

SEMAPHORE CIRCULAR

► KAMMY JOINS UP!

Legendary football pundit and former player and manager Chris Kamara has joined the Royal Naval Association – a nod to his sporting and Royal Navy roots.

Chris, aged 65, joined the Senior Service at the age of 16 and was spotted playing for one of the junior representative sides by coaches at Portsmouth FC. The club promptly bought Chris out of the Navy for £200 – and although it was a short military career, it still means a lot.

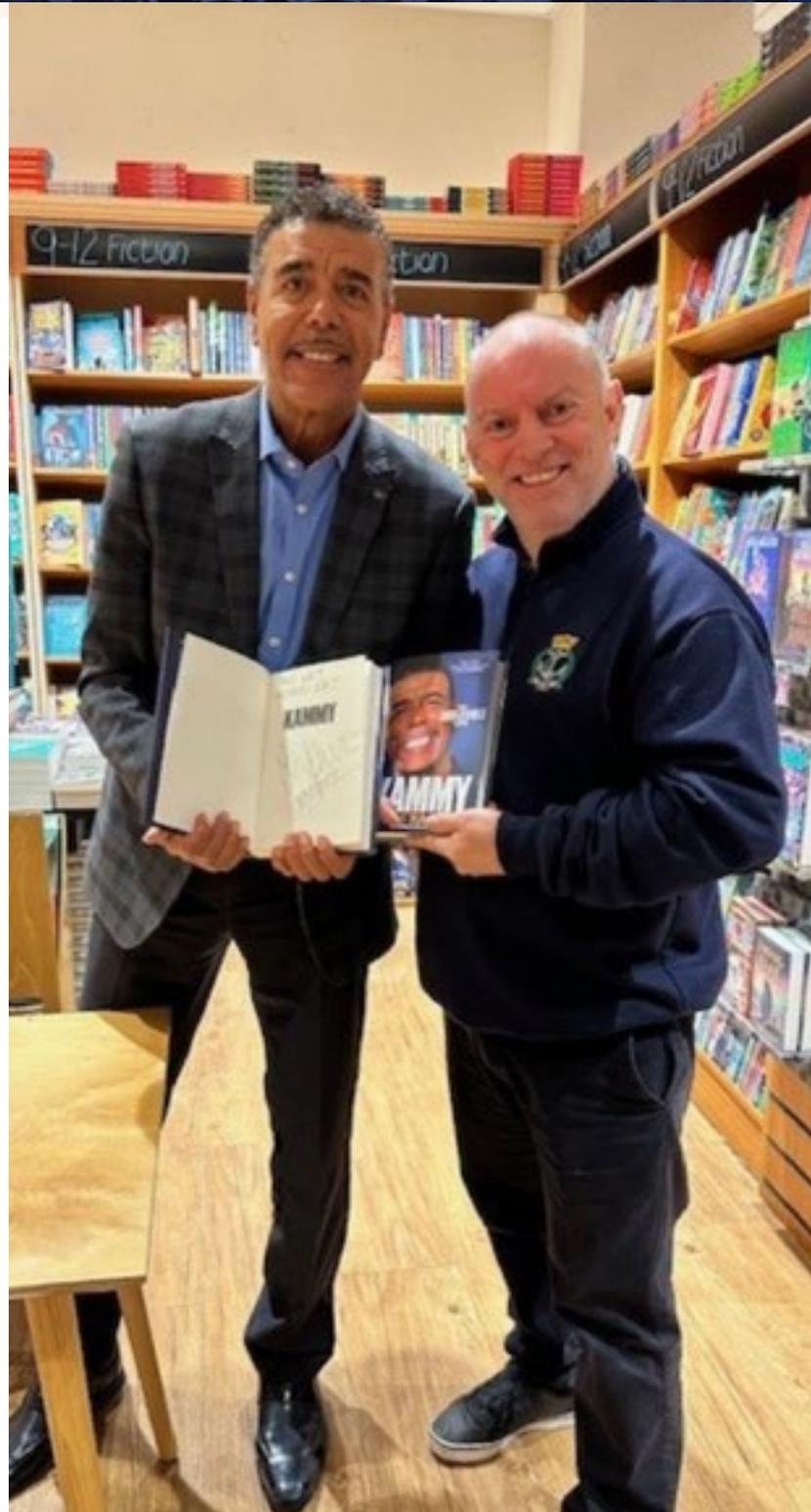
Chris, who has just published his autobiography 'Kammy', said: "Once a matelot, always a matelot – it doesn't go away. I've got a lot to thank Pompey for."

A no-nonsense, committed midfielder, Chris went on to make more than 70 appearance for Pompey in two spells, and in a career spanning 20 years he played more than 600 games for a number of clubs including Stoke City, Leeds United and Luton Town.

He also managed Bradford City (including a promotion to the second-tier First Division) and Stoke City before reinventing himself as a much-loved, larger-than-life football pundit, mainly for Sky Sports, also branching out into other TV roles.

Bill Oliphant, Chief Executive of the RNA, said: "We are very excited to have Chris 'on board' – he is a truly inspirational sportsman. Our membership spans all ages, all interests, and is based all over the world, and we are delighted that Chris has come back to his Naval roots!"

(Right) Chris Kamara with RNA Engagement Officer Dave MacAskill



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Semaphore Shorts and Semaphore Circular: Please note that this will be the last Semaphore newsletter of 2023. We will resume service with the January Semaphore Circular on Friday 5 January with the usual pattern of notes for branch officers (12 Jan) and Semaphore Shorts on subsequent Fridays (19 and 26 Jan).



➤ SECOND CENTENARIAN AT CHRISTCHURCH

Christchurch and District branch clocked up their second centenarian as they celebrated S/M Audrey Taylor's 100th birthday at Christchurch Sailing Club, where Audrey has been a member for 43 years.

Besides a birthday card from the King and Queen. Audrey also received a letter of congratulations from the Princess Royal as Commandant for Women in the Royal Navy. RNA

Central Office also sent a card, along with a bottle of Pussers Rum which was opened to toast the star of the show.

A local baker baked a WRNS-themed cake, while S/M Rick Squibb, Branch President, made up a memory book for a special keepsake where branch members commented and signed the book.

Pictures by S/M Ian Prescott, branch standard bearer.



➤ CONTACTS



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Snail Mail – Postal Address

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➤ FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Ahoy Shipmates

I can hardly believe we are in the run up to Christmas already. The cycle of events this term with the Biennial Parade of Naval Associations at the Cenotaph in September, the Trafalgar season in October and the Remembrance in November all make this a busy period. BZ to all who took part in Remembrance, whether in London or locally.

We've been busy too on the membership front with the Royal Navy Cricket Club voting at their AGM last week to come over to the RNA ostensibly as the RNA Cricket Special Interest Group. I'm hoping that for the wider membership who have an interest in cricket that we can make more of the Inter-Services T20 competition which has historically been held at Lords in the summer and I know is a fantastic day out. We'll let you know as soon as the date is confirmed.

I am happy also to announce that the National Council have generously assigned a sum in next year's budget to subsidising ticket prices for the Army v Navy match at Twickenham on Saturday 4 May. So, if you haven't thought yet what to get your dearly beloved for Christmas, how about a day out a Twickers watching the Navy stuff the



Army like they did last year!

The RFU link for tickets (here) went live yesterday (Thursday 30 November) and has a range of ticket prices – however, to get your discounted tickets and to be sitting in a group, please make your application through Dave MacAskill in Central Office (engagement@royalnavalassoc.com). Also, for Branches, remember if you are thinking about a Branch outing, I can give your Branch a grant from the Branch and Club Support Fund of up to £250 towards your vehicle hire costs.

That leads me onto activities for 2024 and I'm excited to say that we are putting together a number of challenging activities and wellbeing events next year under the banner of the RNA 'Thriving Together' programme which we are establishing to bring more activity and wellness-based events to our membership. You'll see later in this publication adverts for a cycling trip to Normandy to coincide with the D-Day 80 commemorations and a wellness weekend in the Brecon Beacons in Wales based on fun and challenging outdoor activities. These are just for starters and there's more to follow.



Veterans in Plymouth during Remembrance ceremonies – image ©UK Ministry of Defence CROWN COPYRIGHT, 2023

Not good to finish on a sad note but after announcing the President's Award to Bob Coburn in last month's Semaphore Circular, it saddens me to have to inform you that, after a brave fight, earlier this week Bob succumbed to the cancer which he had been tackling throughout the year. Bob's obituary will follow but as a former National Standard Bearer and then RNA Ceremonial Advisor until he had to step back earlier this year, he has been a huge servant to our Association. Bob RIP, and June, please be sustained in the knowledge that our thoughts and prayers are with you now.

Notwithstanding my last, I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,

Bill



➤ NAVAL CHARITIES JOIN FORCES

Two Naval charities plan to join forces in a major step to preserve support for women who served in the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS)

Earlier this year the WRNS Benevolent Trust held an Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss proposed changes for the future of its benevolence.



A vote took place at the meeting in which WRNS members unanimously voted in favour of the proposal that the continued deliverance of benevolence to those eligible members of the WRNS BT would be best served by becoming a wholly-owned subsidiary charity of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC).

The move is part of the WRNS BT's strategy to reduce running costs to ensure support can be delivered to the



last remaining eligible beneficiaries, the youngest of whom are expected to live for another 40 to 50 years.

The day-to-day management, benevolence, and back-office functions of the Trust will migrate across to the RNRMC, and the aim is to be fully transitioned by 1st January 2024.

The subsidiary charity will keep the name the Women's Royal Naval Service Benevolent Trust, its Royal Charter and website. The Board of Trustees will continue to comprise of former members of the WRNS, but will include a representative from the RNRMC.

If you need to contact the WRNS BT for financial assistance or wish to send a donation, then please note the following new contact details from 1 January 2024:

The WRNS BT Office, c/o The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, Building 37, HMS Excellent, Whale Island, Portsmouth PO2 8ER

For financial assistance and advice email: grantsadmin@wrnsbt.org.uk or telephone: 023 9387 1522

For general enquiries and donations email: theteam@rnrmc.org.uk or telephone: 023 9387 1520

wrnsbt.org.uk



➤ RNRMC PARTNERS WITH LAW FIRM

Consumer law firm Slater and Gordon has become an official partner of The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC), becoming the first law firm to partner with the charity.

The law firm, which has a dedicated military practice area, will provide its legal services to charity users as part of its wider commitment to supporting the military. The firm is already a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant.

The RNRMC is the principal charity of the Royal Navy and exists to support sailors, marines and their families, for life. Beneficiaries of the charity will now have access to legal advice from some of the UK's leading military and family lawyers. Slater and Gordon is providing free 45-minute family law consultations, reduced fixed fee divorce costs and a free online will service to those that utilise the charity's services. The law firm also has specialist military injury lawyers who provide expert advice on a no-win no-fee basis, meaning there is no financial risk to those affected.

Natasha Orr, of Slater and Gordon's military team said: "Slater and Gordon has been committed to supporting the Armed Forces for many years through charity initiatives which is something I am extremely passionate about. Our partnership with The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity will allow us to take this a step further

New partnership: 
Family Law services for the Armed Forces



and truly make supporting the Armed Forces part of everyday life at Slater and Gordon.

"At Slater and Gordon, we take pride in our commitment to supporting those in the Armed Forces. Our unique approach, deep knowledge and experience in handling complex military cases is what sets us apart and this partnership allows us to use our skills to support those that need us most."

This work Slater and Gordon does for the military can be exemplified through Mr Courtman, a serving member of the Royal Navy and a client of Slater and Gordon, who said:

"I instructed Slater and Gordon when I was seriously injured and I was in desperate need of help. They immediately assisted me with arranging all of my medical care and treatment in my hour of need. I was supported through every step of the way and the compassion and understanding they provided me was exactly what I needed to guide me through an extremely difficult time in my life. The service they provided was invaluable and I would recommend Slater and Gordon without hesitation."

For more information on Slater and Gordon, visit www.slatergordon.co.uk and more information about the RNRMC visit www.rnrmc.org.uk



New Partnership:
Legal support for the Armed Forces


Slater Gordon
Lawyers

SALUTE MY JOB

Ex Forces Jobs Network, is owned by SaluteMyJob Ltd; a social enterprise aiming to better connect ex-military people with supportive employers and the opportunities they offer by offering a variety of ex-military recruitment services.

They specialise in ex-military recruitment, helping veterans realise their true potential.

See <https://salutemyjob.com/>

➤ THRIVING TOGETHER PROJECT STARTS WITH WEEKEND AWAY

We are super excited to announce our first weekend event in the Brecon Beacons as part of the RNA 'Thriving Together' programme. The confirmed dates are 12-14 April 2024.

Participants will stay in a lodge, walk up Pen-Y-Fan, visit the Four Waterfalls (with potential for a cold water dip!) and BBQ on the Saturday evening at the lodge. There are only 20 places available on a first-come first-served basis.

The weekend will cost around £60 per person, which will include your food and accommodation. Transport may

be available from various areas of the UK, but we advise car sharing where possible.

This event is open to all RNA members, however please be advised you will be required to complete a health questionnaire to ensure you are competent enough to be able to complete the walks.

If you would like further information on this event, please contact Chris 'Scouse' Reeves on scc@royalnavalassoc.com

➤ THE RNA: WHO WE ARE, OUR VISION – AND WHAT WE DO

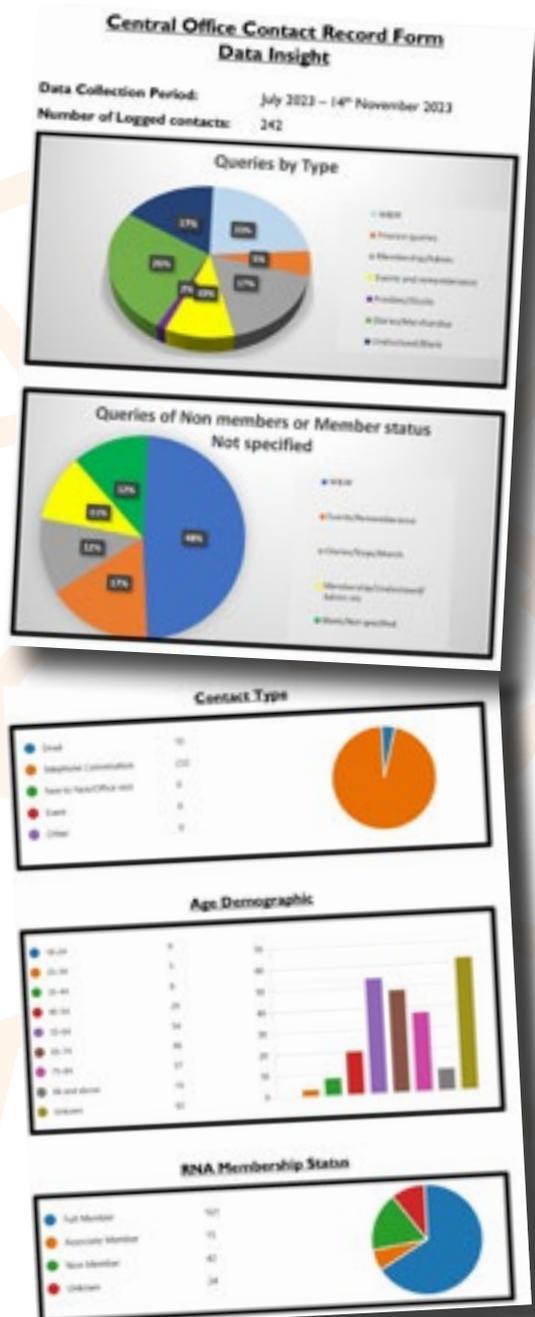
Imagine having a couple of minutes to pitch the RNA to someone who has shown some interest in joining. What would you say? To help us all articulate what the RNA is about and what our aspirations are Central Office have developed, and the AMC have approved, the Who are we, Vision, Mission & Values.

Who are we? The Royal Naval Association is an inclusive, diverse, multi-generational, rank-blind and free to join membership organisation. It is primarily for serving and former serving personnel of our Naval forces and their families. Membership is also open to those who may not have served but have an interest in the Naval Service.

Vision: To be the most relevant Naval Association offering support to our members and smaller Naval Associations, whilst ensuring they maintain the independence and unique identity. Working with other charities, organisations and Governmental agencies to create an environment that improves the wellbeing of all former Naval Forces personnel and their families. As well as offering comradeship to our members.

Mission: To successfully foster comradeship within our membership.

Values: Our core values are centered on the seven components (Seven Cs) of Comradeship which are, Companionship, Community, Connection, Compassion, Care, Commemoration and Celebration, we seek to maintain the naval ethos and enjoy sharing experiences with like-minded people while supporting each other in times of need.





► MOUNTBATTEN FESTIVAL OF MUSIC TICKETS

The Mountbatten Festival of Music returns, featuring the Massed Bands of His Majesty's Royal Marines, performing over two nights at the Royal Albert Hall including a Saturday matinee performance.

These concerts display the outstanding versatility of some of the world's finest military musicians and are given the 'West End' treatment with spectacular lighting effects.

The Festival sees the Royal Marines showcase their incredible musicianship and pageantry and features a wide range of musical styles, including music from the big screen and superb solo items, as well as the traditional marches and overtures that have proved such a hit with audiences over the years.

There will be evening performances on Friday 8 March and Saturday 9 March (both 1930), with a 1400 matinee on the Saturday.

These performances will also be raising funds for Royal Navy and Royal Marines charities.

For more details on tickets etc see the Royal Albert Hall website at <https://tickets.royalalberthall.com/production/84667>

► SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Shipmates might be interested to become involved with the popular and successful RNA Specialist Interest Groups. 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 on 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 Branch – Mark Gayton: 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

**Please note – the Riders are a Branch, not a Special Interest Group.*

➤ DON'T GET IT WRONG ON COPYRIGHT

This is intended as general guidance for those officials and members of the RNA who publish or post material onto the internet or social media, for example via a website, Facebook, Twitter or similar platforms, or in printed circulars, newsheets and the like. It does not set out to explain the law in detail, but to highlight some issues that may affect members and branches of the RNA, as with any other organisation.

It is important to understand that by copying material (such as images) that you found online or in other publications onto your website, social media pages or your own publication, you may inadvertently fall foul of copyright laws.

The vast majority of images (which includes photographs, drawings, paintings, diagrams, cartoons or other such illustrations) that you find online or in publications are likely to be protected by copyright as artistic works unless it is explicitly stated otherwise.

Therefore you must always exercise caution when considering the use of such material – always assume that you CANNOT use an image unless the image was taken by you or you have permission, either from the copyright owner or through a specific licence (which can allow free use of imagery in certain circumstances).

A copyright symbol (©) does NOT have to be present for copyright to exist – just because it, or details of the copyright owner, is missing does not mean the image is not protected by copyright.

Copyright does not have to be applied for by the person who creates the image – it is an automatic right once the material is created (such as a photograph having been taken).

There is no public or government register of copyright in the UK, so tracking down the copyright owner can be a tricky business – but failing to do so could result in an unwanted bill. And remember that an image from another country, perhaps on a foreign website, could still be covered by copyright through international treaties and conventions such as the Berne Convention, to which the UK, the USA and almost every European state are amongst the 176 signatory nations

(<https://www.wipo.int/treaties/en/ip/berne/>).

Just because an image appears on another website/social media page or publication does NOT mean it can be used freely – the other website may have sought or gained special permission, or paid a fee, to use the image or item, or that website may itself be in breach of copyright, so you must satisfy yourself that you are not doing the same.

There is a widespread belief that if an image is published online it is therefore in the 'public domain' and thus can be freely copied and used – this is NOT the case.

And the fact that the RNA is a charity, a not-for-profit organisation and a veterans' organisation is no protection – copyright owners may sometimes charge lower fees for not-for-profit groups, but that would still mean there are fees to be paid.

Even if you are not seeking to make money out of the use of an image, if you use it without the permission of the copyright owner you could still be liable to legal action and/or a claim for lost revenues.

You can, generally speaking, use your own images without problem, or those of a branch member (so long as they have explicitly granted permission for the picture to be used). However, you

will likely breach copyright if you take a picture of someone else's image, painting etc – that could put your image in breach of the original copyright.

And do not think you can hide behind the anonymity of the internet – it is relatively easy for agencies to automatically trawl for the illegal use of images online, whether on a web page, social media post or in a newsheet placed online as a pdf. Once spotted, copyright infringement is a civil matter, not criminal, which has a lower burden of proof – balance of probability rather than beyond reasonable doubt.

If you have breached copyright, you should immediately remove the image in question – that might not be the end of the matter but it will do your case no harm by showing you were willing to act quickly to remedy the situation.

Also remember that there are copyright issues with the use of music online – there may be copyright on the original score, and/or on the recording that you use, even if the original score is out of copyright, so attaching music to a piece of video which you post may also be problematic.

For a basic guide to copyright on photographs and digital images on the internet please see [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/copyright-notice-digital-images-photographs-and-the-internet/](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/copyright-notice-digital-images-photographs-and-the-internet/copyright-notice-digital-images-photographs-and-the-internet)

SCAM ALERT

We have been recently alerted by a shipmate who received a message saying that a parcel is waiting for them from the RNA which doesn't have full postage paid and that they should follow a link to pay the postage.

This is a scam! If you were to be expecting something from us, and there is a problem, do not click any links – get in touch with Central Office to confirm that such a package has been sent out by us.

With so much business done online, and so many deliveries being made over the Christmas period, take a look at the advice offered by the Take Five to Stop Fraud website at <https://www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/> – this is a national campaign backed by major financial institutions and the government to stop online financial fraud.



➤ MONDAY NIGHT FIRESIDE CHATS

For Shipmates who are unaware, there is an ongoing series of 'Fireside Chats' on subjects of Naval and wider maritime interest. 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](#)

Our image, from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 11492), shows motor launches docked for repairs in No 1 dock in Malta Dockyard during August 1942. See 4 December.

| Date | Presenter | Subject |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Mon 4 December | Mark 'Dicky' Barton | Forgotten/lost Naval dockyards and bases |
| Mon 11 December | Matron Dodds | The Confessions of a Health Professional – Part II |
| Mon 8 January | Prof Claire Jowitt/ Julian Barnwell | The discovery of the wreck of HMS Gloucester 1682 |

There will be no Fireside Chats on 18 or 25 December, nor on 1 January 2024

** Lecture subjects may change at short notice.*

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

➤ D-DAY 80TH ANNIVERSARY CYCLE RIDE, 3-6 JUNE 2024

To coincide with the D-Day 80th anniversary commemorations next year, the Royal Naval Association will be hosting a cycle ride in Normandy in the first week of June.

This event is designed to be an inclusive event for all abilities, and the cycling programmes will be based around the cycling abilities within the group.

So, if you wish to bring a recumbent bike/trike or an E-bike, you are still more than welcome!

This event will be partially-funded by a sponsor, however a personal contribution will be required – estimated at approx £250 all in.

Accommodation and ferries are already booked so please act quickly if you want to secure one of the 15 spaces available.

The outline programme is available towards the end of this Circular (click here) and if you want to register interest (£50 deposit secures your space) or have any questions please contact Chris 'Scouse' Reeves in Central Office on email scc@royalnavalassoc.com

➤ NEW CARD HELPS RNRMC

The new Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) Debit Card could save you money when you travel abroad – and support the charity at the same time.

Powered by Currensea and Mastercard, there is no need for a new bank account – the new card links with your existing current account and saves you at least 85 per cent in bank fees on every foreign transaction. And while you are at it, you can donate to the RNRMC by rounding-up your UK spend and donating your travel savings

Transactions are protected by Mastercard's 120-day chargeback protection and you can manage and track your donations via an app.

Currensea works with all the major UK High Street banks. For further details see

https://www.currensea.com/partner/the-royal-navy-and-royal-marines-charity?utm_source=social&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=social&utm_id=digital

➤ SLOPS STILL AVAILABLE FROM CENTRAL OFFICE

Shipmates are reminded that items such as blazer badges, pin badges, ties, beret badges etc are still available for purchase from Central Office.

If you would like to obtain such items, please contact Central Office on the main office number (023 9272 3747).

➤ BREAKFAST WITH THE TRIBE...

The Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Clubs (AFVBC) is now the single largest veterans organisation in the UK, and membership growing weekly.

With over 400 clubs nationally and 15 overseas, the AFVBC seeks to end social isolation for veterans. The clubs bring people with a connection to the UK Armed Forces together, allowing veterans and serving Armed Forces personnel to meet face to face in a relaxed, safe, social environment to enjoy breakfast and banter, to reminisce, to combat loneliness and allow veterans to "return to the tribe".

Furthermore, clubs are free to attend, free to join. There are no fees, subs or commitments; they don't exist to support any national charity, organisation or business – just turn up, pay for your breakfast and enjoy the company of other Armed Forces veterans.

The AFVBC is also conducting five pilot programmes in HM prisons across the UK, building a Armed Forces community within prisons. These pilot programmes help with social interaction, rehabilitation and a support structure for veterans within the criminal justice system.

Lindsay Beadnall from the AFVBC, said: "The AFVBC acts as a beacon of hope and a landmark for those who are at HMP Stocken. It gives them a community, purpose, a chance to learn new skills. And somewhere to head to when they leave HMP Stocken. Our young veterans are gaining awards and are developing their skills for employment on their release. It gives most a second chance."

Find out more about the organisation, and your nearest breakfast club, at <https://www.afvbc.world/>

➤ FOCUS ON... CHRISTMAS IN THE ROYAL NAVY

With an organisation so deeply ingrained with traditions as the Royal Navy it is no surprise that the festive season brings with it a host of activities that trace their roots back decades if not centuries, and many of them originating in civilian life.

One which persists in the Senior Service, and perhaps more so than in wider society, is the stirring of the Christmas pudding some weeks before December 25. In fact, the stirring of the pudding was traditionally carried out by families on Stir-up Sunday – the last Sunday before Advent, at the end of November – and it just happens to be a happy coincidence.

Stir-up Sunday is an informal name, taken from the churches' Collect of the Day (a short prayer for a particular day), which begins "Stir up, we

besech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people..." This would act as a handy reminder to the congregation that it was only a month or so until Christmas, and high time to get the pudding mixed and maturing, so although the religious aspect has nothing to do with puddings, the two became inextricably linked – possibly as far back as the 17th century, when recipes for 'plum pudding' (not a million miles from 'plum duff') started to appear; 'plum' in this instance meaning raisin rather than the modern plum.

Whatever the actual origins, ships and establishments often involved the cooks, the captain and one of the youngest serving ratings in a set-piece pudding-stir for camera, and some still do to this day. And quite impressive they could be too, with some mixtures getting close

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A chef at Rosyth (HMS Cochrane) allows a sailor to taste the Christmas pudding, 1940. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 1988)



to boasting a tonnage as they were worked on in vast containers before being distributed in smaller quantities to the various messes.

In days gone by, the run-up to the festive period would also be marked by matelots getting creative in the production of presents for the family. With little chance to undertake Christmas shopping, some sailors of yore would take whatever material was to hand (or could be begged, borrowed or stolen) to create a gift for a loved one or the nipper. This was particularly the case in times of war, when much of the country's manufacturing effort was in arms, munitions and military support, meaning that there was very little spare capacity for producing relative frivolities such as toys and games. There was the additional benefit for sailors of immersing themselves, if only for a short time, in a hobby or pastime which helped take their mind off war.

There was a comforting structure to the typical Christmas Day in the Royal Navy, which would typically start with some sort of religious service, allowing the ship's company to belt out some favourite carols.

Then all would be looking forward to a traditional dinner, which brought with it a twist

Survivors of the Scharnhorst are landed at Scapa Flow in early January 1944 following the sinking of their ship at the Battle of the North Cape on Boxing Day 1943. Image from Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 21203)

based on a very old convention which saw a swapping of roles. Thus, a group might gather near the commanding officer's cabin, with a rating (perhaps the youngest on board) taking the role of the senior officer. The CO would fall in behind his temporary replacement, and the resulting "funny party" would undertake a sardonic take on Captain's Rounds, adding a flurry or ridiculous or barbed pipes to the general mayhem..

When it came to dinner itself, the commanding officer and his senior officers would roll up their sleeves and serve the junior ratings in a maritime version of the old idea of "the world turned upside down", when the Lord of Misrule or Boy Bishop, a lowly individual, would be elevated to a position of authority and preside over revelries at Christmas.

Part of the Naval Christmas Day would usually be set aside for revelries of sorts, whether that be a SODS Opera, a band concert or similar. In earlier times there might have been more generalised "skylarking" – nothing to do with

continues on page 15 →

songbirds, but taking its name from the habit of sailors in sailing ships swinging in, sliding down and playing about on the rigging (literally to 'lark' or play around, and as it was on high then it became a 'skylark').

All this would, of course, depend on the circumstances, with operational needs taking absolute precedence, and the shape of Christmas Day on board a warship would depend very much on the situation and there were many ships at sea, on patrol, on operations or in transit, during wartime.

A quick glance at this month's Swinging the Lamp demonstrates that in time of conflict Christmas could be just as grim as any other time of the year.

Light cruiser HMS Belfast, for example, was at sea over Christmas 1943, and involved in the Battle of the North Cape on Boxing Day that year, when the German battlecruiser Scharnhorst was sunk, resulting in the deaths of almost 2,000 men.

On Christmas Day itself Belfast was on Arctic convoy escort duties, and Christmas dinner consisted of corned beef and a boiled potato, while one of the highlights was when many of the ship's company those who could be spared in such dangerous waters – pausing to listen to the King's speech relayed over the broadcast system, knowing that their loved ones would be listening to the same words back at home.

Looking back over previous Christmas Days, in 1942 submarine P48 was presumed lost on 25 December 1942 – she had sailed two days earlier on patrol from Malta and was believed to have been the target of ships escorting an Italian convoy, which claimed to have sunk an enemy submarine in the Gulf of Tunis. If it was P48, she was lost with all 31 souls on board.

Even further back, in the days of sail, 74-gun HMS Hero was caught in a fierce gale off the Texel islands in the Netherlands on Christmas Day 1811 and was wrecked in Haak Sands. Only a dozen of her crew of 530 survived the wreck.

All set for a merry Christmas – a sailor from escort trawler HMS Turquoise at Harwich on 21 December 1943 prepares to make the most of the festive season with pudding, a cigar, and a bottle of something... Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 21072)





Comp No.1

RESULTS



- 1 *Pulp Fiction* (dancers)
- 2 *The Red Shoes* (shoe box, bottom left)
- 3 *Milk* (milkman delivering milk)
- 4 *Titanic* (small hand on the window of the milk float)
- 5 *The Sound of Music* (on Hollywood Hills)
- 6 *Moonlight* (beam of light shining from moon)
- 7 *Man On Wire* (man walking between corners of cinema)
- 8 *Rocky* (on top of cinema)
- 9 *The Silence of the Lambs* (man shushing lambs)
- 10 *Birdman* (Michael Keaton character floating on the right)

- 11 *Gandhi* (big Gandhi near cinema)
- 12 *The King's Speech* (giant peach with a crown on it)
- 13 *Forrest Gump* (box of chocolates)
- 14 *Ghost* (ghost mid-right)
- 15 *Alien* (alien poster)
- 16 *The Deer Hunter* (deer with cross hairs on it)
- 17 *King Kong* (Kong on building)
- 18 *The Piano* (small piano near peach)
- 19 *Chariots of Fire* (chariot on fire near peach)
- 20 *The Hurt Locker* (locker saying "Ouch")

Due to a number of correct entries a draw of correct answers took place and the overall winner is

Carrie Anderson

Edinburgh Branch

'a joy to quiz on a Saturday'

Congratulations Carrie and thank you Everyone that took part.

Look out for February's Competition



► BRANCH NEWS

Helston Branch

Helston branch was represented in several locations after the Nelson Thanksgiving Service and parade at Madron on Sunday 22 October. Branch members attended the funeral of Herbert 'Herbie' Bray, a former World War 2 paratrooper, at Mullion – his family had appealed on television for Service personal and veterans to answer the call. It was amazing how many made it to the parade and church service.

Over Remembrance weekend, on 10 November the branch laid RNA and SAMA 82 wreaths at the masthead at HMS Seahawk (Culdrose air station) – the liaison officer was WO Stu Patterson, to whom shipmates send their thanks. On 11 November branch standard bearer Alec Willett took the standard to the top of Tregonning Hill where he paraded it along with the WRNS and British Legion standards. On Remembrance Sunday the branch attended the service at Breage Church. Pictured are branch members

George Scott, Alec Willett, Joe and Josie Locke at HMS Raleigh, Torpoint, for a passing out parade of new recruits. They heard about 'Veterans return to Raleigh' from Capt Jane Roe, HMS Raleigh, after she took the salute at Madron. A great time was had by all the shipmates.



St Neots and District Branch

The St Neots Remembrance Parade and wreath laying was well attended by members of St Neots and District Branch. As well as at the town War Memorial, the branch also laid wreaths at Eynesbury, Eaton Socon, Kimbolton and Cambourne. In the evening three members of the branch, including the branch standard bearer, attended the evening service at Graveley Church, followed by decanting into the village pub for a warming tot of rum, or two...

On 29 November three shipmates visited Cornerstone Pregnancy Advice Centre in Huntingdon to present them with a cheque for £250 which was greatly appreciated. The centre is run on charitable donations and volunteer counsellors.

They provide free advice on all aspects of pregnancy, and also offer a warm and welcoming Baby Boutique for parents who are in need of baby supplies and equipment for their little one. Catering for newborn to 12 months, all baby supplies are free and parents can choose what they need from a huge range of beautiful donated items.

Dartford Branch

A very Patriotic Dartford branch hosted the Area 2 Committee meeting at the end of November.

After initially being greeted by S/M Tom Eastwood attendees had a thoroughly constructive meeting, chaired by S/M Steven Susans – for Area 2 the year 2024 will be very busy indeed.

Shipmates Barry and Tim providing an excellent lunch, followed by a tot – the hospitality was impressive.

Area Welfare and Wellbeing Officer Alan Oliver received his Certificate of Participation from S/M Steve following completion of the RNA Safeguarding awareness course earlier this year (pictured below). BZ Alan!





Redruth and Camborne Branch

218 years to the day (4 November) after His Majesty's Ship Pickle arrived at Falmouth, Redruth and Camborne Branch held their Pickle Night at the Redruth Club. Also on board were guests of **Falmouth** and **St. Austell** branches and guests of Penryn and Redruth RBL. All guests were dressed for a night of revelry in their finest 18th Century sailor garb.



The sloop Pickle, known for her speed, raced 1,000 miles home to England, under the command of Lt John Lapenotiere. He arrived in London on a foggy morning to bring news of the great victory at Trafalgar and the loss of Nelson – with the words to the Secretary of the Admiralty Board (who was about to retire to bed): "Sir, we have won a great victory, but we have lost Lord Nelson!"

The event was celebrated in Redruth with a night of rum, Cornish pasties and great social interaction (see above). Bottles of rum were won by winners of games of 'Heads and Tails' and a nice retro radio, renovated with the latest technology, was won via a raffle.

And while we are on the subject of Trafalgar, we had a despatch from **Bridport** branch, whose members met for their Trafalgar Night dinner at the Bridport and West Dorset Golf Club.

Guest speaker was Cdre Jonathan Fry (pictured left with Branch President Capt John Bench), who presented the Bridport RNA Trafalgar trophy for Shipmate of the Year to Mr Ken Burvill.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

The Lee on the Solent & Stubbington
 Royal Naval Association

Sponsored by
Quirepace

Present a
Christmas Music Concert

Featuring
HMS Collingwood Volunteer Band
 at
Holy Rood Church Stubbington

Friday 8th December - 7.30pm

Tickets: £6 for adults - Children Free

Purchase from November at: Blooms Florist, Stubbington Green, Holy Rood Church.

Or pay at the door on the night.

Contact: leestubb@live.co.uk 02392551946

➤ 2024 RNA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

All branches – please see the AGM paperwork at the end of the circular, including an application form for delegates, a National Council Member and Deputy National Council Member nomination form, and the form for proposing motions and amendments at the Conference, which will be held in Cardiff from 14-16 June.



There is also further information on booking arrangements for accommodation as well as events over the weekend, such as the Gala Dinner.

➤ RNA CLUB C3 LICENCE FORM

For Clubs – the C3 License application form can be found at the rear of this edition. Clubs should return the completed document to Central Office by 8 December 2023.



Stowmarket Branch

This is of Shipmate Jason Sewell of Stowmarket branch, who having served with the REME proudly wore his RNA member's badge when taking part in the Remembrance Parade at the Cenotaph last month.

Jason, who ended his career in the Army as a Staff Sergeant, joined Stowmarket when it was commissioned in 2016 and has remained a loyal member and supporter of the branch ever since, taking a keen interest in the activities and the Association as a whole.

Although he doesn't forget his career in the Army, he takes great pride in being a shipmate of the RNA, and his shipmates too are just as pleased that they have a 'friendly' pongo in our ranks. It also helps that, being used to 'field cooking', he cooks up a mean BBQ for those hungry matelots...



Dublin Branch

Shipmates from Dublin branch, were recently welcomed on board the Royal Navy's Sandown-class minehunter HMS Penzance during the ship's visit to the Irish capital. The shipmates were given a tour of the warship, which was arranged by staff at the British Embassy in Dublin. The visiting party reported that the ship's company of HMS Penzance looked after Dublin shipmates very well.



Christchurch and District Branch

Having already seen earlier in the Circular how Sky Sports pundit and former footballer Chris Kamara got his big sporting break through the Royal Navy, we now have another example, thanks to Christchurch and District branch. S/M Lynn Squibb, wife of branch president S/M Rick Squibb, is on her way to Cali in Columbia, via Miami, for acclimatisation and team-building practice for the World Ten Pin Bowling Championships from 5-15 December, where Lynn is representing Team England's 'super seniors'.

Lynn said: "I am immensely proud to be selected for the Senior World Championships and to wear the Team England shirt at this prestigious event. "To have the experience of bowling with such high-quality bowlers will be amazing. The support from family, friends and Team England players, coach and manager is very much appreciated. I will do my very best to help bring medals home.

"Who would have believed a fun night out at a bowling alley in Portsmouth, while serving in the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) some 30-plus years ago, would have led me to this amazing opportunity?"

Port Phillip Bay Branch

There was a fast response to Port Phillip Bay branch's invitation to join shipmates for Christmas lunch Australian style – but they didn't expect it to come from the other side of the world.

The first to reserve his place was S/M Robert Hinder, of Maidstone branch, who flies into Melbourne Airport on 9 December and joins the 'Grand Christmas Party' the following day at the Frankston Naval Memorial Club in Langwarrin South, Victoria.

"How about that for 'support your local RNA?'" said branch chairman S/M Mike Bennett.



Rosyth and West Fife Branch

As 2023 draws to a close and activities start to taper off, shipmates at Rosyth and West Fife branch approach the Christmas festivities with plenty of optimism for 2024 following a rewarding and challenging year. Although the last 11 months have flown by, they have achieved the goals they set themselves, including a number of fundraising events for nominated charities, RNA promotional activities at community galas and fairs and hosting games nights and quiz nights at host establishment HMS Caledonia.

On 11 November they attended the Remembrance Service organised by RNR HMS Scotia, who also provided a ceremonial guard, at Douglas Bank Cemetery, Pattiesmuir. Following the Service all retired to HMS Scotia, in the grounds of HMS Caledonia, for a small Service of Remembrance which was held in HMS Scotia's Garden of Remembrance.

The following day Rosyth branch held its own Remembrance Parade followed by a Service of Remembrance in Inverkeithing Parish Church, led by Revd Andrea Fraser. The parade to the Garden of Remembrance was led by Pipe Major Bill Davidson and Comrie Community Pipe Band, and there was a large turnout from branch members.

Rounding off the year is the annual Carol Service, held in the Wardroom of HMS Caledonia, by kind permission of Commanding Officer Cdr Morgan McDonald. The service will feature the branch's own ladies' choir, the RNA Belles, who will entertain attendees with a number of festive Carols.

In 2018 Rosyth and West Fife branch started preparations to deliver a Beacons of Light Ceremony within the local community to be held in what is now HMS Caledonia. As part of the funding needed to deliver the project, they applied for and were given a substantial grant in 2019, by the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund.

A condition of the grant was that the branch would deliver an enduring legacy to the event. This was achieved by engaging with seven local primary schools and inviting them to form a partnership with the branch with a view that they would actively take part in the pageant.

More than 120 pupils participated in the pageant, and nominated pupils from each school recited poems of peace in remembrance of those

throughout the world who sacrificed so much for peace. The ceremony and lighting of the beacon took place on the parade ground of HMS Caledonia with an audience of more than 500.

In order to develop and grow the partnership, they proposed that volunteers from the branch would visit the schools on a regular basis annually, and deliver talks and presentations on local military history. Initially, shipmates John Sherwood, Norman Thoroughgood, Jim Stewart, Richard Wardrope and Alan Bayliss laid the foundations for the project, which included the planting of some 200 trees to commemorate the end of World War 1.

There were concerns, that due to Covid 19 and the sad loss of shipmate John Sherwood the project might become a casualty of events. Fortunately, due to the dogged determination of S/M Norman Thoroughgood, the project was kept alive.

S/M Norman gets special mention for the tireless work he has done for the branch and the RNA, not only with our school's partnership, but with his organisation and delivery of branch social events, fundraising activities and representing the RNA at community galas and fairs.

SSAFA BURNS NIGHT

SSAFA Norfolk Branch's annual Burns Night event will be held at the Wensum Valley Golf and Country Club, Taverham, on Saturday 20 January 2024, from 1830 until 2359.

Tickets are £39.50 per person, for which you will get a traditional Burns supper including, piping in of the haggis, the traditional address along with the appropriate speeches and toasts. The three-course meal will be followed by coffee/tea & mints, and dancing to the Marisca Trio ceilidh band.

Accommodation is available at a discounted rate for those who wish to stay overnight, to be booked directly with the venue.

For further details, and to book places and give details of menu choices, contact branch chairman Frank Hughes on frank.hughes@norfolk.ssafa.org.uk

Remembrance

Shipmates across the country and around the world were prominent in ceremonies which remembered and honoured those who served and made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedom.

King Charles III led the commemorations at the Cenotaph in London, where he was joined by other members of the Royal Family, representatives of the Armed Forces and the Commonwealth, and veterans and their families for the National Service of Remembrance and the Two Minute Silence.

The annual march past the Cenotaph, organised by the Royal British Legion, featured almost 10,000 British and Commonwealth former military and civilian Service personnel honouring the fallen of the British Armed Forces involved in the two world wars and all subsequent conflicts.

And while members of the RNA were out in force in Whitehall for the event, areas and branches also played prominent roles in commemorations in cities, towns and villages around the UK and beyond.

While we can't mention everyone who played their part, on these three pages we present a selection of images and accounts from members and branches, giving a sense of the pride with which shipmates remembered those who paid the ultimate



sacrifice.

One such event took place at the Naval Memorial on Southsea Common in Portsmouth, where members of the RNA **Riders Branch** turned out in numbers to pay their respects – the picture of the Riders placing their wreath at the memorial (below right) is by S/M Nigel Huxtable.

The Portsmouth Naval Memorial bears the names of almost 25,000 sailors lost at sea and thus with no known grave – around 10,000 from World War 1 and 15,000 from World War 2.

RNA National President Vice Admiral Duncan Potts and RNA Chief Executive Capt Bill Oliphant attended the recent meeting of the **International Maritime Confederation (IMC)** in Germany, and along with representatives of the



other seven members they laid wreaths at the Laboe Naval Memorial near Kiel at the conclusion of IMC Executive Committee business – Admiral Potts is the current President of the IMC (see right).

Although the Laboe memorial was originally built in the 1930s to commemorate the fallen sailors of the German Navy during World War 1, and the names of their compatriots from World War 2 were added in the late 1940s, the 72-metre monument and hall of remembrance was rededicated in 1954 in honour of the sailors of all nationalities lost at sea, and as a memorial for peaceful sailing on open waters around the world.

Two ceremonies in Wales are pictured on this page – from **Caerphilly** (foot of previous page) and **Builth Wells** (below).

S/Ms Malcolm Day and Andy O'Brien, **Chard** branch standard bearer and standard bearer for the Artificer Apprentices Association, attend the dedication of the Poppy of Honour Standard at Taunton, then witnessed the release of the Poppy of Honour to the Nation and to



have it recognised as a War Memorial (top of previous page).

On Armistice Day the branch attended the Two Minutes Silence outside Chard Guildhall, where S/M Malcolm paraded their standard and branch secretary S/M Ian Phillips gave the Kohima epitaph. S/M Andy O'Brien travelled to Bedworth to attend their Armistice Day parade with the Tiffs' standard.

Andy then travelled all the way back to attend the Sunday service in St Bartholomew's Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church, Yeovil. Wreaths were laid on behalf of the branch and the Artificer Apprentices Association along with others.

Chatham branch's recently-appointed standard bearer, S/M Philip Robinson, paraded the standard at Chatham Naval War Memorial on Armistice Day, with S/M Spike

Hughes placing the wreath.

Meanwhile former RN Shipmate and Lt (SCC) Gary Hammell RNR placed a wreath on the pitch on behalf of Chatham Town Football Club representing the many Navy-related historical ties with this very famous town (right of previous page).

Thursday 9 November saw six members of **Crosby** branch attend HM Prison Altcourse for a Service of Remembrance (below). The service was conducted in the chapel of the prison, with about 30 prisoners, most of whom were ex-military who had fallen on hard times following the end of their military service. The prisoners also laid a wreath in the chapel – the wreath was handmade and paid for by the prisoners. A number of prison staff also attended, some of whom had served in the Armed Forces prior to their new career.



Crosby shipmates have conducted this visit over a number of years – are they the only branch in the country to engage with ex-military in prison?

Traditionally there is 'tea and stickies' after the service and a chance to talk to some of inmates.

Following the service at Altcourse branch members visited Bootle cemetery for another short service at the graveside of five matelots who remain on patrol in various ships lost during World War 2. The prisoners' wreath was then laid at the war graves.

Crosby shipmates led the Remembrance Day service in Alexander Park, attended by around 300 people including local schoolchildren.

National Council Member for **Scotland** S/M Stephen Elliot proudly wore his RNA

Remembrance pin while bugling at the Armistice Day service at the World War 1 memorial at Livingston Old Parish Church (below right).

Members of **Torrevieja** branch provided standards and standard bearers for their Service of Remembrance at Mil Palmeras – they were branch standard bearer S/M Bryan Dalton, Union Jack bearer S/M Nicola Louden, Spanish Flag bearer S/M Carl Louden and White Ensign bearer S/M Graham Shelton; in addition there were the Royal Marines Association Costa Branch standard bearer Phil Prince and two Submarine standard bearers, Stephen Hemingfield and Dusty Miller (below).

The Torrevieja Pipes & Drums played magnificently and led the march of standards to the church before the service and way from the church after the laying of the wreaths.

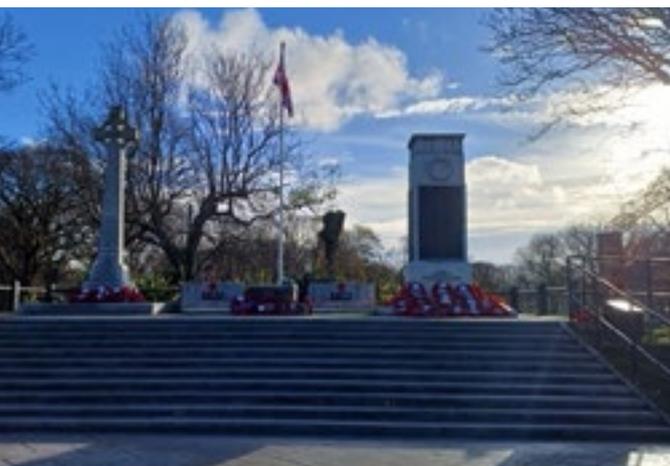
Torrevieja members read the Act of Remembrance, lessons and the poem 'In Flanders Fields'.

There were more than 400 people at the Blyth Remembrance Parade and Service on Remembrance

Day at the Cenotaph in Ridley Park, attended by shipmates from **Wansbeck and District** branch (below left).

There were 14 standards in attendance, and over 40 wreaths laid by various people, either serving or veterans, plus other services as well as civilian organisations. Wansbeck branch secretary Derek Wilkinson did the honours, along with Mayor of Blyth Warren Taylor and Ian Levy, MP for South East Northumberland, while a 14-piece brass band provided music.

Shipmates also turned out for the service at Newbiggin by the Sea, which was well-supported by the public in finer weather.



➤ OBITUARIES

Shipmate Fred Fitch

Norwich branch are extremely sad to announce that S/M Fred Fitch crossed the bar on 28 October aged 98.

Fred joined the Royal Marines in June 1943 (pictured right) and was a crewman on a landing craft at Sword Beach on D-Day, at the age of 19, responsible for providing cover for landing troops by machine-gunning German gun emplacements.

He was one of the early casualties of the day – though he was lucky that it was only a shrapnel wound to his hand as he operated the bow door to allow the troops off. As he watched, the first three men down the ramp were killed by gunfire, though the remaining troops went ashore safely.

Hand patched up, Fred returned to the mother ship HMS Glenearn, rescuing survivors from a sunken landing craft along the way.

He carried out further transfers of man and materiel



between troop and supply ships and the shore over the next few weeks.

Once the Battle for France was well under way, Fred's ship was tasked with joining the war in the Far East, but the Japanese had surrendered by the time Glenearn reached the region. A Londoner by birth, Fred was working in an aircraft assembly facility in Dagenham when he joined the Royal Marines.

After training at Lympstone he was sent to HMS Helder, the Raiding Craft Flotilla base at Brightlingsea in Essex and, in March 1944, Fred moved on to 543 Assault Flotilla on LSI(L) HMS Glenearn, then undergoing training in Scotland. As a Hostilities Only conscript, Fred returned to Civvie Street at the end of the war, getting married and moving to Norwich. Here he was an active member of the RM Association then, from 2008, the local RNA branch, raising thousands of pounds in funds over the years by rattling his tin and regaling passers-by with tales from his wartime service. He returned to the beaches of Normandy for the last time in 2019 for D-Day 75 thanks to the RMA, after which declining health prevented him from attending further visits and, eventually, limiting his attendance at association meetings and events.

Paying tribute to Fred, the Commandant General Royal Marines General Gwyn Jenkins, said his exploits on Sword Beach "exemplified the Commando spirit that we continue to instil in our Royal Marine Commandos today, one of courage, determination, unselfishness and cheerfulness in the face of adversity, Fred and others like him will be remembered by generations to come.

"As we approach the National Day of Remembrance we can reflect on the feats of Fred and the many veterans like him. An ardent supporter of the Marines throughout his life we owe Fred and fellow veterans an incredible debt of gratitude." Fred was a Life member of the RNA, and an active member of Norwich branch, attending his last branch meeting in September. He is survived by his wife S/M Edna Fitch, also aged 98, and was something of a local legend.



S/M Chris Maple

Members of **Chatham** branch are mourning the loss of their shipmate Chris Maple, who crossed the bar in September.

Chris served in HM Ships Ark Royal, Eskimo, Penelope (including service in the South Atlantic during the Falklands Conflict), to name but a few.

By the end of his 24 years of service Chris had risen to the rank of PO(MEM)M

The image was taken on Armed Forces Day in June 2016 at the Great Lines in Chatham, and Chris is pictured with his wife Mary.





The newly-built HMS Illustrious sails from Swan Hunter in June 1982, with her sister Ark Royal in the background. See 1 December. Image taken from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM SFPU-ILL-CN-5058-06)

► DECEMBER SWINGING THE LAMP

1 December 1978

Aircraft carrier – or through-deck cruiser – HMS Illustrious launched at Swan Hunter on the Tyne. One of three Invincible-class ships, Illustrious and her sisters developed out of a concept for an escort cruiser which would form part of an aircraft carrier task group, but when the 60,000-ton CVA aircraft carrier class was cancelled in the mid-1960s the escort cruiser design was reworked to provide anti-submarine and command and control capability. Married to the VTOL capabilities of the new Hawker-Siddeley Kestrel, which later became the fabled Sea Harrier, the Through-Deck Command Cruiser became a Naval requirement – the class were not officially referred to as aircraft carriers until 1980. Illustrious was launched

by Princess Margaret, and like her sisters was much in demand throughout her life. Indeed, her presence was required so urgently in the Falklands to relieve sister ship HMS Invincible in the summer of 1982 that her completion was brought forward by three months and she was commissioned at sea while en route to Portsmouth before heading to the South Atlantic. She played vital roles in conflicts in Iraq, Bosnia, Sierra Leone and Lebanon, and spent the final years of her 32-year service life as a helicopter carrier, the Harrier having been retired in 2010. She was decommissioned in the summer of 2014, and despite hopes that she might be preserved, she was sold for scrap in 2016, leaving for a Turkish breakers in December the same year.

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2 December 1949

HMS Implacable, former French warship Duguay-Trouin and Britain's oldest warship afloat, was towed from Portsmouth and scuttled nine miles south of the Owers lightship (Operation Mainsail). Launched in 1800 at Rochefort, Duguay-Trouin was one of only four French ships to escape capture or destruction, but was captured on 4 November at the Battle of Cape Ortegal, when the remnants of the French Trafalgar fleet were mopped up by Capt Sir Richard Strachan ('Strachan's Action'). Renamed Implacable, she served in the Anglo-Russian War and in 1855 was converted to a training ship in Plymouth. Despite efforts to preserve her – the world's last wooden two-decker and, with HMS Victory, the last survivor of the Battle of Trafalgar – she was deemed too expensive to save, and the Admiralty had her towed out by a fireboat to a spot around five miles off Ventnor on the Isle of Wight where the bottom of her keel was blown out by scuttling charges. Her ballast sank, but her upper works remained afloat for some time, flying the White Ensign and the French Tricolore. Her figurehead and stern were preserved and are on display at the National Maritime Museum.

December 3 1974

HMS Andrew, the last Royal Navy submarine designed during World War 2 to see action and the last armed with a deck gun, fired the

last shell ever from a British submarine, in the Portland Exercise Areas, shortly before paying off at Devonport. Her 4in Mk XXIII gun (and that final shell cartridge) are preserved in the RN Submarine Museum. Andrew, which displaced 1,600 tons, was also the first submarine to use a snorkel (or 'snort') to cross the Atlantic while submerged for the entire 2,500-mile passage, which took just over two weeks, in the Spring of 1953. Andrew also developed something of a sideline on the silver screen. In 1950 she had the role of HMS Trojan in the film Morning Departure, a thriller about a submarine crew trapped by a magnetic mine underwater, while nine years later she was used to portray the fictional American submarine USS Sawfish in the science fiction drama On The Beach, as the Americans would not provide a vessel. On The Beach, incidentally, was based on the novel by Neville Shute (Norway), engineer and author, who was a wartime member of the RNVR and, having helped found the Airspeed aviation company, spent more than a decade living in the Portsmouth area.

December 4 1951

A bus ran into the rear of a column of 52 Royal Marines cadets marching down Dock Road, Chatham, to a boxing tournament at HMS Pembroke. 24 cadets aged between nine and 15 were killed and a further 18 injured. The Chatham (or Gillingham) Bus Disaster,

Implacable is towed from Portsmouth, past aircraft carrier HMS Implacable, before being scuttled – see 2 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 31612)

continues on page 27 →



the most deadly road traffic accident to that point, occurred on a poorly-lit street near the dockyard gates (according to witnesses a street lamp at that point had failed) and the weather was reported to be foggy. The cadets were marching in three platoons, three abreast, when the rearmost boys in the column were hit by a local bus at around 6pm, with the driver claiming he did not see the cadets. Seventeen boys died on the street, with seven more dying later in hospital, six that same evening. Twenty of the victims were given a military funeral at Rochester Cathedral just over a week later, with thousands of local people turning out for the funeral procession and paying their respects outside the cathedral during the service.

5 December 1830

HMS Thetis (46) wrecked in Cape Frio, 75 miles east of Rio de Janeiro, while on passage with \$810,000 worth of bullion. The Leda-class frigate had been assigned to the South America Station in 1826. More than 20 of her crew of 315 died in the sinking, and when she went down she took with her a very valuable cargo. Some of that bullion was recovered soon after in a salvage operation that involved the use of a water tank as a diving bell, and over time most of her cargo was raised.

6 December 1944

Frigates HMS Loch Insh and Goodall spent 14 hours hunting a U-boat in the Pentland Firth off Orkney. A post-war assessment declared that the frigates had sunk U-297 by depth

charges, but a more recent, further analysis of records indicates that the two warships may have been on the trail of U-775, and inflicted no damage. U-775 had already recorded a kill that day, torpedoing Captain-class frigate HMS Bullen, part of 19th Escort Group, to the north-west of Strathy Point in Sutherland, Scotland. Bullen sank with 71 of her ship's company, with almost 100 survived. U-775 survived the war, and was surrendered on 9 May 1945 at Trondheim in Norway. She was sunk by gunfire as part of Operation Deadlight, the destruction of surrendered German U-boats, on 8 December 1945. As for U-297, a submarine on her first patrol, it is likely that she was indeed sunk on 6 December 1944, but probably by an RAF aircraft. She was listed as missing by the Germans on 3 January 1945, and her wreck was found in 87 metres of water 18 miles west of Orkney in the spring of 2000.

7 December 1941

The Japanese carried out an attack on the American naval base of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, bringing the neutral Americans into the war on the side of the Allies the following day. The attack had been planned in parallel with negotiations and diplomatic moves to create room for Japanese expansion into resource-rich territories in the Pacific region and south-east Asia, with the expectation that the Americans would not agree to their demands. The surprise attack began just before 0800 local time, when more than 350 Japanese fighters and bombers took off from a fleet of six aircraft carriers,

Continues on page 28 →

HMS Loch Insh pictured in October 1944– see 6 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM FL 14742)



sinking four battleships and damaging four more (although six were subsequently repaired and returned to the front line, USS Arizona and USS Oklahoma could not be saved). They also sank or damaged three cruisers, three destroyers, a training ship and a minelayer, destroyed almost 200 aircraft, and killed more than 2,400 American service personnel and civilians, injuring another 1,200. At around the same time the Japanese carried out attacks against British territories in Hong Kong, Malaya and Singapore, prompting Britain to declare war on Japan, and American bases in the Philippines, Wake Island and Guam.

8 December 1941

River gunboat HMS Peterel sunk by Japanese cruiser Izumo at Shanghai after a show of defiance that impressed even the enemy. Peterel, a 310-ton shallow-draft vessel with a crew of 55, was built to patrol the waters of the Yangtze River, but with the Japanese occupying most of Shanghai by 1941 Peterel was a token presence in the city, ostensibly to dissuade the Japanese from interfering with the international enclave. By December 1941, under the command of veteran New Zealander Temporary Lt Stephen Polkinghorn, her crew was reduced to 19, with an addition 20 or so locally-recruited Chinese. As news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was received early on 8 December, Peterel was brought to readiness for action. A similar American gunboat, USS Wake, was captured by Japanese

troops, and Peterel was also boarded, despite the fact the two nations were technically not yet at war, but Lt Polkinghorn told them to “get off my bloody ship!”, which they duly did. Having disembarked, the troops moved clear to allow the Victorian-era, British-built 9,500-ton cruiser Izumo to open fire at point blank range, as did a Japanese gunboat and shore batteries. Despite overwhelming odds Peterel returned fire with Lewis guns and small arms, her 3in guns having been disabled some time before to make the ship less valuable if captured. Several Japanese were hit before the gunboat capsized and drifted away; several survivors were machine-gunned in the water. A dozen Royal Navy sailors, including the CO, survived and went through a series of internment camps in China and Japan. Lt Polkinghorn survived the war and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) for his actions in Peterel’s last hours; one of three men who were ashore during the initial attack, 26-year-old POTel James Cuming, remained under cover in Shanghai for the rest of the war, working for a local American-Chinese spy ring while living with his Russian wife.

9 December 1942

P-class destroyer HMS Porcupine was torpedoed by German submarine U-602 while escorting depot ship HMS Maidstone from Gibraltar to Algiers. Seven men died in the attack, which almost split the ship, but with most of her crew taken off by HMS Vanoc she was towed to the Algerian port of Arzew, initially by HMS Exe and

The USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, the battleship was one of six sunk on the day, and one of two that could not be salvaged – see 7 December

Continues on page 29 →



later by a French tug. In the spring of 1943 she was towed on to Oran in Algeria, where she was declared a constructive total loss. Stripped of all useful kit, she was cut into two parts, patched up to make her (them?) seaworthy and towed to Portsmouth in June 1943 – referred to informally as HMS Pork (for'ard) and HMS Pine (the stern). The two elements still had roles to play, first as accommodation hulks for landing craft crew in Stokes Bay, Gosport, from January 1944, then coming under Commander Minesweepers in April 1946 and finally as a tender to HMS Victory III. The various bits of HMS Porcupine were finally paid off at the end of August 1946 and broken up in Southern England – various reports refer to Portsmouth, Southampton and Plymouth, but with the state of the ship, it could well have been all three...

10 December 1942

Destroyer HMS Roebuck, in build at the Scotts yard in Greenock, had the dubious honour of being launched by the Germans... She was lying on a slip, still some months from completion, when a near-miss from a German bomb during an air raid caused the ship to slide into the Clyde, where she lay for three months before being salvaged and completed in the summer of 1943. She spent most of the war serving with the Eastern Fleet, usually in the Indian Ocean. In the early 1950s she was converted to a Type 15 anti-submarine frigate, based in the Mediterranean until 1957 when, after refit, she joined the

Dartmouth Training Squadron for a couple of year. Her final role was as part of the 17th Escort Squadron until she was paid off in 1962 – her final operational role, that is – after paying off she took part in underwater explosion trials at Rosyth before being broken up in Scotland in the summer of 1968.

11 December 1997

Royal Yacht Britannia paid off at Portsmouth on a bitterly cold, grey December afternoon, and though it could have been the chill wind, it was widely reported that the Queen shed a tear at the passing of the iconic vessel. The Queen was piped ashore at 1500, and the flag of the Lord High Admiral and the White Ensign struck. She was built at the John Brown yard in Clydebank and launched by the young Queen in April 1953, shortly before her coronation. Designed to be converted into a hospital ship in times of conflict, that capability was never required, and instead she became a floating ambassador for the UK, manned by Royal Navy personnel. Her maiden voyage, in the spring of 1954, saw her ferry Prince Charles and Princess Anne to Malta to meet their parents at the conclusion of the Queens' Commonwealth tour. Over her 40 years and more in service she made almost 700 official foreign visits and more than 270 visits around the UK, steaming more than one million nautical miles. The cost of manning and running the ship – which required special furnace oil – meant a planned refit in 1996-7 was cancelled, and there

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The stern of HMS Porcupine (aka HMS Pine) is towed into Portsmouth from North Africa in June 1943– see 9 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 17602)

was no political appetite for a replacement. HMY Britannia's last official duty was to ferry the last Governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, away as the territory was handed back to China in the summer of 1997. The ship was subsequently preserved as a visitor attraction in the port of Leith, Edinburgh, where she remains one of the UK's top tourist attractions and event venues.

12 December 1952

848 Naval Air Squadron sailed in carrier HMS Perseus for the Far East, to be deployed in the jungles of Malaya as the first operational Royal Navy helicopter squadron. Equipped with American-built Sikorsky Whirlwind HAR21 helicopters, the squadron carried out final training near their base at RNAS Gosport (HMS Siskin, later converted to the engineering and training establishment HMS Sultan), with the New Forest standing in for the jungle... Pathe News covered their impending departure – you can watch the video on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ALMLhZEoDY>

13 December 1941

Four destroyers of the 4th Flotilla – HM Ships Sikh, Legion and Maori, and Dutch ship HNLMS Isaac Sweers – sank two Italian light cruisers with a brilliant night-time attack from the landward side in the Battle of Cape Bon in Tunisia. The fast, relatively lightly-armoured Italian warships, Alberto di Giussano and Alberico da Barbiano, had been earmarked to rush emergency supplies to North Africa, including tons of aviation fuel which was desperately needed by Axis forces in Libya. The two ships initially set out from Palermo in Sicily on 9 December, but returned having

been spotted by British reconnaissance aircraft in worsening conditions. A third cruiser, due to join them, broke down, so it was just the two original warships that sailed on the evening of 12 December. The four Allied destroyers had left Gibraltar the day before bound for Alexandria, but were ordered to intercept the Italians. Having increased speed, the destroyers spotted their foe early on 13 December, thanks to a Wellington reconnaissance aircraft equipped with radar, forcing the Italians to rapidly reverse course. The Allied ships surprised the cruisers by attacking from inshore, firing guns and launching torpedoes from relatively close range. Fuel barrels on the deck of Da Barbiano caught fire and both ships suffered further torpedo and gunfire strikes. Unable to hit back effectively at the destroyers as they could not see them against the land, both ships were soon beaten to a standstill and they both sank before daybreak, with more than 800 Italian sailors going down with their ships. There were no casualties amongst the Allied destroyers.

14 December 1944

Hunt-class destroyer HMS Aldenham was sunk by a mine 45 miles off Pola in the Adriatic – the last of 139 Royal Navy destroyers lost in World War 2. Aldenham, launched in the summer of 1941, had seen action on Mediterranean convoys, took part in the invasion of Sicily, the Salerno and Anzio landings and Operation Dragoon (the Provence landings of August 1944) before joining the Adriatic campaign, where she met her fate. On 14 December she was leading a bombardment force in support of Yugoslav Partisans when she hit the mine, which

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An Sikorsky Whirlwind HAR21 of 848 Naval Air Squadron in the jungles of Malaya – see 12 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 32673)



detonated beneath her engine room broke her hull in two. Around 60 of her crew of over 180 were rescued, the rest being killed or trapped by the blast of dying of hypothermia in the cold sea.

15 December 1969

Ton-class minesweepers HM Ships Houghton and Wilkieston proved to be far more adventurous than their 'coastal' tag suggested when they reached Portsmouth and Plymouth respectively after voyaging home from the Far East – at 450 tons the smallest RN ships to cross the Pacific since World War 2. Having left the Mediterranean Fleet in 1959 to sail to Singapore, after ten years' service they returned to the UK eastbound via Darwin in Australia, Papua New Guinea, the British Solomon Islands, the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), Fiji, the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (now Kiribati and Tuvalu), Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, California, Acapulco in Mexico, the Panama Canal, Jamaica, Bermuda, the Azores and Oporto. The 22,000-mile journey, which involved some 36 visits en route, took five-and-a-half months. Both were paid off on their return to the UK; Houghton was broken up in 1971 and Wilkieston five years later.

16 December 1957

T-class boat HMS Thorough returned to HMS Dolphin in Gosport, having become the first submarine to circumnavigate the world. Thorough had sailed from Portsmouth Harbour

for Australia in October 1949, serving Down Under for eight years. She had already spent the final stages of the war in the Far East, deployed to intercept coastal shipping off Siam (now Thailand) and Burma (Myanmar), sinking a number of Japanese of varying sizes. Thorough was scrapped on Tyneside in the summer of 1962.

17 December 1940

Ill-fated A-class destroyer HMS Acheron was sunk by a mine off the Isle of Wight, killing 167 of her ship's company and 25 dockyard workers – fewer than 19 men survived. The ship was built in the late 1920s but suffered mechanical problems throughout her life (she was built with experimental high-pressure machinery), and after taking part in the Norway campaign in the spring of 1940 she suffered damage from dive bomber near-misses in the Channel in July 1940. While awaiting repairs in Portsmouth Dockyard she was hit by a bomb during an air raid, killing two of her sailors and injuring three more, and severely damaging her stern. Repairs were completed by the beginning of December, and she began a series of post-refit trials; it was during this series, on a high-speed trial off the Isle of Wight in heavy seas at night, that she struck a mine, wrecking her forward section which caused her to rapidly sink.

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Hunt-class destroyer HMS Aldenham – see 14 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM FL 412)



Australian troops during a lifebelt parade on board a ship between Lemnos and Alexandria after being evacuated from Anzac Cove – see 19 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM Q 15879)

18 December 1967

Coastal minesweeper HMS Maryton reached HMS Vernon in Portsmouth after a 13,000-mile passage from Singapore – the longest unaccompanied voyage undertaken by a Ton-class vessel. She had left Singapore on 12 October, and sailed via (inter alia) Penang (Malaysia), Gan (Maldives), Mombasa (Kenya), Durban (South Africa), Simonstown (South Africa), Walvis Bay (Namibia), Takoradi (Ghana), Dakar (Senegal) and Gibraltar. Water was strictly rationed on the longer legs of the passage.

19 December 1915

The evacuation of Anzac Cove and Suvla beachheads at Gallipoli was all but completed, with rear parties following the bulk of the forces by 0400 the following morning. Ironically, the withdrawal was one of the most successful aspects of the Gallipoli campaign, having been well-planned and executed over the course of five nights, which saw around 36,000 men withdrawn from the beaches to waiting troopships, joining more than 50,000 already secreted away since the first week of December as the faltering Gallipoli campaign was abandoned. In order to cover the evacuation, various ruses were used, including the 'self-firing rifle', operated by water dripping into a container which pulled the trigger, and on one occasion a one-hour period of complete silence from ANZAC troops, which caused Ottoman forces to investigate – they were met by a volley of gunfire, and were not so keen to investigate periods of silence from then on, including the silence that arose from soldiers who were no longer there.... A similar exercise in January 1916 evacuated troops from Helles beach, and in all only a small number of casualties was suffered.

20 December 1946

River-class frigate HMS Aire's brief career came to a shuddering halt on the Bombay Reef in the East China Sea. Aire was commissioned in the summer of 1943 and took part in Atlantic convoys until the end of the war. In March 1946, now renamed HMS Tamar, she took on the role of nominal depot ship at Hong Kong, but by November that year, with then new naval base in Hong Kong completed, she reverted to Aire in time to sail to Singapore to be paid off. It was during this passage that she was caught in a typhoon, with rough seas forcing her onto a treacherous reef in the Paracel Islands. Aire sent a distress signal but her transmitters had failed and the message never left the ship. With the sea pounding her and compartments flooding, the crew discovered that lifebelts had perished and much of the equipment was in poor condition after months alongside in Hong Kong. Without power, they struggled to contain a fire in the engine room, which took two days to extinguish. By a stroke of luck the ship had grounded at high tide, giving the crew some respite as daylight dawned. But they were some 30 miles off the shipping lanes without communication and with little food or water, and by 23 December the situation looked hopeless. But again their luck was in – on 23 December X-craft submarine depot ship HMS Bonaventure, herself having been blown off course by the abating typhoon, sailed close enough to the reef to spot the stricken warship. Options were limited because of the reef and heavy surf which rocked the ship alarmingly, but on Christmas Eve, with assistance from a grass line (a lightweight, floating rope)

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from Bonaventure's cutter, Aire's crew (including the ship's dog) were rescued one by one, wading across the coral reef and jumping into the cutter. Bonaventure put all 85 of the crew ashore in Singapore with no significant casualties amongst them. The frigate remained on the reef where she eventually broke up.

21 December 1941

Escort carrier HMS Audacity, ex German cargo liner Hannover, was sunk by U-751 500 miles west of Cape Finisterre, while Deptford and Samphire sank U-567 in the Atlantic. Hannover, which was built to import bananas, was barely a year old when she was captured by the Allies in the Caribbean in 1940. She went through a number of name changes (Sinbad, Empire Audacity, HMS Empire Audacity) before settling on Audacity, having been converted to Britain's first escort carrier to address the gap in air cover for convoys in mid-voyage. Her Martlet aircraft were stored on deck, as she had no hangar capacity. Although she only took part in four convoys before she was sunk, she proved a thorn in the side of the Germans, accounting for seven bombers, and U-boat commanders were urged to seek her out and remove her from the picture. That happened on Convoy HG 76, which left Gibraltar on 14 December 1941, and was attacked by a dozen U-boats. Lit by a flare from a merchant ship as Audacity left the convoy on 21 December, the carrier was silhouetted against the night sky, and she was hit close to her engine room by a torpedo from U-751. Two more torpedoes blew off her bows and she sank in just over an hour, 500 miles west of Finisterre, with the loss of 71 sailors. Though she was lost, she helped prove the effectiveness of a well-drilled escort group with air cover – the convoy also lost an escort and two merchantmen, but it sank four U-boats, shot down two bombers, and most of the merchant ships got through to their destinations.

22 December 1914

Battleship Queen Elizabeth, Beatty's flagship in the Grand Fleet from 1917 to the end of the war, commissioned in Portsmouth. The dreadnought was the lead ship in a class of five, and though designed to take on enemy battleships she had a relatively quiet time in World War 1, taking part in bombardments in the Dardanelles and missing out on Jutland because of a brief refit. She had a prominent role in the aftermath of the war, with representatives of the German Empire signing the Armistice agreement on board on 15 November 1918. She served in the Mediterranean in World War 2, being badly damaged by limpet mines in Alexandria in an attack by Italian frogmen on 19 December 1941 – she was out of action for around 18 months, being repaired in the United States. On 23 December 1943 she was deployed to the Indian Ocean and Pacific theatres. Returning to Portsmouth in the summer of 1945 she was placed in reserve, where she remained until being sold for scrapping in July 1948.

23 December 1940

A massive explosion occurred near Unicorn Gate at Portsmouth Dockyard, killing 18 people and injuring more than 150. At first it was thought that, given the size of the blast, a German bomber with a full load had crashed, but no wreckage was found and it was later determined that a Heinkel He-111 bomber had dropped a 2,400kg 'Max' bomb, hitting Conway Street in Landport and damaging buildings for up to a mile around, rendering nearly 500 residents homeless. The only building close to the blast that survived was St Agatha's Church, which still stands today opposite the Unicorn Gate of Portsmouth Naval Base.

24 December 1944

Captain-class frigate HMS Dakins was mined north-west of Ostend late on Christmas Eve 1944, causing extensive flooding, but

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Escort carrier HMS Audacity – see 21 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM FL 1204)



Norwegian destroyer HNoMS Stord returns to Rosyth on 4 January 1944 after taking a leading role in the sinking of German battlecruiser Scharnhorst at the Battle of the North Cape – see 26 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 21208)



she managed to limp back to Harwich. The American-built ship had been in service with the Royal Navy for just over a year, having been extensively involved in escorting convoys in the North Atlantic, but her war ended in the mine blast; she was taken to Antwerp in Belgium in the early part of 1945 for assessment, but the yard was disrupted by German V-weapon attacks and no repair work could be carried out on Dakins. After the war ended in Europe, she steamed back again to Harwich, where she served as a depot ship until she was officially written off in January 1947 and sold for scrap in the Netherlands.

25 December 1940

Force H had returned to Gibraltar on Christmas Eve, just in time to celebrate Christmas Day in harbour after operations in the western Mediterranean. But it was to prove all too good to be true – as the men started to get into the festive spirit a signal came through from the Admiralty ordering Force H back to sea to cover Atlantic convoy WS 5A, which had been intercepted by German heavy cruiser Hipper. Within a couple of hours the ships put to sea – with some officers on the bridges of the destroyers apparently still wearing paper hats – and headed out into a filthy Atlantic gale, cheered on their way by those lucky enough to remain in harbour. As it happened, Hipper was driven off by heavy cruisers HMS Berwick and HMS Bonaventure, which were accompanying the convoy.

26 December 1943

German battlecruiser Scharnhorst was sunk by battleship HMS Duke of York at the Battle of the North Cape. The German ship, accompanied by five destroyers as the German Arctic Task Force, had left her Norwegian fjord in the early evening of Christmas Day to attack Russia-bound convoy JW 55B. Also in the area was UK-bound convoy RA 55A, which had the benefit of several destroyers to protect the 22 freighters as well as the three cruisers of Force 1 – HMS Belfast, Norfolk and Sheffield. Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser (CinC Home Fleet), on board his flagship Duke of York, was hoping the eastbound convoy would be a temptation for the Germans, and so it proved, prompting Fraser to put to sea leading Force 2, which consisted of the battleship, cruiser HMS Jamaica, three Royal Navy S-class destroyers and the Norwegian destroyer HNoMS Stord. Gales and heavy seas grounded German reconnaissance aircraft, and the German force, under Konteradmiral Erich Bey, at first failed to find the convoy, and when he sent his destroyers to search a wider area they lost contact with their flagship. It was one of the Force 1 cruisers (Belfast) which first detected Scharnhorst by radar just after 0900 on Boxing Day. The trio engaged the big German ship, hitting it twice (one of which wrecked the Germans' radar) causing the blinded Scharnhorst to turn away at speed. Guessing the German would resume its attack, the cruisers returned to the convoy and picked up Scharnhorst again on their radar around noon. Norfolk was hit and had to retire, but shortly afterwards the German admiral

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broke off and headed back for their home port, unaware that he was heading into a trap as Force 2 was closing in fast. With Belfast tracking the German accurately with her radar she guided Force 2 into position and shortly after 1600 Duke of York's own radar picked up her prey. Lit by starshells from Belfast, Scharnhorst was an easy target for Duke of York, which hit the 38,000-ton German warship with her first salvo, quickly knocking out Scharnhorst's two forward turrets and wrecking her hangar. Attacked from both flanks, Scharnhorst managed to break away briefly, and damaged Duke of York's radar in the process, but in an icy, howling gale and Arctic darkness RNVR officer Lt Harold Bates climbed the battleship's mast and got the system back into working order within a few minutes. A long-range hit from Duke of York smashed one of Scharnhorst's boiler rooms around 1820, slowing her down and leaving her open to torpedo attacks by the British and Norwegian destroyers. Battered by gunfire and hit by at least two dozen torpedoes launched by destroyers and cruisers, the German capital ship capsized and sank at 1945. Only 36 of her crew of around 1,970 survived, while the Royal Navy lost 21 sailors, more than half of whom were in destroyer HMS Saumarez. When Frazer

signalled the Admiralty "Scharnhorst sunk" he received the equally brief response "Grand, well done." In a wash-up later that evening on board the battleship Fraser paid tribute to the gallantry of the Scharnhorst's officers and crew, and also highlighted the ferocity of the "daring" attack pressed home by the Norwegian destroyer Stord. With Scharnhorst out of the Arctic theatre, the Allies could reallocate major Naval resources to other areas, and the Battle of the North Cape proved to be the last duel between battleships in Europe.

27 December 1831

HMS Beagle finally sailed on a five-year circumnavigation carrying Charles Darwin, subsequently author of *On the Origin of Species*. The Cherokee-class brig-sloop had been extensively rebuilt to undertake the voyage to the far south under Robert FitzRoy, and Darwin was invited to accompany FitzRoy as a paying guest who could provide useful scientific support for the expedition. Beagle's departure was originally scheduled for October 1831, but delays in completing her preparations meant she did not sail from Devonport until 10 December that year. A long spell of bad weather forced the ship to anchor at Barn Pool, in Plymouth Sound, until

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Drifter men cheering battleship HMS Duke of York as she made fast at Scapa Flow after the sinking of Scharnhorst – see 26 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 21166)



27 December, when she finally left home waters, returning again in October 1836.

28 December 1756

The court martial of Admiral John Byng on board HMS St George in Portsmouth Harbour began, and lasted 29 days. The officer had been placed in charge of a ramshackle, undermanned fleet and ordered to engage a superior French fleet in the Mediterranean as well as relieve a besieged British garrison on the island of Minorca. His fleet, partly manned by fusiliers as it was 800 men short, was refused a force of marines at Gibraltar that he had been promised back in Britain, and at the subsequent Battle of Minorca the commanders in his fleet performed poorly, leading to a defeat. Byng returned to Gibraltar for repairs, but he was recalled home and arrested for failing to do his utmost in battle – a relatively recent change to the Articles of War that carried the death sentence. Byng essentially was a scapegoat for a series of military reverses in America and the Far East, and with political unrest at home, the British public – prompted by the press – were quick to turn on Byng. On 27 January he was found guilty and sentenced to be shot to death, but the Court recommended mercy as they did not believe his misconduct arose from cowardice or disaffection. Fellow officers petitioned for clemency, as did Prime Minister William Pitt the Elder, but political considerations weighed against Byng, and King George II twice refused to show mercy. On 14 March 1757, on a stormy day in Portsmouth Harbour, Byng was led out on to the deck of HMS Monarch in Portsmouth Harbour. The captains and officers of all ships at Spithead were

required to row to the site, a difficult task against a north-westerly gale and ebb tide, but once all were present Byng knelt on a cushion and was shot by six marines.

29 December 1916

Paddle minesweeper HMS Ludlow was mined in the North Sea off the Shipwash light vessel, in Suffolk, less than a year after she was built. The Racecourse (or Ascot)-class vessel was serving as one of the six paddle minesweepers under the command of the Admiral of Minesweeping at the time. Based on shallow-draft commercial pleasure steamers, the Racecourse class were steady vessels that could operate close inshore, though heavy seas limited their effectiveness as their paddleboxes became overwhelmed by water. Five men died in the Ludlow sinking, and one died of wounds on 11 January, 1917.

30 December 1942

Special Service Vessel HMS Fidelity was sunk in the North Atlantic with the loss of more than 350 men. Originally built in Liverpool shortly after World War 1 as French merchant ship Le Rhin, the 2,500-ton vessel was seized in Marseilles after the Fall of France and handed over to the British in Gibraltar. Converted to auxiliary warship HMS Fidelity and commissioned in September 1940 with many of her French captors serving on board under assumed names – one of them, Special Operations Executive (SOE) agent Madeleine Bayard (aka Barclay) WRNS being one of the very few women to serve as a commissioned officer on a Royal Navy ship. In 1941 Fidelity served off Southern France in support of SOE activities, including the landing

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HMS Fidelity – see 30 December. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © IWM ADNO 5229)

and recovery of agents, spies and escaped prisoners of war, and took part in low-level sabotage missions. The following year she was refitted to act as a commando carrier in South-East Asia, equipped with four 4in guns and four torpedo tubes plus two small Vought Kingfisher reconnaissance seaplanes, a motor torpedo boat and two landing craft. In December 1942, with T Coy 40 Cdo Royal Marines on board, she joined convoy ON 154, a 50-ship slow convoy from Liverpool to North America on a southerly route across the Atlantic. On 29 December Fidelity suffered engine problems and fell out of the convoy while attempts at repairs were made – during this time a reconnaissance flight spotted lifeboats and Fidelity's landing craft picked up 44 men from the Empire Shackleton, the convoy commodore's ship which had been torpedoed and sunk the previous day. On 30 December Fidelity was making 5 knots in the direction of the Azores, having already beaten off attacks by two U-boats overnight, but then she was attacked by U-435 which struck the Royal Navy ship with two torpedoes. All 369 men on board – 274 crew, 51 Royal Marines and the 44 rescued from lifeboats, were lost, the only survivors being six men in the MTB which was on anti-submarine patrol when the U-boat struck, and two aviators whose Kingfisher had crashed two days before and been picked up by a convoy escort.

31 December 1847

The last signal was transmitted on the Portsmouth line of the Admiralty semaphore communications system before it was replaced by electric telegraphy. The system, based on a French version, had been deemed necessary for some years before it was built – Lt Lapenotiere's epic journey from Falmouth to London with news of victory at Trafalgar and the death of Nelson had taken almost 40 hours by coach, which was clearly far too long for Their Lordships to wait for vital information. An experimental system between London and Chatham, created by Royal Navy officer Sir Home Popham, proved a success in 1816, so a chain of 13 relay stations was built in 1820 between the Admiralty and the terminal Semaphore Tower station in Portsmouth Dockyard using a variation of Popham's system created by military engineer Charles Pasley. The semaphore signal link went live in 1822, and in good conditions a signal could be transmitted in eight minutes, being relayed from station to station on high ground or tall buildings all along the line. Despite the remarkable advance in efficiency, the system was not to last long. technology had moved on apace, and it was quickly superseded by the electrical telegraph (and indeed the fast-expanding railway network), with the last signal passing down the semaphore line on the last day of 1847.

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➤ LONGCAST

| 2023 | |
|-------------|---|
| 08 Dec | National Council meeting (via Zoom) |
| 14 Dec | SSAFA Choir, Carols and Curry, 1830, The Globe, Hay on Wye (see poster at end of this Circular) |
| 25-31 Dec | RNA Central Office closed |
| 2024 | |
| 01 Jan | RNA Central Office closed |
| 20 Jan | Area 4 AGM – Dorchester Branch to host |
| 20 Jan | SSAFA Norfolk branch Burns Night event, Wensum Valley Golf and Country Club |
| From 22 Mar | HMS Mohawk Association reunion in Blackpool. Details from IOW Tours |
| 12-14 Apr | Thriving Together weekend away, Brecon Beacons |
| May (DTBD) | National Standard Bearers Competition |
| 3-7 Jun | RNA D-Day 80 Memorial Cycle event to Normandy |
| Jun 14-16 | RNA National Conference, Cardiff |

Please check the RN Shipmates.co.uk website for a list of further reunions: www.rnshipmates.co.uk



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Watch this space for RNA offers on event tickets and lots more to come!

D-Day 80 – Proposed Outline Programme RNA Memorial Cycle

| DTG | Event | Notes |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Monday, 3 Jun 24 | | |
| 1300-1400 | Muster at Temeraire sports accom | |
| 1430 | Ride out to D-Day Museum | On Southsea Common only 5 minutes from Temeraire |
| 1500 | Official start – to Dryad | VIP to be organised |
| 1600 | Dryad – Map Room visit | Access and Briefer to be organised |
| 1730 | Rtn to Temeraire | |
| o/n | Temeraire Sports Accom | |
| Tuesday, 4 Jun 24 | | |
| 0645 | Depart Temeraire | To Ferry Terminal |
| 0700 | Check in for ferry | |
| 0815-1500 | Portsmouth – Caen | (Ouistreham) |
| 1500 | Cycle to Amaye-sur-Orne | Via Sword, Juno and Sword Beaches |
| o/n | Amaye-sur-Orne | |
| Wednesday, 5 Jun 24 | | |
| 0830 | Depart for days cycling | Routes dependent on group abilities. Intend to recce a social route and a longer route. To include attendance at British Memorial Garden Commemoration Caen and visits to well known sites around the Normandy battlefield. |
| o/n | Amaye-sur-Orne | |
| Thursday, 6 Jun 24 | | |
| 0830 | Depart accom | |
| | Cycle to Pegasus Bridge | Visit Pegasus museum |
| | Cycle to Merville Battery | Depart in good time to check in for ferry |
| 1630 | Ferry Caen - Portsmouth | |
| 2100 | Arr Portsmouth | Cycle to Temeraire Sports Accom |
| o/n | Temeraire Sports Accom | |
| Friday, 7 Jun 24 | | |
| Tbc | Arrival event | Maybe standeasy in Leach Building, Navy Command |
| Mid morning | Disperse | |

Recce being conducted in Jan. Route details to follow.

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Just for groups! are delighted to announce we have secured bedrooms at a choice of two hotels, both within walking distance of the Coal Exchange Hotel, Cardiff, where the AGM and gala dinner will be held on Saturday 15th June.

Please contact our friendly team on **01603 886740** to book the gala dinner – at a cost of **£40pp**, and/or bed & breakfast accommodation.

Alternatively you can book on our website : **www.justforgroups.com**

or via post, by completing the booking form and returning this to us at:

Just for groups! The Old Bakery Queens Road, Norwich, NR1 3PL

Gala Dinner: £40pp



HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS - CARDIFF

The Holiday Inn Express Cardiff Bay is located within Cardiff Bay and Cardiff city centre overlooking Bute East Dock.

All bedrooms are en-suite with complimentary WIFI, air conditioning, iron/ironing board, flat screen TV, direct dial telephone and hairdryer.

The hotel offers car parking (charges will apply) and Cardiff Bay train station is within a 10 minute walk.

| | |
|---|--|
| 2 nights £145 per person sharing £249 single occupancy | 3 nights only £215 per person sharing £369 single occupancy |
|---|--|



FUTURE INN - CARDIFF

The Future Inn Cardiff is located within Cardiff Bay and walking distance of Mermaid Quay and the Welsh Millennium centre.

The hotel hosts 197 air-conditioned en-suite bedrooms fully equipped with tea/coffee making facilities, flat screen TV, hairdryer, and iron/ironing board. There is complimentary on-site car parking.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 night £115 per person sharing £190 single occupancy | 2 nights £199 per person sharing £329 single occupancy |
| 3 nights £269 per person sharing £439 single occupancy | |

Booking conditions apply

CALL: 01603 886 740
 Email: sales@justforgroups.com

Delegate to Annual Conference 2024 - CARDIFF

Branch secretaries should note the following before submitting their application.

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. 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.

Each Branch which 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 | | | |
| Delegate's e-mail | | | |
| Number of Observers if known | | | |
| Name of Branch Hon Secretary | | | |

NB: A Delegate will not be confirmed as such unless or until the Branch Balance Sheet for 2023 and Branch Annual Report for 2023 have been received in RNA Central Office.

Should either not have been received in Central Office, the Delegate's Status will be deemed to be that of an Observer.

Branch Secretaries are to ensure that their nominated Delegate, receives the copies of the agenda and minutes of the previous years' AGM prior to representing their Branch at the AGM. Copies will be made available at the AGM, but sight of these prior to the day is considered essential. Branch Secretaries will be forwarded this paperwork from Central Office as soon as it is finalised.

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

To check ahead of Conference, please call Sara on 023 92 723747

NOMINATION FORM
ELECTION OF MEMBERS AND DEPUTY MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL 2024
(Revised RNA Bye-Law 7)

For the attention of All Branch Secretaries:
NCM in Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10 and DNCM in Areas 1, 2, 4, 10, 11

Each Branch may nominate **one full or life member** from any Branch within its own Area, as a Candidate for election to the National Council, and **one full or life member** for election as the Deputy National Council Member **subject to the approval of the Branch to which both persons belong.** (See Note Below)

Names of Nominees

NCM **DNCM**

Proposed by **Branch** **Area**

Address of Nominee

NCM.....

..... **e mail**

DNCM.....

..... **e mail**

Brief history of nominees in the Association. (Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

NCM -

DNCM -

Chairman (signed)(dated).....

Secretary..... (signed)(dated).....

If the Candidate is **not** a member the proposing Branch, this section is to be completed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Candidate's **own** Branch.

Candidate's Branch

We are aware of the above nomination.

Signature of Chairman (Candidate's Branch)

Signature of Secretary (Candidate's Branch)

Candidate

I accept the nomination and promise to attend as many National Council Meetings as is possible and to sit on any Committees to which I may be elected.

Signature of Candidate Dated

The envelope containing this completed form should be marked **NOMINATIONS FOR NATIONAL COUNCIL** and must reach RNA HQ no later than **1600 on 16 February 2024.**

Alternatively, you can scan the fully signed form and email it to sara@royalnavalassoc.com

Nominations for Governance Standing Orders Committee 2024

For the attention of All Branch Secretaries

Applications are sought for the Governance Standing Orders Committee.

Each Branch may nominate **one member** as a candidate for election to the Standing Orders Committee, **subject to the approval of the Branch to which the candidate belongs**. Applicants should be Full or Life members. A nil return is not required.

NAME OF NOMINEE

PROPOSED BY BRANCH

ADDRESS OF NOMINEE

.....

.....

E mail Post code

Brief history of nominee in the Association. Continue on separate sheet if necessary.

Chairman (signed).....(dated)

Secretary (signed).....(dated)

If the Candidate is **not** a member of the proposing Branch, this section must be completed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Candidate's **own** Branch.

Candidate's Branch

We support this Nomination.

Signature of Chairman (Candidate's Branch)

Signature of Secretary (Candidate's Branch)

Candidate - I accept this nomination and undertake to attend as many Standing Orders Committee Meetings as is possible.

Signature of Candidate

This form should be forwarded to Central Office to be received no later than **16 February 2024**
Nominations received after this date cannot be included in any Ballot required if more than two apply

PROPOSED MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

Proposals must reach The General Secretary by **1600 16 February 2024**

Name of Proposing Branch:

Motion / amendment

Explanation of the Motion / Amendment (To be included in the notes for Conference)

Hon Secretary(signed).....(dated)

Name of Seconding Branch:

Hon Secretary(signed).....(dated)

Notes

- a. A motion is submitted in the name of a Branch. Secretaries of proposing and seconding Branches are **certifying** that the motion or amendment reflects the view of the Branch meeting (not a committee); and that voting was conducted in accordance with Rule 20.
- b. A separate form is required for each Motion or Amendment
- c. A manuscript copy is acceptable for additional Motions or Amendments if the printed form is not available.
- d. The Motion or Amendment should be as short and precise as possible avoiding ambiguity. A Motion should normally start with the word 'THAT'
- e. The explanation is to assist the scrutiny of the Standing Orders Committee in understanding the intention behind the Motion so that they may be able to consider its presentation so it can be improved and implemented as soon as possible (Conference Bye Law C4)
- f. Motions may be submitted at any time but must reach the General Secretary by **16 February 2024**.
- g. Motions of Urgency should reach the General Secretary not less than 48 hours before Conference. (In accordance with Conference Bye Law C6.) and include an explanation about the urgency.
- h. Amendments to Motions should also normally reach the General Secretary not less than 7 days before Conference. The provision for the submission of amendments during Conference is in the Conference Bye-Laws.
- i. Bye-Laws. A Motion to Conference may propose that a Bye-Law be set aside or it may ask the Council to consider making or amending a Bye-Law.
- j. The Branch Proposing a Motion **must** have it Seconded by another Branch before forwarding it to the General Secretary. (Conference Bye Law C3a)



**APPLICATION FOR ANNUAL PERMIT FOR A
REGISTERED ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION CLUB
(Form C3)**

(To be submitted to RNA Headquarters by 8 December 2023)

PART I – The Club

Name of Club in full

Registered Number

Registered Office Address

Tel Post Code

Premises owned by :

Club/Branch/Other

Club membership as **at 31 October 2023**:

Life Full Assoc

ANNUAL PERMIT 2024

The undersigned **certify** that:

- The Club is registered with the FCA and has registered the annual accounts/financial statements.
- The Club is a going concern and solvent under the terms of the Insolvency Act 1986 and this is anticipated for the year of this permit application.
- The Club, at its AGM, agreed to abide by the Rules for Clubs laid down by the Association; reviewed its approved Bye-Laws and believes them to be current and appropriate.

Hon Secretary (Signed) (Print name) Date

Chairman (Signed) (Print name) Date

Treasurer (Signed) (Print name) Date

PART II – The Branch

The Committee of the Branch of the Royal Naval Association has examined the above information and it is satisfied as to its accuracy.

The Committee hereby applies for the renewal of the Annual permit and undertakes to ensure all the conditions therein are complied with.

Branch membership as **at 31 October 2023**:

Life Full Assoc

Branch Hon Secretary (Signed) Dated

PART III – The Area

Number Area in which the Branch is situated recommends that National Council approves this application.

Area National Council Member (Signed) Dated

PART IV – The National Council

This application is approved by the National Council, the Bye-Laws, if amended, are approved

On behalf of the Council (Signed) Dated

Notes and conditions

- a) Under Association Rule 11 the Council requires all Branches forming a club to register it and its name with the appropriate authority through RNA Central Office, and thereafter to apply for an Annual Permit.
- b) The application for the Annual Permit should be submitted by the Branch having first received the Area's endorsement, to RNA Central Office by the 8 December 2023. If either the Branch or the Area cannot approve the application, it should endeavour to resolve the reasons with the Club, but failing this should report full details to the General Secretary with a copy to the Council member for the area.
- c) RNA Central Office will issue the permit dated 1 January 2024 as soon as practicable.
- d) If the premises are not owned by the Branch it is a condition that adequate facilities are provided by the owner or lessee for the conduct of Branch business.
- e) If the Secretary's address for correspondence is not the same as the registered office for the club, this should be shown after their signature.
- f) The conditions specified on the Permit as being accepted by the Club include the following:
- g) All members of the Club shall be members of the Association with not less than 20 Full and or Life members as defined by clause 7 of the Royal Charter.
 1. The Club will, in general, do all possible to further the objects of the Association and will support and encourage the work of the Branch with which it is associated.
 2. The Club will abide strictly by its registered rules which shall be those approved by The Council and accepted by the Licensing authority. Amendments to the Rules may only be made by the Council; they shall apply to each Club. Clubs are to use the registered Model Rules for the RNA, which ensures that they are always compliant with the Law and RNA Charter.
 3. Each Club shall review its Bye-Laws annually and submit amendments to the Council for approval.
 4. Two copies of the audited accounts of the Club shall be forwarded to the General Secretary each year.
 5. The Council shall be entitled to appoint a representative to inspect all documents, accounts and books of the Club on giving seven days notice.
 6. The Council and the appropriate Area Committee may from time to time pay a visit of inspection to the Club.
 7. The Council can give seven days written notice of cancellation of the permit, whereupon the Club shall thereupon cease to trade under the title of the "Royal Naval Association" and to use the RNA registered model Rules.

A choir, carols and a curry!

With the Talgarth Male Voice Choir

18:30 Thursday 14 December 2023
The Globe at Hay on Wye, HR3 5BG

Join us for a festive evening of Christmas carols and help raise funds for SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity.

Tickets are £15 and include entry and a curry meal served in the downstairs restaurant after the performance.

Scan for ticket



Buy your tickets online at:

ssafa.org.uk/carolsandcurry2023

ssafa | the
Armed Forces
charity

Regulars | Reserves | Veterans | Families



Registered Charity No 183562

YOUTH SAILING
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



JOB ADVERT FOR: ROYAL NAVAL SAILING ASSOCIATION'S "OUTREACH MANAGER"

Introduction:

The Royal Naval Sailing Association (RNSA) is looking to appoint an Outreach Manager to provide the key link with families of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Maritime Reserves and to encourage their participation in sailing. A major part of this new role is to help initiate and facilitate an exciting new youth sailing project.

RNSA is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) based in Gosport, Hampshire with specific responsibilities to the Royal Navy (RN) for the delivery of the sport of sailing. Its charitable Object focuses on improving military efficiency through encouraging the participation of military personnel in sport. RNSA has 6 staff, a range of volunteers and over 5000 members, which along with a range of trusted partners support this endeavour.

The individual:

Are you an enthusiastic people-person with a good understanding of the military and outreach work? We are looking for a collaborative, enthusiastic, self-starter to manage our engagement and relationship with Naval families. This is a fantastic opportunity to join a high performing team and a Service Sports Association with huge ambition to broaden its work to encourage sailing across the naval community and in so doing improve the military efficiency of the Royal Navy and life skills of young people. Extensive sailing knowledge and expertise is not essential but an enthusiasm for participation in sport is.

Job Title: Outreach Manager

Responsible to: Chief Executive Officer

Purpose: The successful applicant will form an integral part of a dynamic and responsive team that values its strong links with the Royal Navy and the wider military community. Their primary purpose will be to initiate a new and exciting project funded by Greenwich Hospital (the Royal Navy's oldest charity) to reach out to naval families across the country and attract them to take up the offer of free RYA start sailing courses for their children. This will require significant engagement with naval charities, community groups, ships' families' organisations and families themselves. They will work alongside RNSA's Youth Sailing Coordinator who is responsible for the delivery side of the project. The role will also require the day-to-day management of the assigned budget and close liaison with RNSA's Financial Director as well as capturing the necessary data to understand the effectiveness and impact of the project. The work with families will help support wider RNSA projects in this area and form part of the overall role.

Location: The role will require some time at the RNSA office with the opportunity for remote working and some UK travel. The RNSA Office is located at: 10 Haslar Marina, Haslar Road, Gosport, PO12 1NU.

Hours: The 35-hour core week is Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm with one hour for lunch, although there is significant flexibility around when the hours are worked. Some weekend and out of hours work will be required with time off provided 'in lieu'.

Salary: £35,000 - £40,000 dependent on skills and experience.

Benefits: Key benefits include:

- 30 days annual holiday plus UK Public Holidays.
- Pension scheme.
- Learning and development opportunities.

- Remote and flexible working.
- A supportive, friendly and forward-thinking work environment.

Starting date: January 2024 subject to negotiation.

Key Functions: The key functions of the role are:

- Initiate and lead the outreach work to attract children of naval families to participate in the RNSA Youth Sailing Project to deliver free RYA start sailing courses.
- Develop a strategy and identify suitable and effective ways to make the project a success.
- Manage the annual budget allocated to the project.
- Market the RNSA 'offer' to the naval community.
- Work collaboratively and effectively with RNSA staff, partners and stakeholders.
- Provide an informed point of contact for naval families and their young people.
- Assist families to engage with the sailing and help develop follow on pathways.
- Develop information and guidance material to support applicants' understanding of the RNSA and RYA.
- Develop relationships and partnerships as required to meet the RNSA charitable Object.

Key Responsibilities

In meeting these roles, the post holder's key responsibilities will be to:

- Draft the RNSA outreach plan and associated strategies.
- Identify extent and location of demand. Understand potential to scale up.
- Create marketing information and a network to reach out to families.
- Engage with families, beneficiaries, volunteers and stakeholders to promote and subsequently manage the various programmes.
- Work with Youth Sailing Coordinator, RYA and Andrew Simpson Foundation and other partners to optimise delivery including the successful management of throughput.
- Administer the allocated budget.
- Produce appropriate support material.
- Help applicants to understand and engage with RNSA and the opportunities available.
- Be an ambassador for RNSA and more broadly sport in the RN.
- Disseminate advice and guidance to applicants to the Programme as appropriate.
- Enable collaboration between applicants, key stakeholders and other providers.
- Identify early trends and best practice in programme delivery in order to help develop protocols that will enable greater impact.
- Organise meetings and workshops where these would be helpful.
- Work with stakeholders to keep all parties abreast of progress, including the tracking of relevant KPIs.

Skills required

About you

The successful candidate will be able to work independently, be experienced at developing and managing relationships, understand the challenges facing Service families and enjoy a passion for encouraging sport. We know the skills we need for this role, and we are open minded about where you might have acquired or demonstrated these. Let us know in your supporting statement why you believe you would excel.

We are looking for candidates who are:

- Experienced in working as part of a small, busy and passionate team.
- Able to organise and prioritise a busy workload whilst working closely with stakeholders in a highly collaborative way.

- Excellent communicators with the skills and ability to build relationships and collaborate with multiple stakeholders, including families, volunteers, commercial providers and other RNSA staff.
- Digitally literate. As a significant element of the work will require remote and independent working you will need to be comfortable with the tools essential to remote working such as shared files, video meetings etc.
- Understanding of how a charity like ours supports its community.
- Financial management skills to a level able to oversee the day-to-day running of a significant budget.
- Able to confidently and skilfully communicate and market the various sailing offers to the naval community.

Essential:

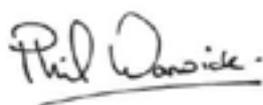
- Experience of managing an outreach programme.
- Understanding of Service families and supporting communities.
- A sense of humour, good inter-personal and communication skills.
- Strong work ethic with service orientated approach.
- Ability to work within a small team.
- Advanced knowledge of Microsoft software.
- Awareness of the Armed Forces and specifically the Royal Navy.
- Ability to use key forms of media, including social media, to communicate and underpin effective outreach activity to support the Association's outputs.
- Experience of budget management.

Desirable:

- Knowledge of sailing.
- Knowledge of other Naval charities.
- Experience of working with Xero.
- Experience of working in the charity sector.

Applications / Interviews

Applications with a CV and covering letter should be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer (ceo@rnsa.org.uk) by 18 December 2023. Interviews for those invited will be held week commencing 15 January 2024. We look forward to hearing from you.



Philip Warwick
Chief Executive Officer
Royal Naval Sailing Association

Tel: 02392 521100
www.rnsa.org.uk

