

SEMAPHORE SHORT

AHOY SHIPMATES! It seems like no sooner is one event finished than the next is upon us. We regularly remind you of important dates such as the **RNA Uckers World Championships** (Portsmouth, **12 October**), our **Annual Conference** (Portsmouth on **20-22 June 2025**) and our **75th Anniversary Fisherman's Friends Concert** (Portsmouth, **22 October 2025**), but you should also keep an eye on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/royalnavalassoc/) and the Semaphores for new events and further details.

PLAY THE ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION WEEKLY LOTTERY AND WIN UP TO £25,000 [PLAY NOW](#)

OPENING NOTES

The RNA Community Choir is up and running! If you would like to join please email the appropriate Choir Co-ordinator for your area: **Scotland & North of England:** Karen Elliot, kelliot250666@gmail.com; **Portsmouth:** Jenny Frank, Jenworking41@gmail.com; **South-West and Wales:** Sarah Bewley, cml@rnassoc.org. All are welcome – singing brings joy and a choir brings companionship. We will welcome you if you are a professional, or if you have never sung before.

TELL US WHAT YOU ARE DOING! Can shipmates please remember to send event photographs (preferably as jpegs) and a brief write-up to comms@rnassoc.org so they can see it in Semaphores and on our social networks.



ROYAL DATE On Wednesday, accompanied by his wife, son and daughter, S/M Keith Ridley attended Windsor Castle for his Investiture as a Member of the British Empire by The Princess Royal. Unlike pre-Covid investitures, the ceremony was conducted privately with only Keith's family present. A former National Chairman for seven years, Keith was proud to accept the award not just for his service to the RNA, but in recognition of the RNA, and the support given to him by the Membership during his term as National Chairman.

NAVAL MEMORIAL A Service of Rededication marking the centenary of the Portsmouth Naval Memorial on Southsea Common will be held on Friday 4 October – see social media for details.

ROYAL OAK A reminder that a memorial service marking the 85th anniversary of the loss of battleship HMS Royal Oak will be held on The Hard in Portsmouth on Sunday 6 October, starting at 1100. The service will include the unveiling of a memorial obelisk. Royal Oak was sunk in Scapa Flow on 14 October 1939 by submarine U-47, with the loss of 835 men and boys.

CROSSED THE BAR It is with great sadness that we announce that **Shipmate Cdr Paddy McClurg RN** has crossed the bar. Paddy, a former General Secretary of the Royal Naval Association, was well liked and will be sorely missed. The RNA sends its most heartfelt condolences to his family. Paddy's obituary will appear in the next Semaphore Circular.

With much sadness, we also mark the crossing of the bar of **Shipmate Leonard Gunner**, D-Day veteran and the bravest seasick young sailor. At the age of 19 he was a signaller on Gold Beach on D-Day, sending back firing instructions to Allied warships bombarding German defences as he was too seasick to work onboard. Leonard's D-Day story is recorded on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gGZQy_WwIk. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

PENSION GUIDE Rules and regulations around pensions can be complicated, and this is certainly the case with deferred and preserved pensions for service in the Armed Forces. A guide has been produced to provide information helping you understand whether you are eligible for an Armed Forces pension, when and how you go about claiming it. That guide is now available on the RNA website at www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/document-categories/central-office-documents

FIRESIDE CHATS Our next Fireside Chat will be on the subject of **FOST (Fleet Operational Standards and Training) Assurance**, by Danny Tregarthen. The Chat is on this Monday (30 September). Fireside Chats start at 1830 every Monday, and to access the chats, log into Zoom here. The meeting ID is 288 830 5105 and the access password is Shipmate.

RNA Central Office,
Lanyard House, Scott Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT
comms@rnassoc.org
www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION