

# ***TON Talk***

**Newsletter of the TON Class Association**

**Edition 209**



**April 2021**



**Historic View from PRESIDENT**

# TON Class Association

## Patron HRH The Prince of Wales



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**TCA Membership**  
**£15 per annum**  
**£150 Life Membership**

**Front Cover:**  
**Historic View from PRESIDENT**

[www.tcaminesweepers.co.uk](http://www.tcaminesweepers.co.uk)

**Founder: Jack Worth MBE**

## Editorial

**Envelopes** You may have noticed that the envelope that brings TON Talk to you now sports the TCA logo. Gipping Press, our printers, has invested in some new software to print the envelopes and it has several additional features. We benefit from this one, at NO Additional Charge – so VMT to Gipping Press.

**Marshland Maritime Museum** Unfortunately the museum's website was affected by the same hacking attacks which disabled the old TCA website. Additionally the MMM website suffered from a software problem which effectively “froze” the contents as at March 2020 and it could not be further updated. A plan was devised to re-engineer a new website for the museum with better security, making it easier to maintain, within a budget that the museum could afford.

The new website **[www.MarshlandMaritimeMuseum.com](http://www.MarshlandMaritimeMuseum.com)** has recently been launched. NOTE NO CHANGE TO E-ADDRESS. Please visit the website and show your support for the Museum, which houses a gallery of TON Class memorabilia, including the tin gear, instructional models and display panels rescued from BRONINGTON.

The new MMM website has been built on the same framework as the new TCA website – not quite BOGOF but a very beneficial arrangement. TCA has made a small financial contribution of £250 towards the cost of developing the new website and we provide technical support on a voluntary basis.

**BZ to Mick Hilder** for discovering the U-Tube film ***The Secret War\_5 The Deadly Wave.*** c.50 minutes. It recounts the story of the discovery of the Magnetic Mine and development of Countermeasures during WW 2. Sequences are re-enacted by serving personnel but with the ACTUAL mine worked on by Lt Cdr Ouvrey, Lt Lewis and PO Thompson and their team. Gripping Stuff with excellent photos and diagrams of Bosun's Nightmares of experimental sweeps until the MM 11 loops was evolved.

**Under my Nose ....** Following up an enquiry from a gentleman seeking details of ships in which his father, an RNR officer, served, pointed to one being an MMS, precursor of the TONs. Jack Worth's book *Minesweepers since 1945* held the key and we tracked down M1089, including when she was KILLIECRANKIE in 1954. Jack's book also includes short histories of all the HAMS and LEYS, details we have been chasing for some time ! This information has now been added to the Ship Histories on the website.

**Deadline for June's Edition is 20<sup>th</sup> May**



*pjd*

## Chairman's Corner

### Annual Reunion 2021

The 2021 Annual Reunion is planned for Friday 1<sup>st</sup> – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at the Carlton Hotel, part of the TLH Leisure Centre in Torquay. I have started talking to the hotel about the details of the Reunion and the costs. This will enable me to confirm the prices. The booking form will be included with the June TON Talk. Please note there is no certainty about the future ! However, all members and guests should have had their two vaccinations well before June. The Reunion will be a great chance to renew old friendships after the "Stay at Home" period we have had to endure. I do hope members will try to attend after last year's cancellation.

### March Committee Meeting

A successful ZOOM Committee meeting was held on Saturday 13th March. Minutes are included with this edition of TON Talk. I must thank all members of the Committee for keeping TCA business running as near normal as possible.

### Succession Planning

None of us are getting any younger and it will be prudent to start looking at a succession plan for key members of the Committee. The most critical post is that of Secretary. Peter Down is now 83 and relatively hale and hearty. We urgently need a volunteer for the role of *Assistant Secretary* to learn the ropes, with a view to becoming Secretary in a year or two. I hope amongst our younger members a volunteer will come forward. Please contact HonSec for details.

### Extending Membership

Vice Chairman Nobby has suggested extending membership of the TCA to those who served in the subsequent classes of MCMVs: Rivers, Hunts and Sandowns.

The other Associations with MCM connections; MCDOA, Mine Warfare and Clearance Divers, are all specific to those specialisations. There is no "home" for all the other personnel; gunners, engineers, cooks, stewards and even watchkeeping officers who did not go down the MCD route, yet these people shared that special bond of MCM operations and camaraderie that we enjoy so much.

It is very probable that many of these people will be a generation younger than us and some may be interested in joining the Committee to take TCA into the future. No question of changing the name of the Association in the immediate future.

I invite members to give me their views on the idea.

*Peter Harrison*

# TCA Who's Who

## President

Rear Admiral R John Lippiett CB. CBE. DL

## Chairman

### Also Reunion Secretary

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## COMING EVENTS

<b>October</b>	Fri 1 - Sun 3	<b>TCA AGM &amp; Reunion</b> Carlton Hotel, Torquay  OR another Zoom AGM - <b>to be advised</b>  Booking forms will be circulated when Covid rules are confirmed
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**Abridged Minutes of TCA Committee Meeting  
Held by Zoom Conference  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**Present** were:

Vice Chairman Neil Hall, Vice Presidents Stuart Johnson and Chris Green, Secretary Peter Down, Sam Cook, Dennis Cook, Michael Cox, Bill Pollington, Laurie Johnson and Robbie Reid-Sinclair (by phone).

1. **Vice Chairman Cdr Neil Hall RN welcomed everyone** to the 59<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee. We had a long agenda, including a couple of Confidential items, so we would have to stick to the point and reduce pleasantries.
2. **One Minute Silence** was observed for 21 members and wives who have **Crossed the Bar** since the AGM, including Ann, Lady Cox and John Soanes.
3. **Apologies for absence** were received from President John Lippiett, Chairman Peter Harrison, Chaplain Trevor Filtness, Terry Hall, Bill Platt and Buster Brown
4. **Minutes of the Committee Meeting of March 2020**, as circulated in TON Talk 203, were approved. *Proposed: Bill Pollington      Seconded: Laurie Johnson*
5. **There were no Matters Arising** not covered by the Agenda.

**6. Committee Matters**

- a) Two **Confidential Matters** were discussed and resolved.
- b) **All Officers were re-appointed** until March 2024  
*Proposed: Vice Chairman      Seconded: Bill Pollington*
- c) There continue to be vacancies for Area Representatives in several regions.
- d) **Revised Rules** Version 22, were adopted  
*Proposed: Dennis Cook      Seconded: Laurie Johnson*
- e) **Reunion Raffle** – No Reunion was held in 2020, hence no Raffle was held and there was no income to distribute. Assuming we may be able to hold a Reunion this year, it was agreed that any income from a raffle would be distributed among our three Affiliated Sea Cadet Units but we could not predict amounts at present.
- f) **Honorary Membership** to be granted to Kapitän zur See Hans Andresen German Naval Reserve and Captain Juan Frias ARA  
*Proposed: Secretary      Seconded: Laurie Johnson*
- g) **Wreath/Donations** for deceased Members (Rule 8.7). It was agreed to increase the amount from £25 to £50
- h) **John Soanes Memorial Service** – No progress due to Covid restrictions. Hopefully to tie in with October Reunion
- j) **Historical records** – see attached statement by Chairman

## 7. Hon Secretary's Report

As ever, VMT to the Officers of the Association for handling the detailed work in their parts of ship, leaving HonSec to handle some complicated matters.

Visits next year to COLLINGWOOD to present the painting "*Minesweeper Sailors through the Ages*" and to EGUERMIN at Ostend will progressed by Vice Chairman as Covid restrictions on travel are eased

## 8. Editor's Report

7.8 Website & Magazine - Your Editor has learned how to use the Content Management System to update the website, so we no longer have to wait for a Monthly update to publish amendments. Discussions are being held with the Imperial War Museum about including another film clip from their library on our website; this one about streaming the Loop and a diver neutralising a ground mine. Probable cost c.£85

Assistance has been given with re-engineering the website of Marshlands Maritime Museum, which is now based on the same framework as TCA's.

## 9. Treasurer's Report – *Given By Secretary*

This was David's first report as Treasurer. He thanked Stuart for a detailed handover of the accounts.

Income for the period has derived mainly from membership subscriptions which include life subscriptions. The Covid restrictions on social meetings have meant that raffles and fund raising from events have not taken place. The bulk of expenditure relates to Ton Talk. A one-off grant of £250 was made to Marshlands to assist with their website. Expenditure on the website is now regular maintenance and is made from the General Account.

### General Account

Income £5,534.00    Expenditure 4,966.86

Surplus of Income over Expenditure £567.14

### Number Two Account

Income    NIL                      Expenditure £445.99

Surplus of Expenditure over Income £ 445.99

### Account Balances- estimated at end-Feb 2021

General Account	£ 5,428.59
Number Two Account:	£ 1,992.87
Reserve Account (including interest of £4.15)	£ 8,295.64
Welfare Account (including interest of £5.04)	£10,079.80

The Statement of Accounts was accepted.

*Propose: Bill Pollington*

*Seconded: Laurie Johnson*

## 10. Membership Secretary's Report.

Current statistics are:

### Paying Members

Full	914
Life	154
<u>Associates</u>	<u>24</u>
TOTAL	1092

### Non- Paying Members

Widows	50
Honorary	7
Associations	22
<u>MCMVs</u>	<u>16</u>
TOTAL	95

**Grand Total 1187.**

## 11. Stores Officer's Report

Balance Carried Forward in Nationwide A/C @ 31 July 2020	£ 1,132.55
Plus Sales Aug –Jan (Feb Nil)	£ 492.95
Plus Interest	£. 0.42
Less Purchases	£ 258.24
Less Remit to General Fund	£ 400.00

**= Balance carried Forward at 17 Feb 2021 £ 967.68**

## 12. Welfare Officer's Report

Attended funeral in Blyth. There have been no enquiries and the only expenditure a donation of £50 to RNLI for John Soanes.

**13. Standard Bearers' Reports** – Covid Rules have prevented attendance at events. Sam plans to attend the Parade in Weymouth in June should the organisers confirm that it will be held.

Dave Parrish paraded the Standard at a funeral in Blyth in February

## 14. Sea Cadets Liaison.

Currently Units are shut down and sea training has been suspended due to Covid regulations. TCA's arrangements for liaison with our Affiliated units are regrettably not working, possibly because our liaison officers live too far from "their" units, so frequent e.g. monthly, visits are not practicable. We need a better mechanism – Ideas please !

## 15. Reunion Secretary's Report

We have a provisional booking at the Carlton Hotel, Torquay for the weekend of Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October, subject to Covid regulations. Chairman Peter Harrison remains in contact with the hotel, ready progress negotiations as Covid Guidelines may suggest. We cannot confirm prices at present but are making preparations to publish a Booking Form in June's edition of TON Talk.



## 16. Any Other Business

16.1 Secretary has held that role for 18 years (Jack Worth did 12) and has collected additional duties of Editor TON Talk and Editor Website as circumstances have changed. Secretary is now 83 and, although relatively hale and hearty, it would be prudent to plan for succession. He appealed for a volunteer to take on the role of **Assistant Secretary** to learn our practices for convening meetings, taking Minutes and maintaining the Constitution and Rules, with occasional dealings with the media and public, with a view to becoming Secretary in a year or two. Full training and turnover of contacts would be given.

Requirements are good organisational skills, familiarity with IT, including word processing, spreadsheets, e-mail and now Zoom, plus some tact and diplomacy. Most importantly, candidates should be prepared to offer at least ten years to TCA affairs.

Potential hand over of the roles of Editor of TON Talk and Website might be split with other people, but both require familiarity with IT and working to deadlines, plus close liaison with suppliers. These opportunities will be advertised in TON Talk and Website.

16.2 Vice Chairman treated us to an insider's view of progress with the **RN in Transformation**.

Navy Command HQ is rather like a Ghost Ship, with people working from home, "hot-desking" in offices and many roles being "dis-established" so that manpower can be diverted to sea-going roles.

Recruiting is UP and RALEIGH is full, such that new entrants to the Warfare branch are doing both Part One and Part Two training at COLLINGWOOD and new entry Engineering Technicians [aka Baby Stokers, Electricians and Weapons Engineers] start at SULTAN.

The Carrier Strike Group is gearing up to deploy to the Far East in summer and will include QE plus escorts and probably a submarine for long-distance surveillance, together with a US Arleigh class destroyer. The Airgroup will include a squadron of USMC F35's with their own engineering staff. Aircrew will be a mixed bag of RN and RAF pilots, plus Army Air Corps with their Apache helicopters.

PC-madness is rampant; "Sir" is now considered to be elitist and sexist, so "Able Seaman" is probably next on the list for revision.

Harbour Training Ship BRISTOL is to be expended as a Target.

16.3 **Cenotaph Parade** RBL has not yet given any indication of arrangements for this November, presumably awaiting further Covid regulations.

**Next Meeting** of the Committee will be held on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2022 commencing at 13.00, hopefully at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth. Zoom will be available for those unable to travel

## Current Status of TCA Historic Records

*Unfortunately there have recently been some mis-guided and inaccurate posts on Social Media about TCA's Historic Records. The TCA Committee held a Zoom Conference on 11 February to discuss the situation and it was agreed to send a Clarification to each of the people who had made these posts.*

The main bulk of the information collected over many years by the TCA Historic Group is housed in a collection of filing cabinets at the home of Mrs Jenny Stewart, widow of Captain Jeremy Stewart. Bob Dean is still reviewing this mass of paperwork, to identify the most important information to be retained by TCA.

There has not been a single requirement to access these records since Jeremy fell seriously ill over four years ago. Much of the key data has been incorporated in our publications: "Last of the Wooden Walls", "Jacks of All Trades" and "Life in the TONs".

Bob Dean has already passed a dozen folders containing important documents to the Secretary. He has also sent to the Secretary a memory stick containing thousands of photographic images and two boxes of loose photographs.

Clive Dennison recently passed to me another mass of documents in six large cardboard boxes, originating from KELLINGTON. This mass of paper was never merged with the archives held by Jeremy Stewart. Clive has apparently produced a spreadsheet to list the contents, but it did not accompany these documents when they were transferred. He retains other documents found on SHRIVENHAM.

Assisted by a colleague with appropriate engineering expertise, with some inputs from the Secretary, I have conducted a review of the KELLINGTON paperwork, on similar lines to the review bring conducted by Bob Dean. Many documents were just Parts Lists for minor items of equipment such as fans. Around 20 significant Arrangement Drawings have been retained, as have a number of photographs and negatives.

It must be stressed that TCA has NOT lost any important historic records. Indeed since the launch of our new website, we have gained additional information on Ship Histories from those who have visited the website. Salient data is contained in our books, the photo archive, and our new website, plus back copies of TON Talk, for which we have a comprehensive index. These resources are used every week by the Secretary to answer enquiries from TCA members and the public.

Following the Committee meeting, the next step will be: *Where do we go from here?* Draft proposals will be drawn up for consideration by the Committee, starting with compiling a comprehensive inventory of what we hold, then deciding what are the most important items to keep, for how long and at what cost.

**Peter Harrison**

## Life at the Sharp End - 16 years On

Lt Cdr John Clark RNR, Petworth, West Sussex

I was delighted to read Laurie Hopkins' dits about his time in WISTON with the 9<sup>th</sup> MCMS in Bahrain and Oman in 1969. (*TON Talk 206, p.7*) This was especially so as the star of the piece was Cdr John Gunning.

Wind forward a few years to 1985 and John is now an Admiral and Commander of the Sultan of Oman's Navy, based in Muscat, on Loan Service from the RN. I was lucky enough to be there during his tenure – as a civilian, but not part of his navy, unfortunately.

Look at a chart and you will find that important line called the Tropic of Cancer passing about ten miles south of Muscat. Chatting to John one evening in early June we were on the subject of the Summer Solstice, when, as everybody (perhaps!) learned at school, the sun reaches its northernmost travel before returning south. So, at local noon on 21<sup>st</sup> June the sun on the tropic should be directly overhead. Wouldn't it be good to prove it by a proper experiment?



Now John as CSON was the proud possessor of a fine Admiral's barge, so a plan was hatched for a navigational banyan to make sure that the sun was keeping in line and doing its stuff properly. There also happened to be a beautiful beach right on the tropic line, which would do very well as an experimental site. We would each design and bring apparatus to prove the solstice – and also bring suitable refreshment.

My apparatus was pretty basic – a square post to which I lashed two long spirit levels to ensure that it stood vertically in the sand.

John's, on the other hand was typically ingenious. He made a sort of two-tier coffee table with a hole in the centre of the top layer and a target marker in the centre of the lower. The idea was that the sun would shine through the hole and project a spot of light on to the target only reaching the bull's eye at exactly local noon. [*Setting up, Left*]



*Noon at Summer Solstice on the Tropic of Cancer  
Everyone stood in their own shadow with the sun directly overhead !*

Our party was about a dozen and included a number of army types who found it difficult to treat the experiment with the solemnity which it deserved! However, we reached the designated beach in good order and proceeded to set up our respective bits of kit on the sand. Disappointment about 15 minutes before noon when my post still had quite a shadow and John's spot of light was way off target.

But then, amazingly, my shadow retreated and his spot travelled across the target to the very centre. We were able to send a fulsome BZ to the sun for having confounded the pongoes and done its stuff impeccably.

And what we had all learned at school is true – the sun is vertically overhead at local noon on 21 June on the Tropic of Cancer – John Gunning had just proved it ! A celebration was called for, the banyan continued, and we managed to tow three water skiers behind his barge on the way back to Muscat.

Happy Days – and, as Laurie Hopkins said:

***Such style !***

## Captain Richard Stannard VC DSO RNR

*The Newsletter of Royal Naval Patrol Service, at Sparrows Nest Museum and Memorial, Lowestoft, produced this article to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the action at Namsos, Norway. VMT to RNPS Secretary Shipmate Leo Whisstock for permission to print it.*

Richard Been Stannard VC, DSO, RD, RNR was born on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1902 at Blyth, Northumberland. He was the eldest of five children of George Stannard and Elizabeth Knowles. After his father's ship was lost with all hands in 1912, Richard was educated at the Royal School for Orphans of Merchant Seamen. He went to sea as an apprentice in the Port Line ship *Port Victor* in 1918 and in March 1929 joined the Orient Line. He was also then appointed a Probationary Sub-Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1932.

Richard married Phyllis Tomkin in 1928 at West Ham, Essex, where they made their home and had two daughters.

With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 Richard was called up for full time service and was appointed to command the trawler ARAB of the Royal Naval Patrol Service. The trawler of 531 tons, had been built in 1936. For five days, from 28<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1940, at Namsos during the ill-fated attempt to capture the port of Trondheim during the Norwegian campaign, ARAB (below), survived 31 attacks by German aircraft.



Having noticed that a bomb had started a fire in a warehouse containing ammunition and that there was no water supply ashore, Lt Stannard placed the bows of his ship

against the jetty, sent the rest of his crew aft, then fought the fire with two seamen for over two hours. They prevented a major explosion and saved part of the jetty which was subsequently used to evacuate troops.

When ARAB was damaged he put his crew and that of two other trawlers ashore in the shelter of a cliff where they built a barricade and fought off further aircraft attacks by day, while maintaining an anti-submarine watch by night. He saved his ship by moving her in hazardous conditions when another nearby trawler was hit by a bomb. Finally, when leaving the fjord he defied an enemy bomber whose pilot had attacked the ship and was trying to force her ashore to surrender by holding fire until the aircraft came within a few hundred yards, then shot it down. The damaged ARAB safely returned to England.

In recognition of his personal bravery in these actions, Lt Stannard was awarded the Victoria Cross - the first to be awarded during the Second World War to a member of the Royal Naval Reserve. He was promoted Lieutenant-Commander on 29th June and presented with the Victoria Cross by King George VI at Buckingham Palace on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. He was also later awarded the Norwegian War Cross with Sword.

He went on to command the trawlers HMS STANLEY (1940-41), HMS RAMSEY (1941-42) and destroyers HMS VIMY (1942-43), and HMS PEACOCK (1944-45). Richard was awarded the Reserve Decoration in 1942.



As captain of VIMY, which with BEVERLY sank U-Boat U18 on 4th February 1943 in the Atlantic, he was appointed Companion of the Distinguished Service Order. In September 1944, as Captain of PEACOCK, his ship helped sink the U-Boat U394 with depth charges in the Norwegian Sea. In December 1944, he was Mentioned in Despatches for distinguished service while commanding PEACOCK in the protection of convoys to North Russia in the face of attacks by U-boats. By 1947, Richard had rejoined the Orient Line. He was promoted Commander on 30th June 1947 and Captain in May 1952.

Post war the family emigrated to New South Wales and in 1955 Richard was appointed Marine Superintendent of the Orient Line in Sydney, In 1960 he became Marine Superintendent of the P&O Orient Lines of Australia. From then until 1973, he also served on the Council of the Royal Humane Society of New South Wales. Richard died on 22nd June 1977, three years after his wife.



## Adrift

Commander David Frost, High Wycombe

*Allan Graham's dit (TON Talk 204, June 2020, page 6) brought back memories of missing the ship on sailing. This appeared in a piece I wrote some years ago for the Naval Review.*

My 21<sup>st</sup> birthday fell as we were about to start a minesweeping exercise at Invergordon. John Kerr, David Newsom (the outgoing and incoming First Lieutenants) and I, a new Sub Lieutenant, dined ashore in an unexciting hotel. When we got back it was to find only two ships berthed outboard of *Reclaim* instead of three. We looked owlishly at each other and it slowly dawned that the missing one was ours - *Belton*.

We three spent the night in *Soberton* until our ship returned at 0800 on 10<sup>th</sup>. The duty ship was actually *Soberton* but *Belton* was sent to the Mayday because she was the Scottish patrol ship and the reported casualty was Scottish. In the event, like so many others, it turned out to be a false alarm. I felt sorry for the unfortunate S/Lt from *Soberton* who had been sent to augment our depleted watchkeeping team. We were excused Sunday divisions, but his ship was not and he had to scramble into his 5s as soon as he got back.

It was by no means unusual for people to miss the ship, as ships of the Fish Squadron often sailed at short notice. My journal records that we left the Midshipmen behind following one hasty departure from Port Edgar and they didn't catch up until Lowestoft some days later. Few officers or ratings were regarded as indispensable although on one occasion our unexpected departure from Lowestoft had to be delayed for several hours as neither of the radio operators could be found, despite a search in all the likely pubs. It turned out they were up homers with a local family.

On another occasion I'd been ashore in Lowestoft one morning on an errand and got back to find the ship had nearly sailed without me. There'd been a Mayday and they'd got as far as singling up when it was cancelled.

An RNR officer told me of his attempt to join another CMS in Whitby. He turned up in the harbourmaster's office to enquire where she was, only to find her First Lieutenant and several others asking the same question.

## EGUERMIN VISIT 1971

Colin Watkins, Royalist & Brightlingsea RNA

In the last edition of TON Talk the article about the EGUERMIN was particularly interesting and activated the old memory box. I attended a course there in 1971 when Vasco of *Wolverton*. Bill Davis was the CO and John Hance the Jimmy and we were the half-leader of MCM 1.

The NATO Minesweeping School was not as high tech as it appears to be now, which was just as well for us. We regarded the visit as a jolly having just finished a week-long minesweeping exercise, sailing from Falmouth before dawn and getting back well into the night. After arriving in Oostend and discovering the delights of Belgium beer and the ladies sitting in the windows, the Ships Company, together with the crews of several NATO 'sweepers, attended classes in the school covering all aspects of minesweeping procedures, engineering matters and tactics.

It is a little vague now but I recall attending a lecture on influence sweeping given by a civilian boffin. He was talking about the optimum current to put through the Loop and took account of water depth, salinity, nature of the bottom and its conductivity, nature of the threat and probably more ! All this data was linked by a complicated formula involving square roots and strange fractional powers and us navigators were invited to work out a few solutions. No pocket calculators back then, out came the log tables and heads were scratched attempting to remember schoolboy maths. The boffin then went round the class comprising navs from Belgium, Dutch, German and French MCMVs (yes French even thought they were not in NATO) plus yours truly, asking what current settings we put on the loop. It soon became apparent that some navies actually did work out the current but when the question came to me all I could say was, we had two settings, 200 amps or Off ! I remembered a box in the Ship's Office which was the controller and recalled the figure of 200 amps.

There was also a Tactical Trainer, quite primitive with a synthetic radar for sweeping manoeuvres and a plotting table with a few books. We could not use current NATO publications, as the French were not cleared for them, so we used some quite out of date publications. Each navy had a cubicle with the CO, Nav and two ROs and perhaps a Mid or two. We had comms with the other "ships" and the cubicle squadron performed standard MCMV manoeuvres. On the final day, a Friday, we were going to have a Grand Exercise involving all ships with wire and influence sweeping and were informed by the Commandant that we should expect the visit of a Mexican Admiral during the afternoon. By now we had become quite friendly with the French team who had invited the CO, 1st Lt and me to lunch in their sweeper in the two hours between the morning and afternoon session. Yes, you can all guess the result. We arrived back quite sociably over-refreshed and late ! Fortunately our two ROs were very switched on and had started the afternoon session without us, they had manoeuvred our "ship" very well and started to field the Mexican Admiral before the Command Team turned up and breathed Cote du Rhone fumes over him. I'm not sure how the debrief went but we sailed the following day, to Kings Lynn, I think.

If any of the Ships Company are reading this and have a better recollection of that visit, please write in and we can swap dits.



# Only Having a Laugh



## That's (not) the way to do it !

I witnessed some totally disgusting behaviour on the pier at Southend today. A man and a woman were arguing in front of a load of kids then she smacked him one on the head and it all kicked off between them. The police turned up and the policeman ended up using his baton on the bloke but the man actually managed to get the baton off the copper and started hitting the copper and the woman with it.

Then a crocodile turned up and stole all the sausages ...

***Ditty Box, Colchester RNA***

**The phone** in Reception at our local hospital rang and a quiet, refined voice said "Is there anyone there in authority who could tell me how Mary Jones, a patient in Ward Six is getting along ?"

"One moment" said the Duty Nurse, "I will make some enquiries".

A few moments later she replied "Mary is doing very well. She has recovered from the operation. Her blood pressure is stable, she is eating well and slept through the night. The doctor expects that we will be able to discharge her in a couple of days.

"By the way", said the nurse, "Are you a relative, a sister, perhaps ?"

"No" said the caller, "I'm Mary Jones in Ward Six. They tell you B#gger All in here ".

***Creeping St Mary Newsletter***

**The solemnity** of Old Bert's funeral was shattered, almost from the outset, when his very respectable septuagenarian sister burst into laughter.

"It was when the Minister introduced herself as Jenny Taylor", she later apologised, "... I'm sure I heard her say 'My name is Genitalia ...' "

## **Ann Soanes writes ...**

### ***To everyone in TCA***

*I would like to say my sincere "Thank You" for the many kind letters and cards of Condolences to myself and my family on the great loss of my beloved John.*



*For well over thirty years the TON Class Association was a huge part of John's life and mine also. I can say that anything that he did for TCA was done with great pleasure and a true willingness to do his very best and help at all times and in so many ways. It is hard to express how very much all the members of TCA meant to him.*

*I, myself, will always be interested in the Association. I am so grateful for all the folk we have met and who now we can say are true friends.*

*All the kind words from those friends are what has helped me greatly over the last weeks.*

*My sincere thanks again for all your most heartfelt letters, phone calls and cards to myself and our family.*

*Yours Truly,*

*Ann*

## Figurehead of Fragata **LIBERTAD**

Captain Juan Frias ARA

The figurehead of the frigate represents the freedom of the Argentine Republic in female form. It was made between 1963 and 1964 by the sculptor Carlos García González, a native of Galicia. His young wife had recently passed away so the sculptor asked permission to dedicate the figure to her. He also incorporated an engraving of the Cross of Santiago, his birthplace. The figurehead was carved from a trunk of Paraguayan cedar six metres long and three metres diameter.



The arms of the Republic of Argentina are displayed on the stern of the ship.

They depict the "Phrygian Cap", the red bonnet adopted by revolutionaries and those striving for liberty in Europe and elsewhere from European powers, in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.



# Run Ashore in STANAVFORMED

Cdr Nobby Hall, TCA Vice Chairman

In the mid eighties as a young S/Lt I was serving as Corro in a Leander attached to STANAVFORMED. Whilst alongside during a quiet forenoon in Monaco I decided to dress up in a USN Lt Cdr's uniform I had, complete with mirror shades and large cigar, and went onboard the USN FFG. Demanding to speak to their OOD I informed him I was on the staff of Sixth Fleet and ordered him to tell his CO to immediately conduct a whole ship underway TacEval.

I then quickly retreated back to my ship to watch with delight as they went to General Quarters with lots of hullabaloo and prepared to go to sea. Eventually they realised they had been tricked and tried discreetly to revert back to being alongside. This of course attracted a lot of attention and so I felt compelled to confess to my CO what I had done to the US Ship.



After he came back down off the deck head we invited their CO & Wardroom over for lunch. We then succeeded in getting them all half drunk, whilst teasing them about their earlier frenetic activity, which they coyly avoided being drawn on.

Just before lunch was served I once again donned my disguise and reappeared at the wardroom to demand from the USN CO what he and his officers were doing drinking on a "Brit" Warship instead of putting to sea.

Fortunately, following the initial shock and horror, it was all taken in good heart and the two ships became bezzy Oppos. After this incident, and a no coffee interview by the 1st Lt, I was henceforth known as the ships "Atrocities Officer", which came back to haunt me later, but that's another dit.

## FLOCKTON up the Gulf 1964/65

Commodore Chris Ellison, Falmouth

Not one, not two, but three articles on MS9 during my time in the Gulf in February's TON Talk ! I really enjoyed all of them !



FLOCKTON's ship's company 1964/5 during Mick Cosgrove's time (Off to the Gulf 1964 - TT Feb 2021 edition).

Seated L to R: ??: Whittaker (MEO); Ellison: McLean: **Jeremy Stewart:** Codd: Green (Cox'n):

Standing L to R: McCartney (WEO): second in from the right WR Steward Urbano Alamo.

I much enjoyed Mick's article - Thank You..



# HMS YARNTON - A Sparker's Perspective

Alan Hewitt LRO(G), Chesterfield

I have read several interesting articles about HMS Yarnton but none mention the communications set up (unless this has been covered prior to me joining the TCA).

My story begins in early November 1968. I was a Radio Operator 2<sup>nd</sup> class based at Kranji W/T radio station in Singapore (a sub-station of HMS Terror). One morning I was told to pack some kit and driven at great speed to the dockyard to join the Yarnton on loan draft. The ship's regular 'sparker' had gone ashore the previous evening, fell down and broke his leg (I always thought Tiger beer was strong stuff). As soon as I had boarded we set sail to rejoin the 9<sup>th</sup> MCM squadron at Bahrain. The Yarnton had been in refit in Singapore dockyard.



*Gulf Patrol. RAS with BEACHAMPTON*

The Yarnton was my second ship and it was very different in the W/T office from my previous ship, the aircraft carrier HMS Victorious. I was surprised to see the sparse and basic radio equipment at my disposal - a Type 618 HF/MF transmitter, a Type B40 HF/MF receiver, a Type 696 UHF transmitter, a KL7 crypto machine, a safe for the stowage of confidential books, a chair and desk with a morse key thereon. I had not seen most of the equipment since having half a day's training some 18 months earlier at HMS Mercury, the RN communications training establishment near Petersfield, Hampshire. I had no turnover so it was a case of getting on with it as best I could.

At first all went smoothly and I was able to transmit and receive signals by morse code to Kranji W/T radio station up to reaching Penang our first port of call. We berthed overnight and took on fresh provisions before sailing for Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

Shortly after sailing things took a turn for the worse as due to a tropical storm I could no longer raise Singapore due to heavy interference and static on the radio. Sailing orders informed me to swop frequencies to read the morse broadcast from Mauritius radio station. This I did but when crossing the Bay of Bengal we were hit full on by a typhoon. It was then that I realised I was no sailor, as I was terribly seasick for the next 5 or 6 days. I struggled to get off my bunk and get up the ladder to the W/T office where I sat for hours on end with the forefinger of my right hand on the morse key and a bucket in my left hand. Despite calling for hour after hour (the Yarrnton's call sign was GTJT) could not raise any shore radio station with the maximum 40 watts (I think) of power. The signals were piling up in the pending tray waiting to be transmitted. Mauritius radio was seeking our position, course and speed (PCS) but they didn't get it for a week. They became concerned for our safety and sent out an RFA to rendezvous with us, no doubt realising we were being battered by the typhoon. We never did find the RFA.

Much to everyone's relief the winds died down when we neared Ceylon and I was able to clear the outstanding signals via a radio station in India who relayed them via landline to Mauritius radio. I then read the 40 signals on the broadcast from Mauritius. The Yarrnton had survived (just) but we had lost various masts and equipment from the open bridge. I don't mind admitting that as a 19 year old sprog I had been scared stiff during the typhoon.

The Yarrnton must have looked a sorry sight when we berthed in Trincomalee on the east coast of Ceylon for 3 days. That evening we were invited to play a football match against the base team and just managed to round up 11 players with me in goal playing in shoes as I had not packed any football boots. We lost 8-0. After the game we were invited into the base social club where I was introduced to 'Arrak' (a whiskey/Rye base drink and VERY potent). The next thing I remember was waking up in my bunk 3 days later with the worst headache imaginable. The only sights I saw in Trincomalee were the football field and social club, which was a pity, as I believe a beautiful beach is located a couple of miles from the port.

The rest of the voyage was relatively uneventful as we sailed up the west coast of India in glorious sunshine and calm seas, accompanied by a dozen or so dolphins. We had 3 nights berthed in Bombay (Mumbai) where I managed to remain sober and toured the city. I recall being shocked at the sheer poverty in some parts of the city but the locals were friendly and helpful.

We sailed from Bombay on our last leg of the voyage before reaching Bahrain in the evening of 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1968. I was a little concerned when I learned that a Chief Radio Mechanician was coming on board to check the radio equipment as the

authorities were wanting to know why we had been out of radio contact for so long. I informed the skipper (Lt Cdr Robertson RN) and he assured me everything would be okay and not to worry. The Chief Radio Mech duly arrived with his test equipment and within minutes reported that there was a break in the wire leading from the transmitter to the whip antenna causing a short circuit and he was amazed that I had managed to contact any shore radio station whatsoever.

Christmas Day was spent in the 2 C's (?) club in HMS Jufair before most of the crew staggered back down the long jetty to be met by a rather irate duty chef as we were 6 hours late for Xmas dinner..... but that's another story.

In early January 1969 the skipper asked me if I would stay on YARNTON permanently. I sort of agreed and he sent a signal to Kranji W/T requesting the same. A rather terse reply was received the following day which said " Request refused. He is to join HMS Albion for a 3 weeks exercise off Malaysia in mid January. He is booked on an RAF flight on 7th January 1969. Details to follow". That date happened to be my 20<sup>th</sup> birthday and of course RAF flights banned any alcohol so I celebrated with a can of coca cola as we flew over the Bay of Bengal (minus any typhoon).

I retain many happy memories of my short time on the Yarnton. She was a solidly built ship and I am sure that Lt Cdr Featherstone RN and a certain Lt Peter Harrison RN, (who joined her 8 months after I left) would agree.



**Mirror, mirror on my locker,  
Who's the fairest, me or Knocker ?  
You are Nobby, without a doubt.  
Thank you mirror. Roger Out.**

*With thanks to Mick Atkinson [www.signaldeck.com](http://www.signaldeck.com)*

Reprinted from  
TON Talk 163  
August 2013



## BZ Lapel Pin

Forever Jack, suppliers of RN-themed souvenirs, has launched an enamelled metal lapel pin 3cm / 1¼ins high displaying this iconic flag hoist.

Price £4.15 to say "Thank You, Well Done and Congratulations" in a meaningful way.

Visit: [www.shopforever-jack.co.uk](http://www.shopforever-jack.co.uk)



## KELLINGTON in the News -1970

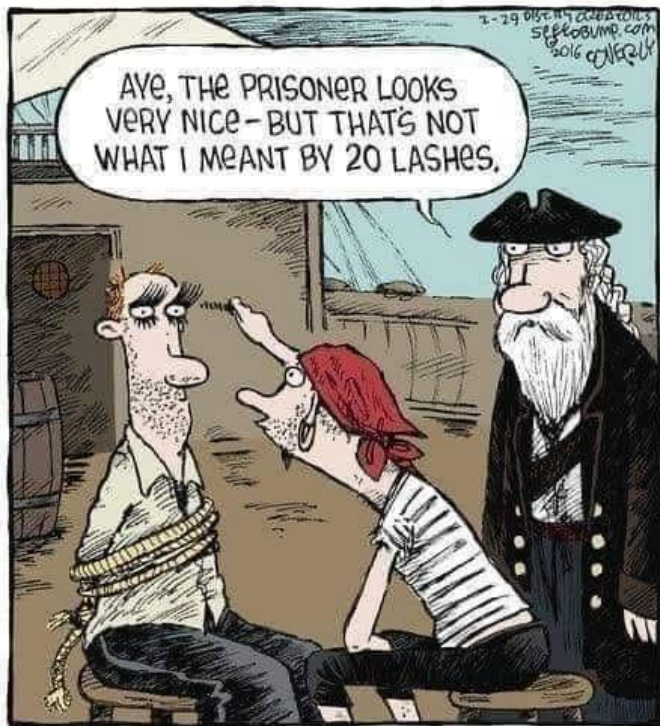
Bob Jones, Llanymynech



*Press cutting and photo from the Shetland Times of 12<sup>th</sup> June 1970*

Celebration of KELLINGTON's First Birthday on 6<sup>th</sup> June, observed in Lerwick, following her first patrol in that area. C.O. Lt Cdr Nicholas St.John Morley-Hall cuts the cake while AB Jones, with beard, looks on.

## Arrgh for the Good Old Days ...



## Young Nobby, RNVR

KELLINGTON on passage to  
Gib 1977

*Double oropesa sweep wires  
out but trouble with the kite ?*

# Square Bashing

Doug Andrews, Ware

We're still on the parade ground at HMS Ceres in early 1953, having been put through our paces on a daily basis for some weeks. We are beginning to believe that despite constant complaints and hurtful comments from our Chief G.I., we are actually improving. The sound of our boots on the concrete is no longer a continuous ripple, but a somewhat smarter 'crunch- crunch' in unison - almost! The 'tick-tocker' (the chap who would swing his left arm in the same direction as his left foot) had been eliminated after much effort to the relief of us all, since his niggling habit had resulted in the rest of us doubling around the parade ground with our .303's on our LEFT shoulder (meaning that the knob on the bolt banged into your shoulder with every step) as a corporal punishment.

Yes, the long hours of dogged determination were starting to pay off, and -dare I say it - we were almost beginning to look smart. We might make a Captain's Guard to be proud of, in our final week at that establishment after all. Then came that day, when we had been at it for quite some time, and our squad was marching parallel to the wall of a building on our left and quite close to it, as we had done countless times before. By this time, we had almost become automatons and could anticipate what the next order was likely to be - then it came. "Squad - into line - LEFT - TURN!" The result was absolute mayhem, in that most of our number quickly decided that the GI had made a mistake and turned right, to continue marching off across the parade ground. A few more, undecided, kept going straight ahead whilst the remainder (with no imagination) actually obeyed the order and turned left into the wall, there to continue to 'mark time' since they could go no-where. In just five words, our Instructor had reduced that smart, cohesive fighting unit into a shambles, and all the hours of dedication, blood, sweat and tears that had gone before came to naught! "HALT! GET FELL IN!" "You're a shower, an absolute SHOWER, but a likeable shower! The trouble with you is, you FINK, and you're not here to FINK, you're here to b\*\*\*\*y-well do as you're TOLD!"

Strange to relate, but we grew to admire our Instructor, despite our having questioned the legality of his parents' marriage when we first made his acquaintance. He had spent his early years as a Dr. Barnado's Boy, then put through the arduous regime of HMS Ganges at Shotley as a Boy Seaman. On his chest were quite a few WW II medals, and he was 'as hard as nails.' Many of us went to say goodbye to him on our last day, and in his cabin on the bunk was the most beautiful silk-embroidered eiderdown depicting a resplendent peacock.

Guess who'd done it ? You're right - He had..!

# SLOPS

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TCA Baseball cap. Logo 1 or 2	£ 11.20	TCA 10 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Print	£ 5.50
TCA Beret Badge	£ 7.50	TCA 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Badge	£ 6.00
RN Beret, Blue. Various sizes	£ 8.00	TCA Wall Shield 8 ins	£ 37.00
TCA Embroidered Blazer Badge	£ 9.77	Beanie/Ski woollen hat Navy with TCA badge	£ 8.72
TCA Lapel Badge	£ 6.05	TCA Polo Shirt, Navy logo 1	£18.44
TCA Mouse Mat	£ 4.00	TON Talk Binder	£ 7.73
Car sticker – Logo 1 Clings to inside of windscreen	£ 1.25	TON Profile badge - Silver or Gold	£ 8.00
TCA Tie, Blue	£ 9.90	Blazer Badge (Gold Wire)	£16.00
TCA Tie, Maroon	£ 11.60	TCA Pen	£ 3.00
Blackfoot Tie	£ 13.00	<b>TCA Notepad &amp; Pen</b> (pictured below)	<b>£ 5.00</b>
<b>Special Order items</b>  <i>Supplies of clothing have resumed but may take some time to catch up</i>			
<b>State size, colour and logo required</b> Logo 1 = Mine and Keys, Logo 2 = Mine and TON silhouette <b>Allow up to 8 weeks for delivery</b>			
TCA V-neck sweater. Navy or Maroon	£ 32.45	<b>BOOKS</b>	
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TCA Polo Shirt in Navy with ships name	£ 18.44	<b>Last of the Wooden Walls</b> A4 Hardback and E-book <i>Order from</i> <i>www.halsgrove.com</i>	<b>£ 24.99</b>
Iron Man Tee Shirt, Navy	£ 15.37		
Iron Man Polo Shirt , Navy	£ 18.44		
TCA Round Neck Sweatshirt	£ 29.16		
TCA Polar Fleece Jacket	£ 38.30		

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 Laurie Johnson, 4 Downham Close, Cowplain, Hants  
 PO8 8UD Phone: 023 923 65729  
**e-mail: lawrencej1055@gmail.com**

# 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, currently comprise the Hunt class MCMVs BROCKLESBY (MCM 2 Crew 8) and CHIDDINGFOLD (2/3) plus the Sandown class MCMVs SHOREHAM (1/7) and PENZANCE (1/3), all supported by RFA CARDIGAN BAY.

On 11 February, the personnel of all RN forces based in the Gulf mustered on the jetty at the UK NSF (Naval Support Facility) in Bahrain to bid farewell to Cdre Dean Bassett RN, the outgoing UK MCC (Maritime Component Command) Middle East.

Also in February, SHOREHAM completed a maintenance period and PENZANCE participated in the International Defence Exhibition and Conference IDEX 2021 in Abu Dhabi where she hosted the British Ambassador. In March, CHIDDINGFOLD participated in the annual Exercise KHUNJAR HADD 26 (Arabic for 'sharp dagger') which was held in the Gulf of Oman and involved ships and aircraft from Oman, the USA, France and Britain. Forces included the frigate HMS MONTROSE and the support ship RFA CARDIGAN BAY plus the Avenger class MCMVs USS GLADIATOR and USS SENTRY.

## **HUNT Class**

MIDDLETON (2/2) is back afloat after a mini-refit in Portsmouth and is due to deploy to the Gulf later this year. CATTISTOCK (2/7) has been seen running from Portsmouth after a lengthy maintenance period. LEDBURY (2/4) has also been seen running out of Portsmouth.

## **Sandown Class**

BLYTH (1/2) has been deployed with SNMCMG1 (Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1) since early February. She has visited Den Helder in the Netherlands, Kristiansand in Norway, **Karlskrona in Sweden** and Kiel in Germany.

Most recently, she has been conducting HODOPS (Historical Ordnance Disposal Operations) in the Baltic along with the Estonian minehunter ENS UGANDI (formerly HMS BRIDPORT) whom she beat 4-0 in a soccer match. PEMBROKE (1/4) has been undergoing operational sea training off the west coast of Scotland and was seen in company with BANGOR (1/8) in late February.

See the 'Latest News' page of the MCD Officers' Association website at [www.mcdoa.org.uk](http://www.mcdoa.org.uk) for more recent updates and photos.

## Membership Update

*To comply more closely with GDPR Data Protection rules, contact details of members are not disclosed in full but friends can obtain them from the Membership Secretary, subject to permission of the member.*

### **NEW MEMBERS – Welcome Aboard**

**Brian Beaton.** A/B, RN. Rainham Kent  
Served on HMS PUNCHESTON 1968-69 L2480

**Robert E Ward** Seaman RNR. Hebburn Tyne & Wear.  
Served on HM Ships HODGESTON 1957-60, QUANTON 1960-61 . F2481

**Robert Lane** ME1 RN, Lee on Solent. Hampshire  
Served on HMS BELTON 1967-60. F2482

**David W Brooke.** O/D - A/Sub Lt RNR. Burton on Trent  
Served on HM Ships POLLINGTON & MERSEY 1962-66. F2483

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

**Tim Lancaster.** To:- Clacton-on-Sea Essex. L1722

**Keith Wright.** To:- Dorchester Dorset. L1998

**Derek Potter.** To:- Kingstaignton Devon F2440

**Glynn Burhouse.** To Sealand Flintshire. F2220

**Neil Sowerby.** To :-Sunderland. F2245

### **CHANGED E-MAIL ADDRESS**

**Rodney North.** F2367

### **LOST CONTACT.**

*Anyone knowing current address please advise Membership Secretary*

**Clive Pearce.** Last known address. Gosport Hampshire F2086





## Crossed the Bar

### ***ERA 3 Albert Edward GOOCH RN***

*Camberley, F1459*

*Served in HMS DALSWINTON 1955-57 & LOCHINVAR*

### ***Lieutenant Commander Neil Macleay RN***

*Commanding Officer PENSTON 1965, DUFTON (as MS8) 1966, WILKIESTON 1967,  
FISKERTON 1968 + others in Portsmouth and Cyprus.*

### ***Lieutenant Commander Ian Smith RNR***

*Nairn, F2161*

*Served in HM Ships SOBERTON 1959, DALSWINTON 1963-71, CUXTON 1982-84*

### ***ME1 Alan Jones RN***

*Plymouth, F2071*

*Served in HMS PUNCHESTON 1959-60*

### ***LRO John Stipetic RN***

*Brough, Humberside. F0302*

*Served on HM Ships CRICHTON 1982-85, HODGESTON 1985-86*

### ***Lieutenant Commander Michael Hordern RN***

*Honorary Member TCA – See TON Talk 200 October 2019*

*HL 2459, Bognor Regis*

*An Intrepid Aviator. Aged 101*

### ***Commander Rupert Best RN***

*Director of Portland Port, Deputy Lieutenant of Dorset and Younger Brother of Trinity  
House. Former C.O. of OCELOT and COURAGEOUS (during Falklands)*

*As a Midshipman in FISKERTON, he participated in the action at Limbang, Dec 1962*

## May They Rest In Peace

## Post Bag

**FROM: Cdr David Frost, High Wycombe**

Re: Mystery Ship MATAPAN in December's TON Talk

I spent a few hours at sea in *Matapan* when she came through Portland for a safety check and I was Flags to FOST.

I don't remember much detail but I do recollect there was nothing below decks I could recognise from my time more than a decade earlier in *Corunna*.

**FROM: Gerry Nunn, Bournemouth**  
**Another Mystery Ship - MADDISTON**

I attach a photo recently acquired of 1145 Dufton alongside 1164 Maddiston. Both look as if they are ready for disposal.



My question is where and when ?

Given that Dufton was scrapped at Ligua Marine Sittingbourne in June 1977 and Maddiston in Feb 1975 at Sunderland when did these two meet ?

**Editor's reply - here you have me !**

*Maddy is the real Mystery TON. When we were putting together our book Jacks*

*of All Trades we found a small photo of her leaving Malta flying a White Ensign on her stump mast BUT we could not find any record of her ever having been commissioned !*

*We speculated that she may have been in reserve in Malta and put to sea for trials to confirm that she was seaworthy and maybe wore the ensign so as not to attract comment ! We know that she was towed from Malta to Aden in 1961. We even have a member who was in that passage crew - Mike Smith, who now runs Marshland Maritime Museum.*



Above: Waiting for the scrappie with Corunna and Agincourt

*Brian Hargreaves found her in Reserve at Gib in 1963 (below) and provided several photos of her being broken up.*



**Can anyone fill in the gaps in her story ?**



**FROM: Lt Cdr Jeremy Davies-Webb,  
Deal**

I was intrigued by Johnny Martin's reference to bullet holes on the bridge. I have some further information regarding them:

Our Jimmy, who shall remain nameless, in Spring 65 was a great one for "playing" with small arms when on watch. At sea we usually had an assortment of firearms in a locker at the back of the bridge. There was always a .22 Rifle, quite often a .303 Bren & occasionally our standard SMG, the dreaded 9mm Lanchester.

One day, fortunately whilst on watch on his own, he was "examining" a loaded Lanchester. He must have jolted it somehow allowing the bolt to release and spring forward and thus fire the magazine. The safety catch on the Lanchester was notoriously unreliable as it only held the bolt back in the cocked configuration. The magazine fired off into the port forward corner of the bridge in front of the Captain's chair.

The bullets destroyed our brand new Chernikeef log display!! I don't remember whether he had to pay for it or it was "written off" on form S126.

On the boardings front, we boarded with Boarding Officer, usually me, wearing a holstered .38 pistol, as described by Johnny. Two of the boarding party carried Lanchesters with the bolt fully forward and quite often with the magazine removed until safely onboard the dhow.

**FROM: Richard Gleed-Owen,  
Mansfield**

I was on the VIDAL (69-70) my last ship - a Buff Funnel Line and David Ince's amusing article about his Greek flags

reminded me of another funny incident when we were at Simonstown.

My three messmate companions were Buster Brown, George Jones and I think another named Smith, were returning onboard in high spirits and were stopped by the ex-UK South African Police at the dockyard gate. After giving their names they were disbelieved entirely by the Police and accused of using well known British surnames and only established their identities after contacting the ship for confirmation. It was a laugh for ages.

On the same visit I was innocently photographing the interesting ship badges on the empty dry docks when I was apprehended by a black saloon car, driven menacingly up to me at speed and taking me and my camera quickly away and taking me to their police base. After pleading my innocence that didn't stop them from ripping open my camera and destroying my film. In those days I was more naive but I still have my memories of that incident.

In those days we had to sail around Africa to reach the Persian Gulf and I well remember three TONs entering harbour smartly in line ahead and I think they were named: APPLETON, BURNASTON and CHAWTON which quickly and efficiently went to their allocated berths. They had left Mombasa on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

I took surreptitious photos of course, well concealed from a scuttle, as I did not want to get caught again ! Also in harbour at that time were SAN Haerlem P3125, the frigate Simon Van Der Stel, NATAL, GAVINTON and PUNCHESTON

**FROM: Les White**

Could I use your columns to thank members of CALLIOPE ASSOCIATION for the photos, dits and memories of my

late father JBN Chalky White BEM, who served at CALLIOPE for 24 years. I was also able to purchase something truly special and memorable.  
You know who you are. Many thanks

**FROM: Sandy Ross, Cambuslang**

It was with great sadness that I learned of the death of John Soanes when TON Talk arrived.

I was one of John's crew-mates in PENSTON and I well remember him joining us, as I had preceded him by a few months.

I was probably the youngest member of the crew at that time and my memory of John was his unfailing calm demeanour and, a quality not always found in senior rates, that of kindness.

We are made better people by his example. I would appreciate it if you would pass on my condolences to Ann at what must be a very sad time.

**FROM: Mick Hilder, Weymouth**

We had just finished working up HMS Kirkliston in July 1977 at Rosyth & sailed south to Scheveningen for a run ashore.

The local swimming pool had an outside pool with a high glass wall around it & patrons could swim inside to the main pool. The lads thought that a late night swim would be good which they enjoyed until the police asked that they left. A small fine ensued & they carried on with the run ashore.

Between March & October they construct prefab bars on the beach, one of which had a swimming pool dive in one end hit your head at the other size. We invented touch water rugby which proved great fun. The weather wasn't good for tourist numbers so the owner was rather

pleased that we were drinking lots of pint sized beers.

We asked one of the locals if the barmaid was anyone's girlfriend. When he said no she was thrown in the pool fully clothed. The bar owner managed to get down to his underwear before he also went in. Great fun boisterous well humoured time had by all

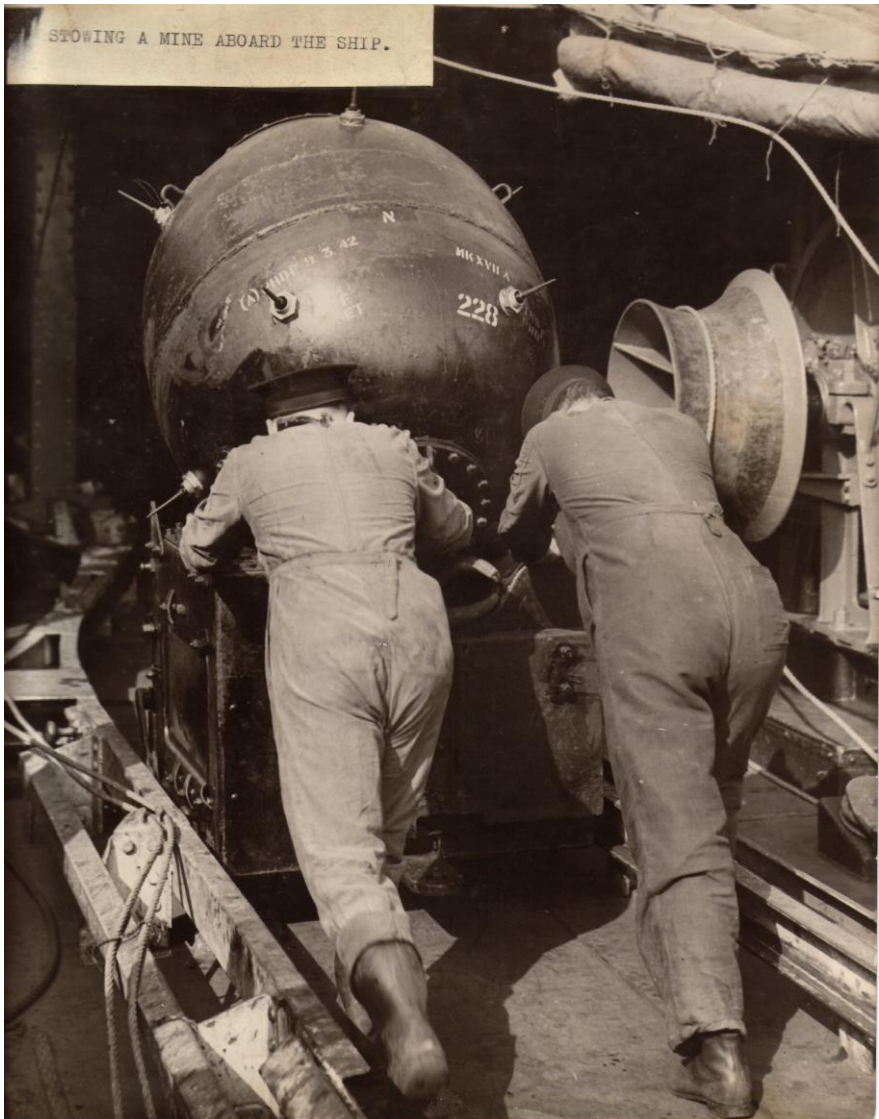
We moved on to Boulogne to celebrate 14th July celebrations there. As I went ashore a little old lady approached the ship & started talking rapidly at me in French. I asked if she could speak slowly & she explained that her husband had passed away & had been cremated. He was a Free French member who served with the Fleet Air Arm in WW2 & it was his dying wish to be interred at sea.

So I went back aboard to ask Lt Cdr Tom Masterman our captain if we could accommodate her. He said as long as all the paperwork was in order, "Yes with pleasure". So on the day of sailing the family turned up, as they stepped aboard the flags fore & aft went to half-mast. A quick drink in the wardroom, we put the family ashore & we sailed, flags still at half-mast. The wooden ashes casket was left in the captains' cabin who said that it should be placed in the 1st Lt's cabin. He in turn said that it should be kept in the stores office aft !

The next day mid-channel representatives from each mess in No1's mustered aft the Cox'n took photos from the sweep winch roof. The family asked if he could be emptied into the sea to prevent the casket from being trawled up. We sent that properly cleaned out, plus the photos, back to the family in Boulogne.

*Great days – Just imagine what Brexit and Environmental documentation would be required these days ! ... Editor*

## From TCA Archives 1950's ...



*... So I says to the Gunner (T) "What's this AUTOMATION we keep hearing about ?"*

*An 'e says to me "Just you keep on shovin', my 'andsome ....."*

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