



**GREETINGS SHIPMATES** Welcome to this week's Semaphore Short and I hope that this finds you well. No Short next week due to the Circular. As usual, if anyone has anything that they would like to include in future Shorts, email me or the team [here](#). Whilst all contributions will be considered, please note that this is a short update newsletter and we can't publish everything. Some content may be used for inclusion in the next Circular.

**RNA LOTTERY** – Win up to £25,000 and support the RNA at the same time. More details available via this [link](#). If you know of a Shipmate that may be interested and wants to enter, but has no internet access, you can download and print a form for them [here](#).

**FIRESIDE CHATS** Tonight's Fireside Chat will be given by Hannah Prowse, the CEO of Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust. Hannah will be giving us an insight into the Trust's work and future plans for the Historic Dockyard. There will be no chats either next week or the week after (7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Aug) due to Summer leave. The next chat will be on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August and will be given by Malcolm Farrow whose subject will be Colours of the Fleet. Malcolm, a former Royal Naval Captain, is President of the Flag Institute. Fireside chats take place every Monday at 18:30 and to access the chats, log into zoom [here](#). The meeting ID is 288 830 5105 and the access password is Shipmate.



## BLACK TOT DAY

'Happy Black Tot Day' – an oxymoron if ever there was one! As most of our readers of a certain vintage will know, today marks the 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the abolition of the daily issue of a free tot of rum to sailors to Royal Naval personnel. In the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, sailors at sea were given an allowance of eight pints of beer per day (albeit slightly weaker than today's beers). Beer does not keep though and for longer voyages, the ration was supplemented or replaced by wine (a pint) or spirit (usually Brandy and half a pint). In 1655, following the capture of Jamaica, Admiral Penn introduced rum which replaced Brandy as the spirit of choice as it was readily available and kept better. In 1731, the issue of rum was formally established as a daily allowance, with a quarter pint being issued both in the morning and in the evening (half a pint a day in total). In 1740, Admiral Vernon issued an order that the rum issue should be diluted with water and the subsequent mix was known as Grog after the Grogam coat that Vernon favoured. Following governmental debate, which included such reasons as the effect on drink driving alongside the inability to operate machinery effectively, the tot was abolished on July 31<sup>st</sup> 1970 – now known as Black Tot Day. There are many references to Black Tot day on the internet, but [this one](#) gives an interesting account of that final day!



**NATIONAL SERVICE FOR SEAFARERS** The RNA has been given a limited number of tickets for the annual national Service for Seafarers at St Paul's Cathedral in London on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October. The service commemorates and celebrates all seafarers from across the maritime professions, including the Royal Navy, Merchant Marine, the fishing industry, maritime colleges and the various associated veteran groups. To apply for a ticket, please email [sara@royalnavalassoc.com](mailto:sara@royalnavalassoc.com) no later than midday on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> August.

**NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES** On Sunday 9 July 2023, members of Huntingdon & District Branch, held a Sea Sunday Service in front of the War Memorial in Huntingdon's Market Square. With the Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr Phil Pearce and Mrs Debbie Pearce, and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr Karl Brockett and Mrs Julie Brockett, the attendees also included staff and cadets representing T.S. Cromwell Sea Cadet Corps, and members of Huntingdon Male Voices. Thanks go to Revd Clifford Owen for leading the service and to the members of Huntingdon Branch for marking this annual event, and of course thanks go to the Mayoral team, Huntingdon Sea Cadets, Huntingdon Male Voices, and everyone else who came to support or watch the service.



**SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP COORDINATOR** An exciting opportunity has arisen to join the RNA team as the new Special Interest Groups (SIG) coordinator. The role of the SIG Coordinator will be to contribute to the delivery of the Objectives of the Association as incorporated by Royal Charter and increase the RNA's impact by developing and delivering the Association's communications, engagement, SIGs and influencing work with key stakeholders. Full information and how to apply can be found [here](#).

**AND FINALLY.....**

### MARY WAS DETERMINED TO WIN THE CROSS-TABLE SHOVE A NAPKIN COMPETITION FINAL



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