



**ROYAL NAVAL
ASSOCIATION**



The Semaphore Circular

No 730

The Beating Heart of the RNA

June 2023



Royal Naval Association National President Vice Admiral Duncan Potts and National Council Member WO1 Claire Robson meet Battle of the Atlantic veteran Frank Cooper during the weekend of the RNA Annual Conference/Battle of the Atlantic 80th Anniversary commemorations in Liverpool

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Glossary of terms

NCM	National Council Member
NC	National Council
AMC	Association Management Committee
FAC	Finance Administration Committee
NCh	National Chairman
NVCh	National Vice Chairman

NP	National President
DNP	Deputy National President
GS	General Secretary
CONA	Conference of Naval Associations
NCBA	National Charter, Rules and Byelaws Advisor/ Governance Committee

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or
RNA Website / Members Area / Downloads /
Circulars / Code (shipmate)

Snail Mail – Postal Address

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From the General Secretary

Ahoy Shipmates

“I feel like a Frenchman at a Trafalgar Night Dinner” was the opening line of Dr Jann Witt’s presentation to our Annual Conference in Liverpool last weekend. Jann (pictured right) is the official historian to the DMB, which is the equivalent of the RNA in Germany, and went on to give us a hugely informative and entertaining briefing on German naval strategy during WWII.



This year’s Conference was set around the commemorations and celebrations marking the 80th anniversary of the turning of the tide in the Battle of the Atlantic (BOA).

In many ways the Conference started with the previous Monday’s online Fireside Chat, with St Neots Branch’s S/M Mike Milne giving an outstanding talk on the Western Approaches Tactical Unit. There we learned that it was actually a group of very bright young Jenny Wrens who did the Operational Analysis to work out how the U-boats were making their attacks and developed the tactics to counter them.

I particularly liked the story about Admiral Max Horton, a former WWI submarine CO and, by then, CINC Western Approaches, playing the role of the U-boat captain on the tactical floor and being defeated five times by a 21-year-old Wren. “You’ve made your point,” he grumbled!



After the introductions at Conference, the Association had the very great honour of being admitted to Liverpool City Council's Freedom Roll of Associations and Institutions (see left). It was such a privilege, and a fitting way to be able to begin our Conference. Our National President has since written to the Lord Mayor, Cllr Mary Rasmussen, requesting she convey our very deep gratitude to the City Council at their next meeting.

We were also fortunate to have the First Sea Lord, Sir Ben Key, teeing us up with a summary of the Royal Navy's current challenges and successes, drawing comparisons between the Navy's role today and that of the Battle of the Atlantic.

And, after Jann, we had Vice Admiral Mike Gretton taking us through the tactical battle of convoy ONS 5 in May 1943, where the Convoy Commander was his father, Peter Gretton, and was reckoned to be the turning point in the tonnage war. The Germans had 60 U-boats at sea at the start of the month and Doenitz had anticipated annihilation of the convoy. Instead, however, 40 of those U-boats did not return and an operational pause was required to reset.

The losses on both sides were horrific and our National President poignantly reminded us, before we stood to remember those who had crossed the bar since we last met, that the Conference landed on the anniversary of the sinking of the Bismarck, with over 2,200 sailors' lives lost.

Along with Gala Dinners, RM Band Concerts, a Drumhead Ceremony and Parade, and a host of other events and attractions on the waterfront to mark BOA 80, the weekend was a tremendous success, and a huge vote of thanks goes out to the Area 10 organising committee, especially Fred Pilgrim and John Arnold, along with Malcolm Little from Central Office. Not an easy Conference to pull together as there were so many competing stakeholders, so BZ to all.

There are so many people to thank after Conference, but my main thanks must go to our two most important guests for the weekend – Wilfred 'George' Osborne and Frank Cooper, both of whom are veterans of the Battle and helped to win us the freedoms we all enjoy today. Thank you to you and all of your amazing generation. We will remember them.

Continuing the theme of Remembrance, last week we hosted the HMS Glamorgan Association when they had Naval Base Commander Cdre John Voyce plant a tree in the Falklands Memorial Garden adjacent to RNA Central Office in HMNB Portsmouth (pictured below). The Garden already has two benches commemorating the two Portsmouth-based warships of the Task Force which were lost, and the tree will serve as a reminder of the 14 of Glamorgan's ship's company who didn't return.



Part II of this serial will be a plaque unveiling and service in the Memorial Garden on 10 July which, somewhat fittingly, is the anniversary of the ship's return to Portsmouth in 1982. Standard Bearers of local Branches would be very welcome to attend along with any old Glamorgans – please let the Ship's Office know if you plan to attend.

Finally, on a more upbeat note, please see the announcement that the RNA has started a weekly lottery. If you want to support your RNA and have a chance of winning £25,000 please sign up. See the separate article [below](#) for details.

Best wishes,

Bill

Chairman's chat

Ahoy Shipmates. This retirement business is getting the better of me with days just flying by! April Fool's Day certainly caught me out missing the Semaphore Circular copy date (Journalism lingo for deadline to print), and then a 'technical hitch' (according to the Editor...) meant another blank last month. Why are the days simply flying by? I do not think I am entirely forgetful as I remember the Saturday evening Virtual Tot Time! Anyway, third time lucky – here is my piece for the June edition, including some points held over from the last two months.

Awards: At the March National Council Meeting, it was a pleasure to award S/M Andy Christie Life Membership of the RNA on behalf of the Council in recognition of his outstanding dedication and commitment to the RNA, over and above what he was expected to do during his 12 years as a member of the Central Office Staff. BZ Andy! Wear your RED badge with pride.

Branch News: Congratulations to RNA Torfaen, who commissioned on 28th January, and welcome to 'probably the second best club in the world...'
It was a pleasure to have been invited to RNA Tyne Branch's 75th Dinner, which was a great success, and to award the Branch a 75th Anniversary Certificate.
Showing on the radar screen is Caerphilly, who will be scheduled to be Commissioning as a Branch on Saturday 10 June.

Special Birthdays: Our Centenarians: If your Branch has a Shipmate about to celebrate this milestone birthday, please inform both Sara Field at Central Office (sara@royalnavalassoc.com) and myself (nationalchairman@royalnavalassoc.com) so as to ensure they are not missed off the Birthday Card list.

Year Book: A large number of these have been returned to Central Office, mainly because shipmates appear to have moved and may not have informed their Branch Secretary or Central Office (if HQ Roll Members). If you have moved, please advise one of those mentioned above.

Deputy National Council Members (DNCMs): At the time of writing this, the following Areas do not have a DNCM: Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10 and 11. Shipmates interested in this role are asked to contact their Area Secretary, National Council Member (NCM), myself or S/M Nick Purkis, Head of Governance (governancechair@royalnavalassoc.com) for further information.

Ships' Badges (Crests): A BIG Thank You to all those Shipmates who donated to the appeal I placed in the Semaphore Short for Ships' Badges to adorn the wall of the Veterans Hub in the newly-opened Veterans Treatment Centre at the Robert Jones & Agnus Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital at Gobowen, Oswestry.

On 17 March I attended the Centre with a Shipmate who had an appointment, and took the opportunity on behalf of the National Council to present Lt Col Carl Meyer RAMC with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of his outstanding surgical support and surgical skills in treating us Naval Veterans who have or are suffering in the main with knee and hip problems.

At the time of my visit, badges on the wall numbered: Navy 8, Army 20, and RAF 2. My wife, not knowing what badge represented which Service, enquired "What are those two?" The reply was "that is the O D corner" with the follow up "they are RAF – Oh Dear Corner." All banter aside, whether Navy, Army or RAF, we are a Team envied throughout the World.

Membership: By April we were just a tad short of 17,000 members. As we go to press, we may have just exceeded that total, against a target of 12,000 set for 31st December 2022. Well done Bill Oliphant, the General Secretary, on smashing his ambitious target in just two years. As a gentle reminder to members – although we are now a subscription-free Association, we encourage members to make an annual donation. A simple £1 or £1.50p per month via a Direct Debit or Standing Order will be appreciated to help run our fantastic Association. If you have not already set up a donation, please consider doing so by contacting your Branch Secretary, look up the RNA website or phone Central Office, tel: 023 9272 3747. If you pay Income Tax, please consider ticking the Gift Aid box as HMRC will freely give us 25p in the pound on your donation.

Central Office Staff update: I extend a BIG welcome to our new member of staff, Alice Farrow, who joined us as the Head of Communications. Alice comes with an impressive background in the world of communications.

Sadly, we have said farewell to Lynda Pearson, who did a wonderful job as Welfare/Wellbeing Manager at Central Office. Lynda, along with one of our Vice Presidents, serving WO1 Claire Robson, organised a well-run National Welfare/Wellbeing Workshop in February attended by just under 100 Area Welfare Advisers and Branch Welfare Officers. We wish Lynda all the best in pursuing her new job.

Chris Trevethan has settled in well and has hit the deck running, getting to grips with how the RNA ticks. Unbeknown to us until recently, he is a TV celebrity! As previously advised, he did two stints as a Jimmy, and appears in the three-part TV Series 'Britain's Biggest Warship' featuring HMS Queen Elizabeth; taking the Commander's Table, explaining and taking part in a RAS, and finally shaking hands with the Skipper, Captain (Commodore) Jeremy Kyd (later promoted Vice Admiral as Fleet Commander) having handed over the Command of QE in New York.

Area & Branch Promotion Boards, otherwise known as Damage Control State 1, "Stop the Ship from sinking": As a follow up to my last Chat. I hope Area and Branch AGMs went well, and you have been successful in filling the all-important Officials and Committee positions. Should Branches have experienced problems with this, please contact your Area Secretary, NCM or Central Office asap.

Football corner: (Just for Andy Christie!): With the Premier League season having just ended, just to say how sad the Hammers fans amongst us are, and we look forward to seeing the Saints rejoining the Premier League next season. We intend to have a whip

round for a ladder to help you back up, but do not hold your breath. Just remember which First Division team's players scored all four goals that won the World Cup back in 1966...

'Finished with Main Engines' has just been rung down, so that is it for now, Shipmates. To all serving Shipmates including Reservists, and your families – keep safe. For those at sea, God Speed, and a safe return.

Yours aye,

Keith Ridley – nationalchairman@royalnavalassoc.com

1 RNA Annual Conference/Battle of the Atlantic 80 – Liverpool



General Secretary Bill Oliphant has given us a sense of just how successful was the RNA Annual Conference, held in the city of Liverpool to coincide with commemorations and events marking the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.

As usual, the official Minutes of the Conference will be available in due course, but by way of reflection on events over the weekend here are some of the images taken by the Association's ace photographer, S/M Nigel Huxtable – the image on the front page of this Circular is also one of Nigel's.











2 WRNS BT and RNRMC join forces

Two Naval charities plan to join forces to preserve support for those who served in the WRNS.

The Women's Royal Naval Service Benevolent Trust (WRNS BT) will operate as a wholly-owned subsidiary charity of The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC).

The two organisations have a long-standing relationship, and have close links through shared values and collaborative working. Both organisations also have The Princess Royal as their Patron.

For more details of how the new arrangement will work, see <https://www.rnrmc.org.uk/news/naval-charities-join-forces>

3 Biennial Parade in London – 10 September

The RNA/Naval Associations Biennial Parade in Whitehall will be held on Sunday 10 September, so shipmates might like to consider whether they need accommodation – London is busy at the best of times, so early consideration will mean more choice.

This year the parade falls just after the first anniversary of the death of our Queen and Patron, Elizabeth II, so the gathering will give us a chance to mark the occasion in appropriate fashion.

Specific details of timings and locations will be made available nearer the time, bearing in mind security and logistical implications, but please don't hesitate to contact Central Office if you have any questions.

Members of RNA Uxbridge would like to extend an invitation to all shipmates who are passing by their patch after attending the Biennial Parade on 10 September.

S/M Slinger Wood, branch chairman, says drop in for a buffet and the odd tot to get the blood circulating after your parade! They are located on the A40 westbound out of London, at the junction just after RAF Northolt. All they ask is an email to rna.uxbridge@hotmail.co.uk or a call to 01895 230071 just to confirm numbers for catering and watering purposes.

4 HMS Prince of Wales – Freedom of City and County of Bristol

Members of the Ship's Company of aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales will be exercising the Freedom of the City and County of Bristol on Saturday 10th June.

The planned afternoon programme will start with the Lord Mayor of the city presenting a Freedom Scroll on College Green, after which a parade of almost 300 sailors from the ship, led by a Royal Marines Band, will march through the city centre before returning to College Green for a short Service of Blessing at the Cathedral. The day's ceremonies will end with the Royal Marines Band Beating Retreat.

All are welcome to attend the ceremony on College Green and the Blessing in the Cathedral.

5 RNA Weekly Lottery – win up to £25,000!

Play the new Royal Naval Association Weekly Lottery and you could win up to £25,000!

The new lottery was launched at the RNA's National Conference on Saturday 27 May, and by playing the lottery supporters will not only have the chance to win some wonderful cash prizes, they will also be backing a rank-blind network of serving, veterans and family members of the Royal Navy.

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

Capt Bill Oliphant, Chief Executive of the RNA, 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.

"The RNA is free to join but relies on donations to help continue the good work. Since Covid, we've done so much more in the welfare/wellbeing space with our veterans, and having an RNA Lottery will allow us to do even more. Please do sign up and play our lottery, and if you're not a member – join us!"

Visit www.RNALottery.co.uk to sign up.

6 China Fleet Club – see what's on offer for ex-Serving shipmates

Shipmates may well be aware of the China Fleet Club, a top-class country club in the South West of England. Set in 180 acres of beautiful countryside beside the Tamar at Saltash, a short distance from Plymouth, the club offers four-star self-catering accommodation, a health club, an 18-hole golf course, a spa and much more.

Shipmates may not be aware that, if they are ex-serving Royal Navy or Royal Marines, they and their immediate family – partner and children up to the age of 18 – are beneficiaries of the China Fleet Trust, and thus can enjoy a number of special benefits.

For more information on what is on offer, see the [flyer](#) at the end of this Circular, or see <https://www.china-fleet.co.uk/>. Terms and conditions apply.

7 Battle of the Atlantic 80th Anniversary Commemorations – Northern Ireland

Commemorations for the 80th Anniversary of the turning of the tide in the Battle of the Atlantic were not just held in Liverpool last month.

Northern Ireland played a vital role in the Battle, and events there kicked off on Thursday 11 May with the arrival of a number of international visitors, representing the Canadian High Commission in London, Canada's Naval Memorial Trust, HMCS Sackville in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and the Crow's Nest Officers Club in St John's, Newfoundland.

Old friendships were renewed and new friendships made at the Meet & Greet, hosted by the RNA at the Royal British Legion Club Waterside Branch in Londonderry.



Rear Admiral Santarpia RCN, the Commander, Maritime Forces Atlantic, had asked the Sackville Trustees to convey and present a ship's bell to RNA Londonderry Branch on his behalf, so accordingly, Vice Admiral Dean McFadden CMM CD (Rtd) presented the ship's bell from Scott-class destroyer HMS Malcolm (pictured left), which played a very active role in the Battle of the Atlantic, to Branch Chairman S/M Robert Buchanan.

The image of the destroyer (below) is from the Imperial War Museum collection, © IWM A 12881.

Vice Admiral McFadden gave a very interesting history of HMS Malcolm up until she was broken up in 1945 – but no one appears to know how the bell of HMS Malcolm ended up spending almost 80 years in Canada!



With the lack of Royal Navy and Royal Canadian Navy assets, attributed to their attendance at the forthcoming events in Liverpool later that month, sadly there were to be no ship visits or waterborne Acts of Remembrance this year.

Friday forenoon saw a group attend a talk hosted by the Museum Services, when historian and author Richard Doherty spoke about the Battle of the Atlantic.

There was a further, and equally enlightening, talk given on Friday afternoon at Aberfoyle House, University of Ulster, Magee Campus, when Dr Adrian Grant spoke of the history of Magee College and the crucial part it played as an administrative and command centre for the Royal Navy and the US Navy during World War 2 as Ebrington Barracks (HMS Ferret).

Shipmates were joined on Friday by a group from the Northern Ireland Submariners Association, RNA National Chairman S/M Keith Ridley and shipmates from other branches of No 12 Area (Ireland).

Friday evening was time to relax with an evening's entertainment hosted by the RNA at the RBL Club.

Saturday evening's events began with a Civic Reception in the Tower Museum, hosted by the Deputy Mayor of Derry and Strabane, Mrs Angela Dobbins. After welcoming speeches from the Museum curator, Ms Roisin Doherty, S/M Robert Buchanan and the Deputy Mayor, refreshments were enjoyed by the assembled guests.

Guests then made their way the short walk to the City Hotel to attend the BOA Commemoration Dinner. Guests were upstanding while the Standards of No 12 Area (Ireland), Londonderry Branch and NI Submariners Association were piped into the dining room by Maurice Devenney. The Standards were received by S/M Keith Ridley, S/M Cdr Tim

Chrishop (Rtd), President No 12 Area (Ireland) and S/M Robert Buchanan, Chairman of Londonderry Branch & No 12 Area (Ireland)

An excellent meal was enjoyed by all and the Loyal Toast to King Charles III was proposed by S/M Keith Ridley. The toast was responded to by Alan Moore, Vice Lord Lieutenant, City of Londonderry. Mr Moore then proposed the toast "To all who served during the Battle of the Atlantic". Vice Admiral McFadden spoke on behalf of the Canadian contingent.

Boatmate Davy George, of the NI Submariners Association, presented S/M Robert Buchanan with a large book, compiled in a joint effort between the MOD and German Naval Historians, entitled 'The U-Boat War in the Atlantic'. This manuscript will be added to the archives of the new Maritime Museum, which is in the planning stages to be in Ebrington Square, formerly known as HMS Ferret during World War 2 and changed to HMS Sea Eagle after the war.

The new Maritime Museum will be right beside the International Sailor Statue which, some will know, was unveiled in 2013 by Prince Michael of Kent. After the speeches and presentations, it was time for music and dancing.

Sunday morning saw preparations for the Parade to All Saints Church Clooney for the Battle of the Atlantic Commemoration Service. The parade was led by the Churchill Band and Standards from No 12 Area (Ireland), S/M Jack Garfield, Vice Chairman No 12 Area (Ireland), Londonderry Branch, S/M Arthur Lapsley; Limavady Branch, S/M Andy Guy; East Antrim Branch, S/M Peter Corry; NI Submariners Association, B/M Jim Brydson, and other veterans associations.

The RAF was represented on parade by Flt Lt Alan Ward and two Airmen. It was especially good to see some 50 cadets on parade, made up of NI Sea Cadets and Naval Contingent Cadets from the CCF.

VIPs included the Lord Lieutenant for the City of Londonderry, Mr Ian Crowe, representing King Charles III; the Deputy Mayor of Londonderry and Strabane, Mrs Angela Dobbins, and Lord Hay of Ballyore. Other guests included Cdr Rob Milligan RN, the Senior Naval Officer Northern Ireland, Cdr Dale Turetski RCN, Canadian Deputy Defence Advisor; Lt Col Michel Tousignant, Deputy Defence Advisor to Ireland, S/M Keith Ridley, RNA National Chairman; S/M Cdr Tim Chrishop RN (Rtd), President No 12 Area (Ireland) RNA and S/M Robert Buchanan, Chairman No 12 Area (Ireland) RNA.

The Service was led by Rev Canon David McBeth, Chaplain of Londonderry Branch RNA, and the congregation included representatives of the Royal Navy, RAF, RNR, Royal Canadian Navy serving and veterans, RNA Branches of Limavady, Belfast and East Antrim, NI Submariners Association, Royal British Legion and other veterans. An interesting sermon was delivered by the Curate Rev Andrea Cotter.



During the Act of Remembrance, a Royal Marines Bugler played the Last Post and Reveille, and the Newfie-Derry Convoy Bell rang out eight bells, rung by S/M Frank Brown, Hon Sec No 12 Area (Ireland). Wreaths were laid on behalf of Canada, the Royal Navy, the RAF, the RNA, HMCS



Sackville, the Crow's Nest Officers Club NL, and the; Merchant Navy.

On the return parade the salute was taken by the Lord Lieutenant for the City of Londonderry, Mr Ian Crowe, representing King Charles III. He was accompanied on the dais by Cdr Rob Milligan RN, Senior Naval Officer Northern Ireland, and Cdr Dale Turetski RCN Commander, Military Policy Adviser, Deputy Naval Adviser, Canadian Defence Liaison Staff (London), Assistant Defence Attaché to Portugal, Canadian Armed Forces.



All were invited to a light lunch hosted by the Londonderry Branch in the Royal British Legion Club Waterside – and that concluded the 2023 Battle of the Atlantic Commemorations in Londonderry.

Thanks go to the Londonderry Port and Harbour for their support, the Museum Services, Magee Campus University of Ulster, Derry & Strabane Mayor's office, the Royal British Legion Waterside Branch & Club and everyone who took time out to support the 80th anniversary of 'the turning of the tide in 1943'.

This would not happen without the shipmates of Londonderry Branch lending their different talents to cover all aspects of delivering a fitting program of events worthy of the memory of the Service and the sacrifice of all those who served and those who died during the longest campaign of the World War 2.

Photos courtesy of S/m James McCurdy, Hon Sec Limavady Branch RNA and S/M Frank Brown Hon Sec Londonderry Branch and No 12 Area (Ireland) RNA.

8 News from the Membership Support Division

This month's notices, in no particular order:

2023 Conference Raffle:

1st Prize (£500): S/M B Kelly – West Lothian Branch

2nd Prize (£300): Runcorn Branch

3rd Prize (£200): East Antrim Branch

Thank you to all for selling and purchasing the raffle tickets, which raised over £1,000 for the Central Charities Fund.

Remembrance Parade:

We are delighted to have been allocated 120 tickets to this year's Cenotaph Veterans' Parade in Whitehall on Sunday 12 November. To register your intention to parade, please email Sara at Central Office – sara@royalnavalassoc.com – by 11 August.

9 War Widows Recognition Payment

The government has published guidance addressing a number of frequently asked questions in response to the lump-sum recognition payment scheme for eligible spouses who forfeited their pensions prior to 2015.

This guidance addresses the FAQs and provides clarification on the eligibility criteria for the lump-sum recognition payment scheme, announced on 17 March 2023.

Widows of serving personnel who forfeited their pensions prior to 2015 could be eligible for a one-off payment of £87,500 as part of the government's continued support for the Armed Forces, their families and veterans.

The new joint initiative from the Ministry of Defence and the Treasury will address old rules in which a cohort of bereaved spouses, civil partners and eligible partners forfeited their pensions if they remarried or cohabited before 2015.

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/war-widows-recognition-payment-qa> for details.

(Note – this notification is for information only – the RNA is not a financial advisory organisation and cannot be held responsible for member's financial decisions)

10 Discount at the Ship Anson and Visits to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

We are delighted to see that shipmates have been taking advantage of discounts that are available to members of the RNA for refreshments at the Ship Anson pub on The Hard, just outside the Dockyard gates.

Members of Bognor Regis branch, armed with an Uckers board, used the Ship Anson as a venue for a competition – see Branch News here for more details

The Ship Anson is offering 10 per cent discount to RNA members on both food and drink.

The historic Greene King pub rates 4.4 stars out of 5 from more than 2,000 reviews on Google.

There is also a members' discount available on the Historic Dockyard Annual Ultimate Explorer ticket offer: Save 30 per cent off the annual Ultimate Explorer tickets at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Tickets are valid for the year allowing you to return again and again. The Ultimate Explorer tickets give you access to: • The Mary Rose • HMS Victory • HMS Warrior • HMS Alliance at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum • Harbour Tour • Plus more/
Offer is valid on one family Ultimate Explorer ticket or up to four adult, senior or child Ultimate Explorer Tickets.

To get this discount, simply show your Royal Naval Association Membership card in the Visitor Centre, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. The discount is only available for 'walk ups'

11 Monday Evening Fireside Chats

For Shipmates who are unaware, a series of 'Fireside Chats' featuring some fascinating subjects including; Battle of Jutland, Operation Paraquet (Re-capture of South Georgia 1982), Naval Recruiting in 2020 to name but a few. 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](#)

Date	Presenter	Subject
Mon 12 June	tbc	tbc
Mon 19 June (tbc)	Angus Konstam	The Grand Scuttle
Mon June 26	Richard Jones	The Sinking of SS Lulworth Hill
Mon 3 July	Mike Ellis	The Baltic Cauldron

* *Lecture subjects may change at short notice.*

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

12 New Chief Executive at the RNRMC

The Board of Trustees of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) has announced the appointment of Andrew Jameson OBE as their new Chief Executive, taking over from Adrian Bell.

Andrew retired from the Royal Navy in 2017, and since worked in the City at law firms, most recently as the HR Director at Harbottle & Lewis, and also as the Clerk to the Governors at Wellington College.

He has been connected to the Charity since its founding; he was a co-founding Serving trustee in 2007 and remained in this role until 2016. In 2019, he returned to the Board as a Veteran trustee, before taking up the post of Vice Chair in 2021. He recently retired from the Board to take up the post as CEO.

During his Naval career he served in submarines and surface ships as a logistics officer, as well as qualifying as a barrister. As a more senior officer, he served ashore in a variety of posts including Head of Naval Legal Services and Commander of the Maritime Reserves.

Commenting on his appointment, Andrew said: "I have been part of the RNRMC from its earliest days and I am honoured and privileged to have been chosen as the Chief Executive.

"I am very pleased to be leading the charity forward into the next stage of its evolution, supporting sailors and marines, wherever they may be and at whatever stage of life they find themselves. I really look forward to working with all the team at the charity and with its colleagues in the military charity community."

13 Careers Fair

The British Forces Resettlement Services (BFRS) supports members of the Armed Forces community – Service Leavers, those in the Reserves, veterans and their families – by helping them find employment and other career-enhancing opportunities.

Their next Careers Fair is in Colchester on Thursday 8 June. See the [flyer](#) at the end of this Circular here, and go to <https://bfrss.org.uk/events/814450/> to register your interest.

14 White Ensign Association jobs

The White Ensign Association are recruiting for two key posts, giving you the opportunity to work with a charity that is, like the RNA, at the heart of the welfare of our Naval community.

The jobs are for an Employment Consultant and an Employer Relationship Manager. If you click on the links below, it will take you to the appropriate COBSEO page which details the jobs and how to apply – applications must be in by Friday 16 June.

<https://www.cobseo.org.uk/the-white-ensign-association-employment-consultant/>

<https://www.cobseo.org.uk/the-white-ensign-association-employer-relationship-manager/>

15 Specialist Interest Groups – Contact details

Shipmates will be interested to know how popular and successful the Specialist Interest Groups has become.

Whether you are already a part of a group or are yet to join one we highly recommend you get involved and see what it's all about.

For more information each group please contact the designated leaders, listed in no particular order:

Camping and Caravanning – Ron Shilton:

rna.camping.caravan.motorhome.club@gmail.com

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

Cricket – Mark Smith : Markmiff1962@gmail.com

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

Decorative Ropework – Bob Jones: oldsalt69@hotmail.co.uk

Divers – Bill Lawless: billylawless40@yahoo.com

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

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

Riders – Dave Ives: secrnariders@gmail.com

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

If you are interested in forming a Special Interest Group please contact admin@royalnavalassoc.com

16 HMS Laurentic anniversary commemoration

Shipmates of Londonderry Branch and No 12 Area (Ireland), and their supporters, who organised their own Battle of the Atlantic 80th anniversary commemorations, took the time to remember those who died in a ship lost in an earlier Battle of the Atlantic.



There was an early start on Saturday 13 May as they set out for a commemoration ceremony remembering HMS Laurentic, a liner taken over by the Admiralty, which came to grief as she exited Lough Swilly on the extremely cold night of 25 January 1917. The ship struck two mines, and although all the crew escaped the sinking ship and took to the lifeboats, 354 of them died of exposure and hypothermia, with 121 surviving.

A fitting memorial to the loss of 354 lives has been created on a hill above Fort Dunree overlooking the wreck site, and visitors were treated to an interesting tour of Fort Dunree before assembling at the HMS Laurentic memorial for the ceremony hosted by the Ulster Canada Initiative.

VIPs included the Mayor of Inishowen, Cllr Paul Canning, Canada's Ambassador to Ireland, HE Nancy Smyth, Germany's Ambassador to Ireland, HE Cord Meier-Klodt, Canada's Deputy Defence Advisor to London, Cdr Dale Turetski, Canada's Deputy Defence Attaché to Dublin, Lt Col Michel Tousignant, and S/M Keith Ridley, National Chairman, Royal Naval Association.

During the ceremony an Act of Remembrance was observed, Standards from No 12 Area (Ireland), Londonderry Branch, Limavady Branch and the NI Submariners Association were dipped to the bosun's call. Wreaths were laid on behalf of Ireland, Canada, Germany, the RNA, the Sackville Naval Trust, the Crow's Nest Officers Club and other organisations.

S/M Eddie Lavery recited his poem 'The Morning Dawn' and Maya McClenaghan performed the lament 'Taimse Im Coadh' on the tin whistle, to the delight of the assembled group.

Also in attendance were members of the Canadian Naval Association and community groups from Inishowen.



S/M Keith Ridley noted that S/M Robert Buchanan, Chairman of Londonderry Branch, played a major part not only in the organisation of this event, but also the social gathering with Canadian guests on the Friday evening, and the church service on Sunday at which he was privileged to have read the Gospel.

Keith said Robert is to be congratulated on his support and organisation of this and wider BOA 80 events over the weekend, supported by his wife Lesley – more so as he was recovering from an operation on his back just a week earlier.

17 Armed Forces Day – 24 June

Armed Force Day is nearly here, and this year's National Event will have a maritime flavour as it is being hosted by Cornwall Council in Falmouth on 24 June.

The National Event is the culmination of a programme of events which allow the nation to show its support for the Armed Forces community – including veterans – and for the Services to show the country their capabilities and just what they have been doing.

For more details of the events in your area (there are also virtual events online) see the main AFD website at <https://www.armedforcesday.org.uk/>

18 Education Briefing event at Edinburgh Napier University

Edinburgh Napier University are hosting an education briefing event on Wednesday 7 June for those who may wish to consider Higher Education and Further Education as an option and would like to find out more information.

For the Armed Forces community – including veterans – there is often a myth about university study with perceived barriers which cause a lack of understanding around university, and this session aims to break down those misconceptions.

There will be a chance to meet colleagues from various teams and have some lunch and a campus tour.

This is a **free event** but booking necessary so they can cater accordingly.

For more information and to book click on the EventBrite link; [ADVANCE into Higher Education Briefing for the Armed Forces Community Tickets, Wed 7 Jun 2023 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Who should attend;

- Those in active service and wish to consider study while in service
- Those who are transitioning from service
- Military Spouses and partners
- Veterans
- Those interested in learning more about ADVANCE so they can promote education within their areas

19 Help for Households with Cost of Living

Inflation may be falling, but the high cost of living is still causing hardships. Remember that the government has published information that may help you should you need it.

This includes details of different types of support which are available in England, as well as energy-saving tips that could save you money.

Use this link – [Help for Households - Get government cost of living support](#) – to access the website.

If you live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland there may be additional or alternative devolved policies and help available. Use the same link as above but then scroll to the bottom of the page to access the website that is relevant to where you live.



Pusser's...

Calling all 'Rum Rats'...

Shipmates may wish to be reminded that 'Pusser's' is now available from the online 'Navy Shop', with all profits from Rum going back to the charity.

Please follow the link <https://royalnavyshop.co.uk/collections/rum>

For those who would like to find out more about Pusser's Rum, go to www.pussersrum.com where there is plenty of information on the history of the brand, the rum itself, cocktails and loads more besides.



Forces Cars Direct

Veteran-owned Forces Cars Direct is celebrating 20 years of service to the military community and we're delighted to welcome them to the Royal Naval Association and our members in an exclusive partnership.

Offering unique new car discounts with savings up to 35 per cent on a full range of makes and models, you can be sure to find the right car for you! Forces Cars Direct is endorsed with 5-star TrustPilot ratings from its customers, was named Veteran Business of the Year in the English Veterans Awards, and has support from the Chairman of the Defence Select Committee, so you not only save thousands, but can be assured of the highest level of service too.



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-

Find out more about the service and savings available at <https://www.forcescarsdirect.com/rna> where you can browse and make your enquiry.

Hayes Travel - Foreign Exchange Rates

Shipmates will be pleased to know that Hayes Travel are offering all of RNA members special rates on foreign currency at any of the Hays Travel branches nationwide.



Your members would simply need to produce membership card for the discount to be applied at the time of transaction.

RNA Slops – RLP Embroidery

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RNA SLOPS

RNA Slops is owned by RLP
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Royalties to the RNA

*The RNA Logo is included in your garment price.
All you have to do is select New or Blazer Style badge and add your Branch Name, of which is optional.*

Tel: 07983 151011 E. Mail: ray@rnaslops.clothing



RNA Longcast

2023	
16 Jun	Open Day – Central Office
24 Jun	National Armed Forces Day – Falmouth
01 July	HMS Collingwood Open Day
14 Jul	Open Day – Central Office
05 Aug	Area 3 Quarterly Meeting (Committee 03 Aug)
05 Aug	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting – Harwich, starting at 14.00hrs
11 Aug	Open Day – Central Office
09 Sep	NC meeting, London
10 Sep	Naval Associations / RNA Biennial Parade - Whitehall
16 Sep	Area 4 Quarterly Meeting – Frome Branch
29 Sep	Open Day – Central Office
21 Oct	Trafalgar Day
21 Oct	World Uckers Championships (Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth)
28 Oct	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting – Harwich
11 Nov	Armistice Day
12 Nov	Remembrance Sunday
18 Nov	Area 3 Quarterly Meeting (Committee 16 Nov)

08 Dec	National Council meeting (via Zoom)
25-31 Dec	RNA Central Office closed
2024	
01 Jan	RNA Central Office closed
20 Jan	Area 4 AGM – Dorchester Branch to host
May (DTBD)	National Standard Bearers Competition
Jun 14-16	RNA National Conference, Cardiff

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

'D'ye hear there' ...

News from around the Areas, Branches and SIGs...

This Month Featuring...

[Forth Valley Branch](#)

[Alresford Branch](#)

[Bognor Regis Branch](#)

[Bodmin Branch](#)

[Portsea and Portsmouth Branch](#)

[Torrevieja Branch](#)

[Area 2](#)

[Cromer Branch](#)

[Wales Shipmates](#)

[Market Harborough Branch](#)

[Area 4/Christchurch and District Branch](#)

[Wansbeck and District Branch \(again!\)](#)

[Redruth and Camborne Branch](#)

[Christchurch and District Branch \(again!\)](#)

[Wansbeck and District](#)

RNA Wansbeck and District Branch



An Anzac Day service and parade, including a march-past, was held at West Chevington cemetery in Northumberland on 23 April to remember those from the RAF, Royal Australian Air Force, and Royal New Zealand Air Force who lost their lives during the two World Wars.

The service and parade featured four standards; 15 wreaths were laid by representatives from various organisations, and individual crosses of remembrance by cadets on individual graves as the names of the fallen were read out. A local band provided the appropriate music, including the Last Post and Reveille.

The guard of honour was provided by Northumberland University Officer Training Corps, and the cadets who laid the crosses were from Cramlington Air Training Corps.

The salute during the march-past was taken by an Air Commadore from the RAF, while senior representatives from the RAF, Australia and New Zealand and the local council were also on the dais. Among the 20 or so veterans in the march-past were three members from Wansbeck & District Branch, as well as a cross-section of other regiments paying their individual respects.

Following the ceremony refreshments were provided at The Trap public house in the form of an excellent buffet, and as a bonus the television was showing the Newcastle v Spurs match, which Newcastle won 6-1!

The weather was a little drizzly and a cold wind blowing, which made it difficult for the standard bearers to control their standards, but more than 200 people were involved in the event, including members of the public who watched.

RNA Forth Valley Branch



Members of Forth Valley Branch made a special effort on Coronation Day.

After viewing proceedings in London on a big screen in their home base of Royal British Legion Grangemouth, they dedicated the newly-installed anchor recovered from the Forth as a fitting tribute to the many shipmates who left from here to join the Fleet.

The anchor was refurbished and holds a permanent place in the Memorial Garden thanks to the RBL and RNA Branch stalwarts – pictured, left to right, Chairman Mike Heskith, Standard Bearer Dave Lewis, V/Chair Robby Burns and Sec Andy McDonald MBE

RNA Alresford Branch

This year, Alresford Branch celebrates 30 years since its founding.

In 1993, at the Bell Hotel in Alresford, Courtney May (Corky), the Publican at the time, put a note in the window asking if there were any ex-matelots in the Hampshire town interested in starting a branch of the Royal Naval Association.

The response was favourable, and a process was set in motion that resulted in the formation of that branch on the 14 April 1993.

Fund-raising started with horse race evenings and similar such events, and with the help of friends in the community they raised enough funds to purchase the Branch Standard a year later.



On Friday 19 May 2023 marked this anniversary with a formal dinner at the Swan Hotel in Alresford.

Shipmates and guests were welcomed with a tot, supplied by S/M Steven Gould who donated a Black Bottle (Pusser's 50th Anniversary Rum) to the Branch.

Host for the night, Hugh Peers, the Branch President, welcomed Shipmates and

Honoured Guests, the CEO/General Secretary from RNA Central Office S/M Bill Oliphant and his wife Anne, and the Chair of Alresford Town Council.

Following an excellent meal, the Chairman of the Town Council gave a fascinating insight of the last 30 years from the Town Council's point of view, and Bill told of the excellent work being done by Central Office and was very complimentary about Alresford and its Branch members.

Finally a celebration cake was cut by Hugh and Founding Member Peter Jennings.

Through the hard work of the Committee both past and present and the unwavering support of shipmates, the Branch continues to thrive, and it is hoped it will continue to do so well into the future.

RNA Bognor Regis Branch

Following on from the Editor's comments in the May edition of the Semaphore Circular, regarding the Ship Anson pub in Portsmouth, Bognor Regis RNA recently decided to take advantage of the discount offered by the pub and have a OD's run ashore in Portsmouth.

Disembarking from the coach, having used the public car park at the back of the Anson, they made their way to the Anson armed with an Uckers board, where they were warmly welcomed by the staff.

Having found a table that accommodated all eight of them, they organised the kitty, drinks were ordered and the first game of Uckers was organised. After a lot of banter and arguments – mainly about the rules of the game, over which all the shipmates seem to have a different interpretations – lunch was ordered.

The food was very good, with a varied menu to suit all tastes. Having eaten, the second round of Uckers was started, but unfortunately, because of the time factor, the deciding game between the winners of both games had to be decided by the toss of a coin.

During the game the manager of the Ship Anson kindly presented the branch with a multi-Services Uckers board, which was much appreciated by the shipmates.

On returning to Bognor Regis the shipmates called into the RAF Association Club and ended the day in the traditional RN way with a glass of rum and also to reflect on a great run ashore.

RNA Bodmin Branch



Bodmin Branch was recently invited to share in a surprise party for S/M Patricia Cornwell (pictured above), fondly known as Tricia, when she turned 90, and boy has she packed a lot into those 90 years!

Many shipmates think of her as a 'genteel lady' – but read on to discover the real Tricia Cornwell!

More than 50 guests packed into the Borough Arms in Bodmin to welcome this Grande Dame for lunch, with some from as far away as Australia sending their best wishes and apologies for not being there.

Tricia was born in Pool Street, Bodmin on 8 April, 1933 after her Irish parents came to the UK to find work. Tricia was one of ten children who all lived in a small three-bedroom house in Green Lane, Bodmin. Memories of them sleeping head-to-toe to all fit in the bed, and her parents covering the bed with old Army coats in the winter to add extra warmth, are all still very clear.

Tricia said "I remember that me and my siblings were sent to Church Sunday School every week with pennies but we often didn't bother, instead spending the money on sweets instead. We also used to raid the local fields where swedes were grown and pick one or two as we loved the sweet crunchy taste."

Tricia went on to become a nurse in St Lawrence's Hospital, Bodmin, a job she really loved and she enjoyed caring for the patients.

Tricia met her first husband Gerald – a Bow-bell Cockney – at a local dance; she loved dancing and they won many jive dancing trophies. Gerald was a wartime refugee from London and, as his father was a soldier based in Bodmin, that is where he came to stay. They went on to marry at St. Petroc's Church in Bodmin in 1958 and have three children.

They moved to St Mary's Road and have lived there ever since, including whilst the house next door was bombed and razed!

Tricia's husband sadly passed away in December 1986. A few years later she met Vic Cornwell, a stalwart RNA member and standard bearer, who was also widowed at the time. They had known each other for many years as Vic used to court Tricia's sister Shirley. They too married at St. Petroc's.

Vic introduced Tricia to the RNA and it gave her a whole new lease of life – and not just the many and varied social times either. She made many good friends in the RNA. She loves the RNA weekends away and has spent many enjoyable 'retail therapy' trips with her daughter looking for special dresses for the events.



Sadly Vic crossed the Bar in 1998 but that has not deterred Tricia from still attending RNA meetings and functions. She is not easily daunted – Tricia (who had never been on a train or an aeroplane before) decided to go and visit her sister Shirley and her husband Nelson in Queensland, Australia, travelling solo to the other side of the world, changing flights half-way around. "I was just so nervous, I followed everyone else!" Tricia said.

Apart from her three children, and three stepsons, Tricia has 11 grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Ann, her daughter told the story of her mother Tricia and the “almost Fire Brigade” date: “A couple of months ago I took her to Bristol to visit my daughter, her husband and their children. We stayed at a Travelodge and mum managed to lock herself in the bathroom. I had to go and get the receptionist, who wasn't sure how we would get her out – mum had been in there about 15 minutes and I barged the door and it burst open and we got her out.

“We all fell about laughing – the receptionist was just about to call the Fire Brigade to release her. We reckoned she'd done it on purpose to get a hunky fireman to rescue her!”

Pictured above is Tricia Cornwell (on left) with her sister Shirley

RNA Portsea and Portsmouth Branch



Portsea and Portsmouth Branch have presented a cheque to their chosen charity, the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust's Admiral Jellicoe House in Portsmouth.

This makes the total £750 raised so far this year by Branch member Stan Arthur, who ran a sponsored head shave raising £500, with a further £250 from donations.

Portsea and Portsmouth Branch Chairman Mike Noonan and Branch Secretary Ted Hawkins presented the cheque (pictured above), with members of the Branch then joining residents of the home for a good chat, tea and cake.

Mike Noonan said: “It's so important to support the incredible work and support for our Shipmates that they do at Admiral Jellicoe House. We love coming here and want to thank our Branch members for continuing to fundraise for such a good cause.”

The Branch was also well represented at the HMS Sheffield memorial service held in Old Portsmouth on Sunday May 7.



A total of 11 members attended the service for the destroyer, including Chis Purcell who is a Shiny Sheff veteran. The Type 42 was struck and fatally damaged by an Argentine Exocet missile in the Falklands Conflict on 4 May 1982, and sank while under tow six days later.

RNA Torrevieja Branch



RNA Torrevieja Branch (RNATB) hosted a special event where 56 shipmates and guests revelled in a Cava Reception, High Tea, a rendition of the specially-choreographed King Charles III Coronation Waltz, a toast to the new King and ultimately rounded off the event with a unique raffle, all at the Lakeview Bar and Restaurant in Ciudad Quesada.

For many, this was a once-in-a-lifetime event, which is why many of the RNATB shipmates wanted to salute the occasion and celebrate it in a befitting style and make sure it was 'one to be remembered'.

The Spanish Valencia TV channel, A Punt, recorded the event and an edited recording was televised during the evening, which is on the RNATB Facebook page at Royal Naval Association Torrevieja Branch Spain.

During the free-flowing Cava Reception the rendition of the King's Coronation Waltz was marvellously performed by two couples, John and Julie Clements and Linda and Steve Rodgers.

Each marvellously delicious High Tea stand was shared between two people, and not only included the mandatory variety of sandwiches, but also delicious scones and a spectacular selection of cakes, all of which were specially hand-made for the event by Bobby and Claudia.

The round tables of eight people ensured everyone enjoyed convivial conversation throughout the majesty of the event, whilst the background music was the official Coronation playlist produced by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, which started with 'Come Together' by the Beatles and ended with 'King' by Years and Years.

RNATB shipmates and their guests had exclusive use of the venue to ensure the event had the panache and grandeur it deserved, and in true Royal Navy style was decked out with flags and regalia, all with a red, white and blue theme.

The Loyal Toast to our new King was performed again in Royal Navy style with the traditional passing of the port.

The traditional raffle had some remarkable Coronation prizes, which consisted of items such as KC cufflinks & tie pin set, KC Ladies Brooch, Kintyre Tot Glass, KC Cypher Embossed Wine Glass, KC Coronation Flag, Two-Hour Photographic Session and many, many more, all of which are now highly-prized possessions of shipmates.

The entire event was a spectacular occasion and is now held most dearly in shipmates' memories.



RNA Area 2

The Area 2 delegates meeting took place at Margate Sea Cadet Unit (TS Jamacia) on Sunday 21 May, chaired by S/M Steven Susans.

A big 'thank you' to all who pitched up for the meeting, which included a delicious buffet.

One topic discussed was the Biennial Parade on the 10 September, and transport is being arranged.

Shipmates are all looking forward to Armed Forces Day, which this year is Saturday 24 June, and the local event at the Great Lines, Gillingham.

Also in the diary is the Area 2 and Maidstone Branch Sea Service, which will be on Sunday 30 July.

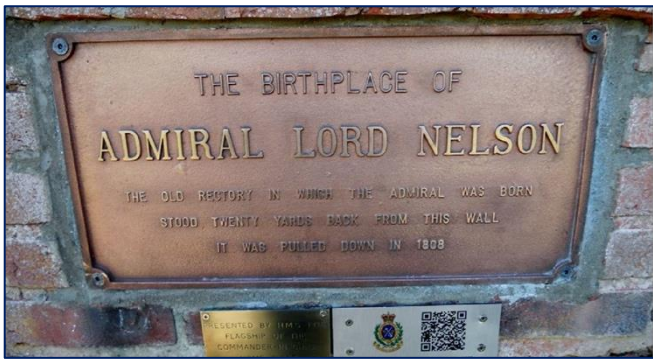
For a ticket, please contact the Maidstone Branch Secretary – tickets are £10 per person, standard bearers on the Mess; the ticket includes a buffet and the odd Tot of Rum. It's always a good day out!



RNA Cromer Branch



Admiral Lord Nelson was born in the Rectory at Burnham Thorpe in North Norfolk on September 29, 1758, that being the home of his father, who was Rector of the local church.



In December last year, a plaque commemorating Nelson's birth-place was stolen, probably just for the little scrap value.

The Army and Navy Club came to the rescue and paid for a new plaque, which was unveiled on Friday 26 May.

In attendance was Frank Froud, Chairman of the Army and Navy Club, Cdre Marcus Fitzgerald, representing the Army and Navy Club, Cdre Rob Bellfield, Naval Regional Commander London and Eastern England, Chris Brett, Chairman of the Nelson Society, members of the Royal Navy, RNA, TS Eliza Adams – Wells-next-the-Sea Sea Cadet Unit – and local residents.

All enjoyed a lovely sunny evening, and in good Navy tradition, all (who were old enough!) retired to the pub afterwards.

RNA Wales Shipmates

The Welsh RNA Uckers competition is being staged on 10 June starting at midday at the Greyhound Hotel in Builth Wells. For those who wish to stay, accommodation can be found for the town on Booking.com

Can all participants please email rnabuilthwells@outlook.com if you are attending for catering purposes.

RNA Market Harborough Branch



S/M Pat Middleton, of Market Harborough Branch, was lucky enough to be invited to The Not Forgotten garden party at Buckingham Palace.

Pat took her daughter as her 'plus one' and they both had a wonderful time in perfect weather for a garden party.

Pat commented that the Duchess of Edinburgh "was looking beautiful as usual" and she and her daughter spotted "lots of interesting people".

Pat is pictured with Cdre Alison Hofman, Head of the Ryal Navy Medical Service.

RNA Area 4/ Christchurch and District Branch

After due consideration by members of the Area 4 Committee, the Area 4 Chairman announced that S/M Christine Payne, of Christchurch and District Branch, is to be rewarded for her many years of service to the Area with promotion to Area Life Vice President.

Her shipmates offer many congratulations to Christine on this well-deserved reward for her hard work as Area 4 delegate.

RNA Wansbeck Branch

A St George's Day service and parade was staged on Saturday 22 April at Morpeth in Northumberland, including a march past the dais in Bridge Street, the salute being taken by James Percy, brother of the Duke of Northumberland, and the Lord Mayor of Morpeth.

There were five contingents in the march of Fusiliers plus the Fusiliers band of 24 in red uniform at the front, also included were two standards with three armed guard, and in the rear were a mixture of veterans about thirty strong plus three bikers.



Prior to the march past there was a service in St James the Great church in Copper Chare, for which the church was packed with in excess of 400-500 people, including members of the public and Service personnel alike, as well as veterans from all over Northumberland.

Also among the congregation and taking part in the march were members of Wansbeck Branch of the RNA, which is based at Ashington in Northumberland.

After the parade and march-past, refreshments were on hand at various different places, and there was a formal dinner in the evening at Newsham and New Delaval Social Club in Blyth, attended by more than 120 people.

RNA Redruth and Camborne Branch



Redruth and Camborne Branch had a little soirée on the Monday Bank Holiday, 8 May, of the coronation weekend.

Around half of the Branch attended, with a good spread. Shipmates were intending to weed and replant the branch's flower bed boat in Redruth as part of the Big Help Out part of the weekend, but unfortunately the heavens opened up with a deluge akin to that of Noah's time.

So instead, shipmates put a couple of hours to good use by getting together and toasting the King – the flower bed will wait! A good time was had by all.

RNA Christchurch and District Branch

Shipmate Ron Checketts enjoyed a great day with fine weather, a cake and balloons, in celebration of his 102nd birthday.

The veteran received more than 40 cards and messages from friends and family all over the world.

Local friends dropped in with flowers and tasty treats, and some even managed to in some rum so Ron, resplendent in his HMS Ganges cap (pictured right, image by Ron's son Adrian), could have his tot disguised as apple juice...

Ron, a founder and former Chairman of Christchurch and District Branch, was born in Woodford, Wiltshire, and spent many boyhood summers at Hengistbury Head.

His association with Dorset continued when the family were living in Worth Maltravers in 1944 – his father was in the RAF and Mentioned in Despatches for his involvement with the D-Day landings.



In 1936 Ron joined the Royal Navy aged 15 at HMS Ganges and trained as a Telegraphist. When 19 he was on board HMS Arethusa off the Dardenelles when war was declared, before transferring to HMS Capetown as part of the Admiral's Flag Staff, which later transferred to HMS Liverpool. This ship was hit by a bomb from an Italian aircraft; the unexploded device was (gently) removed in Alexandria.

In 1941, having joined the newly-commissioned HMS Manxman, Ron was involved in the Malta Convoys, various actions in the Mediterranean and Operation Mincemeat, when the ship was disguised as a French warship and laid mines off the Italian coast. The ship saw much action, and in December 1942 was torpedoed en route to Gibraltar but did not sink.

Ron then transferred to HMS Phoebe under Squadron Commander Lord Louis Mountbatten, where he served until the war ended. He also served during the Korean War and left the Navy in 1953 as a CPO/Telegraphist.

In Civvy Street, Ron continued in communications, working for the Reuters News Agency for three years before joining the Diplomatic Wireless Service / Foreign Office serving in UK diplomatic missions overseas including Cuba, St Helena, Guyana, Poland, Singapore (twice), Yemen, Sudan, Libya, Tarawa and finally Iraq during the 1981 Iran/Iraq war.

The British Embassy in Baghdad was attacked by terrorists in 1981 and Ron was awarded an MBE upon retirement.

Joan, his wife of 60 years, accompanied him to most overseas postings with his only son Adrian, who was born in Singapore.

Retiring firstly to Marazion in Cornwall, he became Town Clerk as well as an auxiliary Coastguard at Land's End for five years. They then moved to Christchurch, where Ron continues to live, Joan having passed away 14 years ago.

When Ron turned 100 he was asked what his secret was – he replied that he still felt 80 and recommended a hearty breakfast, plenty of rest and a nightly tot!

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Swinging the Lamp – June 2023

The RNA is grateful to the Author, Lt Cdr Lawrie Phillips TD, RD, RNR for allowing us to publish a selection from the RN Day by Day, and to use this excellent book as a source of inspiration. If you would like to read more it can be purchased from The History Press, ISBN 978 0 7509 8266 5



Date	Year	Entry
1 st	1990	First-of-class Type 23 frigate HMS Norfolk commissioned under the command of Capt Jonathon Band.
2 nd	1981	Invincible-class aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal launched by the Queen Mother at Swan Hunter on the River Tyne.
3 rd	1980	The Royal Navy's first hydrofoil was accepted into the Service – HMS Speedy, a militarised version of the 117-ton commercial Boeing 929 Jetfoil. Originally intended to be the first of a class of 12, the vessel – capable of 40 knots on its foil – was found to be not what the Navy needed in a fishery patrol or minehunting craft, and she was sold into mercantile service in 1986. She went on to serve as a ferry between Hong Kong and Macau for more than three decades, but is now thought to be awaiting the scrapyard.
4 th	1941	Four of German battleship Bismarck's supply vessels were sunk in the Atlantic – the warship itself was sunk by a powerful Naval force on 27 May.
5 th	1939	Admiral Sir Andrew Browne Cunningham – the legendary ABC – arrived at Alexandria and the following day took over as C-in-C Mediterranean, hoisting his flag in HMS Warspite. The highly-decorated officer, born in Dublin in 1883, went on to become one of the most influential Naval officers of World War 2, winning key battles and keeping supply lines open for Allied forces.
6 th	1944	D-Day, the opening phase of the Battle of Normandy (Operation Overlord), was put into action, landing troops and equipment on the Northern coast of France. Almost 7,000 vessels took part in D-Day and subsequent landings, known as Operation Neptune; more than 1,200 of them were warships, and although the invasion fleet was drawn from eight countries, the vast majority were British or Canadian (almost 80 per cent).

		Despite fierce opposition in some sectors, by the end of D-Day a beachhead had been established on each of the five landing beaches. The greatest amphibious invasion in history, which saw 160,000 Allied troops cross the Channel on D-Day alone, marked the beginning of the end of the war in Europe, with Allied forces eventually fighting their way across France and into Germany.
7th	1960	HMS Vanguard, the Royal Navy's final and largest battleship, decommissioned at Portsmouth. The 51,000-ton fast battleship, the design for which was much modified as World War 2 progressed, had a ship's company of almost 2,000 and served for almost 15 years.
8th	1948	Lt Cdr Eric 'Winkle' Brown landed a Gloster Meteor on the flight deck of HMS Implacable, the first time a twin-engined jet had landed on a British carrier. Implacable was the deck-landing training carrier for the British Fleet.
9th	1931	Parthian-class submarine HMS Poseidon collided with a Chinese freighter during exercises off Wei-Hei-Wei naval base in China. 31 of her crew managed to scramble clear as the boat rapidly sank in 130ft of water, while a further five used the new Davis Submerged Escape Apparatus (DSEA) to escape the sunken craft; three died during or just after the escape, and a further 18 were lost with the boat. It is believed the Chinese salvaged the wreck in the early 1970s.
10th	1971	The first of the Type 42 destroyers, HMS Sheffield, was launched at the Vickers yard in Barrow-in-Furness by the Queen. Two dockyard workers had died in an explosion during her build, and the damaged section of her hull was replaced by a section from her identical sister, Hercules, which was being built for the Argentine navy.
11th	1940	The Siege of Malta began – an attempt by the Axis powers to starve and bomb the British Crown Colony into submission, strengthening their North Africa campaign. Through perilous resupply convoys and plucky air defence the island held out and the siege was effectively ended in late 1942 when, after the Torch landings in North Africa, Allied forces on the island switched from defence to attacking Axis shipping and troops.
12th	1797	End of the mutiny at The Nore, in the Thames Estuary. In sharp contrast to the Spithead mutiny, of the same period (which was sparked by a call for better pay and conditions) there were political elements to the Nore mutiny, as a result of which 29 of the leaders hanged, a further 29 were imprisoned, nine flogged and a number of others were transported to Australia, though many of the ordinary sailors caught up in the mutiny were not punished.
13th	1514	King Henry VIII launched the Henry Grace a Dieu (Henry, Thanks be to God), a carrack or 'great ship' of 1,500 tons and a complement of 700 men at Woolwich on the Thames. She was the largest and most powerful warship in the world at the time (mounting 41 cannon and 141 lighter swivel guns), though as she was top-heavy she handled poorly and was not a good fighting platform until she was remodelled in 1536. She saw little meaningful action, and was destroyed by an accidental fire at Woolwich in 1553.
14th	1982	As 3 Cdo Bde and 5th Infantry Bde prepared for the final assault on Stanley, the capital of the Falkland Islands, Argentine commanders offered to negotiate for a surrender, which came into effect locally late on the same day and ended the active combat phase of the Falklands Campaign.

15 th	1968	Submarine HMS Resolution began the first Polaris nuclear deterrent patrol, a programme which lasted until May 1996, when the Trident fleet completed the phased takeover of the deterrent responsibility.
16 th	1987	Armoured frigate HMS Warrior (1860) arrived in Portsmouth after a four-day voyage from Hartlepool, where the ironclad had been restored. Commissioned in August 1861, the innovative ship was virtually obsolete within a decade, and was finally struck off the active list in 1900. She served as a storage hulk, and was then moved to Pembroke Dock in 1929 to serve as a floating oil jetty. In 1979 she was towed to Hartlepool, where she underwent an eight-year £9m restoration programme.
17 th	1934	Two Naval officers, Lts Luce and Field – the former would go on to become First Sea Lord – were amongst passengers and crew taken hostage by pirates while aboard the steamship Shuntien in the estuary of the Yellow River in China. The response was perhaps unexpected by the outlaws – the UK, the United States and Japan all sent warships to the area, including aircraft carrier HMS Eagle, and three days later the Admiralty was able to report that, “as a result of naval action”, the British submariners were safe aboard destroyer HMS Whitshed, while other hostages were released on 23 June.
18 th	1940	RN Air Station Yeovilton in Somerset was commissioned as HMS Heron. Initially specialising in training Naval fighter pilots and Observers, the station has been in continuous use since then, and is currently home of the Navy’s Commando Helicopter Force Merlin and Wildcat squadrons.
19 th	2003	Amphibious assault ship HMS Albion was commissioned at Devonport Naval Base in the presence of her sponsor, The Princess Royal, and Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, who had been in command of the previous Albion, the Centaur-class light Fleet aircraft carrier.
20 th	1944	Capt Frederic ‘Johnnie’ Walker, scourge of the U-boats in the Battle of the Atlantic, was Mentioned in Despatches, having been awarded a third bar to his Distinguished Service Order a week before. Walker had helped establish an impenetrable barrier across the Channel for the Normandy Landings, earlier in the month preventing U-boats from approaching the invasion fleet, but he would be dead within a month from a cerebral thrombosis, thought to be caused by overworking and exhaustion.
21 st	1919	German High Seas Fleet scuttled at Scapa Flow, in the Orkney Islands north of Scotland. The warships had been interned there after the Armistice, but fearing the ships could be used against Germany or that the British would simply seize them, their commander, Admiral Ludwig von Reuter, ordered the ships be scuttled. Royal Navy guardships were able to beach some of the vessels, but 52 of the 74 warships sank. A number of wrecks were salvaged and used as scrap in the inter-war period.
22 nd	1893	Mediterranean Fleet flagship HMS Victoria sank off Lebanon after being rammed by battleship during a botched manoeuvre on annual exercises. Victoria sank in around 15 minutes, and almost 360 sailors – including Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Sir George Tryon – went down with the ship. Tryon was a highly-regarded ship-handler, who had won many plaudits for his tact and diplomacy on assignments around the world, and he was also a radical moderniser, but a brusque manner meant junior officers were loathe to question a decision, so when the ambiguous order was given for the two columns of ships to

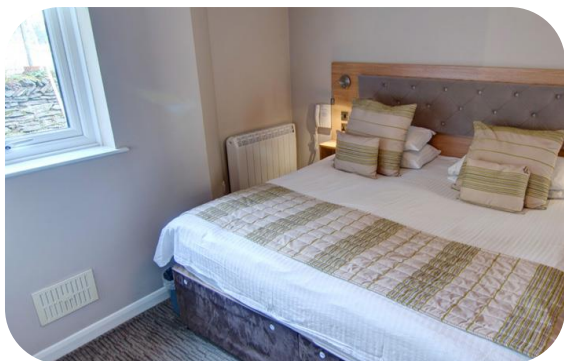
		reverse course in turn, no one queried it, and the fatal collision occurred. Tryon reportedly went down with his ship saying "It is all my fault..."
23 rd	1925	PO Robert Mills Chalmers, of Insect-class gunboat HMS Tarantula, won the EGC (later George Cross) for his actions as part of an armed party protecting British concessions from rioting students and soldiers at Shameen, Guangzhou, in China. The rioting was part of the nationwide May Thirtieth Movement against foreign-run industries, and peace was not restored until November that year.
24 th	1943	Sloop HMS Starling sank U-119, while Black Swan sister ships Wild Goose, Woodpecker and Wren, and modified Black Swan sloop Kite, sank U-449, both actions taking place in the Bay of Biscay.
25 th	1975	Final Beira Patrol ended with Mozambique gaining independence from Portugal and making assurances that no oil would be trans-shipped to Rhodesia. The Patrol was set up on 1 March 1966 to blockade oil shipments to the former colony, now Zimbabwe, which had unilaterally declared independence from the UK the previous year and thus attracted sanctions from the United Nations.
26 th	1959	The formal opening of the St Lawrence Seaway, a series of navigable channels and river courses connecting the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes, was marked by a short cruise by the Royal Yacht Britannia, with the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and American president Dwight D Eisenhower on board, escorted by Type 15 frigate HMS Ulster.
27 th	1942	Convoy PQ 17 left Hvalfjordur in Iceland, bound for Arkhangelsk in the Soviet Union. Warships escorting the convoy were withdrawn when information came through that the German Tirpitz battlegroup had left harbour, but in fact the powerful Axis force was simply shifting to another fjord. However, the merchantmen of PQ 17 were ordered to proceed independently to Soviet ports, but many were picked off by U-boats and air attacks; of 36 merchant ships that left Iceland, only 11 reached Arkhangelsk.
28 th	1977	The Silver Jubilee Fleet Review was held at Spithead – some 180 ships from 18 nations in ten lines stretching seven miles, and a fly-past of 150 aircraft.
29 th	1941	U-651 was sunk in the North Atlantic, south of Iceland, in a combined attack by destroyers HM Ships Malcolm and Scimitar, Flower-class corvettes Arabis and Violet and Halcyon-class minesweeper Speedwell. All 46 of the U-boat crew were rescued.
30 th	1969	Type 82 destroyer HMS Bristol was launched on the Tyne by Swan Hunter. The only one of a planned class of four, originally designed as air defence ships for the cancelled CVA-01 aircraft carriers, Bristol saw service in the Falklands Conflict. She was converted to a training ship in 1987, but suffered a boiler explosion in 1991 which proved too expensive to repair, and she became a harbour training ship at HMS Excellent, Whale Island, in Portsmouth Harbour.



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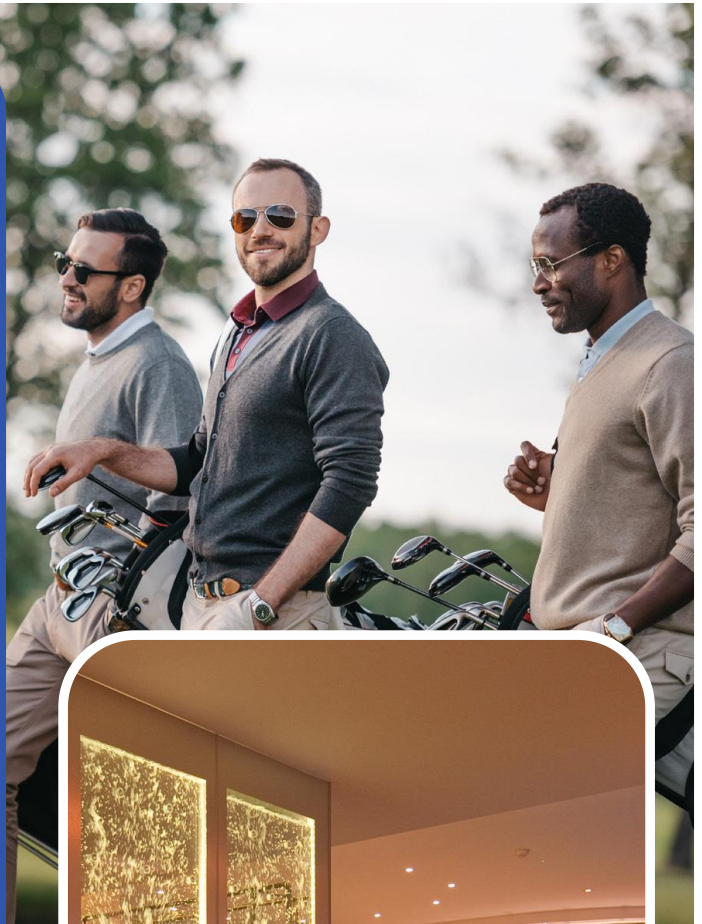
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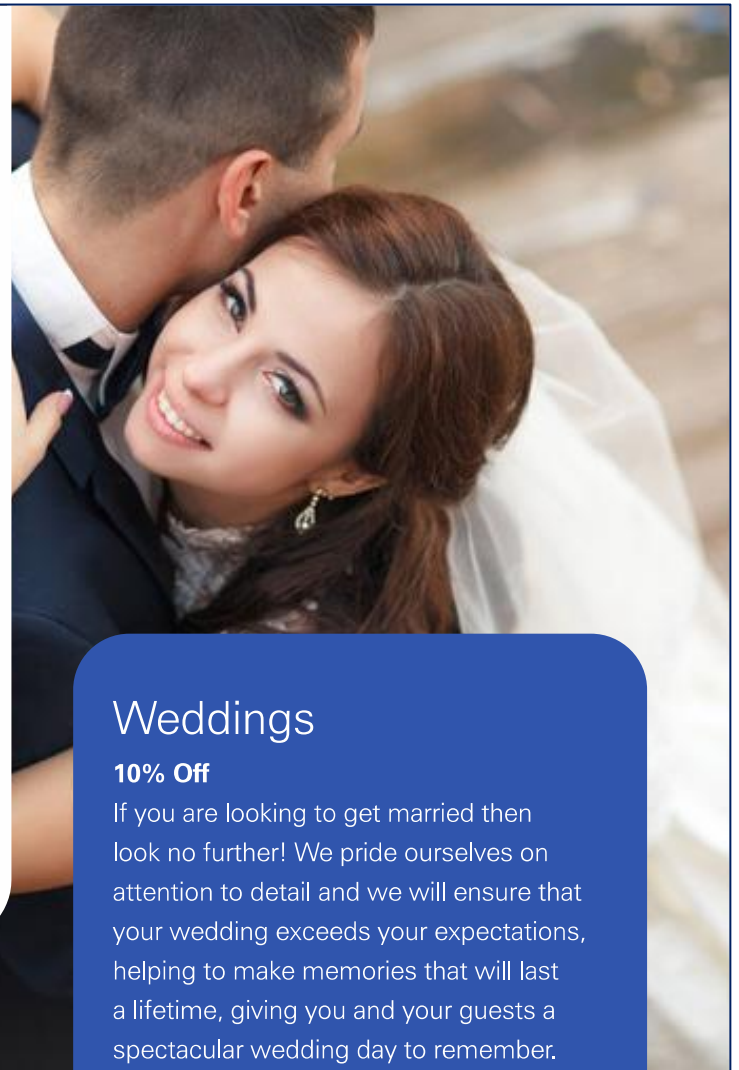


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