

# SEMAPHORE CIRCULAR



## ONE OUT – AND ONE BACK

Portsmouth bid farewell to one of the Royal Navy's two aircraft carrier last month – and days later welcomed the other back to her home port.

HMS Prince of Wales left Portsmouth on 24 April to begin preparations for her next task, when the Carrier Strike Group will deploy to the High North and North Atlantic later this year, including serials under the NATO Arctic Sentry mission. The 65,000-tonne carrier had been in her home port since November, when she completed the eight-month Operation Highmast deployment to the Indo-Pacific region. No sooner had POW left than sister ship HMS Queen

Elizabeth sailed into Portsmouth straight from a period of maintenance in Scotland – she is pictured above courtesy RNA photographer S/M Nigel Huxtable..

The carrier had been in the hands of Babcock International at Rosyth, where, inter alia, core systems such as stabilisation and propulsion were inspected and upgraded, while other essential repairs and renewals were also carried out.

The planned maintenance period is required under maritime safety regulations.

Having been in the Scottish yard for some eight months, Queen Elizabeth returned to the South Coast on 27 April.

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**Semaphore Shorts and Semaphore Circular:** The monthly Semaphore Circular appears on the first Friday of each month, notes for branch officers on the second Friday and Semaphore Shorts on the remaining Fridays of each month. On occasions the publication date might be delayed for operational reasons or editions switched – if so we will endeavour to tell you in advance by email and/or through our social media channels.

**The next Semaphore Circular will be published on Friday 5 June, and the deadline for material is 1000 on Wednesday 3 June. Branch Notes will next be published on Friday 8 May, Semaphore Shorts on Friday 15 and 29 May, with a members’ email on 22 May.**

# TRIBUTES PAID TO VICTIMS OF WARTIME LOSSES IN THE HUMBER

Parallel ceremonies have been held to honour those who died in two ships lost to a mine explosion in the Humber Estuary during World War 2.

On 11 April 1941 the relatively-new Bridlington pleasure steamer MV Yorkshire Belle (right) was on patrol on the east coast of England.

She had been requisitioned by the Admiralty early in World War 2 and set to work as a patrol and boom-defence vessel.

Also taken up by the Admiralty was a veteran Grimsby trawler, Othello, which had seen service as an auxiliary in the Great War and was now asked to undertake similar duties in World War 2.

On that cold Friday afternoon in early April, a mine explosion destroyed boat ships, causing the vessels to sink rapidly.

A total of 21 men died in the explosion – 12 from Othello and nine from Yorkshire Belle – though only four bodies were ever recovered; three now lie in a Grimsby cemetery, while the fourth came ashore in Norfolk and was buried locally.

This year sees the launch of the book **Mined in the Humber**

which author and historian Richard M Jones (pictured far right) has

spent the past few years researching. It tells the story of the two vessels, the people on board and the events surrounding the loss that day.

The front cover (pictured) is an exclusive painting of what the disaster would have looked like, done by artist Colin M Baxter from Hampshire.

The launch took place at Bridlington Central Library on Kings Street at midday on 11 April, with Richard giving a talk on the subject and signing books; a model of the Yorkshire Belle was also there to be studied.

Later that afternoon, at 2.15pm, memorial ceremonies took place at



the Bridlington memorial garden at the Yorkshire Belle plaque, and also at Grimsby docks at the

Royal Navy Patrol Memorial at the Othello memorial. The two ceremonies were conducted at the exact same time to commemorate the time of the sinking at 2.30pm.

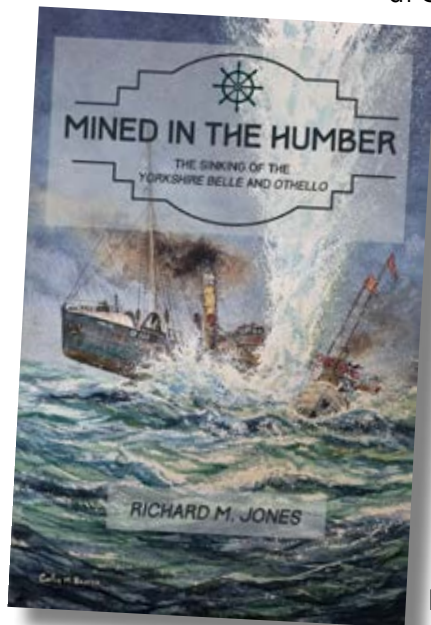
The loss of these two small but significant seagoing units was a bitter blow for the Patrol Service as well as for the families of the 21 who died that day.

Richard is very pleased to report that during his research a number of relatives did get it touch, and not only

were they able to tell their story for the book but some of them also indicated they planned to attend the memorial ceremonies.

In the event, relatives of CPO Stoker Ernest Edworthy and A/PO Ernest Johnson attended the ceremony in Bridlington, while the family of Asst CK Donald Blair were represented at the Grimsby event.

The RNA was represented at the Bridlington ceremony, alongside other veterans groups, Sea Cadets, the RNLI and members of the crew of the current Yorkshire Belle, built in



1947 to replace her lost namesake and still operating out of the East Riding seaside town to this day.



# CONTACTS



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**Find Semaphore Circular online at**

**[www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/news](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/news)**

or navigate to

RNA Website / About / News / Semaphore Circular

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# FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear Shipmates,

Well, after over seven rewarding years as your General Secretary, it's time to move on, and I have submitted my notice to the National President.

I am not alone in moving from Central Office, and I extend my huge thanks and best wishes to Sarah Bewley, who has headed off to SSAFA, and to our Association Membership Secretary Sara Field, who will move to RNRMC after Conference.

Both are extremely professional operators who will be hard acts to follow, and I am sad to lose them. However, I take solace in that they are advancing their careers in the Service charity sector. I wish you both every success in the future. We still have a strong core team in Central Office who will take forward the ethos of our organisation when our successors have been appointed.

Since taking up the post of General Secretary in December 2018, it has been an immense privilege to work alongside our dedicated members, volunteers, and partners in supporting the Association's enduring mission: to foster camaraderie, provide welfare support, and honour the proud traditions of the Royal Navy.

Together, we have navigated a period of significant challenge and development, while remaining resolute in our commitment to support our membership.

I am particularly thankful to the current team here in Central Office – Kate, Sara, Kathryn, Jon, Malcolm, Mike, Milly and Sarah (and from the RNRMC team in close support, including Alice's Comms team and Katie's finance team) who have guided and supported me, without whom we would not have achieved the successes we have achieved. Also, the contribution from those who have gone previously. I am deeply grateful for their backing, professionalism, and friendship over the years. It has been an honour to serve alongside such remarkable individuals.

One of the most encouraging outcomes during this time has been the significant increase in membership numbers – we recruited our 25,000th member last quarter. This growth has not been the result of any single initiative, but rather a combination of thoughtful changes and sustained effort at every level of the Association. In particular, the decision to remove annual subscriptions helped to reduce barriers to joining and rejoining, reinforcing the principle that comradeship should be accessible to all. The reintroduction of Sports and Comradeship Groups also broadened the ways in which people could engage with the RNA, making it more relevant to a wider and more diverse Naval community. Above all, this growth reflects the continued energy and commitment of branches and members, whose personal advocacy remains the strongest driver of recruitment.

A key priority throughout my tenure has been to broaden our reach and relevance to today's veteran and serving community. We have expanded our digital presence, introduced new communication platforms, and improved



engagement with members both at home and overseas.

These efforts proved especially critical during the Covid 19 pandemic, when maintaining connection and providing welfare support were more important than ever. Thanks to the extraordinary dedication of our branches and volunteers, the RNA continued to be a lifeline for many during that difficult period.

Formed on the back of a long and hard war, that founding generation of our Association has all but gone, and my period of stewardship has been dominated by trying to evolve the Association to be better suited to cater for the current generation of serving and former serving members.

Although a lot has been achieved with improving our Branch governance – thank you, Kate Aldous – the work that our DNP, Mark Slawson, has been leading on, to update our higher-level governance, is the next stage and is key in allowing the Association to further flourish. Setting the conditions for success has been important and I would commend to you the proposed changes in our structure.

We have also strengthened our partnerships across the Naval and military charity sectors, ensuring better coordination of support for those in need. By working closely with fellow organisations, we have amplified our collective impact and helped to ensure that fewer of our Naval family are left behind. The support we have had from RNRMC especially has been immense.

Another highlight has been the continued promotion of our heritage and public presence. From commemorative events and outreach to younger generations, to representing the Association at national ceremonies, we have reinforced the visibility and relevance of the RNA in modern society while honouring its proud history. Most importantly, we have sustained and grown the spirit of camaraderie that lies at the heart of the Association. Whether through branch activities, national events, or welfare support, the sense of belonging that the RNA offers remains powerful.

None of this would have been possible without the unwavering commitment of our people.

As I prepare to step down, I do so with great confidence in the future of the Association. Indeed, the opportunities thrown up by a recent study commissioned by Greenwich Hospital place the organisation in a strong position within the ecosystem of Naval charities. With this dedicated team ready to carry forward its vital work, I look forward to seeing it continue to thrive and evolve in the years ahead and I wish you all well.

Thank you for the trust you have placed in me. It has been a true privilege to serve the Royal Naval Association.

*Bill*

# ASSOCIATION BEGINS SEARCH FOR NEW GENERAL SECRETARY

The Royal Naval Association (RNA) is seeking an inspiring and experienced leader to take on the role of CEO/General Secretary, based at Portsmouth Naval Base.

The RNA is the UK's largest Naval association, supporting more than 25,000 serving and former Royal Navy personnel and the wider Naval family. We are a fully inclusive, rank-blind community built on camaraderie, service, and the ethos of "Once Navy, Always Navy."

This is a unique leadership opportunity to guide an historic organisation through an exciting period of development, strengthening collaboration across the Naval charity sector, leading organisational strategy, and ensuring long-term sustainability and impact. We are looking for a senior leader with a Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Fleet Auxiliary or Reserve background, strong strategic and operational leadership experience, and the ability to manage change, relationships, and governance in a complex environment.

Based at Lanyard Building, the RNA's Central Office, in Portsmouth Naval Base, the full-time role is for 37.5 hours per week.

The closing date for applications is 22 May 2026, and interviews are expected to be conducted in the week commencing 1 June 2026.

The RNA is a vibrant, fully inclusive, rank blind and free to join community for serving and former Royal Navy personnel and the wider Naval family. We keep the Naval ethos alive, share the camaraderie that binds us, and stand by each other whenever support is needed.

We live by the creed of **Once Navy, Always Navy.**

For a full job description and person spec see <https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/20260423-GS-advert-DLP-V.3-27-Apr-26.pdf>

Further details about the RNA are available at [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)

Applications with CV and covering letter explaining why you would be the right person for this role should be submitted by email to [ceo-ea@rnassoc.org](mailto:ceo-ea@rnassoc.org) by close of play 22 May 2026.

E-mails should be marked **PRIVATE – APPLICATION FOR GS.**

Applicants wishing to discuss further with the current CEO, Bill Oliphant, should e-mail to arrange an appointment through his EA, Milly Luxford, at [ceo-ea@rnassoc.org](mailto:ceo-ea@rnassoc.org)

## ...AND WE ARE ALSO LOOKING FOR A NEW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY...

We are also recruiting a new Association Membership Secretary.

The Royal Naval Association is seeking an experienced and organised administrator to join the team at our Central Office in Portsmouth Naval Base.

This role is central to supporting our 25,000-plus members across the UK and overseas, leading on membership administration while helping to manage the day-to-day running of the office.

### Key details:

- Based in Portsmouth (with occasional UK travel and overnight stays which may be necessary to support events around the UK)
- 30 working days annual leave plus Public/Bank Holidays
- 37.5 hours per week

You'll be responsible for membership services, office operations, governance support, and contributing to national events and activities across the Association.

We're looking for someone with strong

organisational and communication skills, who demonstrates an attention to detail, and the ability to manage a varied workload in a busy environment. You should have the ability to take the initiative, be creative, and have strong IT skills.

It is also essential that you should have a pride in and respect for the Royal Navy and an appreciation of its traditions, characteristics and workings.

For more information and a full job description please follow [this link](#).

Interested candidates who meet the requirements are invited to email their applications.

Applications must include:

- A Supporting Statement explaining how your skills and experience fit the role.
- A CV (no more than two sides of A4 paper) specifying your qualifications, education and relevant work experience.

Applications must be received by the closing date, which is close of business on 15 May 2026. Please email your application to [ceo-ea@rnassoc.org](mailto:ceo-ea@rnassoc.org)



# ANZAC FORCES HONOURED

Serving sailors, veterans and international partners gathered on and alongside wartime monitor HMS M33 in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard to honour those who served under the banner of ANZAC forces.

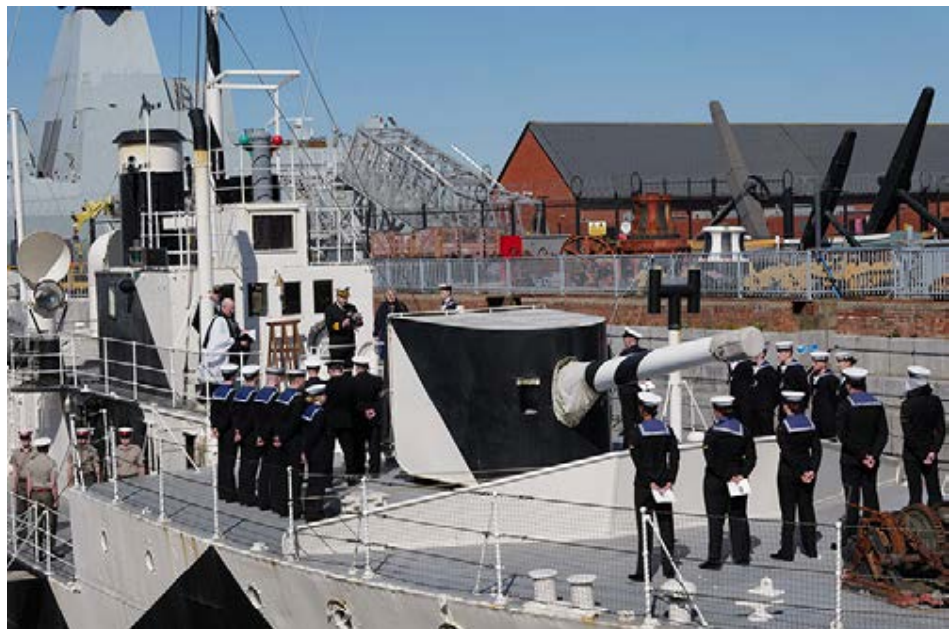
Anzac Day, observed on 25 April each year, is a national day of remembrance for Australia, New Zealand and Tonga that broadly commemorates all Aussies and Kiwis who served and died in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. It originates in a bid to honour the members of the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) who fought in the Gallipoli Campaign of World War 1 – a campaign in which the two countries saw their Servicemen make a significant mark on the world stage for the first time.

On 25 April 1915 thousands of troops from Down Under landed on the cramped beaches of Gallipoli; many would never return. Over the following months of grim, attritional warfare that followed, more than 8,700 Australians and 2,700 New Zealanders lost their lives alongside some 50,000 of their Allies – including Royal Navy sailors – while the Ottoman army is thought to have lost

almost 90,000 soldiers.

Gallipoli was an attempt to knock the Ottoman Empire out of the war, but it proved a dismal failure; the campaign ended in January 1916 when Allied troops withdrew, and the perceived Ottoman victory led directly to the formation

**Continued on page 8**



of the Turkish nation within a decade. Despite the failure of the strategy, there can be no doubting the courage of those who fought there, and their sacrifice and endurance is still honoured more than a century later.

Among the voices that carried across the Dockyard were those of young naval ratings from New Zealand who performed a Naval Haka, a traditional Maori ceremonial dance.

Also there were members of the Royal Naval Association with standards.

The ceremony was carried out on M33, a survivor of Gallipoli and considered a lucky ship – in all her time in theatre, from August 1915 to January 1916, she did not suffer a single casualty or even damage from enemy fire.

The 580-ton ship also saw service in the Russian Civil War immediately after the Great War armistice, and has now been preserved by the National Museum of the Royal Navy.



Anzac Day was also marked in the town of Chepstow, home of AB William Williams, who won the Victoria Cross on 25 April 1915 for an act of incredible bravery at the Gallipoli landings.

Chepstow Branch formally closed in 2023, but the remaining shipmates, with the help of the Royal British Legion, continue to hold a service in memory of AB William's gallantry at the town's Memorial Gun.

S/M Ashok Jethwa belongs to the Chepstow Male Voice Choir, and managed to enlist their support for the occasion. The service is also supported by Chepstow Town Council. See next month for the full, remarkable story of how AB Williams won his VC.



# A SOUND INVESTMENT

A fascinating new book, sold in support of the Royal Naval Association, explores the Royal Navy's unique system of 'pipes' – the traditional broadcasts that underpin daily life at sea in the Senior Service.

Published on 6 May, **D'you Hear There** offers the public a rare glimpse into the unofficial language that keeps ships running smoothly.

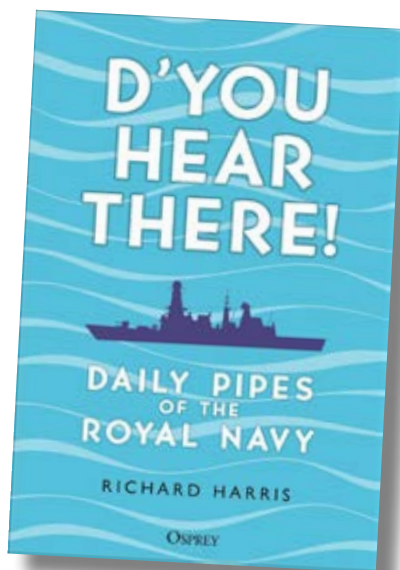
Written by Naval author and former Royal Navy officer Richard Harris, the book decodes the spoken signals used on board warships and submarines, from routine announcements to ceremonial calls.

Each pipe is provided with a brief description of its meaning followed by longer observation of what it meant to different members of the ship's company.

In the times of Nelson's Navy the bosun's call or a bugle were used to pass on information to the ship's company – a simple series of codes for important ship evolutions or orders from the command team.

Nowadays the ship's broadcast system issues verbal (and some original historic) pipes to shape the rhythm, discipline and humour of life at sea.

Beyond its historical and cultural insight, the book is also helping to raise awareness and support for the RNA.



Richard Harris, author of the book, said: "Pipes are more than just announcements — they are part of the heartbeat of a ship.

"They carry authority, routine and sometimes humour, but always connection.

"It has been a privilege to explore these traditions and to support the Royal Naval Association, which does outstanding work for the Naval family long after life at sea has ended."

Capt Bill Oliphant, General Secretary of the RNA, said:

"The language of 'pipes' is part of the living heritage

of the Royal Navy – it reflects the humour, discipline and shared experience of life at sea. "We are delighted to see this tradition being brought to life for a wider audience.

"Support generated through this work will directly help the Royal Naval Association continue its vital mission of standing alongside veterans and their families whenever they need us most."

The book is dedicated to Cdr Amy Gilmore, a popular Royal Navy aviator who passed away from cancer in July 2025.

Follow this link to preorder on Amazon: **D'you Hear There!: Daily Pipes of the Royal Navy (Audio Download): Commodore Richard Harris, David Rintoul, Osprey Publishing: Amazon.co.uk: Books**

## DO YOU HAVE A TOP OPPO? LET US KNOW!

Do you know anyone who has gone above and beyond in their efforts to make other people's lives better within our community?

The National President's Awards are designed to recognise people who do something awesome or who are an inspiration in any way. Usually the Branch will spot those people and nominate them, but we are aware that not everyone likes to blow their own trumpet so we have devised a way for anyone in our network to nominate their Top Oppo – or you can nominate yourself if you are working independently or on the Lanyard Roll.

The awards are celebrated at the National Conference and the deadline for this year is the 11 May.

Please do consider sending in your nominations, there are only a few awards given every year, but it is great to be able to hear the outstanding jobs people are doing across our organisation and be able to recognise this in some way. If you have any questions, please email [ceo-ea@rnassoc.org](mailto:ceo-ea@rnassoc.org)

You can find the nomination form [here](#).

## BURSLEM MEMORIAL PLEA

The Burslem Remembers Partnership needs support in a bid to create a memorial honouring the men and women of Burslem who lost their lives in the World Wars and subsequent conflicts. Burslem never produced an official list of its fallen, and local historians John Bourne and Mick Rowson have compiled a verified list of more than 1,505 individuals from Burslem who gave their lives in these conflicts, which can now be brought together on one memorial. Donations, of any size, can be made through their dedicated GoFundMe page: <https://gofund.me/3abda7c1a>

## HELP PRESERVE OUR NAVAL MEMORIAL

The RNA has an appeal to raise £75,000 to preserve the stunning Naval Service Memorial (NSM) at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas.

The NSM was unveiled 12 years ago, and stands as a powerful tribute to the service and sacrifice of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, and associated Services.

It now requires essential repair work and long-term maintenance planning to ensure its continued preservation.

One of the Memorial's glass panes has developed water ingress at its upper edge. To prevent further deterioration, and to protect the structure as a whole, remedial work is required to repair the pane and to install protective seals across all panes.

These seals were not available when the Memorial was constructed in 2014.

Alongside this work, appropriate arrangements for the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the Memorial are essential to ensure it remains in a fitting condition.

RNA National Chairman Andy Christie said: "The Naval Service Memorial is

more than stone and glass – it is a place of reflection, remembrance, and pride for all who have served, and for their families.

"We have a responsibility to ensure it remains in the condition it deserves. This is about protecting our shared Naval heritage and ensuring future generations can stand here and remember those who served before them."

We strongly encourage all those with an interest in Naval history, service, and remembrance to visit the National Memorial Arboretum near Burton-on-Trent, to see the Memorial for themselves.

The RNA is calling on the wider Naval family and the public to support this vital appeal.

Any contribution, large or small, will help ensure the Naval Service Memorial remains a fitting and dignified place of remembrance for all future visitors.

All donations are gratefully received – follow this link: [Naval Service Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum - JustGiving](#)

# FREE PTSD WEBINAR SERIES TO MARK AWARENESS DAY

To mark PTSD Awareness Day – 27 June – Combat Stress, the UK's leading charity for

veterans' mental health, is hosting a week-long series of free online webinars designed to increase understanding of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), reduce stigma, and encourage those affected to seek support. Running from 22–26 June, the sessions will bring together clinical experts, leading researchers and veterans with lived experience to shine a spotlight on PTSD from all angles.

Across the week, attendees can expect discussions on what recovery looks like, the difference between PTSD and complex PTSD, practical coping strategies, the evolving role of data in treatment, and how organisations can better support those living with trauma. The webinars are open to veterans, families, professionals and members of the public, and registration is now open – if you would like to be involved, use [this link](#).

PTSD can profoundly affect how someone thinks, feels and reacts, and without the right support, it can sabotage every aspect of daily life.

With thousands of former Service personnel turning to the charity for help, every year, and many more still struggling in silence, Combat Stress is calling for greater awareness and understanding of the condition and the devastating impact it continues to have on

## COMBATSTRESS

former Service personnel and their families. Dr Lee Robinson, Acting Clinical Director

at Combat Stress, said: "Ahead of PTSD Awareness Day, we want veterans and their families to know they are not alone, and that recovery is absolutely possible with the right help.

"We also want to encourage the wider public to better understand PTSD and the long-lasting impact it can have.

"There is still a great deal of stigma and misunderstanding around PTSD, so these webinars are an ideal way to explain the condition, the treatment and support available, and how best to support those affected."

Combat Stress provides specialist clinical treatment and support for veterans from the British Armed Forces, focusing on those with PTSD, Complex-PTSD, and moral injury resulting from their experiences during military service.

The charity said that more than 17,000 contacts were made to their helpline in a year, including phone calls, emails and text messages.

The age range of the veterans helped stretched from 20 years old to 92, and Combat Stress has supported veterans from almost 20 different conflicts.

For more information on Combat Stress, see their website – use [this link](#).

## OARDACIOUS VALKYRIES AT WRNS BT EVENT

The 2026 WRNS BT Annual Presentation will be held on Wednesday, 22 July at HMS Eaglet, 80 Sefton St, Liverpool L3 4DZ.

Guest Speakers will be the HMS Oardacious Valkyries, the first all-female Royal Navy crew to row unsupported across the Atlantic, finishing in early 2025.

All serving members of the Royal Navy who joined before November 1993 and all former members of the Women's Royal Naval Service are cordially invited to attend.

Because of security and limited spaces, please follow [this link](#) to apply to attend before 5 June 2026. Please note that the closing date may change if all places are filled earlier.

**Important:** Submitting your details does not guarantee a place. You must wait for a confirmation email. If you cannot use the link, or if you have any questions about the event, please email [theteam@rnrmc.org.uk](mailto:theteam@rnrmc.org.uk) or call 023 9387 1520 and select option 6.

## YOUR CHANCE TO SHOW YOUR TRUE COLOURS

The RNA Standard Bearers Competition takes place at HMS Collingwood this month – and it could prove to be the first step on a new path for some shipmates.

While the event will see experienced standard bearers competing for top honours, it could be the start of something big for shipmates who are considering learning the skills required, as there will be valuable training opportunities for all, whether you take part in the competition or not.

The Fareham training establishment will host the contest on Friday 8 and Saturday 9 May, with the Friday being set aside for training.

That will take place during the First Dog Watch – 1600-1800 – when experienced standard bearers and parade marshals will be on hand to offer advice and coaching to participants whatever their experience, whether they are competing the following day or not. All interested shipmates are encouraged to attend this stress-free training to take up or hone their skills and confidence.

The stress levels rise the following day when the competitors take centre stage.

Participants will muster at 0900 in the WO & SRs Mess

to draw lots for order of parade, and will then march to the Drill Shed at 1000 for inspections.

On completion, the standard bearers will march back to the Mess and then, as required, individual competitors will be marched back to the Drill Shed for their turn to perform.

On completion, all will remain in the Mess of results, prize-giving and refreshments.

Please note, under current rules, it is unlikely that there will be Service accommodation available at any MOD establishment. However, information on accommodation available locally will be promulgated closer to the event.

All personnel wishing to participate should contact both the National Ceremonial Adviser, S/M Mike Smyth, at [nca@rnassoc.org](mailto:nca@rnassoc.org) and Sara Field at Central Office on [ams@rnassoc.org](mailto:ams@rnassoc.org)

Please indicate whether you are attending the training, taking part in the competition or both.

In addition, competitors should advise if they are a 'Novice' – competing for the first time.

Also please provide the name of anyone accompanying as a spectator.



A CENTURY OF CITY PRIDE

## FREE TRANSPORT IS CONFIRMED

Transport officials in Salford have confirmed special arrangements for RNA members attending Conference Weekend. Salford City Council, City Mayor Paul Dennett and the Mayoral team have been working incredibly hard behind the scenes, and they are delighted to announce that Transport for Greater Manchester, the Bee Network, has confirmed **FREE** travel for RNA members.

From Friday 12 June to Sunday 14 June, simply show your RNA ID card and enjoy free travel across both Bee Network buses and trams.

This is a huge boost for our veterans, shipmates, and guests, making it easier than ever to get to travel between venues. A massive thank you to Salford City Council, City Mayor Paul Dennett, Mayoral staff, Transport for Greater Manchester and the Bee Network team

Their support ensures our community feels welcomed, valued, and able to move around the city with ease during this important centenary year for Salford.

## SALFORD QUAYS – HERE BE DRAGONS...

Organisers of the annual RNA National Conference are always up for the challenge of adding their own particular imprint on the event.

And the Organising Committee for next month's extravaganza in Greater Manchester have pulled a rabbit out of the hat – dragon boat racing, anybody?

The dates of the RNA's main business meeting and social gathering at Salford Quays just happens to coincide with the UK Chinese Dragon Boat Festival this year, so once the main business of the day is done on Saturday 13 June, and the ceremonial drumhead service on Sunday 14, there will be an opportunity for delegates, observers and their companions to join up to 20,000 competitors and spectators as they battle it out on the waters of the Quays near MediaCityUK.

The Festival has been a fast growing event including amateur team dragon boat racing, a diversity of culture show and presentations, and the showcasing of authentic food, since it was first established 14 years ago.

Up 50 amateur teams of forward-facing paddlers – ten to a boat – will compete for the honours, driven on by a drummer who keeps the beat to ensure the paddlers are synchronised, while a steersman controls the direction of the boat using a sweep oar attached to the stern.

The festival is just one aspect of a Conference weekend which promises to be full of interest to those shipmates travelling to the North-West.

Two of the main features of Conference weekend – the Annual

General Meeting and the Gala Dinner, both on Saturday are being held in iconic buildings on the Quays.

The AGM is in the Lowry, a multi-purpose arts centre which is home to an impressive collection of works by the artist LS Lowry, after whom the centre is named.

Lowry was famous for his paintings of urban landscapes, often featuring scenes of mill workers and other citizens of Salford and Manchester, usually described as 'matchstick men'.

On Saturday evening the focus switches to the Imperial War Museum North, on the banks of the Manchester Ship Canal (pictured above).

The museum, with its striking, jagged profile reflecting the fracturing effect of war on humanity, includes exhibits exploring the Royal Navy's pivotal role in both World Wars, including the Battle of the Atlantic between 1939 and 1945. The Greater Manchester area and Merseyside had a crucial part to play in this struggle, with many merchant ships arriving at the docks complex with essential cargoes while warship repairs were also carried out.

Full details of the programme for the weekend will be available nearer the time.

Please note that branches can still register delegates to represent their shipmate at the AGM – details must arrive at RNA Central Office not less than one week before the date of the Conference.

For more details, see the application document towards the end of this Circular – use **this link**.

# FANTASTIC NEWS!

## ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION NATIONAL CONFERENCE WEEKEND - CITY OF SALFORD

### FREE TRAVEL FOR RNA MEMBERS

Friday 12th June – Sunday 14th June

Simply show your **Royal Naval Association ID card** and enjoy:

- ✓ Free travel on Bee Network buses
- ✓ Free travel on Metrolink trams



📍 Travel with ease across Greater Manchester  
Including:

- MediaCityUK
- Salford Quays
- Conference venues & events

👏 **With thanks to:**

- Salford City Council
- Paul Dennett, City Mayor
- The Mayoral Team
- Transport for Greater Manchester



**ROYAL NAVAL  
ASSOCIATION**



**Salford City Council**

Supporting our veterans, families & Guest  
during Salford's centenary year

🐝 **Proud City. Proud Service. Proud Weekend Ahead.**



**ROYAL NAVAL  
ASSOCIATION**



**HOW TO BOOK:**  
**01603 886 742**  
**sales@justforgroups.com**  
**www.justforgroups.com**

# **RNA CONFERENCE 2026 SALFORD QUAYS**

## **Friday 12th – Sunday 14th June 2026**



**Gala Dinner  
only  
£55pp**



City of Salford Branch RNA are delighted to be hosting the 2026 RNA Conference at Salford Quays.

A three-course gala dinner with drink reception, and table drinks will be held on Saturday at the impressive Imperial War Museum. just for groups! have also secured some bedrooms at the Copthorne Hotel Manchester Salford Quays. Please contact the just for groups! team on 01603 886 742 to book the gala dinner at a cost of £55pp, and/or bed & breakfast accommodation.

Alternatively, book directly via the website:

[www.justforgroups.com](http://www.justforgroups.com)

Group code:  
RNASAL2601



### **Copthorne Hotel Manchester Salford Quays**

The Copthorne Hotel is located in Salford Quays within walking distance of Media City. The hotel hosts 166 en-suite bedrooms, all fully equipped with complimentary WiFi, mini fridge, tea/coffee making facilities and a TV.

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**2 nights**  
**£119 per person sharing**  
**£209 per person sole occupancy**

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**3 nights**  
**£169 per person sharing**  
**£294 per person sole occupancy**



# CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO FUND COASTAL FORCES MONUMENT

The Royal Navy community is being urged to come together next weekend to help fund a major new monument honouring some of World War 2's most daring – and least recognised – Naval personnel.

The Coastal Forces Heritage Trust is launching a four-day online crowdfunding campaign from 8–11 May, aiming to raise £100,000 to complete a monument to the Coastal Forces and Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR).

The monument, by celebrated sculptor Amy Goodman, is already under construction and will be installed in the Portsmouth Historic Quarter, just inside Victory Gate, as modelled above right. It will feature two bronze figures on the bow of a motor gun boat; one of them is Lt Cdr Robert 'Hitch' Hichens DSO\* DSC\*\* RNVR, the most decorated Coastal Forces officer of World War 2, known for his extraordinary courage and leadership in dangerous night-time operations.

Alongside him, the figures draw on real wartime stories: the signaller is based on LS Seymour Pike DSM, a young sailor who played a crucial role in the daring St Nazaire Raid, while the WRNS figure is modelled on Eve Branson, a wartime Signaller, representing the thousands of women who served, often working under intense pressure to support operations at sea.

Together, the figures are intended to capture not just individual bravery, but the teamwork, skill and determination that defined Coastal Forces operations. Coastal Forces crews carried out some of the most dangerous missions of the war, often at night in small, fast boats, engaging enemy vessels, inserting agents, rescuing downed airmen and disrupting supply lines.

Many were volunteers, and most were very young.

Despite their bravery, their story remains relatively little known.

The online campaign will run 8–11 May on the Charity Extra platform, with donations from the public matched pound-for-pound by supporting organisations.

The matching stops once the £100,000 target is reached.

Supporters are being encouraged to give whatever they can, with organisers stressing that small donations, if enough people take part, will make a huge difference.

A network of volunteer 'Champions' will also play a key role, including the



current Coastal Forces Squadron – each reaching out to their own friends, families and colleagues to build momentum during the four-day appeal. The monument is due to be unveiled in May 2027 and will be the first of its kind to include a female WRNS figure, recognising the key role played by women in Naval operations. Organisers say the project is already well advanced, with most of the funding secured, but this final push is crucial to bring it to completion.

To sign up to receive a link to the campaign when it goes live click here: <https://forms.gle/tHi6McQG2yH67QPL6>.

For more information visit: <https://coastal-forces.org.uk> or follow the Friends of Coastal Forces Facebook page – follow [this link](#).



## GANGES BOYS GATHER FOR ANNIVERSARY

The Ganges Association/Museum are holding an event at the beginning of June in Suffolk to mark 50 years since the closure of the stone frigate near Ipswich.

Yes – it's half a century since the Royal Navy's legendary boys' training establishment at Shotley Gate closed its gates for good.

For more than seven decades, the establishment provided the Royal Navy with boy sailors, except during World War 2, when it was used to train Hostilities Only (HO) ratings.

Ganges closed at the end of October 1976 having trained an estimated 160,000 boys. With the raising of the school leaving age, the Navy stopped training boys, and all basic training for ratings was concentrated at HMS Raleigh in Torpoint.

Five decades on, distinctive elements of the establishment remain – perhaps the most obvious being the 143ft main mast, famous

for mast-manning ceremonies when youngsters would climb the rigging to the beat of a musical accompaniment.

Some of the buildings and the gate are also still in recognisable form. The memory of Ganges is kept alive through its namesake association and museum, and the latter is hosting a reunion on Friday June 5 to mark the 50th anniversary of the closure.

Upwards of 300 former Ganges boys, who joined aged 15 and completed their training at the site before undertaking careers in the Senior Service, are expected to gather at the museum in Shotley Marina to swing the lamp, and to remember former shipmates who have crossed the bar with a service on the foreshore.

The event is a private, pre-paid ticket affair, which will include a buffet lunch. Numbers are limited to 300. Details are available at: <https://hmsgangesmuseum.com/>

# LAUNCHPAD TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

Greenwich Hospital has committed £540,000 over the next three years to Launchpad Homeless Veterans Charity, in support of former Royal Navy personnel.

This grant will provide accommodation and tailored wraparound support for up to 36 homeless Royal Navy, Royal Marines, and RFA veterans with complex needs, providing training and/or employment, wellbeing activities, support and independent living services throughout the partnership. By addressing both housing and wider support needs, Launchpad ensures that veterans are equipped for long-term independence and a sustainable future.

Since its establishment in 2013, Launchpad has assisted more than 850 homeless veterans, providing critical, person-

centred support to former personnel, at crucial times during their lives.

The charity supports veterans from across the UK, through its properties based in Durham, Newcastle, and Liverpool, helping them rebuild their lives and regain independence. Deirdre Mills, Director of Greenwich Hospital, said: "Every veteran deserves a safe place to call home. Launchpad's dedicated team provides more than just housing, offering practical employment and community-based support to help veterans rebuild their lives. We are proud to invest in their proven approach and help meet the increasing need for secure accommodation for homeless Royal Navy veterans." To learn more about the work of Launchpad, follow this link.

# PILOT SCHEME OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO GO LEARN THROUGH CHARITIES

Greenwich Hospital, in partnership with the Naval Children's Charity, has announced the launch of a new pilot tutoring initiative, designed to support children who have at least one parent, carer or legal guardian currently serving in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines or Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Delivered in collaboration with an independent tutoring provider, the programme will offer high-quality, non-means-tested, 1:1 online tutoring support to eligible children.

The selected partner in this pilot is MVA Tutors, an award-winning independent tutoring agency with a long-standing reputation for delivering personalised and adaptable tutoring tailored to each child's needs and abilities.

The 18-month pilot, which began in mid-April, will operate within the following framework:

■ Tutoring support will be available to students who fulfil the below criteria:

- Preparing for GCSEs/Scottish Nationals
- Preparing for A Levels/Scottish Highers
- Secondary school students with additional needs – general academic support

■ Tutoring will concentrate on the core GCSE and A Level (and Scottish equivalent) subjects: English (Language and Literature), Mathematics and Science.

■ Students studying for GCSEs and A Levels (and Scottish equivalent) will receive an eight-week programme, comprising weekly one-hour sessions for two subjects, with a maximum of 16 hours per student.

■ Students preparing for exams the following year – those currently in Year 10 and Year 12 (or Scottish equivalents) – may re-apply for the second academic year.

■ Specialist additional needs provision providing general academic support to secondary school-aged children. Formal diagnosis may be a criterion.

■ For students with additional needs and for those students who have recently transitioned between education systems, the offer may increase, depending on individual need.

■ Sessions to be provided online at times that suit the families and the children themselves.

■ The initial eligibility assessment

and triage will be undertaken by a dedicated newly-recruited caseworker, based within the Naval Children's Charity team. The eligible students will then be referred to MVA Tutors who will then directly liaise with families. This pilot embodies their shared commitment to support children of Royal Navy families to thrive and reach their full potential.

By providing structured, high-quality tutoring, they aim to give students the tools, confidence and stability they need in their educational journey.



**GO LEARN**

**FREE ONLINE TUTORING**

for serving Royal Navy families

Funded by  **GREENWICH HOSPITAL**

Managed by  **Naval Children's Charity**

Delivered by  **mva Tutors**

# ARE YOU GAME FOR SOME UCKERS?

The World Uckers Championships 2026 will be staged in Portsmouth this autumn – but are you prepared to throw your hat in the ring?

Hosted by the Royal Naval Association at the Royal Maritime Hotel in Queen Street, the event takes place on **Saturday 3 October**.

Registration will be open between 0900 and 1000.

So do you think you've got what it takes to be crowned Uckers Champion of the World?

Join us for a day of dice, drama, and full-on matelot mayhem.

Whether you're a seasoned pro or just fancy your chances, we want to hear from you!

And please bring your families – this is an event for everyone.

Register Your Interest

To help us plan, please email [ceo-ee@rnassoc.org](mailto:ceo-ee@rnassoc.org)

to register your interest. Include your name, contact details, and whether you're entering solo or with a

teammate. Spaces are limited – don't miss your shot at Uckers glory!

## SAILING ADVENTURE AWAITS

The Naval Children's Charity is looking for **FOUR** incredible 16–23 year olds to take part in a fully-funded adventure of a lifetime this summer.

You'll join the International Maritime Confederation (IMC) Sailing Camp in Venice from 21–31 July – ten days of international teamwork, sailing, challenge, and unforgettable experiences.

To take part, you must:

- Be from a Naval Family
- Be aged 16–23



- Be physically able to take part in sailing activities
- Have a valid passport and be able to travel to Italy
- (If under 18, a parent/guardian must

apply).

Interested? Fill out the form through the link below and throw your hat in the ring!

This is a rare opportunity – don't miss it.

<https://forms.office.com/e/Yv8fn89ftb?origin=lprLink>

## Saturday 16th May 2026

RBLS Club, Bathgate  
West Lothian



## Scottish Area

## ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

## Uckers

## Competition

From 10:00

Anyone can enter

Spectators welcome



Book your slot by emailing  
[kelliot250666@gmail.com](mailto:kelliot250666@gmail.com)

# ARMY vs NAVY – THE DETAILS

It's finally here – Army v Navy 2026! Army vs Navy Rugby Match at The two old rivals go head-to-head at the Allianz Stadium – Twickenham – tomorrow (2 May), and here are the final details for those of you travelling to cheer the teams in dark blue.

## Timings

- Ticket Office opens: 1000
- Gates open: 1100
- Bars open: 1100
- Ticket/Wristband Office closes: 1345
- Men's Game: 1400
- Women's Game: 1645
- Bars close: 1740

## Wristband Collection

Please collect your wristbands from the dedicated RNA window at the Ticket Office, located on the south-east corner of the stadium (see map). If your shipmates are arriving separately and need to collect their wristbands individually, please ensure they have:

- The name of the booker, and
- The block and seat numbers.

This will help avoid any last minute scrums at the window.

## Where You're Sitting

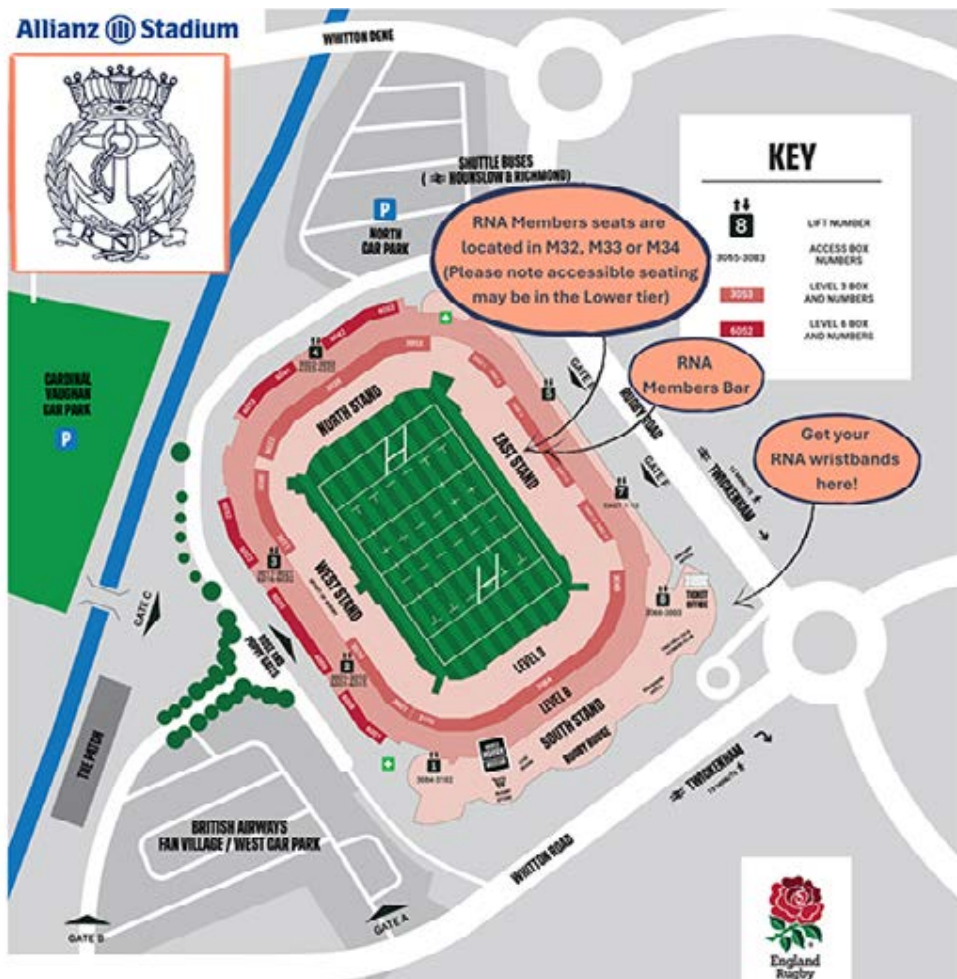
Your digital tickets (in your app) show block and seat numbers. The stadium is clearly signposted, so simply follow the signage to your seats. RNA members are seated in the East Stand, Middle Tier – blocks M32, M33 or M34. Please note: Accessible seating may be in the Lower Tier.

## RNA Members' Bar

Our private RNA Members' Bar is located on the Middle Tier of the East Stand.

We have an excellent selection of auction lots and raffle prizes available, including:

- A Weekend stay for two at the Union Jack Club, London
- A Chivalrous dress watch retailing for £495, donated by William Wood Watches
- A Park Holidays complimentary three or four-night off-peak break in Gold 2 bedroom accommodation which sleeps up to six people at any Park Leisure or Park Holidays UK Holiday Park.
- A Queen Elizabeth II Funeral framed print by Fraser Scarfe,



donated by Thales

- A brewery tour for two at Powder Monkey Brewery, Gosport
- A two-night stay for four plus Family Adventure Golf at China Fleet Club, Saltash
- A private charter on an F8 for up to 12 people at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard
- An RNA clothing bundle, kindly donated by Simple Print Wales

■ An overnight stay for two with dinner and breakfast at the Royal Maritime Hotel, Portsmouth

Get your tickets now from <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/rnas-army-vs-navy-prize-draw>

Please do set some time aside to visit the bar, purchase raffle tickets, and place a bid on any items that take your fancy – all proceeds go towards supporting the work of the RNA.

# DOUBLE SUCCESS AT VETERANS AWARDS

City of Edinburgh Branch (and the rest of the Association, of course) are celebrating today following a double success at last night's Scottish Veterans Awards.

Former RNA National Treasurer S/M Ian Irvin won the Gold Award in the Volunteer of the Year category, while branch shipmate Ewan Galloway, who was declared the winner of the Cadet Adult Instructor of the Year award. After his service in the Navy, Ian moved

into the business world as a chartered accountant, spending more than 30 years managing significant financial transactions worldwide, including India, Hong Kong, Australia and the USA. Ian devoted much care and attention to the role of RNA Treasurer, which he stepped away from last year after six years in the hot seat, and also managed to take up volunteering roles in a wide range of other organisations, including a school PTA and the RBL.

He also took on many tasks at Edinburgh Branch, starting off as Standard Bearer. S/M Ewan began his career with the Sea Cadets as a young lad, serving for six year, and he later became an Adult Volunteer.

He is now responsible for six units around the Scottish capital – a total of almost 250 cadets and 150 adult volunteers. BZ to you both – fantastic ambassadors for the RNA.



# RACE ACROSS THE UK



**START: DARTMOUTH FINISH: INVERNESS**

**TUESDAY 6TH - FRIDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2026**

**EVENT CAPACITY: 30 TEAMS OF 2**

**Navigate a secret route.  
Complete challenges.  
Race to checkpoints.**

Stay ahead of the competition -  
No shortcuts. No map apps. Just quick thinking,  
smart decisions and serious stamina.

**ENTRY FEE:**  
£300

**FUNDRAISING  
TARGET:**  
£1,500

\* per person

**SIGN UP NOW!  
SPACES ARE STRICTLY LIMITED.**



The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (no. 4047940) and is a registered charity (no. 113794) and Scotland (SC044149).

# WHY TAKE PART?

**PUSH YOUR LIMITS**

**SUPPORT YOUR NAVY FAMILY**

**CREATE STORIES YOU'LL TELL FOR YEARS**

Every mile you cover helps change lives.

Your fundraising directly supports serving personnel and veterans when they need it most – from recovery and rehabilitation to family support and transition to civilian life.

“Wow. Hands down the best charity event we've ever been involved in. A week of racing, making new friends, and huge generosity from friends and complete strangers. Anybody reading this, should be signing up, immediately.”

Team Sea Dust, 2025



# RNRMC HELPS BRING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Laughter, shared moments, and a simple Easter egg can go a long way... This spring, Royal Navy Family & People Support (RN FPS) brought families together through a nationwide programme of Easter egg hunts and community activities, made possible through a grant from Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Across the UK, from Portsmouth to Helensburgh, nearly 1,000 Easter eggs were shared with children and young people in Naval communities, alongside activities designed to bring people together at what can be a challenging time of year.

For many families, Easter is shaped by deployment, separation, or the ongoing pressures of Service life. These events offer something simple but meaningful – a chance to connect, meet others with shared experiences, and feel part of a supportive community.

With the support of the grant, RN FPS delivered inclusive events ranging from egg hunts and crafts to games and community gatherings, creating opportunities for families to build connections, strengthen networks, and access wider support.

Experiences from previous activities highlight just how important these moments can be.

Families came together across multiple

locations to enjoy Easter trails, creative sessions, and community events. Children played, explored, and celebrated, while parents connected with others facing similar challenges. Feedback consistently reflects the same message – these events are joyful, welcoming, and help families feel less alone.

Luke Barkes, SO3 BM Engagement & Comms from Royal Navy Family & People Support, said: "On behalf of Royal Navy Family & People Support, we would like to express our sincere thanks to Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity for the generous grant that funded our Easter eggs initiative this year.

"Your continued support enables us to bring joy to children across our Service communities nationwide and helping bring our communities together during particularly uncertain times this Easter.

"For families facing the challenges of deployments and the pressures of Service life, these small moments of kindness make a real difference, reminding them that they are valued and supported.

"We are deeply grateful for your continued commitment to our Naval families. Thank you for helping us make this Easter a little brighter for so many."

Luke Barkes, SO3 BM Engagement & Comms from Royal Navy Family & People Support, said: "Through funding initiatives like this, Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity are helping to strengthen connections across the Naval community, ensuring families feel supported, valued, and part of something bigger.

"Because sometimes, it's the smallest moments that make the biggest difference."

## CENTRAL OFFICE OPEN DAYS

Four dates have been set aside for shipmates to visit Portsmouth Naval Base to see what makes Central Office tick.

The Central Office Open days for 2026 are:

- Friday 29 May
- Friday 26 June
- Friday 17 July
- Friday 7 August

If you would like more details of what happens on Open Days, or to register your interest, please contact Sara Field on [ams@rnassoc.org](mailto:ams@rnassoc.org)

# ANY THOUGHTS ON 12 DITS OF CHRISTMAS?

Here's one to have a think about over the next few days. Our resident musician, Shipmate Dennis Potter is arranging a new RNA carol – The 12 Dits of Christmas. He needs our help with some of the lines, and is ideally looking for a line from each of our Areas...

Dennis said: "We want to convert the 12 days of Christmas song into the Twelve Dits of Christmas, representing the RNA and its 13 Areas.

The 13th Area, of course, will be Hogmanay, a slight slant on the original tune.

"Every line will be relative to a Naval expression or a memory please.

"When we get when we get to the five days of Christmas, Five gold rings will become Five Royal Marines!"

All contributions should be submitted as soon as possible – we might still be in spring but time is of the



essence.

If you are feeling creative and would like to contribute, send them by email to [comms@rnassoc.org](mailto:comms@rnassoc.org) with your lines.

Please make them fun and as clean(ish) as possible as the finished work will be for public consumption!

# Welsh Open Uckers Tournament



Welsh Open Uckers Tournament

To be held at HMS Swan, Builth Wells Rugby Club

6th June 2026 First Roll of the Dice 10:00

Buffet Available 12:00 to 16:00

Entertainment by

**Lower Deck Shanty Men**

19:00 onwards

**2000 Grand Draw**

**All this for only £5 per entrant**

**Please Register ASAP with [davebuckingham10@gmail.com](mailto:davebuckingham10@gmail.com)**



## TRIBUTE TO STANDARD BEARER

It was no surprise to see an impressive turnout of standards for the funeral in Kent of the Association's popular and highly-regarded National Standard Bearer S/M Steve Champion.

Steve represented the Association at several national events, including the procession along the streets next to the Cenotaph during the late Queen Elizabeth's funeral, and at the Coronation of King Charles III. Steve's personal drill and stature was exemplary, and of the highest standard, with Steve acting as a superb ambassador for the Royal Naval Association in the public eye.

*Pictures by RNA photographer S/M Nigel Huxtable*



## DAY OF CELEBRATION AT FORCES LGBT+ MEMORIAL

Save the date! Expressions of interest are now open for an LGBT+ Armed Forces Community Memorial Dedication Event on Saturday 20 June.

Following the successful dedication of the Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum last October (pictured right, UK MOD © Crown copyright 2025), Fighting With Pride (FWP) is delighted to announce this Community Dedication Event.

This special gathering is for the wider LGBT+ Armed Forces family – veterans, serving personnel, and importantly, friends and families who were unable to attend the official ceremony.

It will be a day of celebration, pride and community, with live music, a picnic atmosphere, a short ceremony at the memorial, contributions from veterans and serving personnel, representation from Service and veterans' charities.

FWP want this event to feel inclusive, joyful and affirming, giving everyone the chance to connect, reflect and celebrate the courage, service and dignity of the LGBT+ Armed Forces community.

Full details, including the confirmed timings and formal registration information, will be shared on the Fighting With Pride website and social media in the coming weeks.

At this stage they just need to ask for an expression of



interest so they can have a good idea of numbers for planning purposes.

In the form you will be able to indicate the total number of guests including yourself, and the family and friends you would like to bring to the event with you.

Be advised, they may need to ask for a nominal charge per head for each of your additional guests. This is to be confirmed.

Register an expression of interest using [this link](#).

# EPICGigability

THE MILITARY VETERANS CORNISH PILOT GIG CLUB (CHARITY NO: 1192085)



## Now making waves in Minehead

EPICGigability is a Tri-Service club founded and run by military veterans' charity that welcomes serving members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their families.

We've been running for over three years with resounding success in Cornwall, and now we're looking to expand to Somerset starting in Minehead. With many veterans and serving personnel in the area, we believe our mix of camaraderie, teamwork, and resilience can bring huge benefits to the service community.

### Blue Water Therapy

Fresh air, exercise, and time on the water

Mental wellbeing through focus and rhythm

A sense of calm, balance, and connection

### Our Philosophy: Every Person Is Capable

- No matter your age, background, or ability, you are welcome.
- Whether you've rowed before or never picked up an oar, we believe in inclusion, encouragement, and opportunity for everyone be that rowing, maintaining, support functions, coaching, talking and socialising with likeminded people.

### Why Join?

- Built on teamwork and mutual support
- Open to serving members, veterans, and their families
- Boosts physical fitness and mental wellbeing
- A new community with the spirit of service

*Find out more!*

Follow us on Facebook: [EPICGigability](#) or call 07929 572742 or email [info@epicgigability.co.uk](mailto:info@epicgigability.co.uk)



# SPECTACULAR OPPORTUNITY

The magnificent Massed Bands of HM Royal Marines Beating Retreat will return to London this summer, bringing a spectacular evening of military music, tradition and pageantry to the iconic Horse Guards Parade on 16 and 17 July. This spectacular evening of military music and ceremonial pageantry will see more than 200 of the world's finest military musicians perform in one of the capital's most historic settings, against the stunning backdrop of St James's Park.

Audiences will be treated to a stirring programme featuring the Massed Bands of HM Royal Marines, the precision drill of the 40-strong Corps of Drums, and a Royal Navy Guard of Honour.

The evening will culminate in the moving Naval Sunset ceremony, a tradition rich in heritage that provides a powerful and memorable finale. All proceeds from the event will support the work of Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity

and RMA – The Royal Marines Charity, helping to provide vital support to sailors, marines, veterans and their families.

Performances will take place on:

■ Thursday 16 July – 1830

■ Friday 17 July – 1830

Both performances will be held at Horse Guards Parade in Central London.

Tickets range from £17 to £45, with seated and special access options available.

Wheelchair tickets include a companion within the same ticket.

Groups of 20 or more can receive a 10 per cent discount using the code BEATGROUP (maximum discount £100).

This historic event offers a rare opportunity to witness the precision, tradition and musical excellence of the Royal Marines in one of London's most impressive ceremonial settings. Tickets are available at <https://tickets.rnrmc.org.uk/navy-beating-retreat/>

## QUICK QUOTE FOR TRAVEL INSURANCE

As a member of the Association, you have access to an exclusive annual travel insurance scheme from our insurance partner **Trinity**. You can access this via the quick quote tool below to find out the annual price. Select your age band, European or Worldwide cover and who is to be covered to get your premium. Once completed, you'll be directed to the website to sign up. It's that easy! Any questions call: 02392 419 856.

[https://51bwhwzvnuu.typeform.com/to/UU6ClVe3#association\\_members\\_area=xxxxx](https://51bwhwzvnuu.typeform.com/to/UU6ClVe3#association_members_area=xxxxx)

Trinity's benefits don't just cover travel insurance – there are also offers and discounts on Personal Accident cover, Buildings and Contents Insurance and Life Insurance.

Speak to the Trinity team on 0345 241 1001 during office hours for insurance help.

## REQUEST FOR EMAIL DETAILS

Branch Secretaries – you can help us improve the accuracy of shipmates' details on the Central Office database.

Could you ensure all your members have an email address recorded – even if it is that of a friend or relative who could handle emails on their behalf..

We are striving to refresh our data and want to ensure that we are communicating with as many shipmates as possible on a regular basis.

If any Secretaries require assistance, or a new link into their portal access to the database, please contact the office on [admin@rnassoc.org](mailto:admin@rnassoc.org)

## ARE YOU WILLING TO HELP THE ASSOCIATION?

Change starts with a will... and it couldn't be easier. Writing a will isn't really for you, it's for the people you love, to make their lives easier. It's your chance to leave a legacy that lasts long after you've gone. A will doesn't just save your loved ones time, money, and stress. It's also an opportunity

to be part of something bigger. By including a gift in your will, you can help support the Royal Naval Association and make a meaningful difference to shipmates for generations to come. That's why we've partnered with expert estate planners Octopus Legacy to offer you the chance to write or update

your will for free, online, over the phone, or in person with one of their professional will writers or solicitors. We cover the cost of wills up to £150, meaning you can write a simple will at no charge, or receive a discount on a will with trust. For more information, click here.



Every Royal Naval Association member is entitled to £150 off the cost of making a will with our trusted partner, Octopus Legacy

**ONCE NAVY ALWAYS NAVY**

[royal-naval-association.com](http://royal-naval-association.com)

In partnership with **octopus legacy**

## SHOP ONLINE AND HELP US RAISE FUNDS

Central Office human dynamo Milly Luxford has set the RNA up on a great website called **easyfundraising** to help raise money for the Royal Naval Association – simply by shopping online.

easyfundraising turns your everyday online shopping into **FREE** donations when you use them to shop with more than 8,000 retailers such as eBay, John Lewis & Partners, Argos, ASOS and Booking.com.

Retailers then make a small donation by way of saying 'thank you', and easyfundraising gives those free funds to the cause. If you would like to get involved, please register using this link – just click **here** to sign up, and once you've raised your first donation, easyfundraising will give the RNA a £1 bonus donation! There are no catches or hidden charges and the Association will be really grateful for your donations.

### GIZZETS ONLINE

Our lanyards and pin badges are available from our online shop. Click the SHOP link on our website, or go to: <https://www.rnagizzet.co.uk/>

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### Assoc Management Committees:

Fortnight ahead(ish) of NC, preferably pre FAC (Advisor/Area input two weeks pre-AMC)

**Thurs 7 May** (Zoom 1800)

**Fri 7 August** (Zoom 0900)

**Thurs 15 Oct** (Zoom 1800)

### FACs (finance):

Fortnight ahead(ish) of NC,

# TELL US YOUR VIEWS ON THE RNA – IT COULD BE WORTH £100



Do you have a few minutes to spare to help us help you and your shipmates? It could be very much worth your while...

Because it will only take a few minutes to complete the RNA 2026 membership survey, which will enable us to understand all members' views on the RNA and its activities.

And for one lucky entrant, drawn at random, there will be a £100 Amazon gift voucher.

Completing the survey will help us to deliver more of what members want and need.

And if you could all add your email addresses, this would enable us to communicate more effectively with members.

To take part in the survey please click this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/wbauj6qJmm>

## MINIBUSES ARE AN ASSET FOR ALL

The RNA has three minibuses, located in Plymouth, Manchester and Portsmouth, for use by shipmates. The minibuses are a great asset to us all, and we are proud to offer this membership benefit.

We are also extremely grateful to RNA volunteers who manage the minibuses regionally, including bookings. To book a minibus, the contact details are:

**Plymouth** – Les Yeoman - [lesyeo3@gmail.com](mailto:lesyeo3@gmail.com) – 07795 231397

**Manchester** – David Barlow – [dbarlow@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dbarlow@hotmail.co.uk) - 07747 006100

**Portsmouth** – Sara Field – [ams@rnassoc.org](mailto:ams@rnassoc.org) – 023 92 723747

For insurance, there are criteria for driving the minibuses and these, and other details, are at [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/mini-bus-hire](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/mini-bus-hire)



## CHEER ON MARATHON RUNNERS

A number of runners participating in the Edinburgh Marathon this year – on Sunday 24 May – are raising funds for RNRMC.

Are there any shipmates out there who would be willing to go out to line the route and cheer on the runners? RNRMC will provide a T-shirt for you so runners will be able to spot you in the crowds.

Contact Karen Elliot on [kelliot250666@gmail.com](mailto:kelliot250666@gmail.com) who will pass on your details to RNRMC.

## TRINITY YOUR INSURANCE PARTNER

### Enjoy the following member benefits:

- Special Premium Rate for Veterans' Personal Accident cover
- 15% discount on Travel Plus holiday insurance
- 15% discount on Free Spirit travel insurance
- Buildings & Contents Insurance – on purchase, choose a military charity\* for your donation
- Life insurance – on purchase our partner, LifeSearch will donate £50 to a military charity of choice
- Eligibility for Trinity's 40+ travel insurance scheme



**ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION**



**Associations Line**  
Speak to the Trinity team on **0345 241 1001** during office hours for insurance help.



**Go to your members area**  
To access all of the products and discounts

\* From those charities listed that includes the Royal Naval Association Charity

Trinity Insurance Services Ltd

[www.talktotrinity.com](http://www.talktotrinity.com)

[helpline@talktotrinity.com](mailto:helpline@talktotrinity.com)



## BOB COLLECTS HIS MEDAL

Southend RNA member Bob Mays, 69, from Leigh-on-Sea in Essex, has received his British Empire Medal, awarded in King Charles's New Year Honours list for services to Parkinson's Disease Sufferers and to Charitable Fundraising. S/M Bob, who served in the Army, was diagnosed with the neurological condition in 2012 while still a serving officer with the Metropolitan Police, and since then has thrown his weight behind efforts to support others who are living with the condition.

## AWARDS DEADLINES

Nominations for the Welsh Veterans Awards close on 22 May, with the winners being announced from shortlists at a ceremony at the Vale Resort on 8 July. Follow [this link](#) for more information.

For Northern Irish veterans, the dates to note are 7 May, when the nomination process opens, and 30 June, which is the final day for submissions.

The final awards ceremony will take place on 22 October.

Use [this link](#) to see the categories and access the nomination form.

The application process for the English Veterans Awards will open on 1 June, closing on 17 August, with the final awards ceremony at the De Vere Cotswold Water Park on 1 October – for more details follow [this link](#).

# TIFFIES GATHER FOR REUNION GALA DINNER

RNRMC and Greenwich Hospital funding helped bring veterans together through a Remembrance and Comradeship Grant. Former Royal Navy Artificers from across the world came together for a special reunion gala dinner, celebrating shared experiences, lifelong friendships and the enduring spirit of the Naval community.

The event, held at the Royal Maritime Club in Portsmouth, welcomed attendees who travelled from across the UK and overseas – as far as Canada and Australia, reflecting the strength and reach of the Artificer network and the lasting bonds formed during service. The evening provided an opportunity for veterans to reconnect, reminisce and celebrate their shared history.

The reunion was supported through Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity's (RNRMC) Remembrance and Comradeship Grants programme, alongside funding from Greenwich Hospital.

This support helped make the event possible, enabling attendees to come together and maintain vital social connections.

Events such as these play an important role in supporting the wellbeing of

veterans, offering a sense of belonging and continuity beyond service. By fostering connection and comradeship, they help to reduce isolation and strengthen the wider Naval community.

This reunion gala dinner stands as a powerful reminder of the importance of maintaining connections within the Naval family, ensuring that the spirit of service, support and comradeship continues long after individuals leave the Armed Forces. Supporting connection, wellbeing and lifelong camaraderie – learn more about our Remembrance and Comradeship Grants by following [this link](#).

## FUNERAL GUIDE IS NOW AVAILABLE

**The RNA has created a Funeral Guide, and reminds shipmates that we offer ceremonial and administrative support for members and all those who have served in Our Naval Forces.**

**Find the guide on our website: <https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/rna-funeral-guide>**

# TAKE A BREAK WITH A BREW

Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) is inviting the Naval community to pop the kettle on and take a meaningful pause this May as Stand Easy returns for 2026.

Taking place during Mental Health Awareness Week (11–17 May), Stand Easy is RNRMC's annual fundraising campaign encouraging serving personnel, veterans and families to come together over a brew, creating space to connect, talk and support mental health and wellbeing across the Naval community.

Inspired by the Naval command meaning "pause, but remain ready", RNRMC recognises that while Service life brings pride and purpose, it also brings sustained operational pressure. With ongoing global uncertainty and high-readiness roles, many in our community



are carrying extra worries alongside deployments, relocations and time apart from loved ones.

More than 40 per cent of veterans report difficulties adjusting to civilian life, and one in four adults in the UK experience a mental health condition each year. In 2025 alone, RNRMC supported 3,874 beneficiaries where mental health and wellbeing was the primary area of need, investing over £800,000 into counselling, therapeutic programmes,

peer support networks and family services.

For former Royal Marine James 'Jim' Brown, that support proved life-changing. After experiencing isolation in retirement, he found renewed purpose through Veterans Outreach Support (VOS), supported by RNRMC.

"I am so grateful that I found this support," he said. "I feel part of a community again – it has truly changed my life."

Hosting a Stand Easy event can be as simple as a tea break in a mess, wardroom, workplace or at home. However big or small, every brew helps.

To sign up, download your free host pack and find out more, visit: <https://www.rnrmc.org.uk/supported-events/stand-easy>

Now, more than ever, a simple pause can make a powerful difference.

# SHINING A LIGHT ON FORCES BUSINESSES

There is still time to send in your nominations for the Heropreneurs Awards 2026, honouring entrepreneurs and innovators from across the Armed Forces community.

The awards, delivered by the Forces Employment Charity, celebrate the achievements of the UK Armed Forces community including veterans, serving personnel, reservists, and their families.

Since they were launched in 2018, the Heropreneurs Awards, now sponsored by Warwick Business School, have recognised the drive, resilience and innovation found within the Armed Forces community.

The awards shine a light on businesses at every stage of development, from early start-ups to established enterprises, all united by a strong sense of purpose and



impact.

Categories include Heropreneur of the Year, Start-Up of the Year and Micro Enterprise of the Year. Nominations for the Heropreneurs Awards close on 14 June 2026.

This year's awards ceremony will be held at The Shard, London, on Monday 2 November.

For more information on the various categories, and to submit a nomination, please use [this link](#).

Are you:

**Ex-forces?**

**Eager to travel more this year? ✓**

**Tired of rising insurance costs? ✓**

You could make a saving by

**Joining our 40+ travel insurance scheme to benefit from cover that can continue into your later years, with no upper age limit\***

**Get A 30 Second Quote**

\*TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY. ALL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEME AVAILABLE AT: [WWW.COMBINEDSERVICESTRAVELCOVER.ORG.UK](http://WWW.COMBINEDSERVICESTRAVELCOVER.ORG.UK)



# BE A WINNER WITH THE RNA LOTTERY

You could win up to £25,000 in our very own Weekly Lottery, which gives supporters the chance to win cash prizes as well as backing our rank-blind network of serving, veterans and family members of the Naval community.

Once players have registered online they will be entered into the draw every Friday they are in credit (£1 per line, per week).

RNA General Secretary Capt Bill Oliphant said: "Our lottery is an exciting way of fundraising and with at least 50 per cent from each £1 donated supporting the work we do, we will be able to help those in our community who need it most."

Visit [www.RNALottery.co.uk](http://www.RNALottery.co.uk) to sign up.

## PUTTING US ON THE MAP

The RNA now has a location on Google Maps in the shape of Central Office in Portsmouth Naval Base.

And our entry has a range of photographs available on the site which you are free to browse and download.

If this trial proves popular then more images will be added which highlight the ethos and activities of your Association and fellow shipmates.

These are all RNA Copyright images, and the vast majority was taken by our talented official photographer S/M Nigel Huxtable.

Any feedback to the Comms team please.

## GET YOUR SLOPS HERE

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) or via the 'Shop' button at the top of the RNA website home page at [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)

# SPORTS AND COMRADESHIP GROUPS

Shipmates might be interested in becoming involved with the popular and successful RNA Sports and Comradeship Groups (SCGs). Whether you are already a part of a group or are yet to join one we recommend you get involved and see what it's all about. For more information on each group please contact the designated leaders, listed below:

American Football – Steve Phillips: [rna.american.football.sig@gmail.com](mailto:rna.american.football.sig@gmail.com)

Choir – Jon Everett: [wvs@rnassoc.org](mailto:wvs@rnassoc.org)

Classic Cars – Mike Burnham: [hon.secretary@rnarayleigh.org](mailto:hon.secretary@rnarayleigh.org)

Cricket – Mark Smith : [Markmiff1962@gmail.com](mailto:Markmiff1962@gmail.com)

Collectors: Insignia and Badges – Paul Banyard: [rna.insignia@gmail.com](mailto:rna.insignia@gmail.com)

Cycling – Craig Fulton: [craig@govguide.co.uk](mailto:craig@govguide.co.uk)

Fishing – Gus Honeywood/Selwyn Davies/John Stephenson: [rna.fishing.sig@gmail.com](mailto:rna.fishing.sig@gmail.com)

Golf – Colin Dinsdale: [rna.golfers@gmail.com](mailto:rna.golfers@gmail.com)

Model Makers – Gary Daisley: [RNA.Modelmakers@gmail.com](mailto:RNA.Modelmakers@gmail.com)

Motorhome, Caravan and Camping – Ron Shilton: [rnamcc@outlook.com](mailto:rnamcc@outlook.com)

RNA Football Club – [scc@rnassoc.com](mailto:scc@rnassoc.com)

Rugby Union – Steve Phillips: [rna.rugby.union.sig@gmail.com](mailto:rna.rugby.union.sig@gmail.com)

Woodcraft – Graham Warner: [vicechair@rna-7area.org](mailto:vicechair@rna-7area.org)

Yachting – David Monks: [david.c.monks@gmail.com](mailto:david.c.monks@gmail.com)

If you are interested in forming a Sports and Comradeship Group please contact [cml@rnassoc.org](mailto:cml@rnassoc.org)

# BFBS SIGNS NEW CONTRACT WITH MOD

Media organisation and military charity BFBS (British Forces Broadcasting Service) has signed a ten-year contract with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to transform the way that UK Armed Forces access trusted media and entertainment, wherever they are serving.

As Defence dominates world headlines, this agreement comes at a crucial moment and demonstrates the importance of BFBS's services for the British military community worldwide, and for national security.

Ben Chapman, BFBS CEO, said: "We are very excited to announce this renewed partnership with the MOD, and to fulfil our mission of uniting the UK Armed Forces and their families with trusted, creative media experiences for the next decade.

"We are living in complex geopolitical

times, with Defence at the top of the global agenda, and never has the media landscape been more disrupted.

"BFBS plays a vital role in supporting the operational readiness and welfare of our military wherever they are serving, and we help to maintain a healthy democracy by ensuring that all those who serve our country have access to trusted, relevant, and secure media.

"We offer incredible value to the UK Armed Forces through our deep relationships with media partners who trust us to make their valuable entertainment, news, and sport content available to those who need it most – all free at the point of delivery."

BFBS is developing a next-generation secure platform that will transform and futureproof media experiences for those who are serving, and the organisation already celebrates

many successes with its channels and products.

The BFBS Forces News YouTube channel has more than one million subscribers, while the BFBS Esports Pro League – launched in 2025 – is helping to turn gaming culture in the Forces into a competitive ecosystem, as military players enhance skills needed for modern warfare.

BFBS is also developing technology to deliver digital media content directly to submarines, ensuring that even in one of the most remote environments on Earth, personnel can access entertainment.

This new contract builds on more than eight decades of dedication to connecting and entertaining the UK Armed Forces and strengthens BFBS's enduring relationship with the MOD to meet the future media needs of the military.

# Royal Naval Association Lottery



**Win up to £25,000**

**We rely on your help to  
deliver outstanding  
support throughout  
every stage of our  
members' lives.**



**Help us continue our work  
by playing the RNA lottery**

**Enter by using the QR Code  
or visit [RNAlottery.co.uk](http://RNAlottery.co.uk)**



# WELFARE AND WELLBEING

## SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION (1)

# EASTER LEAVE AT HMS RALEIGH

For many trainees, HMS Raleigh is the place where a life in the Royal Navy truly begins, writes Jon Everett.

It is where confidence is built, friendships are formed, and the values of Service start to take root. Yet for some, particularly during leave periods, those early weeks can also be a time when the sense of belonging is tested.

During the recent Easter leave period, while much of HMS Raleigh fell quiet, a number of trainees remained on board, unable to return home, far from family and familiar support. It is during moments like these that the strength of the wider Naval family matters most. This Easter, the RNA was proud to stand alongside the Royal Navy once again, helping to ensure that those trainees were supported, connected, and not forgotten.

Recognising how isolating leave periods can feel, the RNA funded and delivered a programme of wellbeing and activity support designed to provide structure, encourage connection, and lift morale. Practical support played a vital role. The availability of a minibus, for example, proved invaluable, offering trainees freedom of movement to reach the Torpoint Ferry, local shops, and surrounding amenities. For many, this simple provision made everyday life feel more normal during an otherwise quiet time.

But the true heart of the programme

lay in the shared experiences it created. Activities such as go-karting gave trainees the chance to let off steam, laugh together, and enjoy a rare break from routine.

These moments of shared enjoyment allowed friendships to deepen and confidence to grow – both essential in the early stages of Service life.

An historic walk around Plymouth, led by Brett Crabtree, a member of Plymouth Branch, offered something different. As trainees walked the streets shaped by centuries of Naval history, there was a quiet but powerful sense of continuity – today's sailors walking in the footsteps of those who served before them. It was a reminder that they are now part of something much bigger than themselves.

There were also quieter moments that carried equal importance. An Uckers and pizza afternoon provided a familiar, relaxed space where trainees could unwind, talk openly, and simply enjoy each other's company.

These informal gatherings often say the most about creating safe spaces where people feel seen, supported, and part of a team. The RNA would also like to recognise the generosity of the China Fleet Club, whose support opened the door to additional wellbeing activities. Access to facilities such as the golf driving range allowed some trainees to try something entirely new, offering a welcome sense of achievement and distraction during a subdued period. What became clear over Easter was just how still an establishment like HMS Raleigh can become during leave periods and how noticeable that quietness can feel. Even for those working on



site, moments of isolation were evident. Against that backdrop, the presence of organised activity, regular contact, and visible welfare support made a meaningful difference.

Feedback from trainees has been overwhelmingly positive, reinforcing the value of this support. A short survey has since been completed, and the responses will help shape future welfare provision.

The RNA remains committed to working closely with Royal Navy training staff to ensure support continues to evolve, particularly for international trainees and others who remain onboard during leave periods.

This Easter programme was not just about activities or transport. It was about reassurance. About showing trainees that they matter, even when the establishment is quiet. About the Royal Naval Association continuing its long held promise to support the Royal Navy – by looking after its people, especially those at the very start of their journey. In doing so, the RNA continues to play its part in supporting, encouraging, and caring for the next generation of the Royal Navy.



## MARRIAGE vs COHABITATION – WHAT RIGHTS DO YOU HAVE?

“We’re basically married” – The Times recently produced an article in relation to cohabiting couples versus the rights enjoyed by married people, but it’s important to recognise that there is no ‘common law marriage’, as wrongly believed by many.

There is no current law in England and Wales which recognises what should happen on a relationship breakdown between a cohabiting couple, unlike divorce. 46 per cent of people in England and Wales believe that living together forms a ‘common law marriage’ (The rights of cohabiting partners, the House of Commons 2022). This is incorrect. If you live together but you are not married, you do not have the same legal rights of a married couple. So, what do you need to know?

### What rights do cohabiting couples have?

The key legal difference between married and cohabiting couples is what financial provision the court can make on separation. If there is a property dispute, trust and land law might apply to a cohabiting couple, rather than the Matrimonial Causes Act (and how the court would treat a property on divorce). There is no automatic entitlement to make a financial claim for a cohabiting couple unlike divorce, where a party may pursue claims for capital, pension and income. The rights for cohabiting couples are much more limited.

### What happens on separation?

If the cohabiting couple do not agree with how any assets should be divided on separation and seek input from the court, a Judge would look at the intentions of the ownership.

Is there written evidence about how an asset should be divided? If jointly owned, is the property owned as joint tenants



or tenants in common (either in equal or unequal shares)? Are there documents relating to ownership of other assets such as bank accounts, vehicles, chattels (personal belongings) etc? In an ideal world, the arrangements would be recorded in writing via a Declaration of Trust or cohabitation agreement. If there is no written evidence, how have the parties acted? If the property is owned solely by one party, has the other ever contributed to the property, household outgoings, renovations etc? Who has paid the bills – are both parties named on the council tax? Has there ever been a discussion between the parties in relation to the contributions, and does one party rely on what was agreed? Can the party demonstrate that they have established an interest in the property? The court will look at both parties’ actions and intentions throughout the relationship.

### Steps to protect rights

It is sensible for cohabiting couples to consider the following steps to protect their rights in the event of separation:

**1** A Declaration of Trust (DOT) can confirm the proportion of how the parties own a property, ie if there are two or more people, what percentage do they own the property each? It might be that one party has contributed more to the deposit and wishes to protect these funds so that on separation and sale, this is ringfenced before the net proceeds are distributed.

**2** A cohabitation agreement can record details of how the financial arrangements should be resolved on separation between a cohabiting couple. The agreement can cover additional matters such as arrangements for children too. It can be tailored to the couple’s circumstances and their wishes.

**3** Make sure you have an up-to-date Will. This applies to all individuals or couples, but is incredibly important for cohabiting couples who wish to record the intentions of their assets if they were to die.

If you are worried about the arrangements as a cohabiting couple, please get in touch. Knights have a specialist team of family solicitors who are able to assist. I am an Associate in the family team at Knights and my husband is a Royal Navy Veteran. I come from a military family and have a little girl who is two years old!

## Knights

<https://www.knightsplc.com/company/our-professionals/emma-nicholas/>

[www.linkedin.com/in/emlounicholas](http://www.linkedin.com/in/emlounicholas)

[emma.nicholas@knightsplc.com](mailto:emma.nicholas@knightsplc.com)

**Emma Nicholas** (congratulations on your recent wedding! – Ed) has significant experience in dealing with legal issues arising from the breakdown of relationships involving serving or former Armed Forces personnel, their families and current or former MOD individuals.

Emma – an RNA member – has represented personnel in the Royal Navy, from ABs to Vice Admirals. She understands the difference between civvy and military life and the impact this can have on a relationship and/or a family.

Knights is a business and leading law firm offering premium professional services everywhere in the UK.

The team is made up of 1,100+ professionals across 26 (and growing) locations in the UK from Carlisle all the way down to Exeter.

The national family team at Knights are familiar with all aspects of family law, including contact arrangements for children, divorce and finances and pre/post-nuptial agreements. They have a handful of individuals who specialise in the treatment of Armed Forces pensions on divorce and appreciate the complexities of these schemes. It’s important to seek specialist legal advice when considering the financial arrangements on divorce, and they are there to help.

## VOLUNTEER TEAM SITS AT THE HEART OF WELFARE SUPPORT

### Supporting Those Who Support Others

The National Welfare and Wellbeing Support Team (NWWST) (volunteer role) sits at the heart of the Royal Naval Association's commitment to providing safe, consistent, and professional welfare and wellbeing support across the naval community.

The team is a small, experienced, shipmate-led volunteer group, made up of individuals who bring either professional expertise or significant voluntary experience from across the welfare, wellbeing, safeguarding, and related sectors. Working closely with Central Office, Area Welfare & Wellbeing Officers (AWWOs), and Branch Welfare & Wellbeing Officers (BWWOs), the NWWST provides advice, guidance, and assurance, rather than holding individual welfare cases.

At its core, the role is designed to support those who support others – strengthening confidence, promoting good practice, and ensuring welfare activity across the Association remains compliant, compassionate, and consistent, while staying true to the Naval values of comradeship and peer support.

### The Purpose of the Role

The National Welfare and Wellbeing Support Team exists to:

- Provide experienced advice and guidance on welfare, wellbeing, and benevolence matters.
- Support AWWOs, BWWOs and Central Office with

complex or sensitive welfare queries.

- Promote consistency, compliance, and best practice across the welfare network.
- Monitor emerging trends and issues within the welfare and wellbeing environment.
- Contribute to learning and reporting at national level, helping to shape ongoing development.

### What Is Required

Those joining the National Welfare and Wellbeing Support Team will be expected to meet the following requirements:

- Enhanced DBS clearance
- Safeguarding training at Level 2 or above
- A willingness to undertake any additional training relevant to the role.
- The ability to work collaboratively, maintain confidentiality, and operate within clear professional boundaries.

### Previous Expressions of Interest

Shipmates who previously applied or expressed an interest in joining the National Welfare and Wellbeing Support Team (volunteer role) are warmly encouraged to re-apply, now that the role and recruitment process have been fully confirmed.

### How to Apply or Re-apply

To express an interest in joining the National Welfare and Wellbeing Support Team, please submit:

- A brief covering email or letter of interest, outlining your relevant experience.
  - An up to date CV
- Applications and enquiries should be sent to:  
Jon Everett  
Welfare & Wellbeing Support Coordinator  
[wws@rnassoc.org](mailto:wws@rnassoc.org)

Please note: I would like to apologise for the earlier article relating to the National Welfare and Wellbeing Support Team, which was released prematurely. A short delay followed to ensure that the role, expectations, and recruitment process could be clearly defined and accurately communicated. We are grateful for the patience and understanding shown during this period. The information shown above now represents the current and confirmed position – Jon.

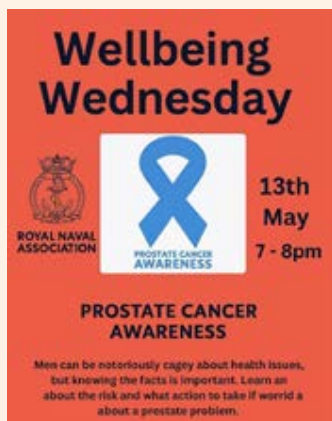
## PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS

**Wednesday 13 May, 7 – 8pm**

Prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers affecting men, yet it is often misunderstood and, too frequently, talked about too late. As part of our Wellbeing Wednesday programme, we are pleased to host a rescheduled Prostate Cancer Awareness session, open to everyone. This session aims

to raise awareness, challenge assumptions, and encourage open conversation about a condition that affects hundreds of thousands of families across the UK.

Importantly, while prostate cancer affects men, this session is open to both men and women, recognising the vital role that partners, families, and friends play in awareness and early support. Many people are surprised to learn that men are three times more likely to develop prostate cancer than women are to develop



breast cancer, yet prostate cancer still has no national screening programme. Understanding the risks, symptoms, and realities of the condition can make a real difference.

### Why does this matter?

- Over 64,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year
- More than 12,000 men die from the disease annually
- 1 in 8 men will be diagnosed during their lifetime
- Around 540,000 men are

currently living with or beyond prostate cancer

This session is an opportunity to get informed, ask questions, and show your support — whether for yourself, a loved one, or simply to better understand an issue that affects so many. Everyone is welcome. Please come along, take part in the conversation, and help us raise awareness. Session is via Zoom; follow [this link](#) The passcode, if needed, is WW2026.

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE BWWO?

Following recent interest in the Branch Welfare & Wellbeing Officer (BWWO) role, the Royal Naval Association would like to provide an update to clarify the purpose of the role, what it involves, and how those who are interested can get involved.

The Branch Welfare & Wellbeing Officer role is an entirely voluntary position, delivered by shipmates who choose to give their time, experience, and commitment to supporting others within the Naval family.

The information below reflects the current and confirmed position for anyone considering volunteering in this important role.

### A voluntary role supporting shipmates at local level

Branch Welfare & Wellbeing Officers are volunteer shipmates who play a vital role in supporting members and their families at local branch level. They are often the first point of contact when someone is experiencing difficulty, distress, or uncertainty, and offer reassurance, listening support, and signposting when it is most needed.

As a voluntary role, the position is not about fixing every problem or providing specialist intervention. Instead, it focuses on listening, understanding, and helping individuals access the right support at the right time, whether through Service charities, civilian organisations, or statutory services.

BWWOs operate within a supportive framework and work closely with Area Welfare & Wellbeing Officers (AWWOs), the National Welfare and Wellbeing Support Team (NWWST), and Central Office. This ensures volunteers are

supported themselves and never expected to carry out the role in isolation.

### The purpose of the volunteer role

The purpose of the BWWO role is to:

- Provide voluntary welfare and wellbeing support to RNA members and their families
- Act as a trusted and approachable signposter to appropriate support services
- Promote wellbeing, inclusion, and comradeship within the Branch
- Maintain a visible, caring welfare presence at local level
- Work collaboratively with Area and National welfare volunteers when matters are more complex.

### What the voluntary role may involve

As a volunteer BWWO, you may be involved in:

- Responding to welfare concerns raised by Branch members
- Informally checking in with shipmates who may be isolated or disengaged
- Offering reassurance during periods of illness, bereavement, or change
- Completing basic welfare reporting in line with RNA guidance
- Attending welfare training or briefings designed to support you in the role
- Sharing good practice and helping raise welfare awareness within your Branch.

All activity is carried out within clearly defined boundaries, with support always available.

### What is required

Those volunteering as Branch Welfare & Wellbeing Officers are expected to:

- Be approachable, empathetic, and able to listen
- Work within RNA policies, including safeguarding, data protection, and lone working guidance
- Hold an Enhanced DBS check
- Undertake Safeguarding awareness training with additional training provided as required
- Be willing to give time in a voluntary capacity, working collaboratively and responsibly

Full induction, training, and ongoing support are provided. The RNA recognises that this is a voluntary commitment and is structured to be supportive, realistic, and sustainable.

### Getting Involved

Anyone interested in volunteering as a Branch Welfare & Wellbeing Officer, or who would like to better understand the role before committing, is encouraged to get in touch. I will be happy to direct you to your local Branch and/or Area, explain how the role operates locally, and discuss the support available to volunteers. This ensures enquiries are handled appropriately and with the right level of local guidance from the outset.

### Making contact

To find out more, or to express an interest in volunteering as a BWWO, please contact: Jon Everett on [wws@rnassoc.org](mailto:wws@rnassoc.org)

## WELFARE CONTACTS

Organisation	Telephone	Website
Aggie's	079 7764 1876	<a href="http://www.aggies.org.uk">www.aggies.org.uk</a>
Association of Wrens	02392 725 141	<a href="https://wrens.org.uk">https://wrens.org.uk</a>
Cobseo	-	<a href="http://www.cobseo.org.uk">www.cobseo.org.uk</a>
Combat Stress	0800 138 1619	<a href="mailto:helpline@combatstress.org.uk">helpline@combatstress.org.uk</a>
CRISIS	0300 636 1967	<a href="http://www.crisis.org.uk">www.crisis.org.uk</a>
Fighting with Pride	0203 981 3810	<a href="http://www.fightingwithpride.org.uk">www.fightingwithpride.org.uk</a>
For all Ops - GOV.UK	0808 802 1212	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/support-for-veterans">www.gov.uk/support-for-veterans</a>
Help for Heroes	0300 303 9888	<a href="http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk">www.helpforheroes.org.uk</a>
Home-Start	0116 464 5490	<a href="http://www.home-start.org.uk">www.home-start.org.uk</a>
Kids	0121 355 2707	<a href="http://www.kids.org.uk">www.kids.org.uk</a>
Marriage Care	0800 389 3801	<a href="http://www.marriagecare.org.uk">www.marriagecare.org.uk</a>
Mind Solent	023 8202 7810	<a href="http://www.solentmind.org.uk">www.solentmind.org.uk</a>
Naval Children's Charity	02392 639 534	<a href="http://www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk">www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk</a>
Naval Families Federation	02392 654 374	<a href="https://nff.org.uk">https://nff.org.uk</a>
Officers' Association	020 7808 4175	<a href="http://www.officersassociation.org.uk">www.officersassociation.org.uk</a>
Op Courage	-	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a>
PTSD Resolution	0300 302 0551	<a href="https://ptsdresolution.org/">https://ptsdresolution.org/</a>
REFUGE	0808 2000 247	<a href="https://refuge.org.uk/">https://refuge.org.uk/</a>
Relate	-	<a href="http://www.relate.org.uk">www.relate.org.uk</a>
Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity	02393 871 520	<a href="http://www.rnrmc.org.uk">www.rnrmc.org.uk</a>
Royal British Legion	0808 802 8080	<a href="http://www.britishlegion.org.uk">www.britishlegion.org.uk</a>
Royal Marines Charity	0800 468 1664	<a href="https://rma-trmc.org">https://rma-trmc.org</a>
Royal Naval Benevolent Trust	02392 690 112	<a href="http://www.rnbt.org.uk">www.rnbt.org.uk</a>
Royal Navy Royal Marines Widows' Association	07462 376850	<a href="https://rnrmwidows.org">https://rnrmwidows.org</a>
SAIL	0800 160 1842	<a href="https://sailine.org.uk/">https://sailine.org.uk/</a>
Samaritans	116 123	<a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a>
Seafarers UK	020 7932 0000	<a href="http://www.theseafarerscharity.org">www.theseafarerscharity.org</a>
SSAFA	0800 260 6780	<a href="http://www.ssafo.org.uk">www.ssafo.org.uk</a>
The Poppy Factory	020 8940 3305	<a href="http://www.poppyfactory.org">www.poppyfactory.org</a>
Veterans Outreach Support	02392 731 767	<a href="https://vosuk.org/">https://vosuk.org/</a>
Walking With The Wounded	0330 058 5800	<a href="https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk">https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk</a>
White Ensign Association	07384 575598	<a href="http://www.whiteensign.co.uk">www.whiteensign.co.uk</a>

## SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION (2)

# MENTORING AT RALEIGH AND BRNC

For the past 14 years I have had the honour and privilege of serving as the Lead Liaison Mentor at HMS Raleigh, working alongside an exceptional team of veterans who support recruits at the very start of their Royal Navy careers, *writes Terry Whitty*.

Our mentoring team currently comprises 14 veterans, with two mentors assigned to each of the seven Phase One divisions: Fisher, Cornwell, Hanson, Nelson, Cunningham, Gould, and Neptune. In the near future, we will also begin supporting a new division for officer recruits – an exciting development and welcome expansion of the programme.

We are a close-knit group, ranging in experience from AB to Lt Cdr, united by a shared commitment to giving something back and supporting the next generation of sailors.

When I first volunteered, I intended to stay for six months. This June, however, will mark 14 years since I began – a reflection of just how rewarding and worthwhile this role truly is.

On 5 May, the mentoring programme at HMS Raleigh will celebrate its 18th anniversary. Over nearly two decades, the programme has evolved alongside the Royal Navy itself. What has never changed is the outstanding professionalism of the Initial Naval Training (INT) staff. Working alongside them, and representing the RNA, has been a genuine privilege.

### The modern role of a mentor

The role of a mentor has changed significantly over recent years, particularly following the return from Covid lockdown. All mentors are now enhanced DBS checked and are required to hold Level 3 mentoring or coaching qualifications.

I will admit I was initially unsure about completing the three-day coaching course, but it quickly proved invaluable, allowing us to offer meaningful one-to-one support to recruits facing physical, mental, or emotional challenges during training.

Every Monday evening, mentors meet with the Raleigh CAST serving coaching team to share experiences, support one another, and maintain best practice. We also complete training in areas such as unacceptable behaviour, diversity awareness, and advanced coaching – many of the same courses undertaken by serving staff.

Although mentoring is voluntary, it requires a significant commitment. Over the ten-week Phase One training period, mentors regularly attend more than 37 exercises and evolutions.

From meeting recruits in their first week to standing proudly beside them at Pass Out Parade in week ten, we support them throughout their entire training journey.

Some days start early, arriving at Raleigh by 0730 for stretcher runs, Battle PT, or the obstacle course. Seeing recruits push through a tough session and still take the time to say thank you makes every early start worthwhile.

Week ten is always a highlight. Watching young men and women stand proudly on the parade ground in front of their families often brings back memories of our own training days. Supporting families sharing their pride, excitement, and the occasional laugh remains one of the most rewarding parts of the role.

Supporting the next generation as they begin their Naval careers is a genuine privilege, and one I am immensely proud to continue.

### Expanding to BRNC Dartmouth

Later this year, the RNA will hopefully expand its mentoring provision to Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth. While mentors may eventually be based at either HMS Raleigh or BRNC, all new mentors will initially attend HMS Raleigh for induction, training, and practical experience within an established

mentoring environment. This ensures consistent standards, shared understanding, and the highest level of support for both recruits and officer cadets.

### Female representation and sea going experience

Women with sea going experience are strongly encouraged to become involved in the mentoring programme. Female mentors who have served at sea offer a unique and highly valued perspective, giving recruits the opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of life at sea from women who have lived it.

This representation can be particularly reassuring and empowering for female recruits, helping to build confidence and encourage open, honest conversations about Naval life. From informal early engagement through to structured events such as Meet the Veterans, the presence of experienced women has consistently proven to be a positive and inspiring influence.

Where practicable, the aim is for female recruits to have access to at least one sea-going female mentor at HMS Raleigh and BRNC, reinforcing visible role models, encouragement, and support at every stage of training.

### Training, eligibility, and commitment

Applicants must:

- Have previously served in the Royal Navy, in any rating or rank suitable for a mentoring role
- Not have left the Service prior to 1990
- Be medically and physically fit in line with establishment requirements
- Live within approximately 15 miles of the relevant establishment
- Be willing to undertake enhanced DBS clearance
- Hold, or be willing to undertake, Level 3 mentoring or coaching qualifications
- Hold a full UK driving licence and be able to travel to the relevant establishment
- Be flexible, with sufficient availability to commit to the role.

Applicants who already hold Level 3 or Level 5 CAST qualifications may still be required to complete the Level 3 mentoring course to ensure consistency.

### Values, standards, and conduct

Mentoring is carried out within a small, dedicated team and requires genuine commitment. Mentors must be members of the RNA and able to commit consistently throughout training periods. All mentors are expected to fully support RN values and its commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Individuals whose views are incompatible with today's Naval Service, including opposition to women serving at sea or LGBTQ+ personnel serving in the Armed Forces will not be considered suitable for the role.

### Interested in becoming a mentor?

Mentor selection is conducted in close cooperation with Royal Navy Training staff to ensure all mentors are appropriately prepared, supported, and able to operate safely and effectively within the training environment.

To find out more or to apply, submit a covering email and CV to Jon Everett, Welfare & Wellbeing Support: [wws@rnassoc.org](mailto:wws@rnassoc.org)

**Please note: Earlier this year, an article regarding mentor recruitment at HMS Raleigh was published in error. We apologise for any confusion this may have caused.**

**Those who applied at that time and who still wish to be considered are warmly encouraged to re-apply, provided they meet the criteria outlined above. Applications are welcomed for mentoring roles at either HMS Raleigh or BRNC Dartmouth.**

# BRANCH NEWS

## CHATHAM Branch

Early last month Chatham Branch hosted a welcoming evening for friends of the Crew Turn To Starboard, on their Full Circle voyage, partly crewed by veterans and raising awareness endorsing courage, camaraderie, challenge and community.

in partnership with the Invictus Games 2027, when they crew moored at Chatham Historic Dockyard on 5 April, Will Keating – crewman and singer of the band Oggymen – entertained branch members with many sea shanties (below). Chatham Branch also presented the crew with £100 raised on the night for the charity.

According to the Turn to Starboard website, adjusting to a new pace of life, coping with mental health challenges, and finding new career opportunities are just some of the issues that veterans face.

They provide a solution through sailing – “a powerful and transformative activity that not only improves physical health but also fosters mental wellbeing, social inclusion, and skill development.”

Through structured wellbeing sailing programmes and formal RYA training, they offer veterans a unique opportunity to reconnect with themselves, their peers, and society.

By engaging in the physical challenge of sailing, veterans develop resilience, teamwork and leadership skills. Through RYA courses they equip them with professional qualifications, which can be used to springboard into new and rewarding careers in the maritime industry.

For more information see <https://www.turntostarboard.co.uk>



Pictured (top) is Chatham Branch Chairman S/M Dennis Potter, his partner Rумыana, T2S CEO Sally Terry, Mayor of Medway Cllr Trevor Clarke and T2S Chief Organising Officer Dan Fielding;  
(Left) Hannah Right, University of Kent, Cllr Clarke and recently RNA Chatham Branch Designated Chaplain Revd Christa Brodie-Levinsohn;  
(Middle picture above) Cllr Clarke, S/M Dennis and Dan Fielding;  
(Above) Chatham Branch shipmates Carol, Tina, Jackie and Spike.



### **STREET Branch**

At the March meeting of Street Branch, shipmates gathered for a photoshoot to celebrate that retiring Branch and Area Standard Bearer Mike Morton has been awarded a Royal Naval Association 'Certificate of Appreciation'.

S/M Mike, who has been constantly and resolutely supported by his wife Jan, has reluctantly called it a

day after 25 years of service 'Carrying the Flag' for the Somerset branch.

S/M Mike was also a familiar face at countless events and ceremonies representing his Area and Branch.

'Bravo Zulu' Mike and Jan (pictured above with certificates, surrounded by members of Street Branch) from all your shipmates, for an exceptional and well-deserved Award.



### **NUNEATON Branch**

S/M Mal Gordon, Honorary Secretary of Nuneaton Branch, informed Central Office that D-Day veteran Shipmate Arnie Salter celebrated his 100th birthday on 4 April. According to Mal, Arnie had a great day with a local choir singing wartime songs, while the local Sea Cadet Band also played music for him. Arnie is pictured left with other members of Nuneaton Branch between Mal and Shipmate Archie Smith, the Chairman of Nuneaton Branch, who presented Arnie with a bottle of Pussers Rum from RNA Central Office. Arnie asked that his shipmates let Central Office know that he appreciated the rum, and insisted that it should be opened straight after the photographs were taken.



**LICHFIELD Branch**

Reporting from Lichfield Branch's latest monthly meeting, held at the Kings Head, Branch Honorary Secretary S/M Phil Tootill said that members welcomed their latest new recruit to the Branch – the 60th member.

You may have seen in the past couple of editions of the Semaphore Circular that Lichfield member and Welfare Officer S/M Rita Ledward celebrated her birthday with shipmates, but crossed the bar shortly afterwards.

Hopefully shipmates across the country will appreciate the Lichfield Branch decision to honour Rita's memory by creating a 'Rita Ledward Award'. The new award was

introduced at last month's branch meeting at their regular meeting place, the King's Head, in the heart of Lichfield.

In a particularly poignant twist, the first recipient of the Rita Ledward Award was Rita's daughter, Fleur Meer.

Congratulations Fleur, who is pictured left receiving the award, presented by Branch Chairman Dino Lote.

At the conclusion of the meeting members wished their Chairman the best of luck for his participation in the London Marathon at the end of last month – and we are happy to report that Dino did indeed complete the race with a very respectable finishing position.

**PORTLAND Branch**

Portland Branch members marked the 70th anniversary of the founding of the branch at their 2026 Annual Dinner on 18.

More than 50 shipmates, partners and friends gathered for the dinner, reflecting on the seven decades since the date it was founded – 8 March 1956.

Guests enjoyed a three-course dinner followed by tea, coffee, and a series of traditional toasts.

Toasts were accompanied by a glass of port served in a specially-commissioned 70th anniversary glass, which shipmates were invited to take home at the end of the memorable evening as a keepsake of the milestone year.

Pictured left are diners from the top table – from top to bottom and

left to right, Shipmate Pete Shoesmith, Shipmate Nigel Rimmel, Shipmate Ben Carter, Shipmate Lynne Rimmel, Shipmate Josie Cartwright, Shipmate Karen Miller, RNA National Chairman Shipmate Andy Christie and Shipmate Dusty Miller.

The Branch was honoured to welcome National Chairman and No 3 Area National Council Member, Shipmate Andy Christie, as Guest of Honour.

In his address, he reflected on the history of the Branch, the wider work of the Royal Naval Association, and the

enduring values that continue to bind its members.

He concluded by presenting the Branch with a framed certificate commemorating its 70 years of service and camaraderie.

In return, Branch Chairman Shipmate Dusty Miller presented Shipmate Andy with a set of Rum Tankards as a token of appreciation (pictured left).

The Branch continues to thrive, with a current



muster of 97 members – six Life Members, 57 Full Members, 31 Associate Members, two Serving Members and one Honorary Member.

In addition, the Branch is regularly joined by three Affiliate Members from **Bridport Branch**, who remain valued friends and supporters of Branch activities.



## NEWPORT Branch

On Saturday 25 April, the 20-strong Maritime Reserves Field Gun Crew visited Newport RNA Club in Area 8.

The team, drawn from 14 Reserve units around the UK, and which trains at Venning Barracks in Donnington, Shropshire, demonstrated their skills with a run past.

The squad is in training for the Brickwoods Field Gun competition, which has been run in the Portsmouth area since 1907.

Following the demonstration, the field gunners enjoyed some warm hospitality at the club. Members agreed it was a very special spectacle for all who attended to watch the display.



## LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT and STUBBINGTON Branch

The essence of the RNA was on show at the Lee-on-the-Solent and Stubbington Branch awards evening last month.

Branch Chairman S/M Andy Christie presented S/M Dick Hobbs with an RNA Certificate of Appreciation (right) for his outstanding efforts in seeing the Daedalus Commemorative Stone project from conception through to completion.



Dick led his small band of volunteer helpers on a gruelling two-year journey, tackling red tape and less-than-enthusiastic officialdom, and ultimately succeeded – the stone was unveiled in June last year.

S/M Andy Graham was awarded a branch Certificate of Recognition (below) for stepping into the role of branch Standard Bearer, giving up his own time to represent his shipmates in ceremonial events, while still in full time employment himself.

Andy Christie also presented a new National Ceremonial Advisor lapel



badge to S/M Mike Smyth (right). Mike is the National Ceremonial Advisor for the RNA, which carries an enormous responsibility as Parade Marshall at the Naval Associations Biennial Parade in Whitehall.

He is also responsible for parade standards in all matters ceremonial including National RNA events and the National Standard Bearers competition.

Finally, Soapy Watson, 3 Area Chairman, presented the Basil

Brenton Shield to the visiting **Netley & District Branch**.

This trophy is awarded to the Area 3 branch that has recruited the highest annual number of new members. Following an absence of a couple of years, when the trophy was 'lost', the award was re-introduced this year. Just who Basil Brenton was, seems to have been obscured by the mists of time. However, with several blank spaces still left to fill on the shield, his name will carry on being celebrated for some time yet!

Separately, Soapy Watson, in his role as 3 Area President, was invited to present a Life Membership Award to S/M Stan Rickeard (below).

During World War 2, Stan volunteered for the Fleet Air Arm as he wanted to be a pilot, but was offered the role of Telegraphist Air



Gunner (TAG) which he turned down, so he entered the Royal Navy in 1943 in the Seaman Branch.

Stan served on landing craft at Normandy, but not on D-Day, as he arrived on D-Day +3 (he's very particular about that). He then went to the Far East where he served on landing craft in Burma.

Stan is a member of the Burma Star Association and is a founding member of Netley and District Branch.





### TORBAY Branch

Members of Torbay Branch gathered at Roundham Head, Paignton on 26 April for the annual service to commemorate the sacrifice made by Lt Cdr Arthur Leyland Harrison VC and the many others who gave their lives during the Zeebrugge Raid on 23 April 1918, an attempt by the British to block the entrance to the port of Zeebrugge in Belgium using obsolete blockships.

The raid was relatively unsuccessful, as U-boats resumed passage through the port a few days later, but yielded numerous acts of incredible courage and resourcefulness.

Shipmates were joined and supported by representatives and Standards from branches of the Royal British Legion throughout Torbay. The Torbay Area Royal Marines Association also attended, as did representatives from Torbay Sea and Air Cadets.

It was a pleasure to welcome David Walker, a distant relative of Lt Cdr Harrison, who had only recently discovered that a memorial existed.

Chairman Terry Mentry welcomed everyone present and read a reflection on the life of Lt Cdr Harrison before the Exhortation, Last Post, Two-Minute Silence and Reveille.

Our Patron, Cdr Jane Allen, RNR (Rtd) and Torbay's Civic Mayor, Cllr Barbara Lewis, laid wreaths.

Arthur Harrison, born in Torquay in 1886, has his Victoria Cross proudly displayed at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth.

After the service, six Torbay Falklands Veterans stood together for a photograph (left).



### UXBRIDGE Branch

At the Uxbridge Branch AGM on 26 April, Branch President S/M Donald Thorpe presenting S/M Frank Brown with a birthday card from Central Office alongside a bottle of Pussers Rum kindly donated by Pussers Rum in celebration of Frank's up-and-coming 100th birthday on 6 May.

According to Branch Chairman S/M Slinger Wood, S/M Frank was "well chuffed" with his card and bottle, and as he left in his mobility buggy he promised not to drink it all in one go... Nice to see that some old sailors still have the matelot sense of humour!



## WALLASEY Branch

The blessing of the stone is done each year at the Wallasey Branch.

The stone is over 40 years old, and was donated and transported by Cammell Laird to the Wallasey Branch many years ago.

It was part of the dock, and thus represented the last piece that Shipmates saw when sailing out of the dock to protect the Atlantic convoys, Russian convoys and to serve at Dunkirk.

They may have gone, but they will never be forgotten.

Wallasey Branch also organised an Easter party for children from the local community – plenty of fun and games, with each child receiving an Easter egg which put a smile on the faces of all the children.

All this was made possible by Vicky, the RNA bar manager, and her bar staff Mai Ellie Chaz and Kerry.

Branch officers would like to thank shipmates and Associated members for their kind Easter egg donations.



# OBITUARIES

## S/M DICK WOOD

S/M Dick Wood from St Neots Branch crossed the bar on 4 March, aged 101 – his obituary was published in the April 2026 edition of the Semaphore Circular. His funeral took place on 30 March at St Swithun's Church, Sandy, Bedfordshire, and was very well attended as people wished to honour a centenarian, who had been at D-Day.

The service was conducted by Revd Jodi Brown, Vicar of St Swithun's, and attended by a number of dignitaries, including Maj John Whatley, Deputy Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, and Cllr Joanna Hewitt, Mayor of Sandy.

Royal Marines bugler L/Cpl Lee Kidd travelled from Portsmouth for the occasion (below right).

There were 16 members of St Neots Branch at the service, with another five shipmates from the wider Area 6.

Lt Cdr Paul Dubras RCN and CPO1 Adam Thibodeau RCN (below) represented the Canadians at the funeral – on D-Day Dick was in HMS Jervis supporting the Canadian landings at Juno Beach.

S/M David Corrigan carried the Area 6 standard, S/M Tony Webley carried the St Neots Branch standard and S/M Keith Ridley carried the former Bedford Branch standard.

Bedford Branch has long since decommissioned, but S/M Dick was their standard bearer for many years and retained their standard.

RBL standards and members also attended.



### **S/M ANDY WRIGHT**

S/M Andy Wright, from St Neots Branch, crossed the bar on 17 February 2026.

He was born in March 1939 and joined the Royal Navy at HMS Ganges, Shotley Gate in Suffolk, as a Boy Seaman in January 1955, aged 15.

Promoted to Ordinary Seaman in 1956, his first ship was the Daring-class destroyer HMS Decoy, which he served on from 1956-1957.

The ship is pictured at the bottom of this page.

He was then drafted to HMS Excellent at Whale Island in Portsmouth for a gunnery course before joining his next ship, the aircraft carrier HMS Albion. Shipmate Andy served in the Centaur-class carrier, which was converted to a commando carrier in 1962, from 1958-1959 and was promoted to Able Seaman in May

1959.

He was on board for the ship's World Tour, which included visits to New Zealand and Tasmania. En route to Sydney, Australia, rehearsals took place for the Sods' Opera 'Out of the Blue', in which Andy was to play two roles in different acts.

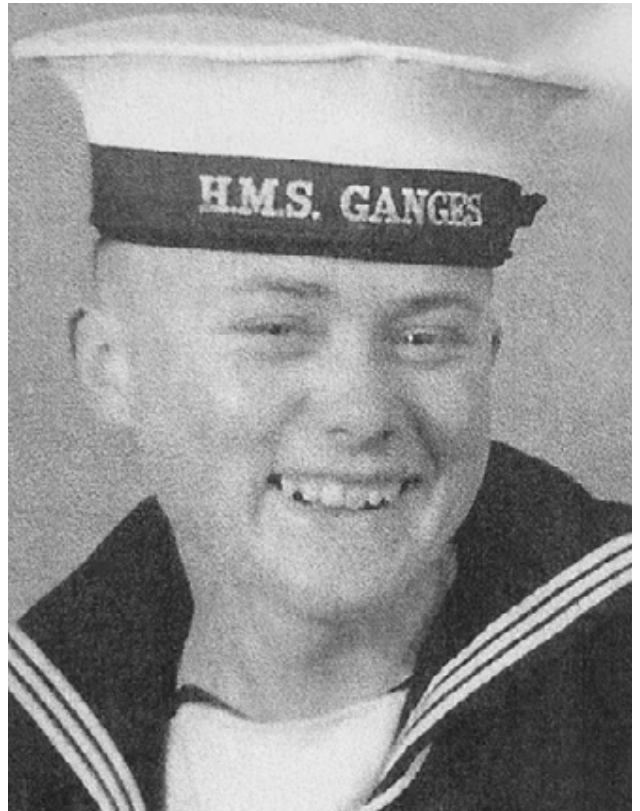
He was the Magician El Squalido's assistant 'Chung King', dressed as a young female, laid out horizontally on a table, and levitated as if by magic (by a battery-operated forklift hidden behind the curtain...).

In the other, he was 'Goldie Locks', dressed in a petite little girl's Sunday best frock, complete with a ponytail wig and white ankle socks.

He recalled the rehearsal being arduous work as the Sods Opera was to be Australia Television's first live outside broadcast. It turned out that the event was an enormous success!

He joined the St Neots & District Branch in 2004.

Keith Ridley recalls a phone call from him



around that time, pointing out that they were old shipmates, having both served in HMS Albion. Andy served as a Committee Member and was amongst the first to serve as a Charity Commission Trustee for the branch. He was always ready to volunteer and assist at all the branch's fund raising events, and a keen supporter of the branch's social events. The picture (below) of HMS Decoy is from the Imperial War Museum collection © Crown copyright reproduced under delegated authority from The Keeper of Public Records. Image: IWM (HU 129793).



### **S/M BOB PATTEN**

St Neots S/M Bob Patten crossed the bar peacefully at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital on 25 March 2026, aged 102.

According to his Branch shipmates, S/M Bob was a bit of a recluse, who never ventured out, and in his latter years was not much of a one for large gatherings.

Details about his Royal Navy service and subsequent life are a bit thin on the ground, but his colleagues state that he was born on 26 January 1924 and joined the Royal Navy in 1943. He served ashore in the Fleet Air Arm, maintaining various aircraft, as an Air Mech Ordinance First Class, and was discharged in 1946.

In retirement, he would drink a tot every day at the appointed hour - no doubt the secret of his longevity!

Rest in Peace Bob, your watch is over!



## S/M CONNIE GREGORY

South Bristol Branch report with sadness that World War 2 veteran S/M Connie Gregory crossed the bar on 12 March 2026 at the age of 103 years young.

Her funeral service was held at South Bristol Crematorium on 16 April, where members of South Bristol Branch joined up with Bristol Branch Association of Wrens (AOW) to form a Guard of Honour.

Three Standards were also in attendance – South Bristol Branch and the National and Branch Standards of the AOW.

On completion of the funeral service, refreshments were provided at HMS Flying Fox.

Connie, daughter to a Bristol river pilot, was born on 31 January 1923, and at an early age showed an aptitude for music – a passion that stayed with her throughout her life. When 14 years of age, Connie joined the Bristol Accordion Band, but very soon the world changed with the commencement of World War 2. Connie was keen to 'do her bit' and, hardly surprisingly, on her 16th birthday, joined the Bristol Wartime Entertainers and toured with the Seven Elliotts Musical Act to entertain the troops at various venues including 1,000 airmen at RAF Hullavington. At 17 years old, Connie worked at the Bristol Aircraft Company (BAC) in Filton, Bristol, as a 'Baffle Inspector' on warplanes.

During the war, the aircraft works was a constant target for German bombers, and on one such air raid, 200 workers were killed at the Rodney Works.

Despite losing some of her friends, Connie remained unscathed and continued her work with the Bristol Wartime Entertainers.

In 1943, aged 20, her involvement



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

In 1944, she met her future husband and married in September of that year.

Her time in the WRNS finished soon afterwards when she was honourably discharged in order to prepare for family life, initially for the imminent arrival of daughter Anita, and then later daughter Veda and son Marcus. Later, when her family had grown up, Connie became an active member of Bristol Branch Association of Wrens, based at HMS Flying Fox, and often carried the Branch Standard during Remembrance Day Parades. In due course, Connie became Branch President.

In November 2017, when aged 94, she was the oldest participant in the WRNS Centenary celebrations at RNAS Yeovilton.

She was also a Life Member of South Bristol Branch for 32 years.

Connie's musical interests continued, and when in her 80s, she joined the Pilning Church Choir.

She also became a volunteer on the SS Great Britain, initially helping with office work and then later playing the piano for visitors on board the ship, often being complimented by the public including celebrities such as Lucy Worsley (then Chief Curator of Historic Royal Palaces) and Elvis Costello.

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

Always being game to support the charity, at the age of 91, she climbed 15 rungs of the rigging on SS Great Britain during a sponsored rigging climb.

And at the age of 93, Connie took herself off to Italy where she climbed to the rim of Mount Vesuvius.

S/M Connie will be sadly missed by family, friends and shipmates alike, with many fond memories and leaves behind her two daughters Anita and Veda, son Marcus, five grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.



# STEP ON TO THE MILITARY-TO-MARITIME PATHWAY

A new collaboration between the White Ensign Association (WEA) and Maritime Solent aims to strengthen workforce resilience by connecting Naval talent with maritime careers across the Solent region in the South of England.

The new collaboration will support the development of the UK's first military-to-maritime pathway, developed through a cluster-led approach in the Solent, creating opportunities to connect Naval Service leavers, veterans and families with the maritime workforce in the region.

The initiative was marked at the Maritime Solent Summit in Portsmouth on 15 April, where Maritime Solent formally signed the Armed Forces

Covenant, reinforcing its commitment to the Armed Forces community and strengthening links between defence and industry.

The Solent is recognised as the UK's leading industrial maritime region, supporting over 146,600 jobs and generating £10.6 billion in economic value each year. With continued growth across the sector, attracting and developing a skilled workforce is a key priority for Maritime Solent and its members.

Through this collaboration, the WEA will work with Maritime Solent to support its partners and network in recognising the value of Service leavers and veterans, and shaping a structured, scalable approach to workforce development across the Solent maritime sector.

The WEA is the principal Naval charity supporting employment transition for the Royal Navy, working closely with the Service to assist Service leavers, veterans and families at critical points of change.

As a trusted intermediary, the WEA works across both sides of the recruitment relationship, supporting individuals and employers through every stage of the transition journey, from career discovery and preparation through to hiring and integration.

This includes one-to-one guidance, translation of military skills into civilian roles, employer engagement, and access to a bespoke digital platform, ensuring candidates are well prepared and aligned to employer needs.

The programme builds on the WEA's established employment support model, which aligns individual capability with employer demand.

It will develop over time as maritime employers engage, helping to shape pathways that reflect real workforce requirements and long-term skills needs.

This approach begins in the Solent as the UK's first cluster-led model,



helping to shape a pathway that may be extended across other regions and sectors.

The WEA attended the Maritime Solent Summit as an exhibitor, engaging directly with maritime employers to better understand workforce requirements and explore how Naval talent can support future capability.

Commodore Stuart Wright, Chief Executive Officer of the White Ensign Association, said: "At the White Ensign Association, we see first-hand how the skills and experience developed in Naval service translate strongly into the maritime sector, where operational understanding, technical capability and a strong safety culture are closely

aligned.

"Service leavers bring diligence, reliability and a background of working in demanding environments, offering real value to maritime employers.

"Our role is to support that transition through a structured pathway, helping individuals move into fulfilling civilian careers while enabling maritime employers to access ready-made maritime talent." Stuart Baker, Chief Executive Officer of Maritime Solent, said: "As the UK's leading industrial maritime region, supporting over 146,000 jobs and experiencing 3.1 per cent employment growth per annum, sustaining a skilled workforce is a key priority for Maritime Solent and its partners.

"Through our partnership with the White Ensign Association, we recognise the significant value that Service leavers and veterans can bring to the maritime sector in the Solent region.

"This commitment is set out in our Armed Forces Covenant pledge, which we were proud to sign at the Maritime Solent Summit."

The Solent Maritime network is incredibly diverse, with world-leading capability across ports and shipping, maritime defence, training, academia and research, shipbuilding, leisure marine, heritage and tourism, professional services and regulation.

Amongst those on the Board is the Naval Base Commander, Portsmouth, Cdre Marcel Rosenberg. Maritime employers in the Solent can find out more about the project and register interest in shaping the pathway using [this link](#).

If you would like more information on Maritime Solent, see their website: <https://maritimesolent.com>

For more details of the White Ensign Association and its programmes, see their website at <https://www.whiteensign.co.uk>



## SPACE – THE FINAL FRONTIER (FOR JOB-SEEKERS...)

While not exactly in the astronaut line of work, one of the jobs currently on offer on the SaluteMyJob website is for a Ground Station Engineer. Offering a salary of between £60,000 to £80,000, the permanent role requires someone who can own the maintenance, reliability and lifecycle of all antenna assets (range, hosted and proprietary).

This is a hands-on technical role combining preventative/corrective maintenance, deep troubleshooting (L1–L3), supplier/manufacturer liaison and formalisation of operational procedures to guarantee mission readiness for launches.

And while we are talking about space, there is plenty of that in the location of the job – the Shetland Islands, which is now home to SaxaVord Spaceport, the UK's first fully-licensed vertical launch spaceport.

Among the responsibilities of the job are:

- Operate, manage and conduct preventative and corrective maintenance on antenna systems, ACUs, modems, spectrum analysers, radomes and associated auxiliary equipment.
- Plan and coordinate maintenance activities with internal stakeholders, launch clients, GS operators, hosted parties and manufacturers.
- Lead on-site troubleshooting and fault resolution (fibre, RF links, rack/cabinet equipment); minimise downtime through decisive technical action.
- Act as primary technical point of contact for manufacturers, suppliers and launch clients; manage ticketing, spares and repair workflows.
- Maintain, update and implement installation,



maintenance and safety documentation; provide post-maintenance reporting.

- Support hardware procurement decisions and contribute technical input to scheduling and software development projects.

The post requires a degree in Engineering (aerospace/electrical/RF/telecom preferred), a minimum

five years' relevant experience in ground station, antenna or RF systems maintenance and operations, demonstrable RF expertise (link budgets, EIRP, polarization, antenna patterns) and troubleshooting experience, and a proven track record in fault diagnosis across L1–L3, vendor liaison and on-site repair campaigns

The ideal candidate should also be client-facing, organised, resilient under pressure, and have strong written documentation skills.

A willingness for frequent international travel and fluent English are also required, while an additional EU language would be advantageous. The right person will be a team player who can also work independently, and a good sense of humour is valued.

The relevant job reference is 00100240-1.

And if you are not peering into the sky for a new career, SaluteMyJob has plenty of other possibilities – they help employers identify roles best suited to ex-military people and collaborate with other commercial and charitable organisations to supply suitably-qualified candidates. For full details of the Ground Station Engineer post, and hundreds of other vacancies across a wide range of careers and disciplines, see <https://www.salutemyjob.com/>

### Your successful career transition starts here

The WEA Career Compass is a powerful digital platform that will support you to take your next steps into the civilian workplace with confidence.

Our expert employment team has developed this unique interface in response to Service leavers' challenges when approaching career transition, to support a successful journey of **discover** > **prepare** > **connect**.



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#### Explore Live Vacancies

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#### Submit Tailored Applications

Create strong, role-specific CVs and cover letters and apply directly to selected opportunities.

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# MAY SWINGING THE LAMP



HMS Dolphin/Fort Blockhouse during its time as an active submarine base. Image from the IWM collection: © Crown copyright reproduced under delegated authority from The Keeper of Public Records. Image: IWM (HU 84829)

**'Swinging the Lamp' events are drawn, by permission, from the definitive Naval history reference book *The Royal Navy Day by Day*, written by Honorary S/M Lawrie Phillips and published by The History Press ([www.thehistorypress.co.uk](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk)). It is currently available online for around £65 new (search ISBN number 978-0750982665)**

The military complex that would soon become HMS Dolphin in Gosport, the spiritual home of the Royal Navy's Submarine Service, was formally established on 2 May 1905 as a Submarine Boat Station, taking over from the Submarine Mining Station run by the Royal Engineers. The establishment was created around the fortification known as Fort Blockhouse, which first appeared on the western side of the mouth of Portsmouth Harbour in the 15th Century. Originally a small wooden tower was constructed in 1431, which went on to form one end of a heavy chain, anchored at the eastern end by a similar building near the site of the present Round Tower. The chain could be raised to block the harbour mouth in the event of an enemy attack. By the middle of the 16th Century the wooden building in Gosport had been replaced by a stone tower with ordnance, which was strengthened by the addition of 'Lynden's Bulwark', but the site fell into disrepair until the great Dutch military engineer Sir Bernard de Gomme rebuilt the fortifications in the 1660s, ironically during the second Anglo-Dutch War. Over the subsequent two centuries the state of the fort fluctuated, with periods of decay and rebuilding, until the Royal Engineers took over in 1873, developing the Submarine Mining Station for the defence of the harbour, linked by a light railway to nearby Fort Monckton. By the first decade of the 20th Century submarine flotillas were established at Portsmouth, Sheerness, Plymouth, Queenstown and Milford Haven, each with its own station. The Submarine Mining Station at Fort Blockhouse, complete with boats, stores etc, was handed over by the Army to the

Royal Navy on 23 January 1905, shortly before HMS A13, the last boat of the first all-British class of submarines (the A Class) was launched at Barrow-in-Furness. In February it was announced all training for Army submarine mine personnel starting in May that year was cancelled, and on 2 May 1905 the Admiralty took formal control of the site, signalling the start of a rapid building programme of support services and facilities for the fledgling Submarine Service which grew around the old buildings of Fort Blockhouse. It was known as the Submarine Boat Station Haslar through 1907, when the former screwship sloop-of-war HMS Dolphin was brought in to serve as an accommodation hulk. The hulk became the submarine depot ship in 1912, at which time the whole establishment adopted her name. By now the site was well-equipped to handle the growing submarine fleet, with accommodation, stores, jetties and a refuelling station, followed by training facilities. As the Royal Navy's principle submarine base, Dolphin was expanded between the World Wars, and the distinctive SETT (Submarine Escape Training Tower) was opened in 1954. With the end of the Cold War, the decision was made to base submarines at Devonport and Faslane; the last operational boat left Dolphin in 1994 and training at the establishment was wound down. Dolphin decommissioned in 1998 and the Royal Navy Submarine School packed up for good the following year, transferring to HMS Raleigh in Cornwall. While not actually house in Blockhouse, the site was also home to the Coastal Forces base HMS Hornet at various times throughout the 20th Century, supporting various MTBs, MGBs and Motor Launches. A trials unit succeeded the operational squadrons, and the site was eventually converted to a Joint Services Adventure Sail Training Centre. Other uses for the site included various operational and training medical units, including (for a brief period) the Defence Medical Training Organisation, the Royal Defence Medical College and 33 Field Hospital.

**For more events and actions on dates in May see our new History section on the RNA website (<https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/history>) – more will be added in the coming months.**

# LONGCAST

2026

<b>2 May</b>	Army v Navy rugby match, Twickenham
<b>8-9 May</b>	National Standard Bearers training and competition, HMS Collingwood, Fareham
<b>9 May</b>	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting (Stowmarket Branch)
<b>16 May</b>	Area 4 Meeting (St Austell Branch)
<b>16 May</b>	Scottish Area Uckers Competition, RBLS Club, Bathgate, West Lothian
<b>6 June</b>	Welsh Open Uckers Tournament, Builth Wells Rugby Club
<b>12-14 June</b>	National Conference and AGM, Salford Quays
<b>28 June</b>	Armed Forces Day
<b>4 July</b>	HMS Collingwood Open Day
<b>8 August</b>	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting (online)
<b>11 Sept</b>	CONA Conference, Portsmouth
<b>12 Sept</b>	Scottish Area Quarterly Meeting (City of Edinburgh Branch)
<b>19 Sept</b>	Area 4 Meeting (Weymouth Branch)
<b>3 Oct</b>	RNA Uckers World Championships, Royal Maritime Hotel, Portsmouth
<b>8 Nov</b>	Remembrance Sunday
<b>14 Nov</b>	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting
<b>13 Feb 2027</b>	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting

Please check the **RNA website** and the RN **Shipmates.co.uk** website for a list of further events

[www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)

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Visit [royalmaritimehotel.co.uk](http://royalmaritimehotel.co.uk) for more information and to book

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## MORE OFFERS

<b>Ship Anson pub, 10 The Hard, Portsea</b>	10% off food and drink
<b>Portsmouth Historic Dockyard</b>	£20 for a day ticket 30% off annual Ultimate Explorer tickets
<b>Royal Maritime Hotel 182 Queen Street</b>	A 10% discount on food, selected drinks and hotel rooms
<b>Sea Urchin's Gin</b> <b>Navy Strength Gin</b> <b>Arctic Convoy Vodka</b>	10% to RNA from the sale of each bottle  Don't forget to tick the box for RNA.  P&P is free for orders over £40, otherwise it is £4.50.
<b>China Fleet Country Club</b>	Click on the link for offers for Serving and ex-Serving RN and RM
<b>Trinity Insurance</b>	For offers see <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ssy8vt5s">https://tinyurl.com/ssy8vt5s</a>

## Delegate to Annual Conference 2026 – CITY OF SALFORD

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.*

*Full Members and Life Members are eligible to act as their Branch Delegate. Associate Members are eligible to be elected to act as their Branch Delegate provided that they have completed three years continuous membership of the Association immediately prior to election.*

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.

<b>Branch</b>		<b>Area</b>	
<b>Name of Delegate</b>			
<b>Delegate's e-mail</b>			
<b>Number of Observers if known</b>			
<b>Name of Branch Hon Secretary</b>			

**NB: A Delegate will not be confirmed as such unless or until the Branch Balance Sheet for 2025 and Branch Annual Report for 2025 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, Lanyard House, Scott Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth, PO1 3LU or email to [ams@massoc.org](mailto:ams@massoc.org)

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

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**8-10 year olds**

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Scotland - 27<sup>th</sup> June



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**Armed Forces Compensation**



**Professional Services Advice**



View upcoming events, and raise a case for confidential guidance at:

**[whiteensign.co.uk](http://whiteensign.co.uk)**





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