



SEMAPHORE CIRCULAR



RNA JOINS ANZAC DAY TRIBUTE

Members of RNA Central Office attended the Anzac Day Service of Remembrance on board HMS M33 at Portsmouth Naval Base on 25 April. The date marks the day when troops of the Australian and

New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed on the beaches of the Gallipoli peninsula in 1915 during World War 1, and evolved into a national day of remembrance for Australia, New Zealand and Tonga.

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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 – 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 6 June, and the deadline for material is 1000 on Thursday 5 June. Branch Notes will next be published on Friday 9 May, and Semaphore Shorts on Friday 16, 23 and 30 May.

The service, organised by the National Museum of the Royal Navy, was well-attended – including representatives from both Australia and New Zealand – and the readings were touching.

It was particularly poignant that the service was held on board HMS M33, a 580-ton monitor which is the only surviving Entente warship that saw service during the Gallipoli campaign in 1915-6.

The ship, which served at Gallipoli from August 1915 until the evacuation of Entente troops in January 1916, is open to the public as part of the historic ships collection at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard – see <https://www.nmrn.org.uk/visit-us/portsmouth-historic-dockyard/hms-m33>

The Royal Navy's waterborne role in the Gallipoli Campaign during World War 1 is widely known of, if not necessarily widely understood – but there is a part of the story which is often overlooked, with sailors fighting on land alongside their Anzac colleagues.

Gallipoli was conceived by the Entente Powers – Britain, France and the Russian Empire – as a way of neutralising the Ottoman Empire, thereby securing the route through the Dardanelles into the Black Sea, allowing supplies to be shipped to Russian warm-water ports, and protecting the Suez Canal route to the Middle East and Indian Ocean.

The campaign began in February 1915 with heavy bombardment by warships of defences along the Dardanelles, to be followed by an attempt by Entente naval forces to bludgeon their way through the strait and into the Sea of Marmara, where they would threaten Constantinople, the Ottoman capital (now Istanbul). The attempt failed – admittedly ships used were, in the main, somewhat obsolete, but losses were nevertheless heavy.

The Navy in the air were somewhat more successful, with RN Air Service squadrons providing ground support as well as valuable reconnaissance and artillery spotting.

However, the focus shifted to the land campaign, and amphibious landings were planned on the Gallipoli peninsula that would take Turkish forts and mobile gun batteries along the Dardanelles, allowing Entente ships unfettered access to the Sea of Marmara.



While the Entente nations made their somewhat laboured preparations, the Ottoman defences, bolstered by German know-how, were strengthened. There was also a tendency to underestimate the fighting prowess of some of the defending forces.

And so, on April 25 1915, the landings began around Cape Helles and what is now known as Anzac Cove, after the exploits of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps troops who fought their way ashore.

Amongst those troops who scrambled ashore onto the unforgiving Gallipoli Peninsula in late April were the men of the Royal Naval Division (RND) – sailors carrying out the role of infantry and earning themselves a great deal of respect in the process.

The first signs of the RND appeared on the outbreak of war in August 1914 with the creation of the Advanced Base Force, a brigade of men from the Royal Marine Light Infantry and Royal Marine Artillery that could take, create or defend temporary naval bases to support fleet operations or sustain land campaigns.

To this, on the orders of the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, were added two further Naval brigades, led by a handful of experienced NCO and senior ratings, but mainly composed of RNR and RNVR reservists and early war volunteers who were not yet needed to serve at sea. The RND was formally stood up on 21 September 1914.

Trained as infantry, and generally equipped with older weapons, the Naval element of the RND was not ready for war by the time the well-drilled Marine Brigade was called on to defend Belgian Channel ports at the end of August.



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After this brief foray the Marines were back in the firing line on 4 October, arriving on the front near Lier in requisitioned London buses on 4 October, followed by the rest of the Division two days later, the majority of them still without khaki uniforms, backpacks, mess tins or water bottles.

The RND was next in action at Gallipoli. The infantry sailors were involved in an initial feint, then went ashore in stages in the last week of April 1915, with members of a Marines battalion taking part in a fruitless attack on high ground early in the campaign.

Much as was happening on the Western Front, the opposing forces became trapped in a war of attrition; a major Ottoman assault on the Anzac sector in May resulted in massive casualties (around 3,000 Ottomans died, against 160 Kiwis) and a day-long truce to bury the dead, who had been lying in the hot sun for days or even weeks.

Various battalions of the RND were put under the temporary control of Army and Anzac commanders for specific actions, but with the sinking of battleship HMS Goliath on 13 May, followed by Triumph and Majestic on 25 and 27 May, the Entente advantage in heavy supporting Naval artillery was much diminished, and the two sides were reduced to occasional forays and constant sniping.

The RND was involved in another attempt at a breakthrough on 4 June at the Third Battle of Krithia, but the attack was repulsed with around 25 per cent casualties. The Division also suffered around 600 casualties in fending off an Ottoman thrust at Blood Valley on 12 July.

Summer brought nightmare scenarios of rotting corpses, flies, extreme heat, diseases such as dysentery and lack of water, and further attempts to break through Ottoman defences failed. With troops needed on the Western Front, it was becoming clear that the Gallipoli Campaign had well and truly run out of steam, such that by the autumn of 1915 plans were being considered for an evacuation.

There was no relief as summer turned to autumn, then

winter – men drowned in flooded trenches and died of exposure in snowstorms, while hundreds suffered frostbite. Throughout December Entente forces were gradually withdrawn from the beaches on which they had landed, and members of the Plymouth Battalion RMLI, of the RND, who had been among the first to go ashore, were the last men to leave Gallipoli on 9 January 1916.

From Gallipoli the RND shifted to France, where the troops took part in several key actions, including the latter stages of the Battle of the Somme (the Battle of the Ancre) the Arras Offensive in spring 1917, and the Third Battle of Ypres (the Second Battle of Passchendaele), fighting with courage and notable success while suffering heavy casualties.

Throughout the war the composition of the Division changed; losses (many through injuries and deaths, though at other times trained men were recalled to serve in the Fleet in the jobs they were originally recruited for) meant purely Naval battalions were replaced by Army formations, but the Naval ethos never diminished.

On 29 April 1916 the Division was transferred from the control of the Admiralty to the War Office, later being redesignated the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division, and it continued to fight on the Western Front until the Armistice. Inevitably, imbued as it was with Naval traditions and traits, the Division earned a reputation for being different – quirky to some, 'difficult' to others (depending on their military perspective), it was run on Naval lines, using Naval terminology and etiquette, which was quite bewildering to those who served alongside them in the trenches.

The Division was demobbed in France in the spring of 1919, having suffered almost 50,000 casualties during the war.

Men of Howe Battalion, RND, sleeping in the firing line at Gallipoli. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection: copyright Image: IWM (Q 109199)



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FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Ahoy Shipmates!

Welcome to the May issue of the Semaphore Circular and hello to the sunshine too! Let's hope it's a sign of good things to come. We know it's heading towards summer when Malcolm in the office shifts into tropical rig and we're near blinded by the early season whiteness of his pins.

Meanwhile, we are all working ourselves up into a froth in Central Office trying to make the most of the RNA being the Charity of the Day at Twickenham tomorrow for the eagerly awaiting annual Army v Navy match. For those who were at the match last year, it was a cracking game, with the RN playing some superb rugby and being in the lead until the very last play. Let's hope we can put it out of sight tomorrow. More than 600 shipmates have bought their tickets through the RNA so it will be great to see such a large part of the Association represented in the crowd. And it's great that we now have our own hospitality suites within the stadium too. Thank you to all the Central Office team, and especially Dave MacAskill, who I know has been digging out blind on this for a while now. For those who are going don't forget to stop at the RNA stand to get your wrist bands for the suite and also to have a guess at the number of rugby balls in my little car!

We waved off the Prince of Wales a fortnight back as she sailed on Op Highmast, her deployment to the Far East (see more [here](#)). As ever, she looked fantastic with the Ships Company dressed in No1s and lining the deck on Procedure Alpha. Just fabulous to see the number of people turn out to wave her off; the seafront from the Round Tower all the way down was crammed with folks proud of their Royal Navy. Best wishes all.

Heartiest congratulations to Jeff Hughes on his award of the National President's Commendation which was awarded on the Quarterdeck of HMY Britannia to recognise his part in the establishment of Tot Time, which has now been running for more than five years. And thanks to both Jeff and Andy Fletcher for organising the visit to HMY, and to Edinburgh Branch for hosting other parts of the weekend – see [here](#).

Sad day yesterday, saying farewell to S/M Steve Caulfield whose funeral it was in Salford (see more [here](#)). Taken too young at only 67, I learned that Steve was only in the mob for three years but nevertheless was a great RNA man, proud of his service. As well as being Chair of the City of Salford Branch he was also the No 10 Area Chairman and did lots for the RNA nationally as well as locally. It was heartbreaking to



hand over the flag which had adorned his coffin to his widow Anne. RIP Steve, you will be missed.

I should also say that I was sad to attend the funeral earlier in the month of George Osbourne of Dorchester Branch who, as a Battle of the Atlantic World War 2 hero, crossed the bar at the tender age of 102.

I also had the joy of attending the 100th birthday party of Shipmate Alec Penstone, who was 100 last week, and his Isle of Wight Branch did him proud (see more [here](#)). He was in fabulous shape and was danced merrily round by the D-Day Darlings, looking fabulous in their 1940s WRAF uniforms, who had come down from the Midlands and sang for him. It was lovely. In fact, although he survived the Nazis, he nearly didn't survive the attentions of the D-Day Darlings who smothered him in lipstick and nearly kissed him to death!

Finally, on the fundraising front, we are looking for couples to rep the RNA in RNRMC's Race Across the UK, which is a more limited version of the Race Across the World seen on TV (details [here](#)). Please see details in this Circular here. Be brave! It'll be fun. And BZ to all those Branches who are doing a fundraising event on the back of VE80 – that's great!

C'mon the Navy!

Bill

NEVER MIND A RACE ACROSS THE WORLD – CAN YOU HANDLE A RACE ACROSS THE UK?

Many of the nation's viewers are gripped by the exploits of teams of two making their way from China to India in pursuit of a prize.

Their Race Across the World sees them plot their way across unfamiliar territory without the ability to use air travel, mobiles or bank cards, and they have a limited amount of cash to get them to their destination. Think you could do that? Well, you could try your luck with a UK version of the challenge – and what's more, you can do it under the banner of the RNA!

The Association is aiming to enter four teams in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity's Race Across the UK in September.

One team is already signed up and raring to go – RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant and Communications Lead Sarah Bewley are steeling themselves for the event. Now Sarah would like to hear from three more pairs of shipmates who think they might be able to race from Scotland to the West Country, raising vital funds for RNRMC in the process.

Teams will start in Edinburgh, and have four days to reach Dartmouth, relying on ingenuity, stamina and teamwork to get there before any of their rivals.

You'll need to partner with someone you trust – someone who will motivate you and help power through when the journey gets tough.

Together, you will tackle the UK's stunning and diverse landscapes, without the help of navigation apps, and no cars, and no planes.

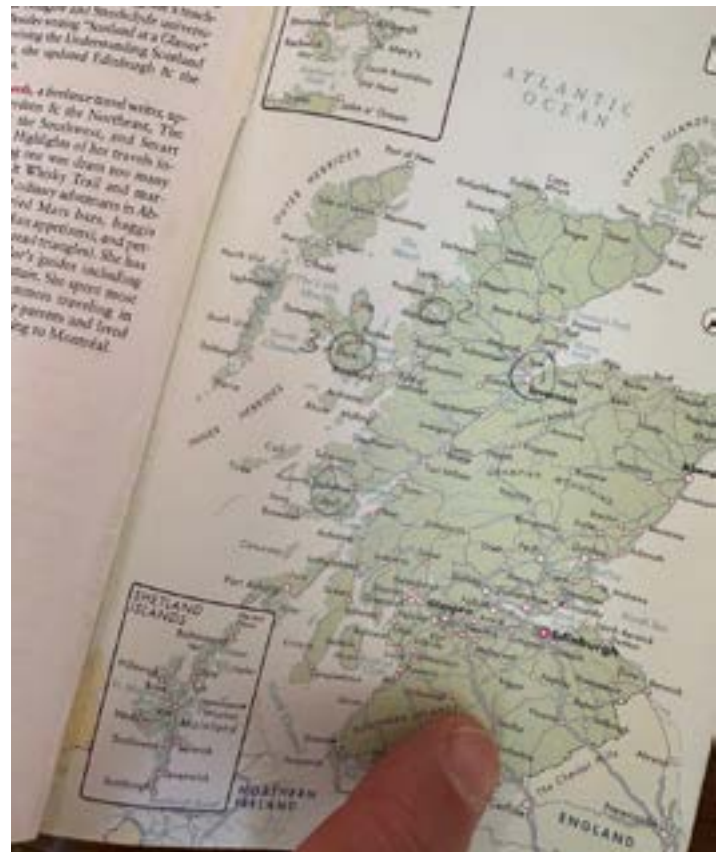
You will rely solely on your wits, a traditional map, and whatever you can carry on your back as you make your way from one checkpoint to the next.

This challenge offers a unique opportunity to test your limits, all while raising vital funds for an exceptional cause.

The Race will take place from 2-5 September, and there is a strict limit of 50 participating pairs – 100 people in all.

There is a fundraising target of £1,500 per person, and RNRMC will give you plenty of support to reach and smash that target.

Participants must be 16+.



By signing up for Race Across the UK, you will play a significant part in improving the lives of those who serve our nation.

With spaces limited to just 50 pairs, apply now to secure your place and help the RNRMC make a difference.

If you would like to be one of the RNA teams, please contact Sara on cml@rnassoc.org.

For more details of what the event entails, see <https://lupine.co.uk/race/2025-rnrmc-race-across-the-uk.html>

CHELMSFORD CITY TO HOST REMEMBRANCE RACEDAY

Following the success of their last two Remembrance Racedays, Chelmsford City Racecourse is to repeat the event this year on the evening of Thursday 6 November. On this raceday, they will once again be offering current and past serving members of the Armed Forces two complimentary adult tickets to come to the raceday. Children under the age of 18 will be admitted for free and are welcome to attend as well.

Organisers have not yet confirmed the running order for the day, but they hope that it will be on a similar basis to previous years, with a wreath-laying ceremony, choir and private marquee for those with the complimentary Armed Forces tickets.

Gates will open at 3.30 (to be confirmed)

Applications can be accepted by the following methods:

- Completing the application form at the end of this Circular (see here) and sending it back to info@chelmsfordcityracecourse.com
- Completing the form online at <https://chelmsfordcityracecourse.com/whats-on/thursday-nights-sponsored-by-betfair-3490929>

Please note that photographic ID of military or veterans status will need to be included with your application.

Organisers understand that not all veterans are in possession of an ID card, therefore please call them if that is the case.

Once your application has been approved, they will remove your ID from their system.

Children under 18 can attend this raceday free of charge, but need to be included in this application.

If you wish to purchase further adult tickets, please see the racecourse website at www.chelmsfordcityracecourse.com or call 01245 360300.

Please allow the public to pay tribute to your service by attending in uniform representing your unit, Service or regiment, and proudly display any medals.

All uniformed military or veterans will be invited into the Parade Ring for the wreath-laying ceremony, depending on space.

Organisers are accepting applications for tickets as from now, on completion of the relevant booking form, with the deadline to apply being Monday 3 November.



ALEC CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY WITH DARLINGS

S/M Alec Penstone, an active member of the Isle of Wight Branch, has just celebrated his 100th birthday. A veteran of the Battle of the Atlantic and D-Day, Alec (pictured in his younger days with his mate Yorkie, – Alec is on the left) was in foot-tapping good form and having a great time at his birthday party at the Trouville Hotel, Sandown, which was made all the livelier through an appearance by the D-Day Darlings, who presented Alec with a copy of their new album *Victorious*. Alec joined the Navy after he promised his father he would not serve in the trenches because of the horrors he had witnessed in World



War 1. He finished his training in December 1943 and served on submarines before being moved to HMS Campania, an escort aircraft carrier, taking part in Arctic Convoys to Russia. The ship played a vital role in the D-Day Landings as it was used to sweep for mines and search for U-boats. Alec spent his time three decks down on constant action station and on watch. After a week in the Normandy area, Alec and Campania returned to Arctic Convoys and made a total of ten crossings. He married Gladys on Saturday 21 July 1945 and left for duty the following Monday morning, serving a further 14 months in the Far East before being demobbed. They were married for 75 years.

SHINING SPOTLIGHT ON POOLE'S ROLE IN DUNKIRK EVACUATION

There is plenty of activity and attention around the 80th Anniversary of Victory in Europe this month, under the collective banner of VE80. It is a chance to celebrate the end of conflict on our continent and to remember those who served and gave their lives for our freedom. But 2025 is also the 85th anniversary of the Evacuation of France – Operation Dynamo, which saw an heroic effort to pluck Allied troops from the jaws of defeat as German forces swept through Belgium and Northern France. Without the success of these operations, overseen by Admiral Bertram Ramsay (see right) VE Day would have been severely delayed, if it happened at all. Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay and his staff had nine days to plan and execute this 'miracle', centred on Dunkirk. By the time Dynamo was over, the operation had far exceeded all expectations, spiriting almost 340,000 fighting men from ports and beaches in France across the Channel to safety. Poole, in Dorset, played a

significant part in this event, and is commemorating its involvement with an exhibition in the Poole Lighthouse Theatre and a display running concurrently in The Gather unit within the Dolphin Shopping Centre from until 27 May. A short documentary has also been produced to tie in with the programme. The project has been produced by Poole Maritime Trust and supported by the local community and organisations including Poole Business Improvement Development, the RNLI, the National Trust, The Keep Military Museum and others. The story starts with the arrival of over 3,200 Dutch refugees in Poole and the boats being requisitioned by the RN and taken to Dunkirk. The exhibition will be open every day from 1000 to 1800 in the Lighthouse and 2000 in The Gather. One of the driving forces behind the programme is S/M Jack Hawkins, a Royal Navy veteran and a Trustee of the Poole Maritime Trust. www.poolemaritimetrust.org



VE80 AT RAMSAY MUSEUM

The Admiral Ramsay Museum, in the Scottish Borders, is holding a special 80th anniversary commemoration of VE Day on the afternoon of Sunday 11 May. This special event will include a visit to the museum, a treasure hunt and cream teas, as well as a minute's silence to remember the fallen. Admiral Bertram Ramsay was the mastermind behind the near-miraculous evacuation of some 340,000 troops from Dunkirk in 1940 (Operation Dynamo) and his supreme planning and logistical skills were a huge factor in the success of the Normandy Landings, when Ramsay was Naval Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Naval Expeditionary Force. Her died in a plane crash near Paris in January 1945. The museum is in a converted garden store in the grounds of the Ramsay family home, Bughtrig House, to the east of the village of Leitholm, near Coldstream. Tickets are £10 adults, £5 children, and must be booked in advance. For more details see the advertisement at the back of this Circular here.



SHIPMATES ENJOY SPECIAL TOUR OF YACHT

A weekend gathering in Edinburgh would not have been complete without a visit to the Royal Yacht. And a visit to the Royal Yacht would not be the same without inside information...

So it was lucky that the **Wrexham** shipmates who enjoyed the gathering had the services of S/Ms Jeff Hughes and Andy Fletcher on hand to recount their time as 'Yotties' in Britannia and to show their shipmates around. During the Friday night reception, RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant presented S/M Jeff Hughes with the National President's Commendation

for services to the RNA – Jeff, along with Kevin Hackett and Eric Holmwood, set up the Wrexham Branch 'Tot Time' virtual meetings when the country first went into lockdown because of Covid in 2020, and the Saturday evening virtual meetings are still going strong today. The RNA party reconvened in Leith the following morning for a guided tour of the ship with many a dit and a few 'access all areas' moments. Things got a little messy on Saturday evening when Edinburgh Branch hosted a karaoke session at the Hibs Supporters Club.

But everyone was in fine fettle again on Sunday morning when shipmates attended a delightful

Palm Sunday visit to Canongate Kirk (the Kirk of Holyroodhouse and Edinburgh Castle). Standard Bearers from far and wide put on a majestic display, delighting the couple who happened to be having their son christened that morning.



TWICKERS THIS WEEKEND – THEN IT’S ALL EYES ON PORTSMOUTH

The second of the RNA's 'Big Five' 75th anniversary events takes place tomorrow at Twickenham, when the Royal Navy's men's and women's teams take on their Army counterparts in a festival of high-quality rugby – at least, that's what has been served up over the years at the home of England rugby. 2023 saw the Navy men finally break a winless streak that stretched back to 2011, with just a single draw in 2016 to show for their efforts. But 2023 was a triumph worth celebrating, when the Dark Blues put the Army to the sword by 39-22, the biggest winning margin since 2001. They very nearly notched a second victory in 2024 in a nailbiting, free-flowing game, storming to a 29-5 half-time lead in front of 46,000 passionate supporters. But the Army clawed their way back into the match, and broke the matelots' hearts with an injury-time try to steal the game 43-42. The women's game was not quite as close, with the Army racking up a considerable points tally, but the Navy women never let their heads drop and continue to make progress as a squad. For full details of the programme for tomorrow, including how to access your tickets, see the document at the end of the Circular [here](#). After Twickenham, all eyes



turn to Portsmouth for the **RNA Annual Conference** weekend on 20-22 June. A package deal covering the three main entertainment elements of the weekend has been organised at a discounted price of £120. The package covers the welcome reception on board HMS Warrior 1860 on Friday evening (20 June), a Gala Dinner in Boathouse No 7 on Saturday night and a special anniversary gathering at the official home of the Second Sea Lord in the Naval Base, following the Sunday morning service. Please note, the deadline for purchasing combined tickets is **this Sunday, 4 May**. Tickets can be obtained from the RNA shop at www.rnagizzet.co.uk

Once the Annual Conference is done and dusted we will be concentrating on the **Naval Associations Biennial Parade** in London on 14 September, when we want to see a good turnout from our shipmates and other Naval Associations. Further details of arrangements for the day will



be promulgated through the Semaphore publications and social media channels in due course. The final event of our national Big Five is the **charity fundraising concert** on 22 October at Portsmouth Guildhall, featuring

Fisherman's Friends, the RNA Community Choir and the Band of His Majesty's Royal Marines from HMS Collingwood. Shipmates' discounted tickets are no longer available, but tickets are still on general sale – see [here](#) for details.

NOW, VOYAGER, YOU COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Shipmates are generally a well-travelled group – not just in days gone by with the Grey Funnel Line, but in more recent times, perhaps revisiting old haunts or trying somewhere new.

Well, if that is the case, you may be of help to those who travel in the future.

The Defence Debriefing Team (DDT) is an organisation that works for the Ministry of Defence to collect information which may help inform foreign travel, risks and concerns. One conversation could make all the

difference – so you might consider joining others in sharing your travel experiences

Your insights and knowledge from travelling can support understanding and inform the MOD and UK government.

The DDT conducts voluntary debriefs with individuals returning from countries of interest.

These debriefs can provide vital information and contribute to national security.

If you have travelled to or from a country of interest to the MOD

they may want to speak to you to learn about your experiences and insights.

If you are not sure whether or not you have travelled to a country of interest, please get in touch.

Your information could be used to provide up-to-date safety and security advice to the UK government and other people travelling abroad.

You can contact the DDT confidentially at any time. Email DDT at DCC-Group@mod.gov.uk



**ROYAL NAVAL
ASSOCIATION**

RNA75 Annual Conference Programme

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, 20-22nd June 2025

FRIDAY

HMS Warrior canapé & drinks reception, Ceremonial Sunset

1830 - 2130 (Rig – RNA No Is neg medals, or equivalent - relaxed jackets if hot)

SATURDAY

AGM begins 0930 (Boathouse #5), coffee from 0815 – all welcome (Rig – RNA No Is neg medals)

Gala Dinner in Boathouse #7, 1830 for 1900 (Rig - black tie or equivalent)

Entertainment

SUNDAY

Muster at RNA Falklands Memorial Garden (Central Office) from 0900

0945 Parade of Standards, march/bimble to church

Church Service, St Ann's Church 1000 (Rig – as Shipmates feel appropriate)

followed by refreshments in Admiralty House and official RNA Conference Photograph

75th anniversary cake cutting

Departure

Tickets for all 3 social events £120 per person – deadline is 4 May.

AGM free to all.

Book via <https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk>

STAND EASY TO RAISE FUNDS FOR RNRMC

VE80 Stand Easy Celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day – and support our veterans. On 8 May 1945, communities across the UK staged street parties and events to honour those who fought for our freedom. Now, for VE80, Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity is asking you to come together

once more – this time, to help their veterans Stand Easy. Whether it's a street party, office bake sale or an informal gathering, you will be making a difference. Host a VE Day celebration and raise funds for RNRMC. RNA branches can sign up to receive a special fundraising

pack and help the Stand Easy by emailing cml@rnassoc.org – see the flyer at in this Circular [here](#). Individuals and branches are asked to sign up via Central Office and please ensure that you send any money raised this way to the RNRMC via this link: <https://tinyurl.com/34ad6efp>

EXPLAIN THE 'PARTY CHAIN'

Denise Charlesworth has been looking into her grandfather's Royal Navy record, but has hit a stumbling block – parts of his military record were blanked out. He served during World War 2 from 1943-6, and from what her uncle remembers, he could have been "a naughty sailor always in trouble". While piecing his career together, Denise started to investigate one thing her uncle did remember – he mentioned a floating dock and for a while was based in Alexandria in Egypt. "I started my research looking at the AFD [Admiralty Floating Dock] records and discovered that AFD5 was in Alexandria during World War 2," said Denise. "I even found some footage of it leaving the UK. There was loads of confusion about it being in Scotland or Devonport, but in the end I went with the archive footage.

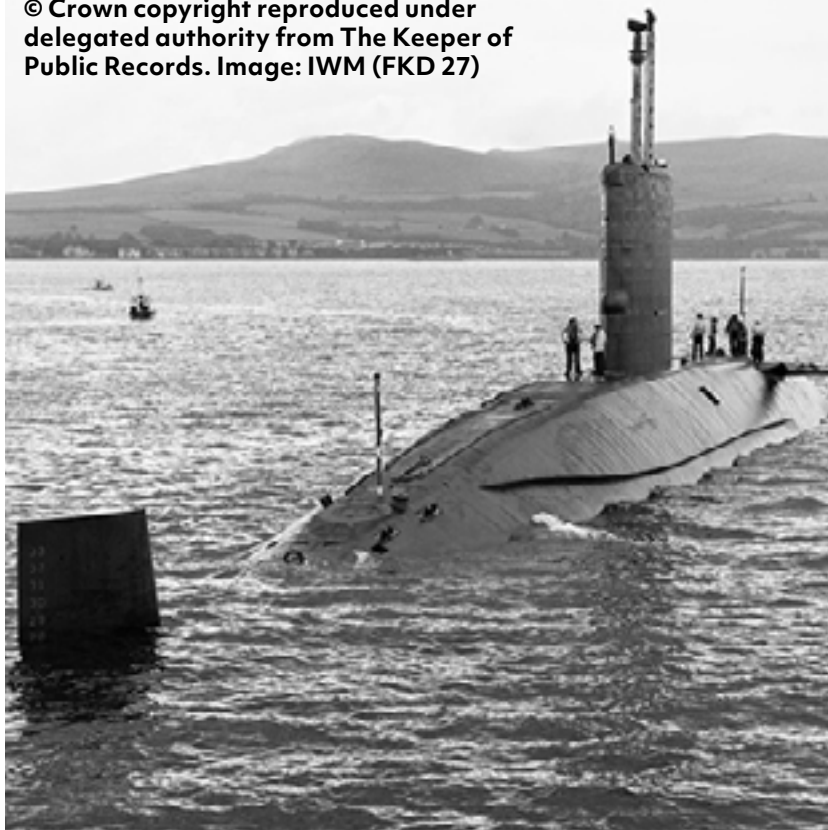
"I have to admit, when the records arrived I was a little bit mystified as to why they would blank out his trade, but it did confirm that he was based in Egypt, but also Italy, which he never mentioned. "I believe it is not normal to blank out the trade, and his record seems to show him moving about all over the place, not really staying anywhere for longer than a couple of months. "I am assuming this is not normal as generally people were assigned to a specific ship or site." Furthermore there is reference to the term 'Party Chain', which would seem to refer to a group on a duty or special service. If anyone can help Denise with her efforts, contact her via Central Office on cml@rnassoc.org

CONQUEROR DOCUMENTARY CALL

Samphire Films are producing a new landmark documentary series for Channel 4 that focuses on the events surrounding the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano in 1982.

The aim of the documentary is to bring together the definitive account of the events through people who were involved at the time. If you were on board HMS Conqueror in 1982 and would like to hear more about the documentary please get in touch with Sarah Bewley at Central Office on cml@rnassoc.org. To reassure shipmates, there is no commitment to any filming at this stage and all calls will be confidential.

HMS Conqueror returns to Faslane from the Falklands on 3 July 1982. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Crown copyright reproduced under delegated authority from The Keeper of Public Records. Image: IWM (FKD 27)



QUICK QUOTE FOR TRAVEL INSURANCE

As a member of the Royal Naval 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. The link is <https://tinyurl.com/yxvwvsy5>

AIMING HIGH

If you're up for a challenge (and have a head for heights), Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity would like to hear from you.

The charity is staging a Spinnaker Tower Abseil at Gunwharf in Portsmouth on 5 July, promising participants "a challenge that will test your nerve to the limits". It is open to people of all ages and fitness levels. You will be met with an incredible view of Portsmouth Harbour – in return there is a registration fee of £45, and an expected fundraising target of £400 per person. For more details see <https://www.rnrmc.org.uk/2025-spinnaker-tower-abseil>



Image: S/M Nigel Huxtable

CARRIER STRIKE GROUP FLIES THE FLAG

Aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales left Portsmouth last month to lead a strike group to the far side of the world. The carrier is at the heart of Operation Highmast, which will take the task group to the western Pacific Rim via the Mediterranean and Middle East, with a series of large-scale exercises with Britain's allies and partners. The goal of the deployment is to

reaffirm the UK's commitment to the security of the Mediterranean and Indo-Pacific region, demonstrate collective resolve with our allies and showcase British trade and industry. Over the course of the deployment more than 4,500 British military personnel will be involved, the majority of them from the Senior Service. Shortly after Prince of Wales left her

home base, F-35B Lightning jets of 809 Naval Air Squadron and 617 Sqn RAF flew from their base at RAF Marham in Norfolk to join the rest of the powerful air wing, which includes various Merlin and Wildcat helicopters and drones. Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer was on hand to watch the aircraft join, underlining the importance of the deployment to the country. The task group formed up as it approached the Strait of Gibraltar; included are an Astute-class submarine, destroyer HMS Dauntless, frigate HMS Richmond, RFAs Tidespring and Tideforce, Norwegian warships HNoMS Maud and Roald Amundsen, and Spanish frigate Mendez Nunez. Before the operation is over, in December, units of the carrier strike group will have visited allied nations including Japan and Australia.



Images: ©UK MOD CROWN COPYRIGHT, 2025

WELFARE AND WELLBEING

SAILING CAMP BRINGS TOGETHER STUDENTS FROM ACROSS EUROPE

The RNA is once again hosting the annual International Maritime Confederation's Youth Sailing Camp, which this year will run from 19 to 26 July, bringing together international students from similar organisations to the Association from across Europe. This year, alongside the invited international students, we are expanding and offering a limited number of places to children from within the RNA family.

Sailing activities will take place at the nearby Alton Water (see <https://anglianwaterparks.co.uk/alton-water>), and conducted by their fully-trained staff.

Accommodation for the week will be in a boarding house at the Royal Hospital School, near Ipswich.

RNA transport will be available from most areas of the UK at no extra cost. Off the water, activities will be organised and run by RNA staff each day, and with this being an international event, everyone has the chance to make friends with other naval children from around Europe. Many participants from last year's sailing camp all still in touch with each other.

The week is expected to cost around £800 per child (four full days' sailing and all food and accommodation), but, depending on the family or child's



circumstances, you may possibly be eligible for help from your RNA Branch, Central Office or other sources of funding to significantly reduce this cost. The intended age range is 15-18, but consideration will be given outside of this range depending on individual circumstances.

In order to register your interest in

taking part, please email Kate at ceo-ea@rnassoc.org in the first instance. Please include your name, a telephone number, your RNA membership number, your relationship to the child, and any notable mitigating factors (eg Service child, parent/carer deployed, single parent family, additional needs, multiple siblings etc). Deadline for this is 18 May.

TAKE THE PLUNGE FOR FREE

The Swim Free programme offers free swimming lessons and training to serving Royal Navy, Royal Marines, and Royal Fleet Auxiliary families. Open to families with a current serving parent, the programme offers swimming lessons for young people as well as training opportunities for partners and spouses, aligned to the Swim England or Scottish Swimming Pathways.

Funded by Greenwich Hospital and delivered in partnership with the Andrew Simpson Foundation, Swim Free facilitates the opportunity for families to build new connections and share experiences, with lessons offered exclusively for the RN community. Learning to swim is an essential life skill for young people, but also supports and helps them maintain positive mental health, grow their confidence, resilience,

and willingness to try new things – all while keeping active.

Programme organisers are currently establishing a network of delivery centres across the UK, with lessons currently under way in Lymington, Plymouth, Poole and Portsmouth. It is hoped to start lessons in Helston, Fareham and Gosport in the coming months. Lessons can be booked, or families can register interest, at <https://swim-free.org.uk/>, as well as find out lots of helpful information on the programme. If families have registered interest in a specific location, the Swim Free team will contact them as soon as lessons come become available in the relevant area.

You can also find out more about the initiative on Facebook and Instagram, search for @SwimFreeCommunity.

FUNERAL GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE

"The RNA has launched our Funeral Guide, and reminds shipmates that we offer ceremonial and administrative support for our members and all those who have served in Our Naval Forces." – Jon Everett, Welfare and Wellbeing Support Co-ordinator wws@rnassoc.org, telephone 07591 829416
Find the guide on our website: <https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/rna-funeral-guide>

CLUB SALE WILL HELP SUPPORT THE BEREAVED

Aberystwyth Branch has made a donation to Central Office of £50,000 which will make a big difference to the Association's welfare provision. Aberystwyth recently sold its club and decided that the money would be best used to support those in need. The branch pledged £50,000 to Central Office to develop a new Funeral Support Service. This service is available to all RNA

members and their families, or anyone with a Royal Navy background, and now has a dedicated member of staff to give support and advice when navigating bereavement and funeral requirements. John Davies, Honorary Treasurer for Aberystwyth Branch, said: "We are pleased that the money will help the RNA provide much-needed funeral support to families throughout the UK." The need for support is clear, and the

Royal Naval Association expressed how proud they are that regional branches use their funds to support their community and improve the lives of their shipmates.

RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant said: "While it is sad that the club had to close, we commend the remaining members of RNA Aberystwyth for donating the proceeds of the sale to improve the situation of others.

"This is truly the ethos of the RNA – comradeship and support to those who need it most.

"We are very grateful that this Branch have enabled us to start the new Funeral Support Service, which has already been used by a number of families in their darkest hour."

The Aberystwyth Branch of the RNA is also set to



close, with only a very few members remaining.

Those members, and anyone who may be interested in joining the RNA in the Aberystwyth area in the future, are able to join the Lanyard Branch, which is a virtual branch where members get weekly communications keeping them in touch with the wider Naval family.

The RNA brings together everyone with a Naval story.

Its aim is to foster comradeship and commemoration.

SCOTTISH INITIATIVE FUNDED

Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity has been awarded £368,500 over three years by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (AFCFT) to deliver a new project, Strengthening

Families – West of Scotland, focused on supporting RN submariner families facing challenges of separation.

The funding forms part of the AFCFT's Apart Not Alone portfolio, and will

enable RNRMC to launch a regionally focused programme, bringing organisations together to improve mental health and wellbeing, fostering community connection, and enhancing social support.

A dedicated RNRMC team will be based locally and work alongside community partners to provide tailored services and strengthen long-term family resilience.

DON'T MISS OUT...

The Semaphore Circular and Semaphore Short publications are an important part of the RNA's '7Cs' provision to its members, so it is important that Branches have an accurate record of members' email addresses – please make sure members keep you abreast of any changes, or would like to be added to the dist list.

Lanyard Branch members should email Sarah Bewley on cml@rnassoc.org if they are having issues with receiving the newsletters.

Please have dist lists up to date by 1 June, when we will be carrying out a major update of the Central Office database.

LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY WITH WILL

If you need to update or create a new will you can take advantage of a free service, where you can also leave a lasting legacy by helping the Royal Naval Association to continue to support Shipmates in need.

This spring we've partnered with expert estate planners, Octopus Legacy, so you can write or update your will for free – over the phone, or in person, and home visits can be arranged as well.

Call 020 4525 3605 and quote 'The Royal Naval Association' to make your appointment. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 0900-1730.

All they ask is that you consider leaving the Royal Naval Association a gift in your will.

For more information see the web page at <https://buff.ly/44BjG39>

COURT IS NOT THE ONLY ANSWER...

Non court dispute resolution (NCDR) in the family courts – what is it, and how can you use it?

There have been some important changes to the Family Procedure Rules (FPR) in the past two years which mean that in the family law arena, parties are encouraged to constructively engage with non-court dispute resolution (NCDR) before they can ask the court for help. The goal is to facilitate an early resolution – whether that relates to financial claims on divorce, or disputed children matters. The objective is sensible, especially where the court are overstretched with a backlog of cases and litigation is expensive. Always keep NCDR in mind if you find yourself in a family law dispute, and here's why. The definition of NCDR has been widened to make it more accessible, and forums for resolution can now be far more creative than simply making an application to court. The FPR changes also mean that parties cannot simply use NCDR as a tick-box exercise before asking the court for help, and exemptions have been restricted. There is much more scrutiny by the court of compliance with NCDR, and the court will go as far as asking the parties at an early stage in proceedings what efforts have been made to reach an agreement and their views on NCDR as a means of resolving the dispute. NCDR is not compulsory, but if parties fail to engage in NCDR without good reason in financial remedy proceedings, there might be cost consequences. Ouch! NCDR should be seen as a cost-effective and efficient tool to reach an agreement outside of a formal court environment. If it works, NCDR is going to cost far fewer pennies than a court application and everything that then follows. The format and forum of NCDR can be tailored to meet the specific needs of the parties, and the issues can be dealt with flexibly. NCDR is not a one-size-fits-all approach, and how it works will be subject to the parties' attitude who use it.

NCDR methods might include:

1: Mediation – this is not relationship counselling! Mediation is a means of resolving disputes in an amicable, non-confrontational manner that meets the needs of both parties. It can take place jointly with a mediator, or separately where a mediator can shuttle between the parties. Mediation can often be a quicker, more amicable, and less stressful process than other dispute forums. We offer a mediation service at Knights, so if this is something that might be appropriate for you, let me know and I can pop you in touch with my

Emma Jones 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 – herself a member of the RNA – has represented several personnel in the Royal Navy, from ABs to Vice Admirals. She understands the difference between civvie and military life and the impact this may well 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.



Knights

colleagues.

2: Arbitration – a legally binding alternate court where the parties appoint an independent arbitrator to decide the outcome. Family arbitration is like the court process in that an arbitrator will produce a decision after considering the evidence and each party's case. See it as a private but legally binding process. The parties control the pace and speed of arbitration, choose the arbitrator themselves (often guided by lawyers if represented) and control the procedure – ie whether it takes place remotely, what issues need to be determined, what information is required to help the arbitrator and there is consistency (the same arbitrator will deal with the matter, rather than different judges at different hearings).

3: pFDR (private financial dispute resolution) – similar to arbitration, but without the outcome being binding. The parties engage in a court-like process where a privately appointed judge, agreed and chosen by the parties, gives an indication of a likely outcome, with the view that this will encourage the parties to reach a financial settlement. A pFDR hearing would not be appropriate in children disputes as it is dealt with by a private specialist financial remedy judge.

4: Collaborative law - there are specialist collaboratively trained lawyers (and we have a few at Knights) who will join their clients at a collection

of remote or in-person meetings with the other party and their legal representative. Often collaborative law includes round-table meetings – everyone gets round a table (enjoys a cuppa) and has a chat about the issues and what is required to reach a resolution. There might also be other professionals such as financial advisors, family consultants who join to encourage agreement between the parties.

At Knights, we understand that family law matters require a tailored, compassionate, and strategic approach. These are all the key benefits of NCDR: confidentiality, faster resolutions, reduced conflict and cost-effective solutions. Knights have one of the largest family law teams in the UK and we have the expertise, resources, and national reach to provide clients with the best possible options for resolving disputes outside of court.

The emphasis on NCDR means that parties who need help with family law matters (including divorce, finances, children issues) should be exploring smarter and more efficient ways to resolve disputes. I'm here to help navigate these issues, and for all other family law questions!

I am an Associate in the family team at Knights, but I am also the fiancée of a submariner, come from a military family and have a little girl who is one year old.

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

www.linkedin.com/in/emmxjones
emma.jones@knightsplc.com

Royal Naval Association Lottery



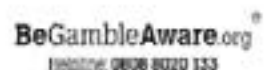
Win up to £25,000

**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**



SHIPMATES INVITED TO FLEET AIR ARM MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Telegraphist Air Gunners Association has held a Memorial Service on the third Sunday in May since 1953, when the Duchess of Kent unveiled the Fleet Air Arm Memorial at Lee-on-the-Solent.

With the number of TAGs becoming ever smaller, since 2013 (when the TAGs Association dissolved), the service has been organised by the Fleet Air Arm Association (FAAA).

The event this year, on Sunday 18 May, begins with lunch (payable on the day) at Lee-on-the-Solent Golf Club, Brune Lane, Lee on Solent PO13 9PB, 1200 for 1230.

Following the lunch attendees will proceed to St Faith's Church, Victoria Square, Lee-on-the-Solent PO13 9PB for the Memorial Service at 1500, after which there will be an informal wreath-laying ceremony at the Fleet Air Arm Memorial.



Royal Navy Telegraphist Air Gunner CPO Pirie (right) with pilot Lt Cdr Stuart, DSC and 2 bars (in cockpit) and observer Lt Davies in a Grumman Avenger torpedo bomber on board carrier HMS Indomitable in the Far East in June 1945. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection: © IWM (A 29632)

A small contingent from HMS Sultan also attends, and shipmates from the RNA would be more than welcome to attend.

The lunch is not obligatory, and anyone is most welcome

to attend the service only. If you would like to attend, please contact: Peter Murray (FAAA) at peter.murray1@btinternet.com or call 020 8428 2621 or 07981 878325.

HERE IS THE LATEST GOSS...

The wait is over... 'Not Forgotten', the eagerly anticipated new single by musician Matt Goss is now available to stream on all mainstream music platforms.

'Not Forgotten' has been released to coincide with the 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May, and is a tribute to those who have given so much in service to their country, their families, and anyone who has ever lost someone close to them.

The accompanying video, which has won praise from veterans and families alike, racked up more than 6,000 views in the first week of release.

All proceeds will be coming directly to The Not Forgotten charity. You can see the emotional music video for the single, which features some of the charity's beneficiaries, on The Not Forgotten's YouTube channel here.

RETIRED CAPTAIN FINALLY PASSES OUT OF DARTMOUTH

Retired Royal Navy Captain Malcolm Farrow OBE has officially passed out of Dartmouth – 63 years after attending the establishment. And in a special moment of Naval history coming full circle, Capt Farrow is pictured standing proudly alongside Midshipman Charles Murphy, the grandson of his best friend.

Farrow, who originally joined Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC) in

September 1962, followed a unique career path which meant he never formally passed out of the college. Initially training as an engineer, he transferred to the Seaman branch after a year at RNEC Manadon, going on to serve 39 years in uniform, reaching the rank of Captain without ever returning to march on the parade ground.

However, this chapter has now been completed in a lovely way as he shared the moment with Charles Murphy, who passed out as a Midshipman. Capt Farrow served closely with Cdr Charles Roe, Charles' grandfather, who died suddenly over 30 years ago. Murphy and Farrow stood together at the passing-out parade, representing three generations of Naval service and enduring friendship.

Malcolm's daughter Alice, Charles's Godmother, has carried on the Naval tradition, working for Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity, which supports BRNC Dartmouth in many different ways.

Capt Farrow said: "To be invited



back to the parade ground at BRNC after 63 years is a huge honour and privilege – and a lot of fun. Joining in 1962 and leaving in 1996, I was a 1* Civil Servant in the Cabinet Office for a short while before being promoted in retirement and re-joined the Navy in 1999, leaving again in 2001, but re-joined once more in 2003 to leave finally in 2005, so I guess it is about time I passed out or I may have to join up for a fourth time..."

Midshipman Murphy passed out as an Air Engineering Officer, and will continue his training in Portsmouth, where he is due to board a P2000 Archer-class patrol vessel to accompany the ship on Baltic operations.





LOOK SHARP FOR BADGES

Three new limited edition pin badges are now available to buy through the RNA online shop, all carrying the RNA 75th anniversary logo. Costing £7.50 each (with discounts for bulk purchases) they will not hang around for long – see <https://www.rnagizzet.co.uk> for full details.

RNRMC TRIBUTE TO STALWARTS

Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) is proud to celebrate the dedication and commitment of three outstanding members of their Grants Team – Anne Carr, Sarah-Jayne Craig and Michelle Midgley – who, between them, have given more than 40 years of service to supporting the Royal Navy community.

Anne Carr, Head of Grants, has played a pivotal role in building up the team and establishing RNRMC as a sector leader in grant-giving; Sarah-Jayne Craig, Grants Data and Performance Manager, has been instrumental in driving insight-led evidence base to maximise impact; Michelle Midgley, Senior Grants Officer, has worked tirelessly to support serving, veterans, and their families. To mark the occasion, the trio attended a Passing Out Parade at BRNC – a fitting tribute to their commitment to those who serve.

CENTRAL OFFICE OPEN DAYS

Central Office Open Days have proved popular with shipmates, giving them the chance to see how the office works and meet some of the people they normally deal with by phone or email.

Due to a busy 75th year, we are only able to squeeze in two Open Days to Central Office this year – 23 May and 11 July.

If you are interested or would like more information, please email Sara on ams@rnassoc.org. Please contact her early to avoid disappointment. Usual service will resume in 2026, as we plan to hold many more Open Days next year.

PLAYING THE SPORT – AND A LOT MORE

The new RN Cricket Club, that includes the Royal Marines Cricket Club, is more than about playing cricket.

The vision is to have a group that helps all to enjoy the game, whether that be playing, watching or socialising. You do not have to have ever played, umpired or scored. You just need to enjoy the game of cricket.

They want people to join in and undertake their own initiatives, but enabled by the RNCC.

They want everyone to join either the RNA or RMA - Sports and Comradeship Group (SCG) RNCC or RMCC - for free in order to be able to communicate.

So cricket fans for all, serving or veterans.

The vision is to bring people

together both on the playing field, watching the game and at the bar.

The new organisation is not selective; it is collective, so that all can take pleasure in donning their whites or simply supporting the teams, both men's and women's.

The three fixtures arranged for the 2025 season are the basis to gather people, starting in May at Lord's. The fixtures are against the Legends T20 Wormsley, the Honourable Artillery Company, and Ditchling Cricket Club.

On the social side of things, the Inter-Services T20 day at Lord's on 22 May (see below) offers a splendid chance to meet up socially. Navy cricket fans aim to meet up in the tavern Stand during the first RN men's

match – contact Mark Smith on markmiff1962@gmail.com or Charlie Hobson on charcricket@btinternet.com for details.

Don't forget, serving personnel and military veterans can get into the T20 day at Lord's for just £10 – don't forget your proof of identity.

There will be other chances, for example, at the Rose Bowl during a Hampshire fixture for those based/living in and around Portsmouth.

The opportunity is there to create something special if it is so desired.

If you feel like getting involved, perhaps more than you have done previously, then please let them know. They all look forward to introducing themselves.

OVER TO YOU, CRICKET FANS

The UK Armed Forces Inter-Services T20 tournament, involving all three Armed Forces, will culminate in a full day's activities at Lord's.

Each of the Forces' senior XIs plays two Twenty20 games in the tournament. The first of these matches will take place between the Army and RAF on Tuesday 20 May at the Utilita Bowl, Southampton, commencing at 1400;.

The remaining two deciding matches will take place at the Armed Forces Cricket Day at Lord's on Thursday 22 May.

Timings may be subject to change, depending on the weather and other conditions, but the planned programme is as follows.

0900 Gates open

1000-1245 Match 1: UKAFCA vs MCC Women's Game

1245-1315 Lunch – Red Devils to land on main ground and Kwik Cricket to be played on Nursery Ground

1315-1600 IST20

Match 2: RN vs Losers of Army/RAF match

1600-1630 Tea – Military Band to play on main ground

1630-1915 IST20 Match 3 RN v Winners of Army/RAF

Ground Admission

Prices: adults £20,

Serving Personnel/

Veterans/MOD Civil

Servants £10, Over 65s



£5, Under 16s £5.

Please note: Under 14s must be accompanied by an adult.

Serving Personnel/Veterans/MoD Civil Servants: please bring proof of identity with you to the match (eg ID cards, Veterans ID card).

You can buy tickets now via the Lord's website [here](https://lords.com). All tickets must be purchased online. Further details about the event can be found at <https://interservicest20.co.uk>

COMING YOUR WAY

Branch officials and delegates to the RNA Annual Conference should keep their eyes peeled for important documents that will be coming their way shortly.

Conference paperwork has to be distributed shortly, so there will be emails going out from Central Office next week with essential information – if you don't receive yours, please let Sara know on ams@rnassoc.org

And there is still time for branches to put forward a delegate – see the form [here](#).

BRIDGE TO BRIDGE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Severn Bridge and Humber Bridge are 212 miles apart – or perhaps a couple of days by cycle...

That is the 'Gear Up for Good' challenge posed by the Sailors' Children's Society (SCS) this autumn in their Bridge 2 Bridge event.

The ride, from 12-14 September, is "more than just a ride. It's about teamwork, camaraderie, and making a real difference for children and families in crisis through the work done at the Sailors' Children's Society."

Your participation in this test of endurance will help raise vital funds to support vulnerable families across the UK, It will also give you the chance to ride alongside other like-minded individuals, and network with professionals from the business community.

There is an expectation in terms of fundraising – each

rider must commit to raise a minimum of £1,500 to support the cause – and places are limited; they are reviewed and allocated on a first-come basis to those applying for a spot on the adventure.

For more details see <https://sailorschildren.org.uk/events/gear-up-for-good-cycle-212-miles/> or see the poster at the end of the Circular here.

The Sailors' Children's Society is a national charity established over 200 years ago. They offer financial and emotional support to children and families from seafaring backgrounds who are in a time of crisis. They help families with connections to a range of maritime roles, including those working for the Royal Navy, the Merchant Navy, in fishing fleets, ferries, cruise ships, and cargo ships

See <https://sailorschildren.org.uk> for more on the charity.

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



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 to sign up.

BAND CONCERT

The Royal Naval Volunteer Band of HMS Collingwood is performing a concert on Saturday 17 May in conjunction with Fun Connection, a band from Fareham's twin town of Pulheim in Germany.

The show, titled A Musical Celebration – Best of British Meets Swing, will be staged at the Titchfield Festival Theatre; doors open at 1830 for a 1930 start. The ticket link is <https://tinyurl.com/3jz59cya> or see the poster at the end of this Circular here.

SLOPS STILL AVAILABLE

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

SPORTS AND COMRADESHIP GROUPS

Different name but same objectives... Shipmates might be interested to become involved with the popular and successful RNA Sports and Comradeship Groups (SCGs), formerly known as Special Interest Groups (SIGs). 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

Classic Cars – Mike Burnham: hon.secretary@rnarayleigh.org

Cricket – Mark Smith : Markmiff1962@gmail.com

Collectors: Insignia and Badges – Paul Banyard: rna.insignia@gmail.com

Cycling – Craig Fulton: craig@govguide.co.uk

Fishing – Gus Honeywood/Selwyn Davies/John Stephenson: rna.fishing.sig@gmail.com

Genealogy – Mike Wilkinson: mike.j.wilco@gmail.com

Golf – Colin Dinsdale: rna.golfers@gmail.com

Model Makers – Gary Daisley: RNA.Modelmakers@gmail.com

Motorhome, Camping and Caravanning – Ron Shilton: rnamcc@outlook.com

RNA Football Club – scc@rnassoc.com

Rugby Union – Steve Phillips: rna.rugby.union.sig@gmail.com

Woodcraft – Graham Warner: vicechair@rna-7area.org

If you are interested in forming a Sports and Comradeship Group please contact cml@rnassoc.org

MONDAY NIGHT FIRESIDE CHATS

Please note there is no Fireside Chat next Monday (5 May) as it is a Bank Holiday. The next Chat, on Monday 12 May, will be by Kathryn Hearn, who will talk about Aggie's.

■ For shipmates who are unaware, there is an ongoing a series of 'Fireside Chats' on subjects of Naval and wider maritime interest. The presentations are held on Monday evenings commencing at 1830 using 'Zoom'. All are welcome.

Meeting ID – 288 830 5105 Password – Shipmate (case sensitive) Or, click on the link [here](#)

* Lecture subjects may change at short notice.

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

Date	Presenter	Subject
Mon 12 May	Kathryn Hearn	Aggies
Mon 19 May	Rob White	HMS Hood – recovery of the bell
Mon 26 May	Spring Bank Holiday	
Mon 2 June	Kelly White	RBLI and Lifeworks programme
Mon 9 June	Mike Milne	HMS Kelly and the Crete campaign
Mon 23 June	Emily Witcher	RN Navigator – transitioning out of the Navy
Mon 30 June	Craig Chapman	The Resurrected Pirate – George Lowther



REASONS TO ATTEND YOUR AGM

YOUR BEST CHANCE TO BE HEARD

If you have any concerns of branch/area life or want to propose changes to the association, then the AGM is the perfect opportunity for you to raise this with and in front of your fellow shipmates.



TAKE CONTROL OF IMPORTANT DECISIONS

Remember, the Royal Naval Association is YOU, the members who have joined collectively. Your AGM is the perfect opportunity to take part in the decision making process



REPRESENT YOUR BRANCH

Your voice and attendance matters; and the conference is the chance to take any issues from a local level to a National platform. Shipmates from all around the UK gather - ideally this is the ONE time your branch can stand up and be counted



MORE THAN A MEETING

What happens in branches under the name of the Royal Naval Association is remarkable

A number of prizes are awarded at Conference for shipmates' contribution to the Association - These are presented during Conference - the only time of the year the RNA is ALL together

COMRADESHIP

CONNECTION

Comradeship is the lifeblood of our Association - friendships are secured by getting to know each other sharing experiences and making new memories

COMMEMORATION

Tradition, respect and honour
We are all rightly proud of our Naval history and service; commemoration and ceremony is a huge part of the RNA's identity

**ONCE
NAVY
ALWAYS
NAVY**

royal-naval-association.co.uk



BRANCH NEWS



TORBAY Branch

Members of Torbay Branch gathered at Roundham Head on Sunday 27 April for their annual remembrance service. Lt Cdr Arthur Leyland Harrison, VC RN, gave his life during the Zeebrugge Raid on 22-23 April 1918. Arthur Leyland was born in Torquay on 3 February 1886 and his Victoria Cross is now on display at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

Torbay members were joined by representatives and standards from **Brixham** and **Newton Abbot** Branches, as well as from Paignton and Brixham RBL.

The Civic Mayor of Torbay and other council representatives were also present, as well as contingents from Torbay Sea Cadets and Air Cadets, supported by parents and other local people.

The service was lead by Branch Chaplain Paul Lomas (pictured above, centre) accompanied by Branch Chairman Terry Membery (left) and Branch President Norrie Millen (right)

Capt Chris Wreford Brown DSO RN, former Branch President, laid the wreath (pictured left).

Photos by S/M Jon Stoneman-Merret.

PORT PHILLIP BAY Branch

Branch member S/M Mike Bennett made the long trip north from Australia in the past few weeks, and made the most of his stay by getting in touch with and visiting shipmates in the UK.

Mike said his feet had hardly touched the ground when he got back home, so promised fellow members of the branch that he would deliver a brief oral account of the visit at a branch meeting before putting pen to paper (or, rather, tapping the keys) to provide a slightly more comprehensive overview for the May edition of the branch's newsletter, the Port Phillip Bay Papers.

Also showing up bright and clear on their radar is the celebration lunch to mark the 75th anniversary of the RNA, which is to be held on 8 June at the Frankston Naval Memorial Club starting at 1200.

Following the Ode to the Fallen, 'Up Spirits' will be piped, and there will be a complimentary tot of rum or sherry for all.

A special RNA branch birthday cake will be cut, and attendees can look forward to a "splendid carvery luncheon prepared by Chef Bruce Trappett and his fabulous Chefs de Tournant."

There will be dancing to the sounds of the ever-popular Deja Vu, and a grand 'blind prize' raffle drawn

throughout the afternoon.

The cost is \$30 each, and a \$10 booking deposit per person applies to all.

Table bookings are essential, and organisers need to have your name, group and number of seats to be reserved by no later than Monday 2 June.

That is also the deadline to let organisers know if you have any dietary needs or require wheelchair access.

Central Office is delighted to see that the celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of the Association now stretch to the far side of the world – BZ Port Phillip Bay shipmates!

ST NEOTS Branch

St Neots Branch got 2025 off to a cracking start with their first fundraising event. The first collection for the branch and for worthy causes was at Lidl supermarket in Eaton Socon/St Neots on 4 and 5 April and, as always, the people in the area responded generously.

Pictured right, from the left, are S/Ms James Hall, Mike Milne (Branch Treasurer), Rachel Hall and Helen Patterson.

S/M Mike Milne is also Chairman of Area 6.

It was great to see S/Ms James and Helen Hall, who are relatively new members to the branch, getting involved so early.

Chairman Geoff Patterson (who has high entertainment value) also did his part, as did President and Vice Chair Keith Ridley (claims to be the most famous ex-Stoker in the RNA!)

Not all S/Ms who took part in the collection are in the photos, but the response for volunteers was good.

In our second picture are S/Ms Tony Webley (left) and Simon Stearman at the start of their watch, with S/M Ian Cameron behind the camera.

S/M Tony Webley is Branch Secretary S/M Simon Stearman, who made the grave error of boasting that he goes brown as a berry in the sun, found himself ensconced in the most sunlit part of the store foyer – which puts the A back in altruism!



MEXBOROUGH Branch

Mexborough Branch attended a service of remembrance at St Margaret's Church in Swinton, South Yorkshire, during which the Mayor of Kingston-upon-Hull unveiled a plaque to remember the 20 members of the Naval crew lost in HM Trawler Kingston Jacinth, which sank off Portsmouth on 12 January 1943.

Swinton adopted the ship as part of the adopt a ship effort throughout the country.

Pictured left are S/M Kev Toseland, the Mexborough Branch standard bearer, and S/M Neil Pearson carrying the HMS Bulwark, Albion and Centaur Association standard. Neil is also a member of Mexborough Branch.

Kingston Jacinth was a 350-ton anti-submarine trawler which was taken up by the Admiralty on 30 August 1939. She was lost when she struck a mine in the Channel off Portsmouth, killing 20 of her crew, though at least four men managed to scramble aboard the trawler HMT Aise.



UXBRIDGE Branch

If any members of your branch are in the Big Smoke on 14 September for the Naval Associations Biennial Parade and you're looking for a watering hole on your way home, then look no further than Uxbridge Branch.

Branch Chairman Slinger Wood said they always welcome members to pop in after the parade for a few wets and tots, and they will fill your bellies with a buffet. And if they have enough visitors they will even lay on a bit of a singalong with the Two Good Olde Boys entertaining.

All they need are numbers emailed to rna.uxbridge@hotmail.co.uk or call them on 01895 230071.

They already have shipmates from Waterlooville Branch booked in, so why not come and join them?

Don't get ripped off with obscene London prices – come on down to RNA Uxbridge Club!

They are situated on the way out of London on the A40 westbound, just past RAF Northolt – take the Hillingdon exit, and they are 50 yards from the end of the slip road at the back of the car park on the left.

Please note – they need numbers for catering purposes. A free tot and buffet awaits for you all...



SOUTHEND Branch

At the last Branch Meeting at RNA Social Club Southend, members celebrated the 85th birthday of S/M Mick Vanner (left). Mick has been a stalwart of the Branch for many years and has carried the Branch Standard on occasions too. Mick is also the Standard Bearer and a member of the Essex Branch of the Submariners Association. Members also said thank you to shipmate Brian Cox, shown right receiving a vintage pewter RNA Standard Bearer figurine as a thank you for his years of service to the Branch as Standard Bearer.



BOGNOR REGIS Branch

Bognor Regis Branch recently celebrated the 39th anniversary of the founding of the branch with a celebration lunch at the RAF Association club in the town.

During the celebrations Cdr Gale, Commanding Officer of HMS Excellent, awarded a posthumous Legion D'Honneur to S/M Lewis Curl, who crossed over the bar in 2024 at the age of 98.

The presentation was made to his widow Iris Curl and his daughter Anne Williams. Lewis served in HMS Belfast and HMS Dacres during the D-Day Landings in 1944 and also went on to serve in the Far East. He was a well-respected member of the Branch.

Also during the celebrations Cdr Gale was presented with a plaque by Branch President S/M John Haste and Branch Chairman S/M Ron Hargest, to thank him for his support of Bognor Regis Branch over the past couple of years – attending Trafalgar Day Lunches, Armed Forces Days and the rededication of the monument to HMS St Barbara on Bognor Regis Pier.

The Commander is due to retire soon from the Royal Navy, and the shipmates of Bognor Regis wish him well in his retirement.



PORTSEA and PORTSMOUTH Branch

The Branch was well-represented at the Anzac Service on board monitor HMS M33 in the Historic Dockyard. Pictured right are Chairman Tom Frank and Vice Paul Henty; Standard Bearer Clive Sutton was also on parade. Several hours prior the Branch was represented by Mike Barry at the Anzac Parade in Kingston, Tasmania (left). He also made front page of the local paper (below).



OBITUARIES

S/M STEVE CAULFIELD

It is with great sadness that we learned of the death of our much-loved Shipmate Stephen Caulfield, who sadly passed away on the night of 13 April, writes RNA National Chairman S/M Andy Christie.

Steve was a popular and much-valued member of the **City of Salford** branch of the RNA, where his humour, comradeship and empathy will surely be missed by his shipmates, as it will by those of us who worked with him at National level and in Central Office.

Steve was one of those marvellous people who invariably put others before himself, and was always keen to be closely involved in organisations that helped others, be it the RNA, the Royal British Legion or the Pendleton Ex-Services Social Club.

He was pivotal in arrangements for the City of Salford's annual Service of Remembrance each November, just one demonstration of his dedication to the cause that made Steve an example to others as well as a driving force in the development and success of his branch.

In recognition of his hard work, which was never done for his own glorification, the Ceremonial Mayor of the City of Salford, Cllr Tanya Burch, chose the RNA as one of the two charities which she supported this year – further testament to the impact that Steve had on his community.

Steve also had a major role to play in the development of the Association during a period when a great deal of effort went into reshaping the structure and processes – Steve's input into the 'shop window' through marketing and communication helped lay the foundations for the thriving organisation we have today.

Steve spent his final days in the care of the caring staff at St Ann's Hospice, which is the Mayor's other chosen charity for the year.

All of us who knew Steve, and had the privilege of working alongside him and getting to know him, extend our heartfelt sympathy to Steve's widow Anne, to his family and friends.

Standards are paraded at S/M Steve Caulfield's funeral yesterday (right)

SS/M Steve Caulfield (second left) at last year's Annual Conference in Cardiff (below)





S/M TOM MUMFORD

S/M Tom Mumford, a founder member of **St Neots & District Branch**, crossed the bar peacefully at home on Monday 31 March. He served in the Royal Navy as a Fleet Air Arm Electrician.

Tom was one of six founder members of the Branch when it commissioned on 17 November 1972.

He served the branch as a loyal and dedicated member, becoming a Life Member of the RNA.

He held the positions of Secretary and Chairman before being appointed Treasurer and later President, holding both posts together for many years, before standing down in 2015.

Tom's vast experience, wise judgement and sense of humour will be sadly missed - RIP Tom.



S/M COLIN BOUGHTON

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that Shipmate Colin Boughton 'Crossed the Bar' on Friday 11th April at home at the age of 94, writes S/M Graham Warner, Chairman No 7 Area and Secretary of Rhondda Branch. It was sudden and completely unexpected. I have conveyed the condolences of the branch to his family. Colin was a very positive man and a pleasure to know. A great advocate of and fundraiser for the Royal British Legion, but his heart was always Navy. Rest In Peace Colin.

S/M ERIC MICHAEL 'MICK' THORNTON

Eric Michael Thornton - Mick, as everyone knew him, crossed the bar on 2 April, aged 89.

A Royal Marines Commando, Mick was a Life Member of the Association who held the longest membership of **Warwick Branch** and the positions of President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Standard Bearer over his long years of membership.

Mick was also the RNA National Standard Bearer in the 1970s, and was particularly proud when his duties encompassed Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1977. Mick will be much missed by the Branch.



S/M Mick Thornton as RNA National Standard Bearer in the 1970s, and (left) with S/M John Langdon of Warwick Branch on Remembrance Sunday 2018



MAY SWINGING THE LAMP

'Swinging the Lamp' events are drawn, by permission, from the definitive Naval history reference book *The Royal Navy Day by Day*, written by Honorary Shipmate Lawrie Phillips and published by The History Press (www.thehistorypress.co.uk). The book is issued to all HM Ships and Establishments and is 'probably one of the most well-thumbed and valued books that Captains of HM Ships possess'. It is currently available online for around £45 (search ISBN number 978-0750982665)

1 May 1915

L/Cpl Walter Parker won the VC for his actions on the night of 30 April/1 May 1915 during the Gallipoli campaign. Parker, aged 33, was a Royal Marine stretcher bearer and part of the Royal Naval Division at Gaba Tepe when he went out with a relief party to take ammunition, medical supplies and water out to a group of 40 or more soldiers – several of them severely wounded – in an isolated trench. With no communication trench the only way to reach the men was across open ground, swept by machine guns. The party set out across the open ground, but by the time Parker reached the trapped men 400 metres away he was the only one of the party still standing, the rest of his comrades having been killed or injured. Parker himself had suffered serious injuries, but tended to the wounded and helped evacuate the trench early on 1 May. Parker never fully recovered from his injuries, and was invalided out of the Royal Marines in June 1916. His VC was gazetted a year later, the delay coming about because of the injuries sustained by senior officers in the action at Gaba Tepe. Parker died at the age of 55 in Nottinghamshire.

2 May 1941

Destroyer HMS Jersey was sunk by a mine in the entrance to Grand Harbour, Malta on 2 May 1941, blocking the harbour for several days. The 2,370-ton J-class destroyer was little over two years old at the time, having been built at the J Samuel White yard in Cowes and commissioned in April 1939, at which point she sailed to Scapa Flow to join the Seventh Destroyer Flotilla. She proved to be something of an unlucky ship. By the end of the year she had already suffered major damage, having been struck by a torpedo from German destroyer Erich Giese off the Norfolk coast on 7 December while on patrol with the Humber Force. Ten of her ship's company were killed, and she required extensive repairs – she was towed to the Humber by sister ship HMS Juno, and was not ready for front-line service again until October that year. She completed sea trials on 10 October and sailed for Plymouth to rejoin her flotilla, but struck a mine en route and required further repairs in London. She finally joined up with the Fifth Destroyer Flotilla on 29 October, and embarked on a busy programme of convoy escort work, patrols and strike missions against German warships, some of which was based at Greenock on the Clyde. In mid-January 1941 she was earmarked for special operations with Force H in the Mediterranean, based in Gibraltar escorting capital ship formations and bombarding shore targets, though she had to return to Portsmouth at the end of February for repairs to defective steering gear. In April Jersey returned to the Med with her flotilla, this time taking her place in Force K in Malta. On 1 May she sailed with the group to disrupt Axis convoys between Augusta and Tripoli, but after a fruitless search Force K returned to Malta. On entering Grand Harbour on 2 May Jersey struck a mine

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laid in the entrance by Italian aircraft the previous night; 35 sailors died in the explosion and the destroyer sank in the channel, blocking the harbour to all ship movements for several days. The wreck broke into two sections on 5 May, alleviating the problem, but the stern section was not cleared until after the war, when a series of controlled explosions between 1946 and 1949 removed the hazard. Further salvage work was carried out in the late 1960s to make the channel safe for larger ships, including cruise liners.

3 May 1840

Prototype screw ship SS Archimedes was put through a series of trials by the Admiralty in April and May 1940 which suggested the premise that steam engine + propeller might prove superior to steam engine + paddle wheel, the established form of propulsion at the time. Archimedes was the brainchild of farmer turned engineer Francis Smith, who first took a patent on a screw propeller in May 1835. A model boat employing his invention was tested on a pond at his farm in Hendon, and a later test in London caught the eye of a senior member of the Admiralty. A second demonstrator followed – a canal boat named the Francis Smith – was built, but the principle of screw propulsion was dismissed by Their Lordships having watched a demonstration on the Thames by rival pioneer John Ericsson, who built a 14m steamboat at the same time as Smith. The Admiralty felt such a system would prove ineffective in open seas, but Smith set out to prove them wrong. He took his 9m six-ton canal boat out of the Thames and round to Hythe in September 1837, and on the return trip, in stormy weather, Royal Navy officers saw the little boat making good headway. Suddenly the Admiralty were interested again, and Smith was encouraged to build a full-sized ship. With backing from an engineering firm, a banker and investors, the Ship Propeller Co was formed, and plans laid to build the Propeller. The somewhat unimaginative name was quickly changed to Archimedes, the ancient Greek inventor who gave

the Archimedes screw to the world. Built in London, the 38m 237-ton ship demanded some innovative design features and technology to fit her remit, but was successfully launched on 2 May 1939, making her first sea voyage less than two weeks later when she managed ten knots on passage to Portsmouth. While off the South Coast she proved a match for one of the Navy's fastest ships, the Vulcan. On returning to London, Archimedes suffered a boiler explosion – the controls on the system were rudimentary to say the least – which killed an engineer and injured several of his shipmates, and required several months of repairs. The following spring Archimedes was back in the Channel at the invitation of the Admiralty, undergoing a series of trials controlled by Capt Edward Chappell. The screw ship was pitted against the four fastest cross-Channel mail packets, including Widgeon, a paddlewheel steamer that was the closest in size to Archimedes. Although Widgeon just edged the speed trial in calm seas (including one run on 3 May 1840), Chappell concluded that screw was at least the equal of paddle – and that was good enough, because paddles had numerous drawbacks, including requirement for more space, vulnerability to enemy fire, and the loss of full broadside gun placements. Chappell later took the ship on a 2,000-mile tour of British ports, then to Portugal, Belgium and the Netherlands, during which time she performed admirably. She was later loaned to Isambard Kingdom Brunel, who adapted his new transatlantic liner the SS Great Britain to take advantage of Smith's work – the giant steamer also used a propeller designed by Smith, who actually crossed the Atlantic in the Great Britain in May 1852. Drawing on the trials, Chappell stated that screw was the future, and the Navy built a 900-ton sloop to take the principle further. When HMS Rattler proved superior to sister ship HMS Alecto, a paddle wheeler, in 1843-5, the die was cast. Archimedes was sold to a commercial firm and popped up periodically on Lloyds Register; her machinery was removed at some point and she continued as a sailing ship until she is believed to

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HMS Galatea. See 4 May. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © The rights holder (Q 74323)



have been lost on passage between Chile and Australia in January 1857. The development of screw propulsion, a pivotal point in maritime history, did not serve Francis Smith particularly well in the short term. It is believed he lost a considerable sum in the Archimedes venture, and was forced to return to farming. However, his work was recognised by Parliament in 1855 with a £4,000 grant, and patrons supplemented that with almost £3,000 three years later. In 1860 Smith was appointed Curator of the Patent Office Museum in London, and he was knighted for his work three years before his death in February 1874.

4 May 1916

Light cruisers HMS Galatea and Phaeton combined with submarine HMS E31 to bring down a Zeppelin off the coast of Denmark in an unusual incident on 4 May 1916. M2-class airship LZ32, with the operational number L7, was a rigid reconnaissance Zeppelin which was also capable of carrying out bombing raids. Built at Friedrichshafen in 1914, the 158m long aircraft had a range of 1,350 miles, depending on weather conditions, and could cruise at 50mph, making her an ideal craft to carry out patrols over the North Sea and toward the coast of England. By the start of May 1916 the airship had carried out more than 160 operational flights, almost 80 of which were reconnaissance flights over the North Sea, and L7 had also made several unsuccessful sorties against English towns. On the evening of 4 May 1916 L7 was on an operational flight when she was spotted by light cruisers HM Ships Galatea and Phaeton, both of which were completed at around the same time as the airship was towed out of its shed for the first time. The two 3,570-ton Arethusa-class warships opened fire with their quick-fire anti-aircraft guns, striking the Zeppelin which began to lose height. As this action was taking place HMS E31 surfaced and caught sight of the Zeppelin. E31, which ironically was escorting seaplane carrier HMS Engadine on a mission to attack L7's home base, the airship sheds at Tondern in southern Denmark, quickly dived as she was vulnerable to air attack, particularly as the incident took place in the relatively shallow waters of Horns

Reef, a sandy shoal some ten miles off the Danish coast. On returning to periscope depth to survey the scene her CO saw that the Zeppelin was heading downwards, so the submarine surfaced and fired the shot with her 12pdr deck gun that finally brought L7 down. The submarine then rescued the seven survivors of the German crew of 18, though she almost came a cropper on her journey back to England, narrowly avoiding being sunk by a fast German cruiser that attempted to ram her then blazed at her with its guns but only landed one shot, which did little damage.

5 May 1944

Fairmile D-class motor torpedo boat (MTB) 708 was destroyed by combined friendly fire in the English Channel on 5 May 1944. The 120-ton high-speed 'Dog Boat', commissioned in November 1943 and designed to operate in excess of 30 knots, was operating in the Channel when she was attacked in error by Allied aircraft and struck by bombs, crippling the lightweight vessel. Her crew of 30 were taken off before Hunt-class destroyer HMS Cottessmore, which had been operating with MTB flotillas in the Channel in the lead-up to the Normandy Landings in June 1944, finished her off, firing on the stricken MTB until it sank.

6 May 1941

Ocean Boarding Vessel (OBV) HMS Camito was sunk by torpedo in the North Atlantic on 6 May 1941 with the loss of 28 men. The 8,830-ton ship was built in 1915 as a merchant steamer and served with the Elders and Fyffes Line until World War 2. On 6 August 1940 she was requisitioned by the Admiralty and converted into an ocean boarding vessel, commissioning on 26 September 1940. In the early hours of 6 May 1941 Camito was struck by a torpedo from U-97 after the German submarine had stalked the OBV and a tanker for several hours; having disabled the merchant ship U-97 returned to Camito, though the German captain was concerned that Camito might have been a Q-ship. The submarine stood off then sailed away, leaving Camito to sink the following day. Survivors were picked up by HMS Orchis and landed at Greenock.

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A Fairmile D-class MTB similar to MTB 708. See 5 May. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (A 25318)





7 May 1941

German weather ship *Munchen* was taken in the Arctic Ocean on 7 May 1941 in a deliberate attempt to gain the advantage in breaking German signal codes. It had been suggested by codebreakers at Bletchley Park that German weather ships – vessels stationed mid-ocean to take meteorological readings and provide vital reports to military commanders – would be part of the Enigma naval code system. This seemed a reasonable possibility as Bletchley Park had intercepted signals from the weather ship *Munchen*, positioned in the Arctic Ocean far to the north of Iceland. The Royal Navy immediately launched Operation EB, under which HM Ships *Birmingham* and *Edinburgh* were diverted from Northern Barrage minelayer protection to join sister light cruiser *HMS Manchester*, of the 18th Cruiser Squadron, based at Scapa Flow. They were joined by a destroyer screen – HM Ships *Bedouin*, *Eskimo* and *Somali*, and HMAS *Nestor* – the following day to the east of Iceland, at which point the task group turned north. In mid-afternoon on 7 May the ships formed a line abreast, each ten miles from the next, and started to scour the seas for *Munchen*. Little over two hours later the weather ship was spotted between *Edinburgh* and *Somali*, with the destroyer firing a warning shot and approaching the enemy vessel at speed. *Somali* swept alongside the weather ship as its crew opened the seacocks and began to abandon it, and the German captain managed to throw their Enigma coding machine over the side. But *Somali*'s crew managed to secure the ship before the code books could be destroyed, and a Naval intelligence officer, Capt Haines, took possession of these coding tables, which covered the rest of May and June 1941. The German crew were taken prisoner in *Somali* and *Edinburgh*, but Capt Haines was rushed back to the Orkneys in HMAS *Nestor* and then flown directly to London with his precious cargo, which was of immense value to codebreakers at Bletchley Park in reading German naval wireless signals over the following weeks. *Nestor* had been handed over to the Australians just three months earlier, and only joined the Sixth Destroyer Flotilla two days before Operation EB.

8 May 1942

Odin-class submarine *HMS Olympus* was sunk by mine

six miles off Malta with heavy loss of life on 8 May 1942. The 2,040-ton submarine, built on the Clyde by William Beardmore, was designed for long-range patrols, and after her commissioning in June 1930 spent almost a decade on the China Station. She conducted her first war patrols out of Singapore before transferring to Colombo in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in October 1939, using her range to prowl the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal. After her sixth war patrol *Olympus* made her way to Aden then on through the Suez Canal to Malta, joining the Mediterranean Fleet on 7 May 1940. She underwent a minor refit, but was then damaged in an air raid, only rejoining the front line at the end of November that year. Her seventh war patrol was conducted from Gibraltar, departing for the Azores on 2 January 1941 and finishing in Portsmouth almost four weeks later. By March she was back in Gibraltar, and escorted a convoy from South Africa back to the UK, after which she patrolled the Mediterranean, and underwent an extensive period of repairs back in Malta. This pattern continued through 1941 and early 1942, with convoy escort work, patrols and supply runs to Malta keeping the boat and her crew busy, though successful attacks were few and far between. On 8 May 1942 the submarine left Gibraltar en route for Malta with almost 100 on board – her normal crew of around 55 was almost doubled by the presence of sailors from HM Submarines *Pandora*, *P36* and *P39*, all sunk or badly damaged by a German air raid on Malta on 1 April. *Olympus* struck a mine seven miles offshore shortly after sailing, and there were only nine survivors from the 98 men on board.

9 May 1945

The surrender of German forces on the Channel Islands signed on board *HMS Bulldog*, in company with *HMS Beagle*, in St Peter Port, Guernsey on 9 May 1945. The Channel Islands had not been particularly affected by the war in its early stages, with tourism and trade continuing as before, but all that changed in 1940 as the Germans attacked the Benelux countries and struck ever deeper into France. Britain decided the islands, just a few miles off the French coast, were of little strategic value and defending them would prove costly. British soldiers in France were evacuated back to the UK from St Malo via Jersey in mid-June, and French wartime leader Charles de Gaulle also stopped on the island en

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route from Bordeaux to London on 17-18 June, at the same time a squadron of RAF Hurricanes arrived on their transfer back to England from Dinard. A hurried partial evacuation was carried out of civilians, but the majority remained where they were. The Germans were not, at that stage, aware that the Islands had been declared 'open islands' (ie free of military forces) and carried out reconnaissance and bombing missions at the end of June, killing 44 islanders, and prepared for a military assault on the islands. However, a Luftwaffe reconnaissance pilot landed on Guernsey on 30 to test the defences, and found it deserted. German airmen were landed by Junkers transport aircraft the same evening, and Guernsey came under German occupation at that point. Jersey followed the next day, Alderney on 2 July and Sark another two days later. The German occupation was at first intended to take a moderate tone, and elements of 'normal' life continued, including entertainment (cinemas and theatres) and commercial activities, though the islands were put on Central European Time and traffic was ordered to drive on the right. Active resistance was discouraged as it served no purpose – there was an uneasy balance of cooperation between islanders and the occupiers to begin with, as resistance would only have led to harsh reprisals, though the level of cooperation would lead to much soul-searching after the war and there were pockets of resistance throughout the period on a scale comparable to that of occupied France, the Netherlands and Norway. As the war progressed the

islanders suffered an increasingly oppressive regime – there were restrictions on gatherings, access to beaches and free speech, homes, transport, cameras and radios were confiscated over time. Forced labour camps sprang up to house thousands of workers, many from Eastern Europe, who were building part of Hitler's Atlantic Wall defence against invasion. More than 2,000 islanders were deported for various reasons (including being Jewish) and at least 45 died as a result of that deportation before the war ended, including a number in German death camps. Supplies eventually ran short, making the final year of the war a battle for survival for both occupied and occupiers. As the Germans became isolated by the defeat of their forces in France following the Normandy landings there was barely enough food produced to feed everyone, though a German offer to evacuate all civilians (other than men of military age) to the UK was declined by the British government. In the final six months of the war a Red Cross ship, SS Vega, was allowed to make six runs bringing emergency supplies of food, medicine and vital items such as soap and salt. On 8 May 1945 the islanders were informed by their occupiers that the war was over, and early the following day – 9 May – B-class destroyer HMS Bulldog sailed into St Peter Port. German leaders boarded the warship and signed an unconditional surrender at dawn. British forces landed on the island shortly after and began the task of dismantling the German regime. Bulldog's sister ship, HMS Beagle, performed a similar role in Jersey on the same day; Sark was liberated on

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German representatives Maj Gen Heine and Lt Cdr Arnim Zimmerman aboard HMS Bulldog off Guernsey before the final signing of the instrument of surrender. See 9 May. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (D 24594)

10 May and German forces on Alderney surrendered on 16 May, though civilians did not begin to return to that island until the end of the year after German troops, under British supervision, had cleared up the mess that they made. The process of returning the islands to their former state was a slow and painful one – many of the children evacuated at the beginning lost their sense of belonging, the islands were heavily in debt and many businesses had failed, while the military infrastructure that had been built (and the munitions and weaponry) presented a very real danger – several people died as a result after liberation. Some felt there was also a need for reckoning; only a dozen cases of collaboration were identified and none went to trial as there was insufficient evidence, profiteers were prosecuted, and there were a number of cases of local retribution against ‘Jerry-bags’ – women who had fraternised with German forces.

10 May 1865

‘Crimean gunboat’ HMS Haughty destroyed four pirate junks 40 miles south west of Macao near Hong Kong. The 232-ton four-gun wooden screw gunboat was launched in March 1856 at the prolific Pitcher family shipyard at Northfleet in Kent. The yard, stung by criticism for having built two corvettes for the Russians just before the outbreak of the Crimean War (in any case both ships were transferred to the Royal Navy as HMS Cossack and HMS Tartar), tendered for a third of the massive order of 154 gunboats placed by the Admiralty. These Albacore-class ships, including HMS Haughty, were turned out at a rate of one every fortnight or so, but the fixed price contract began to bleed the shipyard dry as workers’ wages rose. By May 1857 the yard was in financial trouble, and although there were periods of relative stability in the ensuing years the tide was against them and the Pitchers shipyard, having gone through the hands of the Official receiver in 1861, built no further ships after 1865. Albacore-class ships were known as ‘Crimean gunboats’ because their design as shallow-draught steamships meant they could be used for inshore bombardment in the Black Sea and Baltic during the Crimean War. However, Haughty served mainly on the East Indies and China Station, and was sold in Hong Kong on 23 May 1867.

11 May 1860

Two relatively minor warships played a small part in the unification of Italy simply by being present in the port of Marsala on 11 May 1860. One of the ‘founding fathers’ of Italy, the revolutionary Giuseppe Garibaldi, had assembled a force of volunteers (known as the Expedition of the Thousand, though they started off with nearly 1,100 poorly-armed but enthusiastic men). This group was given the objective of liberating what is now southern Italy from the rule of the repressive Spanish House of Bourbon, starting in Sicily. Garibaldi’s Thousand, known as the Redshirts from their simple red and grey uniform, sailed from Genoa in the north on 5 May 1860 in two steamships they had ostensibly seized but were actually provided by friendly powers in Piedmont. The ships, *Il Lombardo* and *Il Piemonte*, lacked any sort of firepower, so Garibaldi called in at Talamone in Tuscany, where he obtained gunpowder, three old cannon and round 100 rifles from the garrison

there. There was a further stop two days later to take on coal at Porto Santo Stefano, after which they made a wide sweep to the south, almost reaching the African coast at Tunisia, but they then set course for Marsala as they picked up intelligence that the port was not defended by Bourbon ships. The two steamships reached the port, on the western point of the island of Sicily, in the early afternoon of 11 May, and found two Royal Navy vessels, the wooden screw sloop-of-war HMS *Intrepid* and wooden paddle gunboat HMS *Argus*, sitting offshore. Their presence was a discouragement to Bourbon forces, which did not seek to interfere lest they prompted a response from the warships. It was only after Garibaldi had landed his ramshackle army that the revolutionaries’ ships were attacked, with *Il Lombardo* being sunk and *Il Piemonte* captured. However, historians argue that the British were unlikely to have been able to help as the ships’ boilers were cold and their commanding officers ashore – though the Bourbon commanders would not necessarily have been aware of those facts. The Redshirts, facing overwhelming odds to begin with, scrapped their way to victory in a couple of early encounters with Bourbon troops, and gathered Sicilian men along the way; by the end of May they had forced their opponents to plead for an amnesty in Palermo (which was overseen by Admiral Rodney Mundy RN, who was in charge of the two British warships). This spark of revolutionary fervour was just one strand of a complex pattern of political and military manoeuvres that created the *Risorgimento* – the unification of Italy – which was completed with the capture of Rome in 1870. The British position on all this was generally neutral and simply supportive of British interests, though it was acknowledged that a friendly regime in southern Italy would be of great value in curbing possible French influence in the Mediterranean.

12 May 1854

Frigate HMS *Tiger* ran ashore in fog under Russian gun batteries five miles south of Odessa on 12 May 1854. Her crew were forced to burn her rather than surrender the ship. The 1,220-ton paddlewheel ship was launched as a ten-gun steam sloop on 1 December 1849 at Chatham Dockyard but within three years had been reclassified as a 16-gun second-class frigate. Deployed to the Crimean War, *Tiger* was one of a flotilla of eight paddlewheel steamers that took part in a spectacularly successful punitive raid on the port of Odessa following an incident where the Russians fired on a ship’s boat from HMS *Furious* that was displaying a flag of truce. On 22 April 1854 the eight warships, accompanied by various other Royal Navy vessels, launched a bombardment and rocket attack on the naval port, causing a magazine to explode which set more than 20 Russian ships alight, as well as burning several storage buildings. On 11 May 1854 *Tiger* was part of a small group patrolling off Odessa when she became separated in a bank of fog from screw sloop HMS *Niger* and paddlewheel sloop HMS *Vesuvius*. Early the following morning *Tiger* ran aground around five miles south of Odessa, but directly under cliffs. Still shrouded by fog, *Tiger*’s guns were thrown overboard in an attempt to lighten the load and refloat her, and fired her guns to attract the attention of *Niger* or *Vesuvius* but both plans failed, and when the fog cleared around 0900 the Russians brought a battery of field artillery

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guns to the clifftop and fired down on the stricken ship, raking her deck with shot and shrapnel. Unable to reply, Tiger was hit several times, starting fires, and quickly forced to surrender. Her crew were taken prisoner and the Russians blew Tiger up to prevent her being salvaged by the Royal Navy. Her commanding officer, Capt Henry Giffard, had been obliged to have a leg amputated while the ship was under attack, and despite being well-treated by the Russians he succumbed to gangrene on 1 June, being buried with full military honours in Odessa. Four of his shipmates also died of their wounds, while three injured men recovered. A number of Tiger's guns were recovered by the Russians, and one still stands outside the City Hall in Odessa, now part of Ukraine.

13 May 1915

Pre-Dreadnought battleship HMS Goliath was sunk by Turkish destroyer Muavenet-i-Millet, manned by Germans, at Gallipoli on 13 May 1915. The veteran 14,500-ton warship had served far and wide by the time she ended up in the Dardanelles. Launched on 23 March 1898 at Chatham, the Canopus-class battleship began her active service on the China Station, then returned to home waters. En route back to the Far East, Goliath was reassigned to the Mediterranean Fleet, then returned to the Channel Fleet in 1906 and the Home Fleet in 1907. She shuttled out to the Mediterranean and back to home waters before decommissioning in 1913. With the outbreak of war Goliath was reactivated and given the task of Loch Ewe guardship before escorting Allied troop carriers in the Channel in August 1914. The battleship was then switched to East Africa, where she took part in the blockade of German light cruiser SMS Königsberg. In March 1915 Goliath joined the Dardanelles Campaign, and supported the Gallipoli

landings at Cape Helles on 25 April, breaking up Ottoman counter-attacks and bombarding shore positions. That was to be the extent of her contribution. On the night of 12-13 May that year she was moored in Morto Bay, close to battleship HMS Cornwallis, when enemy destroyer Muavenet-i-Millet slipped through the British destroyer screen and fired three torpedoes at Goliath. Two of them struck the forward part of the ship, which immediately began to capsize, and as she rolled the third torpedo exploded near her aft turret. As British warships pulled survivors from the sea, the Turkish destroyer slipped away in the moonless night, having killed some 570 men out of the 750 on board.

14 May 1847

Wooden paddle steamer sloop HMS Driver arrived at Spithead from the Pacific on 14 May 1847 to claim the title of the first steamship to circumnavigate the world. Launched in Portsmouth on Christmas Eve 1840, the 1,600-ton warship ran aground off Yorkshire within a year but was refloated shortly after. In March 1842 she was deployed to the Far East, serving in China before steaming on to New Zealand in the autumn of 1845, though she suffered storm damage en route and needed repairs to both hull and machinery. She set off from New Zealand at the end of January 1847 via Cape Horn and called in at Argentina to refuel on the way back to Portsmouth, where she arrived more than 100 days after leaving New Zealand. Driver was lost in the Bahamas on 3 August 1861 while steaming from Bermuda to Jamaica.

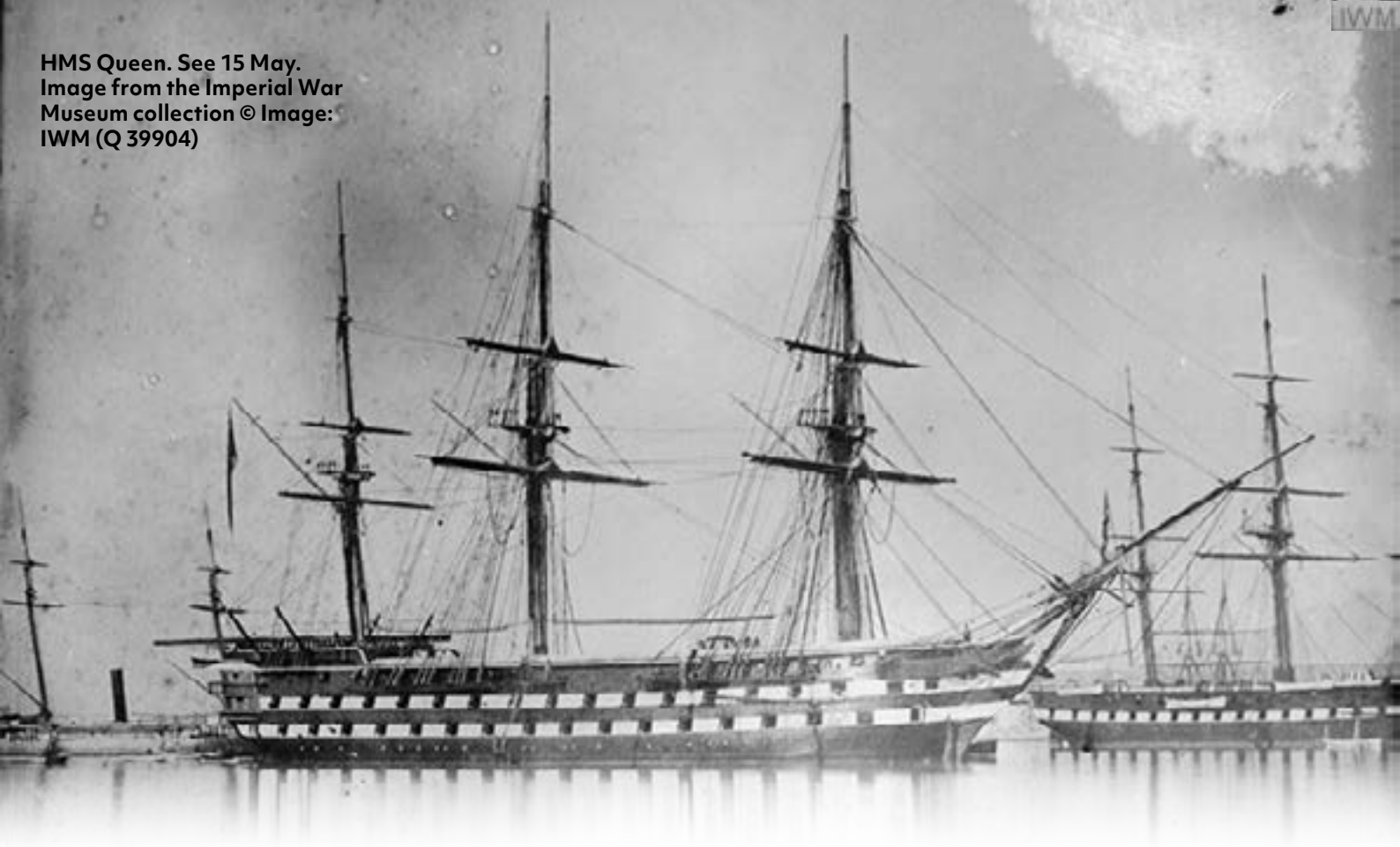
15 May 1839

First rate HMS Queen, designed by Symonds, was launched at Portsmouth on 15 May 1839 – the zenith of construction of sailing men o'war and the last of the

HMS Goliath. See 13 May.
Image from the Imperial War
Museum collection © Image:
IWM (Q 21299)

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great sailing ships of the line to be built, though she had an auxiliary steam engine fitted in 1858. Queen served in the Crimean War, taking part in the bombardment of Sevastopol on 17 October 1854, though she suffered significant damage which eventually forced her off the gunline. In 1858-9 Queen was fitted with a 500hp auxiliary steam engine and was reduced from three gundecks to two, leaving her to 86 guns. She spent the next five years in the Mediterranean, and was broken up on the Thames in 1871.

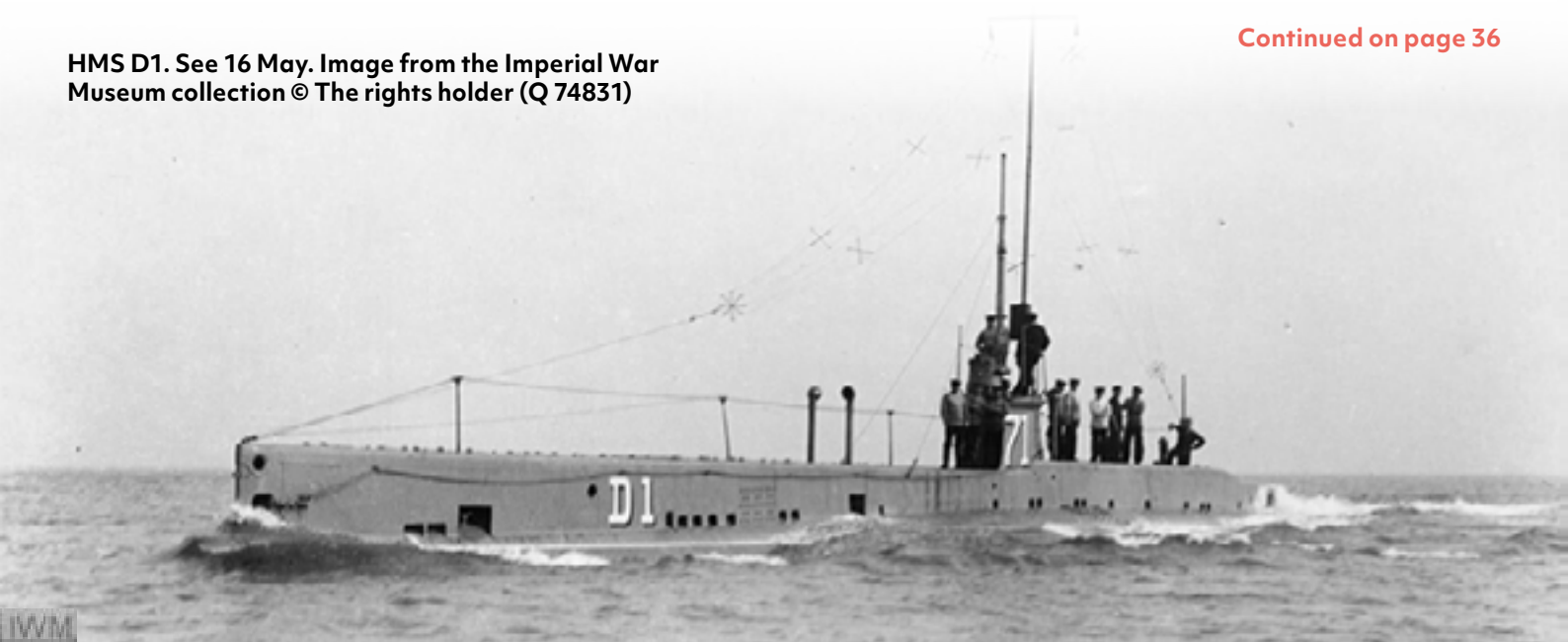
16 May 1908

HMS D1, the first British diesel submarine, was launched at Barrow-in-Furness on 16 May 1908. The D-class boats were an improvement on their C-class predecessors; they were slightly larger with twin screws and a radio set, but perhaps the most important change

was the replacement of unreliable and volatile petrol engines with diesel versions. The boats displaced just over 600 tons when submerged and operated with a crew of 25 – a major advance on the Holland-class boats of just seven years before which displaced 107 tons and had a crew of nine. D1 had a relatively uneventful career, patrolling the Dover Straits and North Sea before joining the Portsmouth Defence Flotilla in 1917. She was used as. Training vessel in the final year of the Great War and was sunk as a target close to Dartmouth less than a month before the Armistice.

17 May 1917

Destroyer HMS Setter was lost in collision with sister ship HMS Sylph off Harwich on 17 May 1917 – the end of a very short active service life. Setter was an R-class



destroyer, launched at the J Samuel White shipyard in Cowes on 18 August 1916 and commissioned on 12 February 1917. She displaced almost 1,200 tons and was theoretically capable of speeds up to 36 knots with a ship's company of 82. She immediately joined the Harwich Force on escort duties, shuttling back and forth to the Netherlands protecting merchantmen. On 12 March Setter's convoy was attacked though the destroyer escaped damage. She was not so lucky in mid-May when her convoy ran into fog and German warships were able to approach quite close before launching a torpedo attack. In the poor visibility sister ship HMS Sylph had to change course sharply to avoid a torpedo, then Setter also had to veer hard to port to avoid destroyer HMS Recruit. In doing so Setter ran across the path of Sylph, which ploughed into her sister, flooding Setter's engine room. Her crew clambered across to Sylph without incident, but Setter sank just over an hour after being struck.

18 May 1941

30-year-old PO Alfred Edward Sephton won the Victoria Cross for "great courage and endurance" during an air attack on light cruiser HMS Coventry during the Battle of Crete on 18 May 1941. PO Sephton was a director layer in Coventry, when the ship went to the aid of hospital ship Aba. The 8,000-ton converted passenger ship was clearly marked as a hospital ship but came under attack from waves of German dive bombers south of Crete. Coventry moved in to provide defence for Aba, but came under attack herself and PO Sephton was severely wounded in a strafing run by a German aircraft. One bullet passed through him, partially blinding him, before killing an able seaman standing nearby. Although in severe pain, Sephton continued to carry out his duties until the attack was over, at which point he collapsed. He died of his injuries the following day and was buried at sea. PO Sephton's VC was put on display in Coventry Cathedral some years later, but was stolen in September 1990 and has never been recovered. HMS Coventry survived the Battle of Crete, but was crippled

by German bombers in the autumn of 1942 to the north of Alexandria; the bombs set off fires that could not be extinguished so the cruiser was scuttled by destroyer HMS Zulu on 14 September.

19 May 1940

Destroyer HMS Whitley was beached near Nieuwpoort on the Belgian coast after being attacked by German aircraft. The W-class destroyer was ordered as HMS Whitby, but a miscommunication between the Admiralty and shipbuilders Wm Doxfords at Sunderland led to the ship being laid down as Whitley, and the powers-that-be decided to stick with that name. She was launched on 13 April 1918 but commissioned too late to have a role in World War 1, instead cutting her teeth in the Baltic with British forces against the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War in 1919. Whitley spent a couple of years out of commission before joining the Atlantic Fleet in late 1923. She served in the Atlantic and Mediterranean before being reduced to reserve again in the summer of 1932. In 1938 the 1,100-ton ship was converted at Chatham to an anti-aircraft escort and recommissioned once more in 1939. She went straight onto North Sea convoy escort duties, continuing until April 1940. The following month she was assigned to the French Navy to support Allied operations ashore in France and Belgium, but on 19 May she was badly damaged by a German dive bomber two miles offshore near Nieuwpoort; her Commanding Officer had no choice but to beach her to prevent her sinking, but with German forces advancing rapidly it was decided to destroy her with gunfire, a task carried out by destroyer HMS Keith where Whitley lay in around five metres of water.

20 May 1905

HMS Africa, the last battleship produced at Chatham, and an important player in early Naval aviation, was launched on 20 May 1905. Fully loaded, the pre-dreadnought displaced 17,600 tons, was almost 140m long and had a complement of around 780;

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HMS Africa. See 20 May. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © The rights holder (Q 74903)

with battleships becoming ever larger there was insufficient capacity at Chatham to continue building such vessels. She was commissioned on 6 November 1906 and spent her first few months with the Atlantic Fleet before joining the Channel Fleet and finally the Home Fleet before a spell in reserve from late 1911. The following January Africa took part in aircraft trials at Sheerness in Kent. A 30m runway with guide rails was built sloping down from the ship's superstructure to her bows, across the top of the forward 12in gun turret, and a Short Improved S27 pusher aeroplane took off from the ship while she was anchored on the Medway. Pilot Lt Charles Samson managed to pull the aircraft up after speeding down the runway, circled the ship a number of times then landed ashore – the first successful British shipboard aircraft launch. The trials, which included sister ship HMS Hibernia and battleship HMS London, proved the worth of aircraft for spotting and reconnaissance, but the fixed runway proved an encumbrance which interfered with the guns – another path needed to be found. After refit, Africa joined her seven class sisters in the 3rd Battle Squadron which was sent to the Mediterranean to join the First Balkan War, blockading Montenegro. On the outbreak of war the 3rd Battle Squadron was assigned to the Grand Fleet at Rosyth, but Africa saw no action, being involved in fruitless sweeps, patrols, exercises and dashes towards enemy encounters but arriving too late. After a brief spell at the Nore, and a refit in Portsmouth, Africa was sent to the Adriatic where a British squadron was supporting the Italians, but again she saw no action as local commanders kept the larger warships out of the range of submarines. After a refit in early 1917 Africa began Atlantic convoy escort duties, mainly based at Sierra Leone, and underwent a further refit in Brazil in the winter of 1917-18. In early September 1918, while still at Sierra Leone, members of her ship's company became ill with the so-called Spanish Flu, and by the time the outbreak was over at the end of the month more than 50 sailors had died. In the final days of the war Africa went into reserve in Portsmouth, then spent several months as an accommodation ship before she was sold for scrap in the summer of 1920 and taken to Newcastle, where she was broken up.

21 May 1943

Submarine HMS Sickle sank U-303 while the German boat was on trials off Toulon on 21 May 1943. Sickle, an S-class submarine built at Cammell Laird in Birkenhead, was commissioned on 1 December 1942 and after an initial patrol off Norway she transferred to the Mediterranean, operating first from Gibraltar then Algiers. The submarine, which displaced 1,010 tons when submerged, left Algiers on 10 May 1943 and after five days on patrol she attacked a German convoy to the south of Nice in France, sinking a submarine chaser. On 20 May Sickle fired torpedoes at U-755 but missed – the U-boat's luck ran out just eight days later when it was sunk in an air attack. However, on 21 May Sickle attacked U-303 ten miles off Toulon, and this time hit her mark. Sickle continued to sink enemy vessels, including a trio of Italian minesweepers, before transferring to Beirut at the end of October 1943 and finally on to Haifa, at that time part of mandated Palestine. In early 1944 Sickle sailed west through the Mediterranean to Gibraltar via Malta for repairs to her electrical motors, which were damaged in her final

patrol of 1943. In the early part of 1944 the S-boat sank a number of smaller vessels, including a sailing caïque transporting citrus fruits, an addition to their diet which was welcomed by the British sailors. She also attacked a trader station, though she sustained some damage and injuries, including those sustained by her commanding officer. Her final patrol saw her depart Malta on 31 May 1944, and there is evidence that she continued to pick off enemy vessels at regular intervals around the Greek islands until mid-June, after which no more was heard from Sickle. It is thought that she was lost by striking a mine on her way back to Malta around 16 June 1944; 49 men died when she went down. U-303, Sickle's victim off Toulon, was on only her second war patrol, having been commissioned just a few months before the British submarine. She entered the fray as the Battle of the Atlantic was turning in favour of the Allies, and targets were consequently hard to find. The only success U-303 could claim was somewhat underwhelming – the 5,000-ton American ship SS Expositor, which had already been crippled by U-606 and was lying abandoned. U-303 was caught by Sickle as she sailed from Toulon at the start of her second war patrol. Ten sailors died when the British boat's torpedoes struck her, but as she slowly sank the rest of the German crew managed to scramble into life rafts and paddle their way back ashore.

22 May 1941

Naval chaplain and England rugby international the Rev Christopher 'Kit' Tanner RNVR, was posthumously awarded the Albert Medal for his actions in saving lives when the cruiser HMS Fiji was sunk in the Battle of Crete on 22 May 1941. Tanner played for Gloucester and Barbarians as well as gaining five England caps between 1930 and 1932. In June 1940 he was appointed chaplain with the RNVR and joined the new light cruiser HMS Fiji. The ship was damaged in a U-boat attack in September 1940 and underwent several months of repairs before rejoining the front line in the Denmark Strait. In April 1941 she joined Force H at Gibraltar and was sent to patrol west of Crete in mid-May in anticipation of a German attack on the island. That attack, led by paratroopers, began on 20 May, and Fiji and the other ships in the area regularly came under air attack. In the early afternoon, while attempting to cover a destroyer force, Fiji and cruiser HMS Gloucester came under constant air attacks which lasted several hours, a situation made more serious by the ships' shortage of anti-aircraft ammunition. By early evening, her ack-ack round exhausted, Fiji was struck amidships by two bombs that caused her to list heavily. She capsized around 1930 with the loss of almost 250 of her ship's company, but most of her survivors could not be recovered for several hours until darkness brought respite from air attacks. The Rev Tanner had helped evacuate some 60 men from the cruiser's sick bay and was one of the last to leave the stricken ship, then helped keep spirits up amongst the men bobbing in the sea. When destroyer HMS Kandahar started picking up survivors he refused to rest and instead went back into the sea time and time again to help those who were struggling to grab a line. It is estimated he saved at least 30 lives, but in doing so he sacrificed his own; by the time he was finally hauled on board Kandahar he was completely exhausted and died a few minutes later. The Albert Medal for saving life was replaced by the George Cross in 1971.

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23 May 1822

HMS Comet, the first paddle steamer built for the Royal Navy, was launched at Deptford on 23 May 1822. Built by Boulton, Watt and Co at Deptford on the Thames, she was ordered as a steam tug to tow Naval ships on the Rivers Thames and Medway when the wind was too light. As well as side paddles, Comet was built with a two-mast schooner rig. Although she entered service later in 1822 she did not go onto the Royal Navy's books until 1831. She continued to serve the nation until December 1868, when she was declared surplus to requirements and broken up the following year at Portsmouth Dockyard.

24 May 1916

HMS E18 was reportedly sunk by a German 'submarine trap' (Q-ship) off Bornholm in the Baltic on 24 May 1916, though there is some evidence that the submarine may have been operating after this date. The 805-ton boat, launched in March 1915, was only in service for just over a year, but managed to contribute plenty to the war effort. After her first patrol in the North Sea E18 was sent to the Baltic, leaving Harwich on 28 August 1915 and travelling with HMS E19 via Newcastle, arriving at Reval (now Tallinn, in Estonia) on 13 September – though the passage nearly finished her off; she narrowly avoided two German destroyers by diving and porpoising between the shallow seabed (seven metres down) and the surface for three hours, then after pausing in deeper water she surfaced near a cruiser and her escort destroyers, which hunted her for some time. With batteries low, E18 continued her passage, only to be attacked by two more destroyers, one of which nearly rammed her. She managed four patrols in the latter part of 1915, on two occasions almost firing on major German warships but circumstances (a Russian submarine which disturbed the target, then a jammed torpedo bow cap) prevented her firing. Her

first patrol of 1916 was also problematic. As soon as she left, on 6 January, the patrol was cancelled, but too late for E18 to be recalled. On her return leg, storms and sub-zero temperatures at one point prevented her conning tower hatch from closing, and she became icebound – she could only return to base with the help of a Finnish icebreaker. The British boats in Reval were iced in until the end of March, and E18 was the first submarine back at sea, resuming her patrol programme on 28 April. She left for her final patrol in late May – some records indicate she was at sea and possibly sunk by the German Q-ship Kronprinz Wilhelm (known as Schiff K) on 24 May, though that could have been the result of a confusing interaction between Ship K and two Russian submarines at that time, though it is by no means sure that E18 was in the area at the time. Other historians believe E18 was responsible for badly damaging German destroyer V100 on 26 May and that she was possibly sighted by German forces on 28 May and 1 June. In this scenario she would have been lost in early June on her way back to Reval, possibly by striking a mine; in any case nothing further was heard from her and she was officially declared lost by the Royal Navy on 11 June. Her wreck was discovered off the coast of Estonia, and images taken of the wreck by a Swedish remotely-operated submersible show that E18's hatch was open, indicating that she was probably sailing on the surface when she struck the mine.

25 May 1941

Sloop HMS Grimsby was sunk by German aircraft 40 miles north of Tobruk on 25 May 1941. The ship, one of eight vessels in her class built for the Royal Navy, was launched at Devonport Dockyard on 19 July 1933 and commissioned on 17 May the following year. Designed as 1,500-ton specialist escort ships, they were equipped with two 4.7in guns, a quickfire 3in AA gun and four 3pdr saluting guns, were capable of over 16kts and

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HMS Grimsby. See 25 May. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (FL 13656)

had a complement of 100. Grimsby was based in Hong Kong before World War 2, carrying out anti-piracy patrols along the Chinese coast, but on the outbreak of hostilities she returned to the UK, joining the Rosyth Escort Force to protect convoys through the North Sea. In May 1940 she switched to the Red Sea Escort Force and shuttled between Aden and Suez for a year. In March the sloop was on the move again, this time escorting convoys in the Mediterranean and playing a role in Operation Demon, the evacuation of Greek and British Commonwealth troops from mainland Greece as the Germans invaded in April. On 25 May 1941 Grimsby and armed trawler Southern Main were escorting the tanker Helka into the besieged port of Tobruk. The customary air cover from the RAF was not in place that day, and the three ships were attacked by a formation of Italian Junkers Ju 87 'Stuka' dive bombers. The tanker was sunk, and Grimsby damaged, to the extent that she was unable to fend off a second air attack and was sunk later in the day with the loss of 11 men. One of Grimsby's sister ships, HMS Wellington, has been preserved, and is currently moored on Victoria Embankment in central London – for more information see <https://www.thewellingtontrust.org>

26 May 1918

Auxiliary patrol yacht Lorna, a venerable vessel built in 1904 and taken up by the Admiralty in both world wars, sank UB-74 in Lyme Bay on 26 May 1918. The vessel was ordered by the son of a textiles magnate and built in 1904 by Scotts at Greenock under the name Beryl, but the intended owner died before she was finished, and it was bought in 1905 by a member of the aristocracy, and in 1911 by a former Governor of the Bank of England, when it was given the name Lorna. The 485-ton steam yacht was requisitioned by the Admiralty in August 1914 and converted to an armed patrol vessel, mounting two 6pdr guns and a number of depth charges. She served in both home waters and the Mediterranean, and on the evening of 26 May was escorting a convoy off Portland Bill when her crew spotted a submarine periscope just 30m away. Having spotted the yacht late, the submarine – UB-74 – dived but was depth-charged, and a patch of debris and turbulent water was spotted on the surface shortly after. On returning to the spot Lorna's crew spotted four German sailors in the water but by then a further depth charge had been dropped and the explosion killed three of the survivors outright while the fourth died later that evening. Lorna was returned to her civilian owner in February 1919, and later sold to an MP. She was taken up once again in September 1939, initially serving out of Fort William and later moving to the Mediterranean based at Gibraltar. She was excused further military service in 1943, and in 1947 was sold to a Greek shipping concern, which converted her to carry passengers under the name Thessalia. She was refitted with a diesel engine in 1960 and renamed Glaros, and sank after a collision in Piraeus on 14 December 1966. Although the wreck was raised she was of no further use, and was scrapped nearby in 1968.

27 May 1942

Survey vessel HMS Fitzroy was sunk by a mine off Great Yarmouth on 27 May 1942 with the loss of 12 men. The 720-ton ship, part of the Aberdare sub-class of Hunt-class minesweepers, was completed in 1919 and commissioned on 1 July that year as a survey vessel,

spending the inter-war period surveying home waters from Shetland to Portsmouth. Powered by forced-draught pulverised coal-fired boilers, the ships of this class required high-quality Welsh coal to operate effectively, and produced a lot of smoke, being known as 'Smoky Joes'. Fitzroy had two earlier names – Pinner and Portreath – before the Royal Navy settled on the appropriately survey-related name Fitzroy. She was converted for minesweeping work at the start of World War 2, but met her end when she struck a mine some 40 miles off Great Yarmouth in the North Sea on 27 May 1942 – it is thought most likely that the device she struck was a British mine.

28 May 1891

Converted tugboat HMS Hearty sailed from Kinsale in southern Ireland on her first fishery protection patrol on 28 May 1891 – regarded by some as the first Royal Navy ship fully dedicated to that task. Previous ships with the long-established Fishery Protection Squadron – one of the oldest military formations in the world – had always been general-purpose warships allocated on an ad hoc basis, and included frigate HMS Albermarle, commanded by Capt Horatio Nelson, in 1781 off the American East Coast. Having said that, Hearty did have a wider remit than simply fishery protection work. She was built as the tug Indra at the Thompson shipyard in Dundee, but by the time she was launched in 1885 she had been bought by the Royal Navy; she was renamed Hearty at the end of that year. Hearty was commissioned in September 1886 to serve as a Special Service Vessel on fishery protection patrols in the North Sea, as well as a tug, and she later undertook harbour duties at Chatham and Sheerness. In 1908 she was employed as a target-towing vessel in the Moray Firth, where elements of the Nore division of the Home Fleet were able to carry out battle practice. Hearty was recommissioned as a survey ship in 1910, carrying out tidal surveys of the deeper areas of the English Channel and the North Sea from her base at Dover; her survey work carried on throughout World War 1 while she was based at the Nore. Hearty was sold as a salvage vessel to a commercial firm in late 1920 and continued to work under the name Dalhousie until she was scrapped in the 1930s.

29 May 1877

HM Ships Shah and Amethyst, under Rear Admiral de Horsey, fought Peruvian rebel ship Huascar off Ilo on 29 May 1877, during which Shah fired the first British torpedo used in action. Built at Portsmouth Dockyard and launched on 10 September 1873, the 6,350-ton unarmoured steam frigate Shah was deployed to the Pacific Station as flagship in 1876. The following year, on 29 May, in company with the corvette HMS Amethyst, Shah fought an action against the armoured turret ship Huescar, operated by anti-government rebels, near the port of Ilo in Peru. Huescar had been taken from the Peruvian government's hands on 6 May 1877 and was being used by rebels to harass commercial shipping along the Peruvian coast. When she boarded a number of British merchant ships, enough was enough, and Shah and Amethyst were sent along to knock the Peruvian ship out of the picture. In the battle, the Royal Navy ships fired at a much quicker rate than the Peruvian – Shah managed almost 240 shots and the smaller, shallow-draught Amethyst almost 200, while Huescar only managed to fire off

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40 rounds, most of them off-target and only doing superficial damage to the rigging. However, shots from both Amethyst and Shah (60 of which struck the Peruvian) had very little effect against the monitor's armour. An attempt to ram Huescar also failed, as did the first attack by a self-propelled torpedo in the history of the Royal Navy – the device had only just been introduced to the front line, and in any case it missed. Although Huescar managed to escape under cover of darkness, the 1,900-ton armoured monitor was surrendered to the Peruvian government the following day after less than a month in the control of the rebels. She went on to serve in the Chilean Navy, and is now preserved in the Chilean port of Talcahuano. Shah continued to serve in the Royal Navy, playing a small part in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 and taking up the role of accommodation ship in the Naval Dockyard at Ireland Island in Bermuda. In late 1904 she was converted to a coal storage hulk named C740, and she was eventually sold in the autumn of 1919, ending her days when she was wrecked in a hurricane in Bermuda in 1926. Amethyst underwent a major refit in England at the end of the 1870s then returned to South America until she was paid off at the end of 1885. She was scrapped two years later.

30 May 1942

Battleship HMS Ramillies was badly damaged and tanker British Loyalty sunk by Japanese midget submarine at Diego Suarez on 30 May 1942. The 31,600-ton battleship had an inauspicious start to life, damaging her hull and rudders at her launch at Dalmuir on 12 September 1916 – she had to be patched up before she could be towed to a sufficiently large dry dock (in Liverpool) where she could undergo repairs. When they were finished, in May 1917, she ran aground as she left the Cammell Laird yard and headed out onto

the Mersey, requiring further repairs. Ramillies served with both the Atlantic and Mediterranean Fleets in the 1920s and 30s, and undertook a training role in 1936-7 before undergoing a refit that took her through to 1939. She began hostilities in the Mediterranean, based at Alexandria, then moved to Aden before undertaking a passage to New Zealand via Australia in order to escort troop convoys between the Antipodes and Aden. With the entry of Italy into the war Ramillies was put onto convoy escort work in the Med, and later in 1941 she was switched to the Indian Ocean, although as she and her sisters were somewhat outdated she was kept away from combat operations and continued to escort convoys. She was the Royal Navy flagship for Operation Ironclad, the invasion of Madagascar, in early May 1942 and continued to support Allied forces during the subsequent land operations. On 30 May the midget submarine M-20b, launched from Japanese submarine I-20, attacked Allied shipping in Diego Suarez (now Antsiranana) in northern Madagascar, with one torpedo blowing a gaping hole in the hull of the battleship (though causing no deaths) and another sinking the 7,000-ton motor tanker British Loyalty, killing six sailors. Badly damaged, Ramillies managed to limp to Durban in South Africa where, despite her 26 years, she was found to be in generally excellent condition (apart from the hole in her hull), so she continued on her way to Devonport where full repairs were carried out. A further brief spell on the Eastern Fleet was followed by a refit, after which Ramillies joined the bombardment force for the Normandy landings on 6 June 1944, successfully knocking out the German shore battery at Benerville-sur-Mer, on the fringe of Sword Beach. Over the course of a week Ramillies fired more than 1,000 shells from her 15in main guns at targets around Sword, Gold and Juno beaches, requiring her worn-out guns to be replaced

Continued on page 41

HMS Amethyst. See 29 May. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (Q 41083)

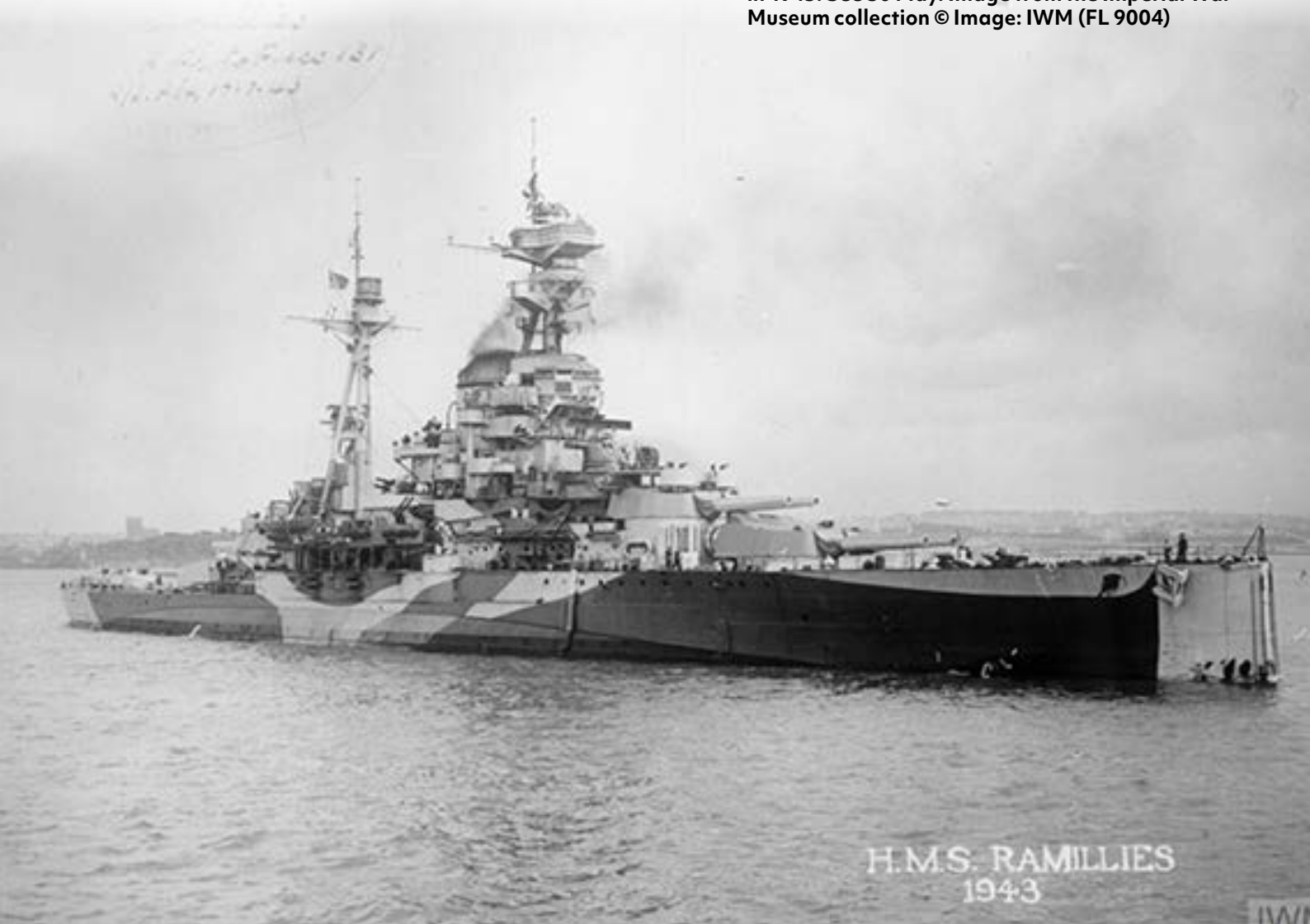


in Portsmouth later that month. She repeated her feat of accurate bombardment in August 1944 during Operation Dragoon, the landings at Provence in Southern France, when she knocked out a succession of batteries from St Tropez to Toulon. With the bombardment role no longer in such demand, Ramillies was reduced to reserve status in January 1945 and converted to a barrack ship after VE Day. In late 1947 she was deemed surplus to requirements and sold for scrap in February 1948, finally being broken up at Cairnryan in Scotland in April. One of the battleship's main 15in guns can still be seen outside the Imperial War Museum in London; the gun was on board Ramillies between 1916 and 1941 when it was removed and placed in storage. The tanker British Loyalty was refloated in December 1942 and towed to the Addu Atoll in the Maldives in October the following year where she was used as an oil storage hulk. The tanker had to misfortune to be attacked for a second time on 9 March 1944 when she was struck by a torpedo from German submarine U-183. Although the torpedo did significant damage, counterflooding prevented the tanker from sinking, and she was repaired and continued to serve as a hulk until she was scuttled on 15 January 1946.

31 May 1946

RNAS Wingfield was handed over to South Africa Civil Aviation on 1 May 1946, and for a period it became Cape Town Airport. The land was sold to the South African government by a local businessman/politician on the outbreak of war in 1939 for use as an airfield, on condition it would be returned to him when it had no further use. Wingfield Aerodrome saw its first military formation arrive shortly after in the shape of 15 Squadron SAAF, which comprised three former Junkers Ju 86 airliners that were converted for use as maritime patrol aircraft. The Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm used the airfield from July 1942, originally as a disembarkation facility and for working up squadrons and later as a repair yard. It saw a wide range of squadrons and aircraft on its runways. Including 799 NAS's Albacores, 804 NAS's Hellcats, 810 NAS's Barracudas and 818 NAS's Swordfish. The airfield was handed back to the South Africans in May 1946, and served as Cape Town's primary airport until a new Cape Town International Airport was opened in 1954. That facility is now the second busiest airport in South Africa, and the fourth busiest on the entire continent.

HMS Ramillies secured to a buoy in Plymouth Sound in 1943. See 30 May. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (FL 9004)



2025

3 May 2025	Army v Navy rugby match, Twickenham
10 May 2025	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting hosted by Romford & Hornchurch Branch
10 May 2025	Scottish Area Quarterly Meeting hosted by City of Glasgow Branch
15-18 May 2025	Londonderry Battle of the Atlantic 80th Anniversary Commemoration
17 May 2025	4 Area meeting, St Austell
20-22 June 2025	RNA75 Annual Conference 2025, Portsmouth
28 June 2025	HMS Collingwood Open Day, Fareham
9 August 2025	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting online
30 August 2025	Scottish Area Quarterly Meeting hosted by Aberdeen Branch
14 Sept 2025	Naval Associations Biennial Parade, Whitehall
22 Oct 2025	Fisherman's Friends Charity Fundraising Concert, Portsmouth
15 Nov 2025	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting hosted by RNA Stowmarket

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



www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



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The Royal Maritime Hotel is a stone's throw from Gunwharf Quays, the Spinnaker Tower and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, HMS Victory, The Mary Rose Museum and HMS Warrior. Facilities include Horatio's restaurant, the Victory bar, a small swimming pool, sauna, spa pool and skittles!

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MORE OFFERS

Ship Anson pub, 10 The Hard, Portsea	10% off food and drink
Portsmouth Historic Dockyard	£20 for a day ticket 30% off annual Ultimate Explorer tickets
Royal Maritime Hotel 182 Queen Street	A 10% discount on food, selected drinks and hotel rooms
Sea Urchin's Gin Navy Strength Gin Arctic Convoy Vodka	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.
China Fleet Country Club	Click on the link for offers for Serving and ex-Serving RN and RM
Trinity Insurance	For offers see https://tinyurl.com/ssy8vt5s



**ROYAL NAVAL
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Army Vs Navy Rugby (RNA75 AvN planning)

2 May 2025

Introduction: The AvN Rugby Match takes place at Twickenham on Saturday 3rd May 2025 with the RNA as the chosen Charity of the Day. Central Office staff and Volunteers will be out and about collecting money for the RNA. If you are attending the Army v Navy and want to volunteer to give up an hour of your time to fundraise for the Association please contact the Admin Gazebo.

RNA Gazebo: Central point for admin for the RNA, located at the West Fan Village – see Annex A. RNA wristbands, **for those who bought tickets through the RNA**, to access the RNA Bars can be collected from the admin Gazebo. RNA wristbands will be in envelopes with the lead booker's name on the front. We would ask that only the lead booker, or nominated representative, comes to the admin Gazebo to collect wristbands rather than trying to distribute wristbands to individual Shipmates.

Tickets: If you have not yet accessed your tickets please download the Allianz Stadium app, input the requested details and your tickets should appear in your app. If someone else has purchased your tickets for you, these will be allocated to that person and they can then send the tickets to you, using your mobile telephone number, but you will still need to download the app and your tickets will arrive there.

Car Competition: Located at the RNA Admin Gazebo. For a donation, Shipmates can try to guess how many rugby balls and balloons are inside the General Secretary's classic Fiat 500. We are hoping to announce the winner at half-time of the Men's game so the winner can go home with their prize.

Nightingale Suite & Churchill Suite: Our nominated RNA bars, for those who bought tickets through the RNA, are located on Level 2 at the southern end – see Annex B. There will be security on the door **(no entry without a wristband)** and the bars will open at 1200 and close at half-time of Women's game, around 1730.

Emergency: If you require urgent assistance, please contact the nearest member of security, or alternatively contact Twickenham Control on **020 831 6555**.



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Timings For Saturday 3 May

1100	Gates at Twickenham open
1100	Admin Gazebo opens
1100	RNA Charitable Collection commences.
1200	Nightingale Suite & Churchill Suite bars open to RNA Members
1330	All Charitable Collection ceases
1400	Men's game begins
1540	Men's game ends
1645	Women's game begins
1725	Women's game half-time
1730 approx	Nightingale Suite & Churchill Suite bars close to RNA Members
1810	Women's game ends
1845	Fiat 500 and Minibus depart Twickenham
2000	Gates at Twickenham close

General Secretary / Chief Executive

Annex A: External Layout of Twickenham

Annex B: Internal Layout of Twickenham

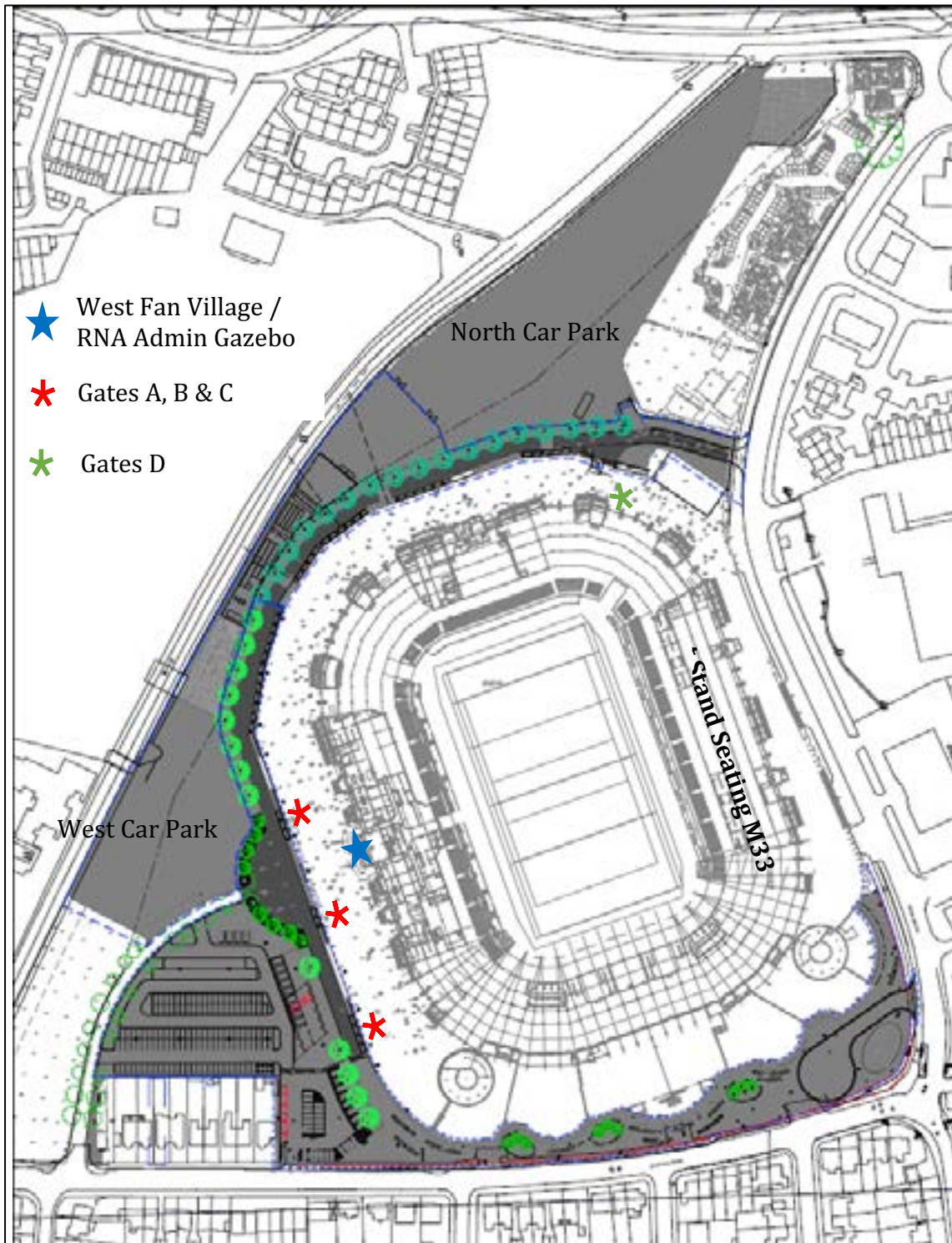


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Annex A - External Layout of Twickenham



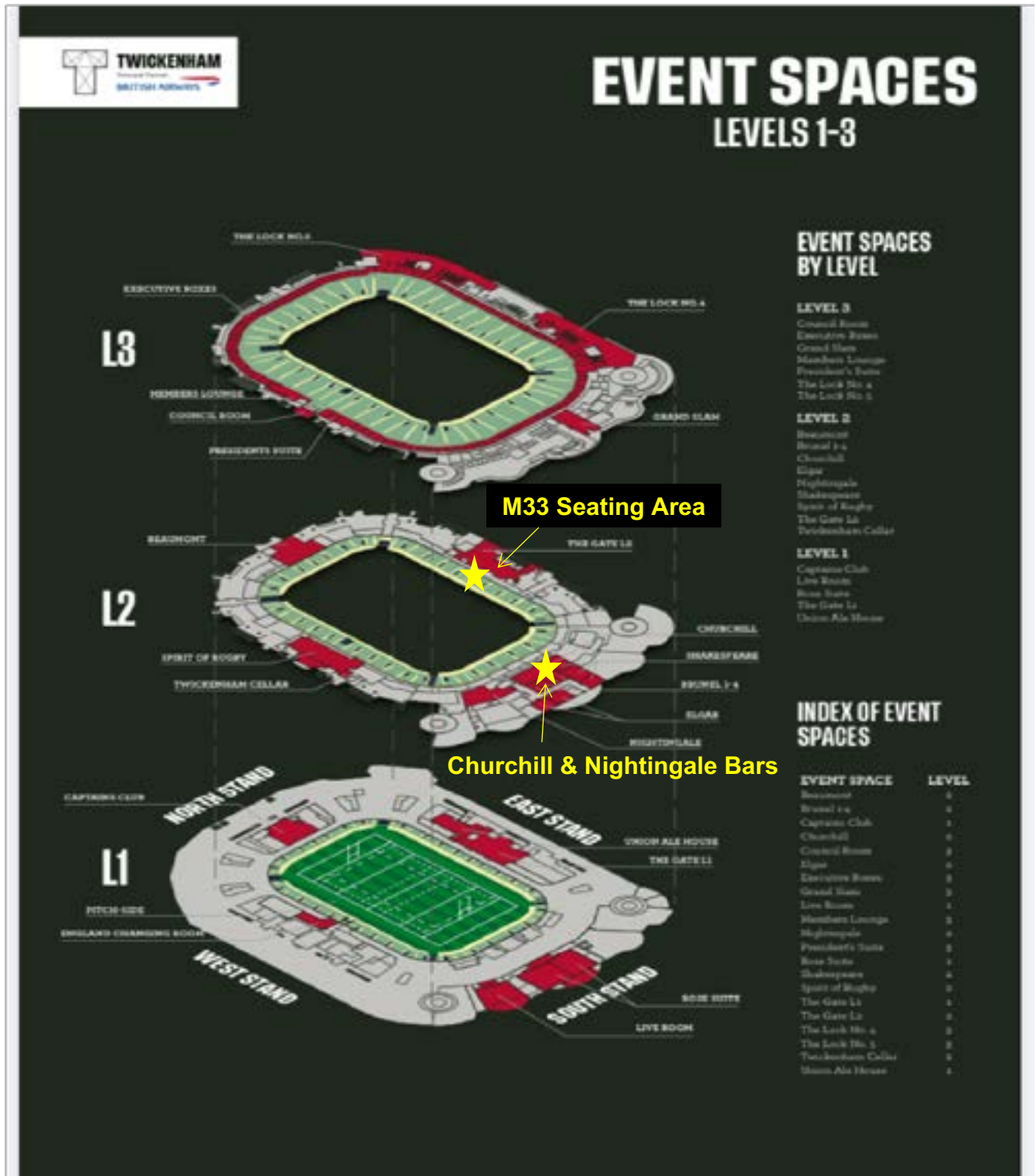


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Annex B Internal Layout of Twickenham





ARMED FORCES CRICKET

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S T20



**SERVICE PERSONNEL/ VETERANS/
MOD CIVIL SERVANTS:**

£10 (WITH PROOF OF ENTITLEMENT)

ADULTS: £20

U16s: £5

OVER 65s: £5

PLEASE NOTE: ALL UNDER 14s MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT

**TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM
3 MARCH 2025 VIA THE LORD'S WEBSITE**
ALL TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED ONLINE

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Webpage



HMS Collingwood – Government Organisation



@HMS_Collingwood



**Fareham ~ Pulheim
Twinning Association**



HMS COLLINGWOOD presents

BEST OF BRITISH MEETS SWING!

1930 – Saturday 17th May 2025

A Musical Celebration – Best of British Meets Swing!

Join us for an unforgettable evening of music, where two fantastic bands come together for a unique cultural exchange! Experience the rousing “Best of British” sounds from the Royal Navy Volunteer Band of HMS Collingwood, alongside the dynamic swing rhythms of Fun Connection from Fareham’s twinned town of Pulheim. From stirring marches to toe-tapping jazz, this concert promises something for everyone.

Don’t miss this lively night of musical talent and international friendship!

Doors Open at 6:30PM

Starts at 7:30PM

Location – Titchfield Festival Theatre, Fareham, PO14 4BG

Supported by Hampshire County Council



Delegate to Annual Conference 2025 - PORTSMOUTH

Branch secretaries should note the following before submitting their application.

No Branch shall be permitted to send a delegate to the Conference unless it has observed the regulations of the Association in regard to the return of balance sheets, the Branch Annual Report and the formation of Branches. This provision has no application to the right of, and expectation for, ships and establishments to send a delegate to the Conference. Associate members are eligible to act as a Branch Delegate at Area meetings and Conferences, provided that they have completed three years continuous membership of the Association immediately prior to election as Delegate.

Each Branch which has been in commission for at least three months by the date of a Conference shall be entitled to nominate one eligible Association Member as its Delegate to attend a Conference.

Each Branch nominating a Delegate shall send details to the Council **to arrive not less than one week before the date of Conference**. A Branch may change its nominated Delegate provided the Council is notified not less than twenty four hours before the Conference.

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

NB: A Delegate will not be confirmed as such unless or until the Branch Balance Sheet for 2024 and Branch Annual Report for 2024 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@rnassoc.org

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



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TICKETS FOR
ARMED FORCES
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Remembrance Raceday Application Form

Thursday 6th November 2025

This offer is for two complimentary adult tickets to Chelmsford City Racecourse's Remembrance Raceday, for past and present members of the Armed Forces and their guest. Gates open at 3.30pm (TBC).

To apply please complete the form below and return it to info@chelmsfordcityracecourse.com by **Monday 3rd November**. Alternatively, you can complete the form on-line at [Remembrance Raceday Application Form](#)

Please note that **photographic ID of military or veterans status** will need to be included with your application. If you opt to complete the form online you will need to send the requested supplementary information to info@chelmsfordcityracecourse.com to support your application. **We understand that not all veterans are in possession of an I.D card therefore please call us.** Once your application has been approved, we will remove your ID from our system.

Children under 18 can attend this raceday free of charge, but need to be included in this application. If you wish to purchase further adult tickets, please see our website at www.chelmsfordcityracecourse.com or call 01245 360300.

Full Name of Lead Booker:	
Name of Regiment, Corps or Unit:	
Rank:	
Number of Adult Tickets (max of 2):	
Number of Child tickets (Under 18s):	
Postcode and House No:	
Email:	
Contact number:	
How did you hear about the event:	

Please allow the public to pay tribute to your service by attending in uniform representing your regiment. All uniformed military or veterans suited and proudly displaying their medals, will be invited into the Parade Ring for the wreath laying ceremony.

Please refer to the website for any further racing information and opening and closing times.

<https://chelmsfordcityracecourse.com/plan-your-visit/faqs/>

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CONTACT S/m Frank Brown for more detail

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