

TON Talk

Newsletter of the TON Class Association



Edition 205

AUGUST 2020



Thank You NHS

Flying from HMS BELFAST

TON Class Association

Patron HRH The Prince of Wales

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TCA Membership

£15 per annum

£150 Life Membership

www.tca2000.co.uk

Front Cover:

Courtesy Bernie Bristol

Note use of 4th Substitute – top flag, inboard hoist - to save repeating flag N in NHS ...

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Editor's Grandfather was a Yeoman on the Royal Yacht in 1904.



Founder: Jack Worth MBE

Editorial

TCA Website We regret to advise that on transferring responsibility for the TCA website it was discovered that it had suffered badly from attacks by hackers; initially 12-20 months ago, but continuing up to this May. Some programs have been corrupted, so it is not safe to build upon them to effect the planned enhancements. We are left with no option but to re-build another website, incorporating the best features from the current one, with improved security. The Committee has discussed options by phone and e-mail and by majority of 10-2 has accepted the investment of c.£3,400 for a re-build. We have £1,800 left from Jeremy Stewart's bequest which will be used for this purpose. As Project Manager, your Editor did not vote. Our President and Chaplain (non-voting members) also approved of the rebuild. Re-engineering work has commenced, aiming for a re-launch in September.

TCA Members on Video.

38 Years On ... a video interview has recently been found of (then) **Lt Bernie Bruen DSC** of Fleet Clearance Diving Team 3 explaining the disposal of unexploded 1000 lb bombs in Sir Galahad and Sir Lancelot during the Falklands Conflict.

Follow the link www.youtube.com/watch?v=uipc7s11p_y

The clip has been described as "*One of the best interviews arising from that war*" by Michael Nicholson of ITV.

And follow the long link below to see former LRO **Bernie Bristoll** in the Bridge Wireless Office of HMS Belfast, teaching morse code to young visitors to the ship.

Bravo Zulu to him for promoting TCA in the process. - ... --..

https://m.youtube.com/watch?utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f618c86a94-84ecc46b29-&utm_source=IWM&utm_campaign=84ecc46b29-2020_5_21_Members+eNews+-+Bernie&feature=youtu.be&v=HjefViZRDcM

Cenotaph Parade The Royal British Legion is pressing ahead with arrangements for the usual parade although it is not yet clear how, **or even if**, it will be held or Social Distancing relaxed. The deadline for applications has not been confirmed, so as a contingency, names of TCA members who attended last year have been submitted. If anyone else wishes to attend, contact HonSec ASAP and be prepared to give your old Official Number, Dates of your Naval Service and Date and Place of Birth - for "security" !.

Correction. For counselling: **David Larkin's** land line is 01323 765 459



Deadline for October's Edition is 21st September

pjd

Chairman's Corner

With great regret I must advise that, with the agreement of the TLH Leisure Centre, we will NOT be able to hold our AGM and Reunion this year in the Toorak Hotel. We and the hotel must follow Government guidelines on keeping safe from the Covid 19 virus.

Clive Dennison has stood down from Committee responsibilities. He has been a highly active member of the Committee and we will miss his zeal. He undertook several roles and will be a hard act to follow.

I will take over responsibility for arranging Reunions, as I had that responsibility for several years before being appointed Chairman. I have arranged to return all deposits etc that TCA members have sent. The TLH Leisure Centre has confirmed that next year's Reunion in the Carlton Hotel is booked.

We are going to run our AGM as ZOOM Virtual Conference. Committee members have been practising with this app on their laptops. Every member has a right to attend our AGM, so **If you wish to join in our ZOOM Virtual AGM, please e-mail Hon Sec for instructions.** It is quite straight forward, and you do NOT have to download any software.

Officers will be requested to e-mail their reports to Hon Sec and all Committee members by 1st October, so they will have a week or so to read them. **The AGM will then be an electronic conference, commencing at 10.00 on Saturday 10th October.** Matters may be discussed, decisions made and Hon Sec will take Minutes, as he would normally do. The Minutes will be sent to each Committee Member and published in December's TON Talk, so every member will know how our Association is progressing.

We now have vacancies on the Committee for a Vice-Chairman, Reunion Secretary and Archivist. The Archivist will safeguard our collection of photographs, ship's engineering drawings and important documents. Please contact me or HonSec if you would like to discuss what the jobs involve before you offer your services.

Meanwhile work on the "Way Ahead", the revision of our Constitution and Rules continues, to make the governance of our Association fit for the years to come. Details will be put before the Committee for approval hopefully before the AGM, then announced in TON Talk. *Watch This Space!*

John Soanes is out of hospital and, although still weak, he and Ann are cheerful and send their best wishes.

Please keep safe and exercise patience and prudence, as the restrictions of the past months begin to ease.

Best wishes to you all.

Peter Harrison

TCA Who's Who

President

Rear Admiral R John Lippiett CB. CBE. DL

Chairman

And Reunion Secretary Peter Harrison,

151 Discovery Road
Plymouth
PL1 4PR
Tel: 01752 656 228
E-mail:
peterharrison@eclipse.co.uk

Hon Treasurer Stuart Johnson

30 Maple Close,
Chase Town
Burntwood
Staffs WS7 4RP
Tel: 01543 675 901
E-mail:
deeziandjohn@yahoo.co.uk

Hon Secretary, Editor, TON Talk & Website Peter Down

39 Anderson Close
Needham Market
Suffolk
IP6 8UB
Tel: 01449 721 235
E-mail:
peter.avoca@gmail.com

Membership Secretary Dennis Cook

5 Manvers Street,
Worksop,
Notts
S80 1SD
Tel: 01909 481 745
Mobile: 07919 897275
E-mail: dcook1727@gmail.com

Chaplain

Rev. Trevor Filtness

24 Orchard Road
Brixton
Plymouth
PL8 2FE
Tel: 01752 881 967
Mobile: 07785 568 056
E-mail: trevor@filtness.org

Welfare Officer

Robbie Reid-Sinclair

68 Brookside
Carlisle
Cumbria
CA2 7JR
Tel: 01228 542114
Mobile: 07791-908242
E-mail: crofton1216@gmail.com

COMING EVENTS

September	Sat 12 th	13.00. White Rose Branch Lunch at Thomas', Lendal Bridge, York Meal at 15.30 To be confirmed Contact Buster Brown a-brown35@sky.com
	Sunday 13 th	White Rose Branch - Eden Camp All Services Remembrance Parade. <i>Regret to advise that this event has been cancelled due to Covid precautions.</i> <i>Eden Camp is now open for small groups of visitors.</i>
October	Fri 9 - Sun 12	Annual Reunion Toorak Hotel, Torquay Regrettably the Reunion has had to be cancelled due to Covid. Refunds of deposits etc are in hand. AGM will be a Virtual Conference using ZOOM commencing at 10,00 Sat 10 October – Contact HonSec for details if you wish to participate

My War

Lt. C F Dance RNVR

This memoir was composed by the father of George Dance, of Pencoed, Mid-Glamorgan as a history for his family. George has kindly agreed to share it with us.



I joined the supplementary reserve of the R.N.V.R. in 1937 and was attached to the Bristol division with headquarters on H.M.S. Flying Fox and in 1939 was called up as a Sub Lieutenant R.N.V.R. I said cheerio to my wife and family and went for training to H.M.S. King Alfred at Hove in Sussex. It was bitterly cold, our training quarters on the sea front were half finished and cement dust was everywhere. We were billeted in the town, but instead of our training being for six months, it was only for a few weeks and we rushed off to man mine- sweepers.

Ships were being mined and torpedoed all up the East coast and the Thames estuary and we were needed immediately. I did a mine-sweeping course at H.M.S. Vernon

at Portsmouth where snow was thick on the ground and was there ordered to join H.M.S. Ombra at Southend.

After a fruitless journey I discovered she was at Grimsby, but I was posted to the mine-sweeper H.M.S. Garry, a coal burner. My first impressions of Grimsby were poor, in a complete blackout with thick snow everywhere. However after minesweeping for a few weeks at a time in heavy weather and blizzards, it seemed a paradise to get back to.

The winter of 1939/40 was bleak with gales and blizzards and mine-sweeping the North Sea was an anxious time. There were wrecks all up the east coast either from torpedoes or generally from mines. I was serving on HMS Garry and swept the searched channel from the Humber towards the Thames estuary. Sometimes we assisted the fleet sweepers Skipjack, Dunoon, Halcyon, Selkirk etc., most of which were sunk as war continued. Apart from the weather and the mines we often had to contend with attacks from enemy aircraft and we lived and slept if we could, in our

lifebelts. A merchant ship the Chivy Chase was mined and sank just ahead of us as we escorted a convoy south.



In 1940 I was promoted to Lieutenant and ordered to take command of HMS Liffey, another mine-sweeper, and armed with a 12-pound gun and Lewis guns.

My first assignment was to take the Liffey to stand in for the Outer Dowsing Light Vessel, which had been bombed and damaged by enemy aircraft. We were there a week in gales and blizzards marking a turning point for convoys which loomed up in the gloom. When a replacement light float arrived we were ordered back to mine-sweeping down as far as Sheringham Shoals, an area full of mined and wrecked ships.

Eventually we sailed north to the Firth of Forth to Port Edgar, near the Forth Bridge, where after a while I transferred to take command of HMS Syringa, a more modern mine-sweeper of 650 tons and a crew of 28, and

armed with a 4" semi automatic gun and machine guns.

With her we sailed south again to Hartlepool and commenced sweeping down the magnificent Yorkshire coast as far as Flamborough head. This was the period when the Germans over ran Belgium and the British army had to be evacuated from Dunkirk. Just after that, on sailing to Portsmouth, we passed the many wrecks in that area and could see smoke and explosions over the Belgium coast. From Portsmouth we swept from the Nab Tower out into the channel and saw many ships of all types escaping from France as the Germans drove on. The old French battleship Bretagne and the new destroyer Leopard were among them and also, a strange sight, a dredger packed with refugees, including gendarmes, and with belonging and bicycles in the dredgers buckets.

At this time, when France was over run, and invasion was expected, Britain, and Empire, was fighting alone. The enemy was assembling fleets of barges and ships in readiness in various French ports, and the danger was very real. We were switched to

anti-invasion patrol in the English Channel and patrolled at night from the Isle of White up to Dungeness, drifting during the day in the area of Beachey Head, where we might get some protection from shore based anti-aircraft guns. Once when we were coaling in harbour I snatched a few hours off and wired my wife to meet me with the children at Salisbury, from Bath were they were then living. I caught a train but an air raid delayed our departure, then half way to Salisbury an enemy plane dropped a stick of bombs ahead of the train, destroying the track and by the time I arrived it was time to return.

When on anti-invasion patrol we were often at action stations during the day, with enemy planes in the sky and dog fights overhead, and at night we could hear, and smell, the E. boats which torpedoed many ships. I was lucky to be on sick leave when my ship was attacked in the Channel, was shot up and my gunner killed and a seaman wounded. In addition a bomb went through the engine casing into the engine room without exploding. The weather at times was foul, and our boats were slung out at all times, we lost two as the ship rolled.

I was due to take a gunnery course at Whale Island, and was to leave the ship in two days, when I received a signal while in Portsmouth Harbour. It signified that the invasion had started and we were to put into operation the secret plan for this contingency. All ships with any sort of armament were to put to sea to repel the invaders, but first we were to anchor in the Solent to await further orders. All night we swatted up the signals and instructions, while fierce aerial fighting took place overhead and made sure our 4" gun and machine guns were ready for action. It was an anxious time but in the morning another signal signified "false alarm" and we returned to harbour. Next day I reported for my course at Whale Island. Here we spent every night in trenches dug as primitive air raid shelters, while bombs fell all around. As we retired to our chicken wire bunks in the trenches so early I got plenty of sleep, but by the light of the hurricane lamp, did little study. After passing the course, my next appointment was Auxiliary Vessels Gunnery Officer in charge of gunnery training for the Bristol Channel area, based at Swansea.

As I was ashore here for most of my time I rented a house for my family, and my wife Kay and our two children moved down from Bath to Mumbles. Here we were to see the destruction of the centre of Swansea when after three nights of air attack, the town was left in ruins. From Mumbles the centre of Swansea looked one enormous fire. Apart from Swansea my chief centre of activity was Milford Haven, where huge convoys of merchant ships assembled with escort vessels. I had twelve months as Auxiliary Vessels Gunnery Officer. I had requisitioned a large shed on the South Dock at Swansea and training had begun on all guns and we went on practice shoots at sea. Aircraft recognition too was an important instruction as many of our own aircraft were fired on in the early days.

This was a crucial time of the war, France had fallen and Britain and the Empire had

been fighting alone. Much equipment had been lost at Dunkirk, and ammunition and guns were in short supply. Losses of merchant ships torpedoed reached terrific proportions and our battleship HMS Nelson was sunk with great loss of life, though we gained revenge when the Royal Navy sank the German battleship Bismark. Then Japan entered the war on the side of our enemies, after destroying the American fleet in their treacherous attack on Pearl Harbour. Soon the Japanese had captured Hong Kong and Singapore and sunk our battleships Prince of Wales and Renown. The position could not have been graver but I can recall no atmosphere of defeatism and Winston Churchill, now Prime Minister, rallied the country with fighting speeches.

I was next ordered to join HMS Flying Fox, and old sloop now used as a gunnery training ship for gun-layers appointed to DEMS (Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships) and commanded by Commander Lawrence RN. This ship, based in Bristol docks, passed out gun-layers after about a months' intensive course on 6", 4", 12 pound guns and 20mm Oerliken guns, and the various machine guns which included Lewis, Browning 5, Hodgkiss and Marlin. We had a massive battery of guns at Severn Beach for practice and we fired 4" and 12 pounder guns towards the "Denny" islet and an aircraft towed a drogue for Anti Aircraft firing. Bristol was attacked on many occasions by air and the centre was a ruin and many buildings around the docks were destroyed. The "Flying Fox" was lucky not to be hit as bombs fell all around.

The men needed relaxation and I managed to start sporting activities and formed a soccer side in the winter and a cricket eleven in the summer from ratings taking the course.

American forces now began arriving in Britain and at times we helped them with our training facilities, especially the U.S. Naval personnel manning guns on merchant ships. British aircraft construction began to catch up and the R.A.F. were now on the offensive. At last, in 1944, after long secret preparations the "2nd front" began. British and American forces stormed ashore in Normandy after the great force had been ferried across the channel in an enormous fleet of ships, landing craft and R.N. vessels and. escorted. by the Royal Navy. The landing was more successful than expected due to false information filtered to the enemy.

I had been about two years on the "Flying Fox" and was now ordered to take over D.E.M.S. training on the South Atlantic station based at Durban. This meant saying "Au revoir" again to my wife and family. I sailed from Liverpool, after a dreadful train journey in the "blackout" jammed in the corridors like sardines, on the fine French troopship "Pasteur". The "Pasteur" was a fast ship and sailed without escort. She took mostly R.A.F. men to Freetown in Sierra Leone and, after dropping them off, we continued to Cape Town. After the blackout in Britain it was amazing to us to see lights again and neon advertising etc. After a short spell in Cape Town and Simonstown where I called on the Captain in charge D.E.M.S., we travelled by train on a three day journey through the Great Karroo, Kimberley, Kroonstad, Boomfontein, Ladysmith and the rolling hills of Natal to Durban.

I was lucky to be sent to Durban. Although Japanese submarines had torpedoed ships

in the Indian Ocean, Durban had escaped attack. However, it was hard work as Durban was the big port for the allies once the Sues Canal was closed. Every merchant ship and some Allied war vessels, sent their gun crews for a two day refresher course. This was spent in our "Dome" where air attacks were simulated, or on our range on the coast where we fired at drogues towed by aircraft, and occasionally I flew in the aircraft to observe the firing.

I lived partly ashore (at times we had days at sea for firing) at Fleet House - a large residence run by the Navy League on the lovely Berea overlooking Durban City. About 20 officers were billeted there and were a great crowd. On a leave I spent a fine week in the Drakensburg Mountains and climbed into Basutoland - nearly 10,000 feet. A friend of mine in the R.A.F. based in Pretoria also flew me up to Johannesburg and Pretoria in a De Havilland Rapide and once in a Dakota.

By 1945 Allied forces were advancing on all fronts towards Germany and by the middle of the year the great news came that the war in Europe was over. Japanese forces too were in retreat everywhere and before long the first atomic bomb was dropped on to Japan, causing unconditional surrender to the great relief of the many Allied Prisoners of War held in dreadful conditions in Burma and elsewhere

It was good to feel one could relax and prepare for a normal life. Gunnery training ceased and we commenced disarming merchant ships as they reached port. I also played cricket, first for the Royal Navy, and then for the South African Naval Forces in the war time league and was picked to play for Durban in a two day match versus Pietermaritzberg, where we stayed the night. About this time too I was best man at the wedding of a fellow officer who married a South African girl in Pietermaritzberg.

A Hunt class destroyer was under repair in Durban before proceeding to Malta. I had completed my job in D.E.M.S. and so was appointed as watch keeping officer to H.M.S. Lauderdale to join in February 1946. Hunt class destroyers were of about 1,000 tons armed with four 4 inch guns, and. 8 to 10 Oerliken or Bofors guns with a speed of 32 knots. We sailed via the Mozambique channel to Mombassa and then to the Suez Canal and eventually paid off at Malta. I spent a short time there exploring the island before being put in charge of about 10 officers and 120 ratings proceeding to England via the 'Medloc' route. We went by the troopship to Toulon where we spent several nights at a transit camp at Hyeres in unpleasant snow and rain, before we embarked on our special troop train to Dieppe. We went via Marseilles, Montpellier, passing Carcassonne, and to Toulouse. On leaving the latter place, our train was in collision with a goods train causing damage and injuries, I suffered a cut on my face which did not need attention. When we reached Dieppe and embarked on the cross channel ship, it was cold and raining and we realised that we were nearing home.

When in March 1946, my train pulled into Swansea, I was reunited with my wife and family and started my end of war leave at Mumbles.

Danish Naval Home Guard

Ray Brooks, Gosport

In 1991 HMS President was asked to host three ships of the Danish Naval Home Guard for a 3-day visit. As London Unit RNXS of the Thames Group, Lt Cdr Ted Seath was our Boss, we were deemed to be the nearest thing to their service.

The Danish Home Guard (*Hjemmeværnet*) (HJV) is a unique formation, founded in June 1945 by members of the former Resistance. It is now the fourth service of the Danish military. Initially concerned only with the defence of Danish territory, since 2008, it has also supported the Danish military efforts in Afghanistan and Kosovo.

Service is voluntary and unpaid, though members' loss of income from time taken off work, transport and other basic expenses are compensated. Workshop, depot staff, admin clerks and senior officers are all paid. It has Army, Navy and Air Force components, with depots in all major communities.

The founding members of the Home Guard swore to protect the Danish people against all enemies, both foreign and domestic, this last referring to the Danish government during the occupation that supported Nazi Germany by handing over Danish citizens to the Gestapo.

On their arrival the Danish ships laid on a reception for 25 guests. It was a uniformed gathering, so naturally Top Brass and local dignities held pole position, leaving just eight places for the lower orders, of which I was lucky enough to be one.



A great evening was had with much circulating and supping. Later I invited some to join me in the Dickens Inn on St Katherines Dock nearby, ending up aboard their ship for snacks and coffee.

The next evening we invited them to join us in the mess aboard President.: a more relaxed affair. and again we later repaired aboard the Danish ship for more bonding. The next day they slipped to return to Denmark.



I had made great friends with several members of their crew, especially "Able Seaman" Britta and her mother and stepfather, all of whom were aboard pfather Gorgen was an engineer but doubled as cook for this trip. I am still in touch with them.

In 1993 I was part of the crew of a Fleet Tender on a Training Cruise. We spent a few days in Esbjerg and were treated to a short visit to the new Training Craft. of the Danish Naval Home Guard.

I had had a chat with Britta by phone the week before and ended it by saying we would continue in person. She said she wasn't coming to England and I told her our ship would be coming into Esbjerg. She was thrilled. On the day of our arrival I'd pulled the morning watch, force 7/8 all night. I was on the charts. We took the Pilot at 0730 and having tidied my chart portfolio I left the bridge and prepared for a well needed shower.

A few minutes after we had berthed I was hailed to report to bridge to receive visitors.

So quickly donning my best rig, I popped up to the bridge and was given a big hug by Britta. She was with her mum. They asked the Skipper if I could come ashore with them, so off I went to their home. Britta was still attending college and was awaiting exam results. Over the next few days we spent time together and I got to meet some of her friends. One evening Gorgen took me to his local pub, which was nice. Altogether a most enjoyable week, then we were off back to Chatham. The weather on the return trip was no better.

A couple of years later the Danish MOD invited the RNXS to join them for an Exercise in the Baltic but sadly, due to work commitments, I was not able to take part.

Britta has recently celebrated her 12th birthday. She was born on Feb 29th, so making her now actually 48. She has a fine 8 year old son.

Postscript by Lt Cdr Ted Seath

Ray Brooks' memory is correct regarding the visit of the Danish Naval Home Guard to President. I only regret that the hospitality we offered was not anywhere near as generous as that given to the RNX flotilla that subsequently, commanded by me, paid a return visit to Denmark.



Photo above of the P20 crew that led the team.

The Skipper, second from left, is Maurice Pickering, head of Southend Unit.

Ian Campbell is quite right about me taking BELTON through the Corryvekan whirlpool but only because I was ordered to do so by my boss (Commodore Fishery Protection) who was embarked at the time. We had been doing trials on deep team sweeping using Algerine gear and I had upset him. Belton was starboard wing ship without CFP embarked and I spotted a French trawler with his gear down about 5 miles off the Mull of Kintyre. Without giving it much thought, I slipped my gear leaving the next in line to recover it and proceeded to arrest the Frenchman.

Commodore Fishery Protection, Gavin Weymss, although a great friend, gave me a hell of a telling off but I also received a BZ (well done) from Flag Officer Scotland.

At the end of the trials CFP embarked in BELTON for passage to Faslane and then led the whole squadron through Corryvekan Sound. I can only describe the incident as interesting on a full flood tide ! We spent quite a bit of time not pointing in the direction I wanted to go !

RUSSIAN COD

Tony Quick, Watford

After responding to the Suez Crisis 104/105 MSS were disbanded in November 1956. Some ships returned to UK and those left behind in the Med reinforced 108 MSS in Malta. In early 1957 the ships that had returned to Home Waters were formed as 100 MSS, based at HMS VERNON, Portsmouth.

A previously postponed NATO exercise named "Spring Double" was re-organised for the southern waters of the Baltic, around the Bornholm Straits. Tasked to take part, 100 MSS set out in mid-July to rendez-vous with NATO partners just north of the Baltic entrance to the Kiel Canal.

After a swift passage across the North Sea, arriving at the Brunsbüttel, at the southern end of the Kiel Canal, near the mouth of the River Elbe, the Squadron soon found itself deep into the enclosed waters of the canal, proceeding in line ahead.

"*'Ere Lofts, Come and have a look at this'*" spoke the Steward from the Wardroom flat. I was putting a nut and bolt in a piece of loose vibrating cable plating, whose sound accompanied the whining of the worn out bearings in the ventilator fan – right outside the Captain's cabin; much to his annoyance. Following him out into the port waist I saw several "idlers" manning the garden fence. We seemed to be in some sort of large canal lock, similar to those I had grown up with, living near the Grand Union Canal but this lock accommodated sea going ships rather than canal barges. The idlers' attention was focussed on the ship in the neighbouring lock, travelling in the opposite direction to us. My first impression was of a rather run down and dirty fishing trawler but as I ran my eyes over her I began to see the details which had made the lads so curious.

We were about 50 yards apart, separated by the quay to which both ships were secured. Manning their guardrail was a line of scruffily dressed "fishing hands", all giving us the "eye" with hostile blank stares. Several features stood out: first was a rather dirty torn flag of the USSR, which hung limply from a stubby jackstaff and, for a fishing boat, an extraordinary array of aials of all shapes and sizes between the bridge and funnel and a bedraggled length of fishing net, full of holes was hanging from a derrick. It would not have held a fish for long !

Ollly and Wally, two of our seamen baited and waived at this line of sullen stares but there was no reaction. At the forward end of this scruffy line up was a burly looking hand wearing a blue cap with a visor and smoking a pipe, perhaps watching us with some interest. Just then a door in the superstructure below the bridge opened and out stepped a smartly uniformed officer, wearing a naval cap and carrying some papers. He marched over to the pipe smoker and, saluting smartly, handed over the papers. To our amazement the Pipe Smoker stood up and revealed her considerable profile.

Immediately a great cheer went up from our lads but, seemingly as a response to this accolade, she gave a sharp order and the whole line of "fishermen" turned about with

military precision and stood with their backs to us. Speculation was rife as to who the Pipe Smoker might be - might she be East German Stasi, code name Iron Gerda ?

According to John Le Carré Soviet spy ships regularly sailed under Polish or East German flags, just to confuse the issue.

To get a better view I walked aft towards the loop, but I stumbled over someone lying flat on the deck. Recoiling from a curse, I realised that there was the Subbie taking photos out of one of the deck edge drain ports using a camera with a large telephoto lens. I was told to “-Iss orf” and returned to my toolbag.

I had only previously seen spy ships from afar on the fringes of previous exercises, so to see one up close was rare indeed. It was very unusual for the Russians to send such a vessel through the Kiel Canal, they normally crept round the top of Denmark at dead of night. The subsequent conclusion that something very important was imminent for them to risk the short cut to the North Sea.

Olly and Wally were trying to drum up support for their own “Moon Shot” but the Buffer stepped in saying “*No you don’t. That would be disrespectful to our own new Skipper*”, although him being an Aussie, might just have gone along with it !

The Soviets were watching us too, as I could see the glint of binoculars among the dark shadows in their bridge.

Sub Lieutenant Edwards was a respected National Service Officer. I had shared may a watch with him as lookout or on the wheel but he was always quite guarded in casual conversation. With his rolls of charts and perpetually sharpened pencils, there was a certain air of privacy about him and he never disclosed what his civvie occupation might have been. Much later when I mentioned my suspicions to the Coxswain and said that there might be a whiff of Naval Intelligence about him, ‘Swain reminded me that the Official Secrets Act applied to all of us aboard and to mind my own business !

Mind you, Subbie did keep his bedtime reading in the office safe

ELINT – Electronic Gathering of Intelligence – has come a long way since then.

Pictured below, Russian *Balzam* class specialist intelligence gathering vessel, successor to the *Primor’ye* class which regularly “accompanied” NATO exercises in our time.

The array of aerials and sensors are capable of listening in to radio signals (including cell phones of crew members who do not follow the rules) plus frequencies and characteristics of radars. Their sonar suites also record ship noises (useful for torpedo and mine targeting) and try to track submarines en route to patrol stations.



TONs Along the Way

Dagger Pensioner

Dagger Pensioner is the Nom de Plume of a very distinguished TCA Member.

The first TONs I saw were three, building alongside each other in a covered shed in Davie Shipbuilding & Repair Yard on the south bank of the St Laurence River opposite Quebec in Canada. The year was 1954 and I was nine. It was the wood as much as anything that caught my eye. What seemed a massive keel of laminated oak was being fashioned by a pair of carpenters and the tools they were using would have been totally familiar to The Good Lord's Dad. One or two aluminium frames were already in place. Although an explanation was patiently given at the time, I was amazed that new warships were being built of wood and stuff you normally used for making saucepans. I can remember thinking they looked as if they were going to be rather small ships too.

1958 and back in England, I broke through Green & Siley Wear's fence into Falmouth Dockyard on my bicycle to find a gleaming TON alongside the fuelling jetty. The ship just had an air about her – smart, purposeful, a bit cheeky – but she looked capable and seaworthy and strengthened my growing resolve to go to sea - in almost any capacity - if they'd have me. But she was small.

Fast forward 6 years and here I am a Midshipman in a River class frigate on a Sunday morning in the Gulf of Oman, watching a plume of smoke with a speck underneath that becomes a TON, coming over the horizon from the south east. They're short of bridge watch-keepers over there and my captain has just confirmed my suspicions of some weeks that I am surplus to requirements aboard the frigate. A bump transfer and minutes later I enter a whole new world and my naval career starts looking up. The portly chap chipping paint from the boat cradle in the starboard waist, in khaki shorts and rigging set, is apparently the Jimmy. The elegant figure in sunglasses, slacks and the Copacabana shirt, who would later become Director, TCA Historical Records, but back then, he was my new captain [*Jeremy Stewart ... Editor*]. "Kept a bridge watch before, Mid ?" Errrrr "No Sir" "Good: you've got the First Dog and Middle !" The ship's not small at all, and for a few glorious hours a day – she's all mine. How amazing !

But with advancing years comes increasing responsibility, and 48 months later as a brand new Lieutenant, I was Jimmy of a TON myself. Wow ! Best job in the Navy. My captain was another Lieutenant, but one from the other end of the age spectrum. He taught me many things about leadership and life, how to make the ship perform a movement rather like a salsa in the Portland race at springs, and how ungracious it was to leave anything in a whisky bottle that one's captain had opened to see us through our two-man weekly planning meetings.

Years later I had a pier head jump in Singapore to a ferry crew to navigate a group of TONs west across the Indian Ocean, and thought perhaps that was my swan song for the TON. Found Addu Attoll; found Mauritius; might as well go out on a high.

But no, the RN isn't the only navy where frigates break down. In 1977, I had been scheduled as teacher, to take a class of embryo Canadian navigating officers to sea for two weeks in a Canadian St Laurent class frigate from Esquimalt on Vancouver Island. Severe 'condenseritis' put paid to the frigate: would two Canadian TONs do instead? Pilotage and OOW manoeuvres— yes please ! I often wondered then and later if HMCS's COWICHAN and MIRIMACHI were two of the keels I'd seen being laid down all those years before in Sorel. The pilotage training was a huge success: open bridges, beautiful scenery, great weather and 5 and 6 knot tidal streams in the narrows, which took some thinking about for the would-be Vascos.



HMCSs COWICHAN & MIRIMACHI - Vancouver Island Spring 1977

I thought that was the end of it, and it was really. But then one morning in the mid-1990s as I was scurrying northwards across the Hard from Old Portsmouth, headed for VICTORY gate and my MoD desk (that was wood too, but there the similarity ended), there she was. Plugging purposefully up harbour into a strong northerly breeze that showed her paying off pennant to advantage, was a TON. I think it may have been

HMS STUBBINGTON. Whoever she was, she was just right: smart, purposeful, with an air about her – a bit cheeky. The years had been kind to her and she hadn't changed a bit. For me she represented a sort of talisman for all the TONs I'd known and appreciated, touchstones along my naval life – good times and bad, and it was a privilege that quite by chance I had been able to watch the last passage up harbour of probably one of the last RN TONs to be operational. With a puff of smoke she was lost behind a large Type 42 berthed on South Railway Jetty. I was adrift for the first interminable meeting of the day, but it was more than worth it: I'd been lucky enough to see the fitting completion of a rite of passage.

Only Having a Laugh ...



Every so often the Royal Marines take over Ceremonial duties at Buckingham Palace. A young Royal Marine, a country boy who had never before visited London, is on the gate at the Palace.

The RSM walks up to him and says "Right lad, the Queen is out on public duties and I want to know the minute she gets back here. Do you understand ? The very minute she's back, you let me know".

"Yes Sir " says the young Marine .

Minutes later a big limo pulls in through the gates, the young Marine stops the car, pops his head in and says " Scuse me Ma'am are you the Queen?

"No I'm Princess Anne", said the occupant.

"OK. Sorry to delay you Ma'am. Please proceed".

The next limo pulls in and he sticks his head in the window and says

" Scuse me Ma'am are you the Queen? " "No I'm the Duchess of Cambridge" came from the rear seat.

" OK. Sorry to delay you Ma'am. Please proceed."

Next limo pulls in and ,same again, he sticks his head in the window, "Scuse me Ma'am, are you the Queen?."

"Yes I'm the Queen".

"Right" he says, "Well take my advice love, and make yourself scarce, 'cos the RSM is looking for you !".

From: Peter Harrison - on his way to the Tower ?

HMS SHOREHAM - Sitrep from Bahrain

S/Lt Harry Long RN

Navigating Officer, MCM1 Crew 4 in *HMS SHOREHAM*, M112

SHOREHAM has had a long, interesting and, due to recent events, slightly different experience to the usual KIPION deployment.

A short introduction to what most of you know: our mission out here is to maintain freedom of navigation for the huge volume of trade that sails through the Gulf. This is done with our three sister ships – *LEDBURY*, *BLYTH* and *BROCKLESBY* – which are also based in UK NSF, backed up by two Type 23 Frigates, and all supported by *RFA CARDIGAN BAY*. Quite an impressive group of British naval assets



It has been a successful deployment with the crew working well and to a high standard as a worked up team. We have done several exercises with our US Navy colleagues that are also based in Bahrain, as well as many days of mine-warfare survey operations in Defence Watches.

SHOREHAM also enjoyed two separate weeks in Dubai – in the far-off days before the Lockdown began. During one of the weeks, the families of the Ship's Company were able to fly out and spend some time with their loved ones – much needed when the deployment lasts eight months !

In March *SHOREHAM* had a productive visit to the Ra's Al Qulay'ah Naval Base in Kuwait, in company with *BLYTH*. The aim of the visit was to further interoperability between the Royal Navy and the Kuwaiti Naval Force.

Teams from *SHOREHAM*, *BLYTH* and the Kuwaiti Naval Force diving branch conducted a simulated hull search on *SHOREHAM*, who also hosted Maj Gen Khaled Abdullah (Commander of the Kuwaiti Naval Force),



His Excellency Michael Davenport (UK's ambassador to Kuwait) and the CO of *BLYTH* for lunch in the wardroom. On departure from Ra's Al Qulay'ah, *SHOREHAM* and *BLYTH* conducted Officer of the Watch manoeuvres with KNS ISTIQLAL

The majority of May was spent alongside for *SHOREHAM* in a four-week maintenance period. During this time the anchors and cables were fully removed to allow for a Lloyds Registry inspection, which they passed with flying colours. The Ship's Company also took the opportunity to relax with some old fashioned whole ship social events, such as Pizza Night, BBQs and whole ship quizzes.



In June we got our sea legs back and were straight back into action when our diving team assisted one of our coalition partners who had fouled her screws with discarded fishing nets. *SHOREHAM'S* diving team spent several hours freeing her. We've had an exciting few months at sea and alongside, and are very much looking forward to seeing what the next few months bring.

May I encourage everyone to follow @HmsShoreham on Twitter as you can see what the Ship and her Company have been doing in our deployment, along with some excellent photos.

SAS DURBAN

News and photo from Tony Simmonds in South Africa. A leaking valve or stern gland is suspected of causing the flooding pictured, soon after *DURBAN* returned to Museum duties following her recent refit.

The museum had been closed for some time due to Covid precautions, so the condition had not been spotted until this dramatic outcome.



She is now being pumped out so that rectification can take place. Let's hope that water ingress has not done too much damage. Parallels with *BRONINGTON* are uncomfortable.

Deltics in the Merchant Service

Extract from The LOG, Quarterly Journal of the Nautical Association of Australia, Vol 47, No.1, Issue 195 of 2014, whose Copyright is acknowledged. In particular, that of author I Stevenson.

*Details were passed to us by **Eric Coates of Western Australia**.*

The **Bass Trader**, built in 1961 in Newcastle, New South Wales, about sixty miles north of Sydney and centre of Australia's still burgeoning coalmining industry, was a revolutionary concept at that time, combining RollOn-Roll Off operations with container handling; a first for Australian shipping, coupled with the distinctive advantages of the Deltic engine.

During the 1950's Australian National Line (ANL) had accumulated a mixed fleet of technically unsophisticated ships and was investigating the trailer-ship concept as a means of competing with the trend of carriage of general cargo from ships to road and rail, exacerbated by slow, restrictive, waterfront handling of cargo. A report in 1957 noted "*Since it costs as much in one Australian port to move an item [motor body] 50 yards across a wharf as a road haulier would charge to carry the same item 50 miles, the difficulties that the ship owner faces in trying to attract cargo to his vessel will be realised.*"

The Ro-Ro concept had been pioneered in Britain in 1946 by Transport Ferry Service, a subsidiary of Atlantic Steam Navigation Co. Ltd, using three WW 2 surplus tank landing ships trading between Tilbury and Hamburg. The concept took off and in 1948 was extended to the route between Preston and Larne (NI), shortly followed by a purpose designed ship, Bardic Ferry, with astern loading ramp.

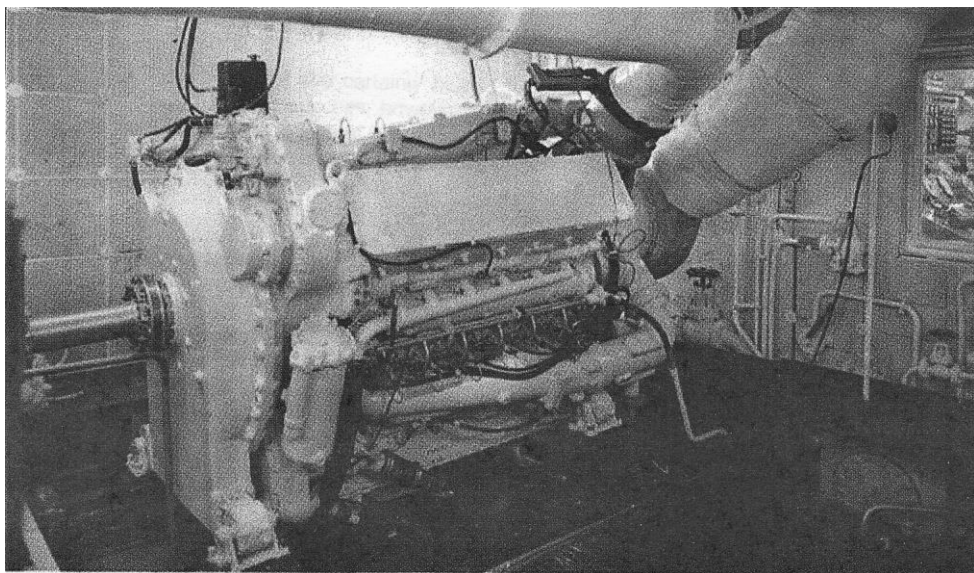
The engines of the ANL fleet were a mixed bag of steam reciprocating and diesels of different designs and manufacture - a maintainer's nightmare , with spares always in short supply.

As all in TCA will know, the Deltic engine had proved it worth in service with the RN and British Rail, with outstanding advantages of compact size, light weight and excellent power to weight ratio and relatively low maintenance, being able to "repair by replacement" with a spare engine in a matter of hours.

The compact size, particularly as compared with the space requirements for boilers and steam reciprocating engines, meant that more space could be allocated within the hull for revenue-generating additional cargo.

Bass Trader was the first merchant vessel in the world to be specially designed for propulsion by Deltic engines. As each engine weighed only five tons and was self-contained regarding necessary pumps, it could be removed and a spare unit installed relatively easily. The original concept was to have five engine units; two in use at sea, one carried as a spare in a trailer on the vehicle deck and two on standby or being worked upon at a shore depot in Melbourne. Maintenance at sea was to be minimised.

Each engine was arranged in six banks of three cylinders with opposed pistons in an inverted triangular formation, making 36 pistons in total. The engines were linked through Fluidrive couplings and Allen-Stoekart epicyclic speed reduction gearings on each shaft, reducing the input speed of about 1600 rpm to 167 rpm, then geared to two Ka Me Wa controllable pitch propellers. This enabled the engines to run at constant revolutions, irrespective of propeller pitch setting. Bridge control was also provided for pitch alterations. [*We could have done with this on TONs ...* **Editor**]



I.S.M.V. "BASS TRADER"-NAPIER DELTIC ENGINE (PORT)

(I.Steverson Collection)

*Just look at all that space ! Stokers could actually get to the valves.
With no more skinned knuckles ...* **Editor**

Bass Trader had space for 60 semi-trailers, each 32 feet long, driven aboard over the shore stern ramp, in addition to 22 cargo lift on/off containers loaded

in the top (weather) deck by shore side crane. She also carried 14ft 5 ins OR 16ft 8ins container units in the vehicle deck or lower hold. The mixture of semi-trailers and container units varied depending upon cargo requirements and the handling time and equipment such as forklift trucks and tractors available in the ports of call. Four specially constructed shore terminals were built at Melbourne and Burnie, Bell Bay and Devonport in Tasmania.



Photo © R. Wilson

The ship was launched on 3rd December 1960, just fifteen months after the keel had been laid. She had none of the conventional cargo handling gear or hatches found on other merchant ships. She was commissioned on 5th April 1961 following successful sea trials. Her dimensions were: Overall Length 322ft 5½ ins, Beam 57 ft, Loaded Draught 15ft ¾ ins, Light Draught 10ft 5 ins, Gross Tonnage 4,128 Nett Tonnage 1,994, Displacement 3,905 tons, Speed 13.7 knots.

To assist berthing and avoid use of tugs, the ship was fitted with a bow thruster and twin rudders. Additionally she had Denny Brown stabilisers – another first for a merchant ship.

Single berth accommodation was provided for the 32 crew members, with 12 additional berth for drivers; all housed in the forepart of the vessel.

Bass Trader commenced her scheduled service from Melbourne to Burnie on 18 April 1961. Subject to the vagaries of weather, industrial disputes, the odd engine problem and delayed cargoes, her routine was:

Depart Melbourne 15.30 Sunday, arrive Burnie 08.30 Monday
Depart Burnie 15.30, arrive Melbourne 08.30 Tuesday.

Depart Melbourne 15.30 Tuesday, arrive Bell Bay 08.30 Wednesday
Depart Bell Bay 15.30 Wednesday, arrive Melbourne 08.30 Thursday.

Depart Melbourne 15.30 Thursday, arrive Devonport 08.30 Friday
Depart Devonport 15.30 Friday, arrive Melbourne 08.30 Saturday.

During her first six months of operation there were 14 engine changes, but none in the second six months. A spate of unconnected engine failures hampered Bass Trader once more from the second quarter of 1962. One commentator noted "engine exchange became so frequent that the access hatch pins were in danger of wearing out". Napier's Chief Engineer of the Deltic Division visited Australia in May 1962, identified the reasons for the failures and made sure that a spare engine was available

Bass Trader did a sterling job over 14 years running backwards and forward through an area often subject to extreme weather. The versatility of the ship was such that she could discharge 1,200 tons in three hours before lunch and load the same in the afternoon, then sail on time. She was able to carry more cargo in a day than conventional cargo ships on that route handled in a week. Freight rates came down, which pleased Tasmanians and gave them quicker and a more reliable and flexible access to the mainland. Bass Trader was an immediate success, successfully completing 585 voyages into Bell Bay before she was retired in April 1975. She was replaced by larger but similarly specialised Ro-Ro ships handling the (by now) standard ISO 20ft containers, which could carry twice the cargo.

The Deltic was not used in later ships, as improved designs of diesels required even less maintenance.

Bass Trader was sold to Halley Enterprise Shipping Inc of Panama who fitted her with a stern ramp. She spent the remainder of her life in the Mediterranean managed by Oroconsult Shipping of Zurich for her eventual owner Intermodal Shipping Services Inc. She was finally scrapped at Savona, Italy in November 1984.

JOBS FOR THE BOYS 2 : THE ELASTIC STRETCHES

Harry Cartlidge, Staffs

Divisions, bilge party at the ready when that doom laden order "from here to the left" was given. We were to pack a hold-all whilst staying at and cleaning a fort at the back of Portsmouth, purportedly built by Boney's beaten battalions and unused since. First our own quarters; erected the bunks, lit the pot stove, and thought this is cushy. On the following days instead of down the bilges we were up in the air rigging radio aerials from high pylons to Nissen huts. The view atop a pylon is heady but it can make a mess of your underpants. Oddly it was the first time I'd spliced anything except the main brace since Ganges.

Where do you start with a Fort? Scrubbing, mopping, waiting for a broom, enjoying the space and stringing the job out when the caretaker stunned us. Dense double doors in the hillside revealed a tunnel capable of taking a bus tumbling down into the bowels of the earth and widening out to a cavernous spider infested chamber furnished as an Operations Room with all mod cons, and we thought we were done.

In a dribble diverse NATO nations began to appear as we worked around them, an exercise underway. Stowing a couple of brooms I was buttonholed by an American Admiral, he was surprisingly young, no grey hair, smart uniform and more medals than Mountbatten he was the epitome of meritocracy (thanks Pancho).

Explaining that I was the cleaner I aired my recently acquired knowledge as we toured the space, still carrying my brushes. He asked me to join him again after dinner (!) which I did not, expecting to be up all night. Though we were sustained by delicately cut sandwiches and flasks of coffee - a far cry from the usual fare of kye and ship's biscuits.

The Admiral charmed everyone and seemed to know everything even minutiae, he was the 6 minute rule on steroids calculating equations before I plotted them making erasers and slide rules redundant. Each night, flask in hand, he would greet me with "Accept my felicitations Cartlidge" 'til he latched on the term 'Hooky' which amused him .. Well there was something of the Peter Pan about him.

After a few days and passing me a rail warrant and an address he said "we're going North". Who was I to argue ? So organising the cleaning party I borrowed a few bob (we'd missed pay day), and walked to Cosham in my 8's and another walk from Waterloo. Chugging north a couple invited me to the Dining Car, first time I'd eaten on a train, and then dozed towards the destination. I found the address, a non-description house in a Main Street, and entered to another eye opener. Same tunnel, same Ops Room, and the Admiral already in situ. Here, although supernumerary, everyone in 3a's and me in 8's. I'd gone up a rung, as the Admiral wielded his weight, continuing his nightly vigil.

To get some sleep I'd go to a nearby cinema and drop off watching Bob Hope on the Road to Morocco and wake to Errol Flynn liberating Burma - not a lot of difference. Soon we flitted again, this time to sea aboard the INDOMITABLE, Same routine, Rail warrant, See you there.

TONs visits to Port Dickson

Poopalu Nagiah, Negri Sembilan. Malaysia

Having not much else to do during Lockdown and my barber shop closed, I went through my old photo album of RN ships and found this picture of HMS DARTINGTON at Port Dickson in May, 1965 when she with the 6th MSS under the command of then Lt. Cdr. M.A.Stockton.



In fact, this is the only coloured picture I have of a TON. It was sent to me by Tony Dodd many years ago. He had mentioned that he was the ship's postman and used to come over to town with the ship's black dog, have a few beers, collect the mail and then go back to the ship.[*We have now sent Poopalu some more colour photos of TONS. VMT to Bob Dean ... **Editor***]

However, I only knew DARTINGTON for the first time after this picture was taken. You can say my very first encounter with a TON, I never knew anything about her and why she was here.

I was a teenager and fishing with my brothers when I noticed two drunken sailors returning to their ship after a few beers at a local Chinese bar only a few shops away from my father's old hair-dressing saloon. These two men caught our attention and we didn't want to miss the action as I wanted to know what they were really up to.

I followed with them with my brothers. As soon as they reached the ship with HMS HUBBERSTON in company on the day, both men were locked up in the ship's wheelhouse. But not for long, as they managed to open the hatch and head towards the bow of DARTINGTON, diving into the water and swimming towards the Shell Oil Company jetty about 100 meters away.

While this was going on two men on watch from both ships sprang into action heading towards the shore hopping and jumping across the rocky beach to reach the Shell jetty. Their timing was so good that they caught up with the two men just as they were about to take off with the Shell launch called DUYONG. Well, all four headed toward the open sea, maybe, about one nautical mile away. Once the two men on watch got control of the two naughty men they signalled back to DARTINGTON using the launch's searchlight. Upon returning to ship this time there was no escape for them; they were handcuffed and back again to the wheelhouse. I never learned what happened to them next !

This dramatic event drew me more interest for the other TONs which were about to call at PD next. I had exciting and wonderful moments, getting to know the TONs throughout the following months, until Confrontation ended in August, 1966

There were further visits to PD by TONs of the Royal Malaysian Navy (Tentera Laut di Rajah) and for me a memorable visit by a ship's tender [MFV] from HMS Terror in Singapore Naval Base. Thanks to the generosity of Sub.Lt .D..M. Wilson, the officer in charge, I was fortunate to make a trip to Malacca with his crew of twelve sailors from HMS Forth. Good experience for a young lad like me.

Later visits by RN ships included:

HMS Dampier under the command of Cdr.Peter Cardno, who anchored off PD for a week during her Malacca Straits survey in March, 1969

HMS Hydra under the command of Cdr.M.J.Baker, followed by Cdr.R.O. Morris (later Hydrographer of the Navy and still a good friend of mine) visited Port Swettenham (across the bay) during her epic 1970, year-long, survey of the whole 180 miles of the Malacca Straits..

HMS Wilkieston, under Lt.Cdr Douglas Lotian, paid the last visit to PD by an RN TON in March, 1970.

Coastal Forces Rig

By Tim Trezare

Those of us in MCMVs in the 70s and 80s will remember Coastal Forces (CF) Rig consisting of: leather seaboots, heavy wool seaboot stockings, thick blue serge trousers and white coastal forces sweater. This last must not be confused with the 'submarine sweater', which was of thinner wool and had a big roll-neck. The CF sweater was of thicker, oiled-wool and with a shorter collar - and generally better, warmer and more wind-proof.



CF Rig modelled by sailors on GAVINTON 1977

In the Seventies, the blue woolly-pully had been introduced to replace that excellent piece of clothing - the blue seamen's jersey - which was then 'phased out' in the interests of uniformity. Leather seaboots had been 'phased out' (along with their associated stockings) and supplanted by Dunlop and Firestone 'wellies'. Oilskin coats and trousers had also been 'phased out' and the blue nylon foul-weather (FW) gear had replaced them. This last was not actually waterproof but had been introduced (along with the polyester No8 working rig - that was *not* fire-resistant !), for the convenience of the Submarine Service. MCMVs were issued with the orange version of the FW gear, which showed up every sweep-wire grease stain admirably.

In the late Seventies, a situation had arisen where upper-deck crews of MCMVs entering or leaving Rosyth were forbidden to wear their orange foul-weather gear unless it was *actually raining*. Consequently they got very cold in

those bitter Easterlies that scourged the Forth, especially when heading seaward. In Gavinton, our Jimmy went into Edinburgh and found, in a surplus store, a large number of ex-navy, dark-blue battledress tops, which had been 'phased out' of the Navy as no longer needed. He bought these and issued them to the fo'c's'l and sweep-deck crews. These marvellous 'blouses' had the advantage over the woolly-pully (which could be worn underneath) in that they were pretty wind-proof and *had pockets!* We sewed on our rate and branch badges and were jolly happy with the whole arrangement – until CMCM banned their use.

Unperturbed, the Jimmy then managed to get from Stores a number of aircraft-carrier flight-deck 'anoraks', made of double wind/waterproof, black 'Ventile' material, which were even better than the battledress. Also unperturbed, CMCM banned these as well. Eventually, our Skipper managed to talk him round and the orange foul weather gear was allowed to be worn.

At this time, Officers were able to purchase and wear an 'Officers Windcheater', made of dark blue, double 'Ventile' material, which was an excellent piece of kit – except that it looked like a maternity smock and *had no pockets!!* That did not last long.

Moving on to the Eighties; the Duty Watch in harbour wore Coastal Forces Rig, consisting of: steaming-bats, No.2 trousers, submarine sweaters (CF sweaters had been 'phased out' as unnecessary) and beret. Given the lack of space, storage and laundry facilities onboard Tons, this was an eminently sensible rig – easily maintained, warm and comfortable.

Enter the then CMCM; who asked his ships' Captains if there was any reason why the duty watch in harbour (as represented by the quartermaster) should not wear No.2 square rig, instead of *"....this 'pirate rig', that makes them look like a bunch of submariners."*

Unfortunately none of his 'Ton-class' Captains were available at the time (probably at sea) and so only the 'Hunt Class' Captains (not at sea), all of who, per se, had their feet firmly on the promotion ladder and were therefore not likely to disagree, were there to acquiesce.

And that was the end of Coastal Forces Rig, 'phased out' in the interest of 'neatness' and not in the interest of that "Single Most Important Factor" – Jolly Jack.

Sorry, Jack; no more Coastal Forces Rig for Coastal Forces – 'Phased Out', as they had it in the RN. Mmmm Hopefully things are a lot better now.

Membership Update

NEW MEMBER – *Welcome Aboard*

Nicholas Griffin. S/Lt RNR. 11 Glyn Place, East Melburn, Shaftesbury Dorset SP7 0DP. E-mail:- nicgriffin@hotmail.com
Served on HM Ships PENSTON1957, ASHTON 1958, ST DAVID 1955-67 F2470

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Peter Crook. To:- 51 Mountfield, Hythe, Southampton SO45 5AQ. F2430

Michael Kerry:- 21-2081 Winfield Drive, Abbotsford ,B C V3G 1C7 Canada. E-mail:- nutshell@telus.net F1353

LOST CONTACT – *Last known address given.*

Anyone knowing current address please advise Membership Secretary

Edwin R Morriss. 33 Lavent Court, Charles Street, PETERSFIELD GU32 3EQ F2168

Edward Connolly. The Earl St Vincent, Wadebridge, Cornwall. H0269

Donald Norman. The Berkshire Care Home 126 Barkham Road Wokingham RG41 2RP F0377

Thomas Walker 6 West View, Lewes Road, Lindfield RH16 2LI

RESIGNED – *May fair winds attend you*

Gordon Palframan,. 60 Worlds End Lane, Green Street Green, Orpington BR6 6AG. F1672



Crossed the Bar

AB Evan Robertson RN

7 Stanhall Street, EDINBURGH EH6 7NG.

*Served on HM Ships Killiecrankie, Upton, Kedleston
F0702*

Commander John Barron RN

45 Vasart Court, PERTH, PH1 5QZ

*Served on HM Ships Upton, Crofton, Kedleston, Cuxton 1972-84
F0483*

A/B Terry (Stanley) Matthews RN

27 Dunsmore Ave, Wiltenhall, COVENTRY CV3 3AG

*Served on HM Ships Laleston 1957/58, Wotton 1962/63
L1224*

CPO (MW) Gerry Smart RN

Culverhayes Nursing Home, 106 Lymore Avenue, Bath BA2 1AY.

*Served on HM Ships HODGESTON 1973-76, UPTON 1976-79
F0275*

A/B Evan Robertson RN

7 Stanwell Street Edinburgh EH6 7NG.

*Served on HM Ships KILLIECRANKIE, KEDLESTON, UPTON 72-79
F0702*

A/B Bob (Ringo) Starr RN

17 Merriton Avenue Corsham Wiltshire SN13 0BP.

Served on HM Ships MAXTON 1966-68, ALFRISTON, KELLINGTON 1976-92

L/S Frederick Hogben RN

25 Trendall Road Sprowston Norwich Suffolk NR7 8BL.

Served on HMS BRINTON 1954-55 F0942

May They Rest In Peace

SLOPS

Items held in Stock		Price	Special Order items	
Please ring Stores before placing order to confirm items are in stock			State size, colour and logo required Logo 1 = Mine and Keys, Logo 2 = Mine and TON silhouette Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery	
TCA Baseball cap. Logo 1		£ 11.20		Price
TCA Beret Badge		£ 7.50		
RN Beret, Blue. Various sizes		£ 8.00		
TCA Embroidered Blazer Badge		£ 9.77	TCA" V" Neck Sweater, Navy or Maroon	£ 32.45
TCA Lapel Badge		£ 6.05	TCA Round Neck Sweatshirt	£ 29.16
TCA Mouse Mat		£ 4.00	TCA Polar Fleece Jacket	£ 38.30
Car sticker – Logo 1 Clings to inside of windscreen		£ 1.25	Blazer Badge + ships name	£ 34.20
TCA Tie, Blue		£ 9.90	TCA Polo Shirt in Navy with ships name	£ 18.44
TCA Tie, Maroon		£ 11.60	Iron Man Tee Shirt, Navy	£ 15.37
Blackfoot Tie		£ 13.00	Iron Man Polo Shirt , Navy	£ 18.44
TCA First Day Cover		£ 2.50		
TON Talk Binder		£ 7.73	M/S Sailors Painting	
TON Profile badge - Silver or Gold		£ 8.50	- Notepad & TCA Pen	£ 5.00
TCA 10 th Anniversary Print		£ 5.50	- A3 Gicleé Print	£ 30.00
TCA 25 th Anniversary Badge		£ 6.00	- A4 Gicleé Print.	£ 25.00
TON Profile badge - Silver or Gold		£ 8.50		
TCA Polo Shirt, Navy logo 1		£ 18.44		
TCA Mug		£ 9.9 1		
Beanie/Ski woollen hat Navy with TCA badge		£ 8.72		
New - TCA Wall Shield 8 ins i		£ 37.00		
Blazer Badge (Gold Wire)		£ 16.00		
TCA 10 th Anniversary Print		£ 5.50		
TCA 10 th Anniversary Print		£ 5.50		
TCA 25 th Anniversary Badge		£ 6.00		
BOOKS				
Life in the TONs – Sold		Out		
Jacks of All Trades		£ 11.50		
Last of the Wooden Walls		£ 24.99		
Hardback and e-book via www.halsgrove.com				

Them as is Keen, gets Ready Early ! ...	
	
Supplies of both the “Snowman” and “7MSS Leaving Malta” designs of TCA Christmas cards are now available at £ 5.50 for 10 cards, with envelopes.	
Order early for Christmas !	

All prices include P&P (within UK only)
Please make cheques payable to TON Class Association
 Laurie Johnson, 4 Downham Close, Cowplain, Hants
 PO8 8UD Phone: 023 923 65729
e-mail: Lawrencejohnson1055@outlook.com

Post Bag

Continued on Rear Cover

FROM: Tony Quick, Watford.

A little pick me up for these trying times received from **Elaine Zerafa**, Secretary of **RNA Malta**.

My dear old friend,

Did you know that we old folks are worth a fortune ? We have silver in our hair, gold in our teeth, stones in our kidneys, lead in our feet and gas in our stomachs !

I have become older since I saw you last and a few changes have come into my life. Frankly I have become a frivolous old woman, seeing six gentlemen every day !

As soon as I wake up Will Power helps me out of bed, then I go to see Jimmy Riddle and then it is time for breakfast with Mr Kellogg, followed closely by the refreshing company of Mr Tetley or his friend who I know only by his initials PG.

Then comes someone I do not like at all – Arthur It is. He knows he is not welcome, but insists on being there and, what is more, stays for the rest of the day. Even then he does not like to stay in one place and takes me from joint to joint.

After such a hectic day I am glad to get to bed – and with Johnnie Walker too !

What a life and now I am flirting with Al Zeheimer !

The vicar called the other day and said I should be thinking of the hereafter, so I told him That I did it all the time, going into the kitchen, fridge, lounge and garden asking myself "What I am here after ? "

I will close now and hope that Will Power is your constant companion too but do make sure that his friend Emma Royd does not creep up on you from behind. And watch out for the crafty one, Gerry Atric ...

*With much Love,
Carlotta*

FROM: Dave Morris, MMM and Fakenham

The article by Captain Taylor in the April edition of TON Talk brought back memories of an incident when we served together in Dartington 63-64.

I was the bunting and S/Lt Taylor was the Navigating Officer and my D.O. I was an S.D. candidate so the C.O., Lt. Cdr. Andrew Marx, instructed me in navigation. One day whilst on patrol off Borneo we spent a day at sea exercising laying danbuoys, anchoring overnight in a sheltered spot inshore.

Next day was spent recovering the danbuoys and I was in the Wireless Office when I had a message down the voice pipe to report to the bridge. S/Lt. Taylor and Lt. Cdr. Marx were on the bridge when I arrived and as I stepped on the bridge from the bridge wing Lt. Cdr. Marx said 'Morris, we have recovered the last danbuoy. Take the ship back to where we were last night and anchor it'. I was more than a little surprised.

S/Lt Taylor looked at me and smiling said 'Happy?' I of course answered 'No' at which he said 'Come on, let's have a look at this' and took me into the chart room.

With his guidance I laid off the course to return us to the anchorage and gave the appropriate wheel and engine orders. I subsequently closed up the forecasle party and ordered the anchor be made ready for letting go. Giving all the necessary wheel and engine orders as we approach the anchorage I stood on the starboard bridge wing with the little flag raised and gave the signal for the anchor to be let go. I transpired that I had just about put it in the right spot. A unique experience for a 19 year old bunting !

We next met in HMS Mercury in the early 1980's when Captain Taylor attended a course in which I was involved as the Fleet Chief in charge of the Tactical Training Section.

FROM: Bernie Bristoll, Hendon

Following on from Bob Dean's item on Cyprus Patrols in TON Talk 202, February, I was the LRO aboard HOUGHTON in 1958/59 and experienced a couple of misadventures regarding signals to Commodore Cyprus.

As a daily routine we had to give a Position, Course and Speed at 20.00.

I received the PCS details from the bridge and sent them to Cyprus Comms Centre but shortly afterwards I received an Operational Immediate signal referring to the PCS asking "Do you need re-treads ?"

I sent the signal to the OOW (remember the string in the voicepipe ?) who then realised that the person responsible for the information had given our position as in the middle of Nicosia.

A second incident happened when the bridge drafted a signal reporting the sighting of a trawler in a certain position.

The OOW steered for that position, informing the Captain what we were doing.

When the C.O arrived on the bridge his language was unprintable. The lights that had been sighted turned out to be Famagusta harbour !!!

FROM: Lt Cdr Colin Watkins, Brightlingsea RNA

Did I ever tell you about AB Winger ? He, or she, was a small South African penguin which sailors from HMS WOLVERTON rescued in Simonstown Dockyard in 1971/72. He was happy in a small pond that Buffer made out of canvas and enjoyed Herrings In. He was given a bosun's call and stood beside the QM. He lived with us for a few weeks until we took him to Durban, where he was given to a zoo. We were bound for Mombasa, which would have been too hot for him.

FROM: Poopalu Nagiah, Malaysia

I was sad to note that Admiral Sir John Brigstocke had passed away on May 26. To his beloved family my family join in expressing our heartfelt condolences. He was kind and likeable man by whom I was invited personally and had the great honour of meeting him on board HMS Invincible during the ORIENT 92 Task Group visit to Penang in Oct.1992.



MCMV NEWS

Rob Hoole

Operation KIPION MCM

Our MCM forces in the Gulf, based at the NSF (Naval Support Facility) at Mina Salman in Bahrain, comprise the Hunt class MCMVs BROCKLESBY (MCM 2 Crew 6) and LEDBURY (2/2) plus the Sandown class MCMVs BLYTH (1/2) and SHOREHAM (1/4), all supported by RFA CARDIGAN BAY. At the time of writing, CHIDDINGFOLD (2/3) was on passage to relieve LEDBURY (2/2) in company with PENZANCE (1/3), due to relieve BLYTH (1/2). SHOREHAM was due to run, cycle and row the 1,500 mile equivalent distance to the Mediterranean in competition with BLYTH, which will be completing the same distance in reality, to raise money for RNRMC (Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity). It has been announced that crews will rotate every four months in future instead of every six months. BROCKLESBY joined USS DEXTROUS, USS GLADIATOR and the RSNF MCM vessel AL-SHAQRA in a minehunting training exercise 6-21 June. In between exercises, SHOREHAM was happy to receive a parcel of treats from The Smile Club who generously support our sailors, soldiers and airmen deployed away from home. LEDBURY celebrated her 39th birthday on 11 June making her the oldest front-line warship in the RN.

HUNT Class

In July, CHIDDINGFOLD interrupted her passage to the Gulf to participate in SEA GUARDIAN, a standing NATO Maritime Security Operation to promote security and deter terrorism in the Mediterranean. MIDDLETON (2/8) sailed from Portsmouth on 28 June following a year in refit. The embarked FOST and Cdr MCM staff enjoyed it so much they insisted on staying the night. She later encountered our new aircraft carrier QUEEN ELIZABETH at sea and responded to a fishing boat's Mayday call after it had become tangled with a line and was drifting in the Solent. CATTISTOCK (2/1) has been undergoing all manner of sea training while running from Portsmouth.

Sandown Class

PEMBROKE has been taken over by MCM1 Crew 7. GRIMSBY (1/1) hosted the RN's future Petty Officers (Mine Warfare) at sea for the final stages of their training. RAMSEY (1/6) returned to Faslane on 28 June following her assignment to SNMCMG1 (Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1), mostly finding and disposing of historical ordnance in the Baltic.

MASTT (Maritime Autonomous Systems Trials Team)

In July, the Portsmouth-based MASTT conducted on-job training and equipment preparations before a vital set of sweep demonstrator trials in Weymouth Bay.

See the 'Latest News' page of the MCD Officers' Association website at www.mcdoa.org.uk for more recent updates and photos.

Post Bag continued: FROM: Commodore John Madwick, Glastonbury

I have now had a good read of the excellent June edition of *TON Talk*, and came across Bernie Bruen's fascinating saga about *Gavinton*. It so happens that I was CO of *Leeds Castle* at the time. We had been patrolling in the vicinity of the Shetland Islands and were then directed by Pitreavie to head south at best speed to stand by *Gavinton*. It was quite a ride - but probably more comfortable for us rather than the unfortunate *Gavinton*. In the event we were required to continue south until Bernie was safely alongside – at which point the Pitreavie Duty Officer released us so that we could return to our fisheries patrol area.

We too suffered damage, with one of the very large bridge windows shattering under the pressure of a particularly powerful wave. We later went on to conduct a mine laying trial: as one of their many secondary roles, both *Leeds Castle* and *Dumbarton Castle* might have been required for mine laying. *Leeds Castle* subsequently laid a number of different types of mine into the River Forth (photo below – I appear to be signing the invoice). The individual units necessarily had to be secured by welding, thus causing rather a lot of damage to our splendid Chinook-size flight deck !



Post Script from BERNIE BRUEN

On behalf of all the Gavvie Boys (if somewhat late in the day), thanks John to you and your men for standing by us all those years ago. Although we never saw you, it was a great comfort to know that you were there, within striking distance, if we had needed help. We are all deeply grateful.