

# ***TON Talk***

**Newsletter of the TON Class Association**

**Edition 211**



**August 2021**



**CHAWTON afloat again**

*Courtesy of John Duffy (see page 18)*

# TON Class Association

## Patron HRH The Prince of Wales



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

P 24

**Front Cover:**  
**CHAWTON Radio Controlled Model**

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

**Founder: Jack Worth MBE**

## Editorial

**Website** Additions shortly to be made include TWO new short videos: one of WALKERTON streaming her loop and the other of a diver rendering safe a ground mine underwater. See the new Videos section on the "Further Information" page.

Regrettably no use has been made of the "Old Ships" facility on the website to contact former shipmates, so this facility has been withdrawn. Appeals for lost comrades can still be made via Post Bag in *TON Talk* magazine.

**Crowd Funding** TCA has been approached by yet another group seeking to "rescue" BRONINGTON. They have been given advice about the history and condition of the ship, including that, in our considered professional opinion, the hulk is Beyond Economical Repair.

We understand that the group has not accepted this advice and proposes to press on, possibly trying to raise funds via an appeal for Crowd Funding in the national press.

TCA has told them, in no uncertain terms, that we do NOT support their project, as we do not have requisite resources of manpower and finance. Our priority is our members.

**Cenotaph Parade** We have been allocated 24 tickets for this year's parade and currently I have 14 volunteers. Names have to be submitted to the British Legion organisers by 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

*If you wish to attend and have not already given details to HonSec, please do so ASAP*

**Models** We often receive enquiries via the website about kits for models of TONs. We pass on the info we have but it appears that not many kits are currently in production. However several scratch built (custom) models are known - see Page 18 for CHAWTON. Enthusiasts may like to visit **[www.southcoastmodellers.org](http://www.southcoastmodellers.org)** for an exciting gallery of ships, aircraft and tanks, mainly custom built, to very high standards.

**March 2022 Committee Meeting** No suggestions for alternative venues have been received, so we will hold the meeting at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2022, commencing at 13.00. All TCA members are welcome to attend. Remember our membership number 3966 when booking accommodation in order to obtain discount on rooms, bar and parking.



**Deadline for October's Edition is 19<sup>th</sup> September**

*pjd*

## Chairman's Corner

How life has changed since the last Reunion in 2019 ! I know it has been a difficult time for all of us. I am afraid that the Covid 19 virus will be with us for the foreseeable future, much the same as the Flu virus is. I hope you have all received your two vaccinations. I am hopeful of a Covid 19 booster in the autumn, which is likely to be administered at the same time as the flu vaccine.

On the bright side I am looking I am looking forward to the Annual Reunion at the Carlton Hotel in Torquay. The Carlton Hotel is part of the TLH Leisure Centre as was the Toorak Hotel. I have visited the hotel twice; once to review the facilities and more recently to discuss the details of the Reunion. The latter meeting went well, and I was pleased that one director and two managers were present. The facilities in the hotel are excellent – the Rivera Ballroom is ideal for the Gala Dinner and dancing afterwards. KB Sounds will be providing the music. There is only a small car park at the main entrance but unloading there is welcomed. The main car park is large and is on two floors.

Apart from the opportunity of renewing old friendships and general socialising at the Reunion there are two important items that I need to bring to your attention. Firstly, a key part of the weekend is the AGM on the Saturday morning. This is where members of the Committee present their reports and members can ask questions. Members can also vote on proposals submitted. Secondly, the Annual Church Service will be a Thanks Giving and Remembrance in tribute to John Soanes .

We have over 50 members booked in for the Reunion. If you wish to attend the Reunion and informal dinner, please send me your Application ASAP, including notification of vegetarian meals or other special needs.

Bill Pollington is continuing his inventory of TCA Assets such as photographs, drawings etc. Once he makes his report, we will then have to decide on the way ahead. This is likely to take some time.

We have now decided to hold the next Committee meeting at the Royal Maritime Club in Portsmouth on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2022 starting at 1300. I emphasise that whilst this is a Committee Meeting, all members are welcome to attend. There will be an informal dinner on the Saturday Reunion.

*Peter Harrison*

# TCA Who's Who

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## COMING EVENTS

<b>October 2021</b>	Fri 1 - Mon 4	<b>TCA AGM &amp; Reunion</b> Carlton Hotel, Torquay  Booking form in June's edition OR from HonSec
<b>March 2022</b>	Sat 12	<b>Committee Meeting</b> Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth 10.30  + ZOOM link will be enabled

# TCA INVENTORY OF ASSETS

Bill Pollington – Hon.Auditor

On behalf of the Committee, and in my role as TCA .Auditor, I am compiling an inventory of all TCA Assets and Historic Records. Over more than thirty years the Association has acquired certain physical assets, usually seen at AGM/Reunion weekends, together with a whole range of historic records in paper, electronic and photographic formats. Curiously, no comprehensive list of these items has previously been made.

The intention is to record all items which TCA holds; their format, approximate size (for possible future storage considerations), condition (VG/Good/Fair) and name of the Member who is the present custodian.

Obvious items such as the two TCA standards and associated regalia cared for by our Standard Bearers have been documented. Several members have helpfully provided a significant amount of material which has already been processed.

Should any member have in their care any item or records of which I am unaware, and which they believe should be included in the inventory, I would be pleased to hear from them at **bill@pollington.me.uk**.

Many thanks for any information you may be able to provide towards completion of this project.

# **Memories of Nobby Hall**

## **Commander Ed Featherstone RN Rtd**

Neil Hall joined HMS PHOEBE in 1983 as a junior officer in the Warfare Department and as a Bridge Watchkeeper. I was the First Lieutenant and, amongst other things, responsible for his career development. All the junior officers got themselves into trouble at some stage or other, usually for something they had failed to do. Neil was different. All of his misdemeanours occurred when something he was attempting went wrong!

He was always in the thick of it, dreaming up some new scheme to keep himself and usually the whole ship's company amused. However on one occasion whilst alongside in Devonport, he overstepped the mark and I was forced to stop his leave for two weeks. By the end of the first week I decided that he needed more dedicated career counselling, so I took him under "close custody" as a "man under punishment" and drove him to my home in Keinton Mandevile in Somerset for the weekend. He played with my two young sons in the garden and he was charming to my wife and a good guest but I decided that we needed to go to the Quarry Inn in the village for that career counselling I had promised. I feel sure he must have derived great benefit from our two sessions!

Life on towed array patrol, sliding along at 4 knots north of Iceland in winter for six weeks or more was challenging but rather lonely, when the only other ship you saw was the tanker once every 4 to 6 days. For the Underwater Warfare people it was operationally exciting, chasing real Soviet submarines, but for the majority of the people on board it could be humdrum and rather boring. Neil, above all others, was instrumental in helping me to keep the whole ship interested and amused. We were a happy ship. Much of that was due to him.

Later in the commission I arranged to take over "The Academy" in Union Street for a rollicking Ship's Company dance. Of course Neil jumped in to organise. Towards the end of the evening I was invited by Neil on to the stage on some pretext or other, followed very quickly by a beautiful young woman wearing very few clothes who presented me with a "Strippagram" to the amusement of all...thanks to Neil.

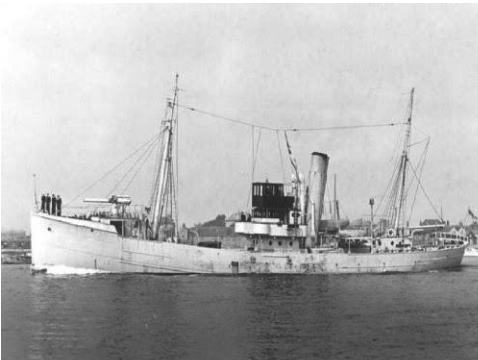
Anyway we kept in touch over the years and I followed his career as a naval officer and as a Sea Cop (as he called himself), meeting up from time to time in various places. After his retirement, somebody in the RN with real imagination gave him a call and invited him to rejoin the Navy as a Commander, despite the extensive surgery he had undergone for cancer. We had a bit of a reunion in Dartmouth Yacht Club about 18 months ago and I realised that he was only standing there at all, because of his bravery in adversity and indomitable spirit. I mourn his passing, along, no doubt, with many others.

## A Bad Day in Lagos

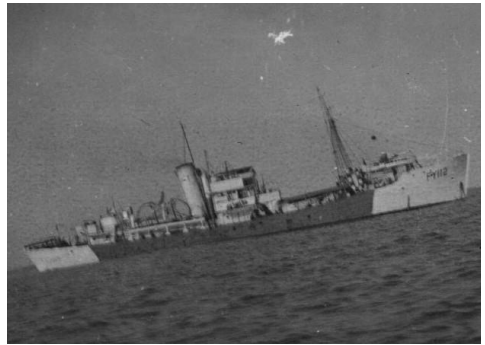
David White. Hoylake

Members will be well aware of the numerous armed trawlers in service during WW2 performing a vital and undervalued role as patrol vessels, minesweepers, rescue ships, convoy escorts and anti-submarine vessels. Before the vessel's name, the prefix HMT – not HMS – was used. Though there are a number of confusing exceptions, the general rule of identification by pennant numbers was that those trawlers built for the RN carried the prefix T in the pennant number while those taken up from trade (ie former active commercial fishing boats) carried the prefix FY.

A group of trawlers was based at Freetown providing patrol and escort duties and had been involved in a number of actions off the coast of West Africa. In early December 1942, three trawlers were refitting at the Naval Base on the river at Lagos. One was the Isles Class *Canna* T161, built by Cochranes at Selby 1940, 550 tons. The other two were the sister-ships *Bengali* / FY165 and *Spaniard* / FY144, built in 1937 at Smiths Dock on the Tees and at 455 tons were slightly smaller than *Canna*.



HMT Bengali / FY165



HMT Kelt / FY112

Athel Line Ltd came into being in January 1940 as a wholly owned subsidiary of United Molasses Co. Ltd, to own and operate the Group's molasses tanker fleet. The entire company was taken over by Tate & Lyle in 1965 and Athel Line joined a group with two Scandinavian partners as Anco Tanker Services. In 1973 the company became wholly owned by Tate & Lyle. Though primarily concerned with the transport of molasses, in peace-time the tankers were often tramped around to carry whatever cargoes were available, including vegetable oil, crude oil and petroleum spirits. During the war, a number of the Athel tankers were predominately devoted to the carriage of high octane fuels.

*Athel Victor* had an unusual start in life. Her ice-strengthened hull was launched in Gothenborg as *Silenus* in 1939 for Swedish owners Axel Johnson but then transferred to Caledon Engineering at Dundee for completion. Of 8,400grt, 12,000dwt, she had an eight cylinder Hawthorn Leslie diesel engine driving a single



propeller. In 1941 after trials she was sold to Tankers Ltd (Athel Line) Liverpool for about £300,000 and renamed *Athel Victor* [callsign GPQQ].

Carrying high octane petrol from the Persian Gulf, *Athel Victor* had completed a partial discharge at Takoradi. On Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December 1942 she arrived in Lagos from Takoradi escorted by HMT *Kelt* / FY112 (sister to *Bengali* and *Spaniard*). The tanker secured to the Shell terminal at Apapa while *Kelt* moored at the Naval Base.



Athel Victor

The following day, Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December, *Athel Victor* commenced discharging but several thousand gallons of highly inflammable cargo escaped into the river and drifted rapidly down to the Naval Base and ignited, completely destroying *Canna*, *Spaniard* and *Bengali* and badly damaging *Kelt*.

Gordon Bates writes:

*I joined the mv Athel Victor in Swansea on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1942. The voyage was to last some eighteen months. When laden, we carried 12,000 tons of spirit, generally of high octane value. We arrived at the oil terminal of Apapa, which is across the river at Lagos. It was intended that we should discharge the remainder of petroleum which we had earlier loaded in the Persian port of Abadan.*

*The following day, a Saturday, I was to accompany the Captain to Lagos across the river where I was to have an ear checked following an infection. We were awaiting the arrival of the boat and I was looking down river to the Naval Base some three quarters of a mile when I saw the river was on fire. At the time there were three anti-submarine vessels (ex trawlers) undergoing refit. They would be carrying ammunition and depth charges.*

*Suddenly there was a massive explosion and air blast as one or more of the trawlers exploded. The river was moving down stream at about 4 knots and it would appear that an amount of petroleum had entered the river at the terminal and had been carried downstream to the Naval Base. We completed unloading and the next day lay*

*at anchor in the river whilst over the next three weeks an enquiry into the incident was carried out.*

Of the four trawlers, *Kelt* suffered the most casualties, with only one survivor out of her crew of 26. Casualties on the other three vessels were less, totalling 15, as many of their crew were ashore.

Final casualty figures including those ashore were never accurately established but are believed to have been about 100. Though she had her bows blown off, *Kelt* was refitted and returned to service. Sold in 1945, she was scrapped at Bruges in 1960 as *Camilla*.

The War Diary of the Flag Officer in Charge, West Africa for December 1942 contains surprisingly little information about the incident:

Friday, 4th December

H.M.S. KELT arrived Lagos from Takoradi escorting tanker ATHELVICTOR.

Saturday, 19th December

H.M.S. DESPATCH arrived Lagos where her Commanding Officer will hold enquiry into the cause of the explosion which occurred on 5th December.

Monday, 21st December

At Lagos, Naval Board of Enquiry opened on board H.M.S. DESPATCH dealing with the explosion in the Marine Harbour on 5th December.

Tuesday, 22nd December

Board of Enquiry second day sitting on H.M.S DESPATCH at Lagos.

Wednesday, 23rd December

Board of Enquiry concluded on board H.M.S. DESPATCH at Lagos.

What became of the *Athel Victor*?

Contrary to numerous inaccurate records, she did not explode, nor, did she sink. As Gordon Bates wrote (above) she remained at anchor until the completion of the Board of Enquiry and then resumed her vital operations. She next appears in the records as being part of the large convoy HX247 (73 merchant ships and 25 escorts) which departed New York on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1943. She arrived safely in Liverpool on 22<sup>nd</sup> July with her cargo of petrol.

1952 Sold to Chiarella Societe di Navigation, Genoa for £735,000;  
Re-Named *California* Port of Registry Genoa

1960 Sold to Garla Cameli, Genoa for £132,000

1961 Sold to Armatorati Mediterraea Idorabutt, Palermo

1962 Sold to breakers at La Spezia

# SUSSEX RNR Hip Flask

*We were delighted to receive two complementary accounts of the provenance of the Hip Flask recently acquired by Marshland Maritime Museum :*

## First from David Hope

These were designed by the Senior Rates Mess Committee during my tenure as Mess President as mementos for members' attachment to HMS Sussex as either RNR members or RN Permanent Staff Instructors.

The effects of the government 'Drink & Drive' campaign had reduced the number of members regularly using the Mess bar, so that the obligatory presentation 'Tankard' was no longer a suitable reminder. In fact many of the permanent staff said that they had accumulated so many tankards from previous appointments, that some were being recycled.

I researched various options and settled on a 7-inch salver for use as a general purpose 'useful thing' e.g. peanut dish, pocket change tray, cuff-links, keys etc, trying to get away from the traditional naval connection to alcohol.

Eventually I found a small company that produced copper salvers with 'tin plate' designs, so during many lunchtimes I created the master artwork.



It was not long after my tenure as Mess President that HMS Sussex was scheduled for closure and my successor expanded the range of presentation gifts to include the 4½- inch Hip Flask as an optional gift.

**Then from Dave Rich** EX CPO MEA (ML), Mess President , HMS Sussex RNR, Senior Rates Mess, January 1993 - March 1994

The Hip Flasks were a special order of about 50 we had made to give to Mess Members of the Senior Rates Mess HMS Sussex as a memento to remember the good times we had at the shore base and of course at sea on TON, River and Archer class vessels back in 1994 when we were decommissioned as part of the Defence Review.

HMS Sussex based in Hove Sussex, HMS Wessex based in Southampton and Communication Training Centre at Southwick back of Portsmouth were all closed and a new Unit was formed on Whale Island, HMS King Alfred. Many were informed that their service was no longer required and only selected branches were transferred to King Alfred.

Our mess funds prior to closure were in a healthy state and the Wardroom, which audited us, came sniffing for money to subsidise the Decommissioning Ball to be held in Hove Town Hall. However, we were not happy to provide funding for a ships company event, as this should come from the General Purpose fund, so the committee decided to have a spend up, as we were also not permitted to transfer funds to the new senior rates mess being set up in HMS King Alfred.

The mess committee had earlier decided to change our standard leaving gift from a tankard to a an etched copper plate, so we used similar artwork for the hip flask.

As we had some money to burn, we decided that all Mess Members should get a bite of the cherry; we gave all members a hip flask, a copper etched plate and a wall plaque and of course a good PU and Mess Dinner just prior to closure.



I am pleased that the flask has been placed in the TONs area of the Museum and the name of HMS Sussex RNR can still be proudly recalled.

## **AN RNR 'FORTNIGHT' LIKE NO OTHER OPERATION PIKE, 1979**

Lt Cdr. John Clark, RNR

RNR 'fortnights' as they were called, or Continuous Training Periods, CTPs, in the Tons tended to follow a pretty similar pattern. After a considerable amount of preparation in the weeks leading up to departure the ship's company would descend from many different quarters and walks of life and swarm into the ship late on a Friday evening. After a brief handover the RNR C.O. would sign for the ship and the Permanent Staff RN team would depart thankfully for an ordinary weekend ashore. Within the hour the ship would sail – it was important that we went to sea before 2359 otherwise nobody got paid for the Friday !

There would then be a passage to the exercise area, possibly meeting up with one or more other RNR MCMVs en route. The planned exercise might be a national one, say a VERMEX out of Portsmouth, or something bigger and perhaps involving RN ships as well and at least once a year it would be participation in a full-blown NATO exercise – OCEAN SAFARI or the like. Or it could be the whole of the 10<sup>th</sup> MCMS taking off on passage to Gibraltar for a ROCKHAUL or MAINHAUL. But it would always have those two components – it would involve an exercise and it would mean joining with other ships of the Squadron.

So this is where the London Division RNR fortnight in August 1979 started to differ from the norm. To start with we were given not just an exercise but a proper, grown-up, operational task – Operation PIKE, the minehunting route survey of the Firth of Clyde approaches to Faslane. Secondly, we were to be a 'private ship' – no others with us and totally our own boss (at least afloat!). But both of those things sounded good to us – we were delighted to be doing a 'real' job (this was still very much during the Cold War) and we didn't mind having some time on our own.

Our ship was to be KELLINGTON, the minehunter shared between London and Sussex Divisions RNR and based at Shoreham. Everyone would leave their places of work on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> August and travel by train down to the south coast to join the ship. On Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> we made final preparations in PRESIDENT in London and all seemed set. On Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> the C.O. was in his solicitors office and received a call from the RN Staff Officer. "Sorry, change of plan. KELLINGTON's lost an engine and we can't do an engine change in time to get you away on Friday. You won't be going in KELLINGTON but we've lined up KEDLESTON for you. However, she's at Leith so we'll be flying all your ship's company up to Edinburgh on Friday evening – joining instructions amended to catch the 1830 shuttle from Heathrow" !

Okay, so one TON is very like another – no problem there. And no particular problem for the C.O. But the navigator had put in quite a bit of work planning our passage from Shoreham westabout Lands End to the Clyde, bearing in mind that he would be straight into executing it within an hour or so of arriving on board. Now he had to scrap that and plan a passage northabout round the top of Scotland from the Forth to the Clyde and still ensure that we were on task at the time required by the Oorder - Life in a blue suit, of course.

All went well. Somehow or other everyone got the message, they all showed up for the Edinburgh flight and arrived on board KEDLESTON in Leith at the appointed hour. HMS CLAVERHOUSE (Forth Division RNR) had worked wonders to get the ship ready and victualled (and didn't seem to be *too* miffed to be lending her to a bunch of southerners from PRESIDENT!). And we managed to sail out into the Forth before 2359 thus securing that extra day's pay.

Just to keep him on his toes – and to add to the pressure a bit – the C.O. had told the navigator that on the way round the top of Scotland he “would like to go inside every chunk of land that it was possible to go inside”. Whilst this was obviously good navigational training for the bridge team it also meant that us southerners would get a much better view of the beautiful coastline on our unexpected ‘trip’. But the best laid plans.... Sadly the weather intervened – it turned into one of those calm, grey, damp and murky Scottish skylines with the cloud base at about 50 feet and nothing visible of the shoreline except a rocky beach and the lower slope of a heathery hill. Good for navigation training, bad for sightseeing.

But the weather did have a bonus for us – it was calm, flat calm. So the dreaded Pentland Firth was a millpond and we steamed happily westwards towards Cape Wrath at 400 revs without too many cares in the world.

However – and this is where things got more serious – it was by now Monday 13<sup>th</sup> August and in the opposite corner of the British Isles things were very different. The Fastnet Race had started from Cowes on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> and the yachts were by now strung out between Land's End and the south of Ireland. The ensuing disaster is well documented. Force 11 winds were battering the fleet. A major search and rescue operation was underway, boats were being abandoned and lives were being lost. We started hearing about it on news bulletins and it was suddenly borne in on us that we should have been there too. Had it not been for the change of ship, we would have been rounding Land's End on our original planned passage to the Clyde.

What would we have done? How would we have coped with the disaster ? There are huge difficulties involved in rescuing survivors from small craft in high winds and big seas without making matters worse. We all discussed the options at the time, but there did not seem to be any definitive answer to how it should be approached. What we did know was that we would have been severely tested – as were the many other vessels on scene which helped in the SAR. And some of us on board knew sailors who were competing in the Fastnet, and we had no means of knowing who was safe.

And so we steamed on along the murky coastline round Cape Wrath, through the Kyle of Lochalsh, past Tobermory and inside Mull. We funked the Gulf of Corryvreckan because of the tide at the time and passed between Islay and Jura before rounding the Mull of Kintyre and heading into Troon for a quick refuel before heading out on task between the Isle of Arran and Ailsa Craig.

We were on task for Op. PIKE on the Wednesday morning and our Oporder required us to continue the route survey until the following Friday week, hunting round the clock. But we

were allowed one period of 72 hours off task in the middle, to give us a break. This of course again differed from the 'standard' RNR fortnight which would have seen a foreign visit – 'jolly' – for the ships in the second week after completion of whatever exercise they had been involved in. For our 72 hours we were told we could take it at any time and go anywhere we wanted as long as we were hunting back on task on time.

Where to go? It has to be remembered that for most of the ship's company (unless they had kind civilian employers) this two weeks was taken as part of their holiday allowance and they were normally used to a good run ashore in a foreign port. We needed to go somewhere interesting and providing at least the rudiments of a proper run ashore, but equally somewhere not too far away from our operational area so that we would not spend too many precious hours on passage. We decided on a visit to Port Ellen on the Isle of Islay – only about 60 miles from the southern end of our area or, say, four hours away. But there and back still eight hours out of our precious 72! Oh, and there are no fewer than eight distilleries on Islay – so how's that for a run ashore?

Negotiations with the Port Ellen harbourmaster had taken place from London. We were very welcome to visit – in fact it was very popular as we were to be the first grey funnel visitor for some years. However, we might have difficulty with Caledonian MacBrayne as alongside berthing for a Ton was limited and we might interfere with the ferry service! In the event, that was avoided.

And so we arrived. The ship was open to visitors that afternoon and we held a cocktail party in the evening. All the usual suspects were invited – the local Councillors, the Harbourmaster, the Lifeboatmen, the Coastguards, the Distillers (of course), the Schoolmaster and the Chief of Police. Actually, Chief of Police is a bit grand because at that time, and perhaps now, there was only one policeman on that law-abiding island. And he turned out to be a real star. Turning to the C.O. after a dram or two he asked, "And what are you lads going to do for transport whilst you're here? Well, would you like to borrow my police car?" "Perhaps not tonight (!), but thank you very much."

So, the next day equipped with blue lights and a siren we were able to explore the island - although use of the car was discouraged on distillery visits. Local people were, however, very kind in helping with transport for that purpose where needed, though most of the ship's company found that actually visiting distilleries wasn't really necessary when there were pubs within staggering distance of the brow where all of the local malts were in the optics. You have to like your whisky peaty if you're on Islay, but that didn't seem to bother too many of us.

So a very happy visit was had by all and at the end we left with slightly dulled brains which, as usual, perked up once we were back at sea again. We made our 'on task' time and settled back into the hunting and survey routine. All of the kit was working well and we managed to produce what we were afterwards told was a useful survey – so the RNR had done it's bit.

At the end of the operational phase we still had to return KEDLESTON to her base in the Forth. The final Monday was August Bank Holiday so we had an extra day before people

had to go back to work. On this basis we could just squeeze in a quick visit to Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis for the Saturday night. Now, it may not be the same today but in the 1970s the puritan influences of the Outer Hebrides were very much alive in Stornoway, and Saturday evening was fully an extension of Sunday – we discovered that all the pubs were closed! Imagine poor Jack ready for a last run ashore after a hard fortnight's work only to find the pubs shut. There could have been a riot. As it was, we had an excellent Sods' Opera on board and a good time was had by all.

The following morning we steamed northeast up the Minch towards Cape Wrath in fine clear weather. The C.O. was standing on the sweepdeck when he was approached by one of the divers. "It seems to me, Sir, that this is the sort of morning when your devious mind might be turning towards a Man Overboard exercise". The C.O. admitted that this had been a possibility. "How would it be, Sir, if I were to volunteer to be a real live man overboard?" Excellent idea! So off he trots and quietly dons a wetsuit under his 8's, saunters back and drops over the stern – at 16 knots (but he was a diver). The broadcast blares out 'Man overboard, port side'. You could see the resignation on the face of the OOW – here we go again – expecting to see the usual fender disappearing astern. Until he had a proper look and saw that there was a real MOB waving his arms and hollering. That galvanised him !

The buzz quickly got out and soon most of the ship's company were lining the side. And then it all got serious – a dorsal fin appeared behind the man, moving towards him. Everyone yelled and pointed – '*Shark*' – the man looked behind and started swimming rather faster! The fin dived and reappeared, then porpoised. Phew, a dolphin. But even so that MOB was recovered in double quick time. They always say that dolphins understand sailors in distress and it seems that this one had come to see what he could do to rescue our intrepid diver. He was quite pleased to be back on board.

On we steamed round the north of Scotland and there was one more serial and one more excitement in store. Before departure we had been told that KEDLESTON was going into Rosyth for a DED on our return and would have to be de-ammunitioned. It would be a great help to the permanent staff if we could get rid of as much as possible of the 40/60 ammunition – it's very heavy lugging it all up from the magazine. And we hadn't done any gunnery and there were some task books to be completed. So when we got to the Moray Firth and with a clear range across the North Sea we decided to have a shoot. And because we had lots of the stuff to get rid of we decided to ensure that everyone on board should have a go in the aimer's seat.

There was a rig support vessel at anchor inshore of us but otherwise nothing about, so we dumped a target out to sea and then steamed in a large circle at 10 knots with the bofors trained to port and one by one each member of the ship's company was dressed up in anti-flash and rotated through the various gun's crew positions. The aimer received instruction as the ship was steaming landwards, and once the outermost point of the circle was reached and the gun pointed safely out to sea they each let off a clip of four rounds of HE and then handed over to the next number.



All went very well until the very last member was seated – he was the baby chef. He was receiving his instruction – turn the handlebars this way and you train to port, the other way to starboard, rotate up to elevate, etc., etc. And he asked “but where’s the trigger?”. “Just there behind your right index finger”. So he tried it. Now the instructor who had been so careful with all the other 35 odd candidates had for once failed to put the cocking lever into the safe position, and, without warning – BANG – and away went a high explosive brick towards the rig support vessel. Panic!! CHECK CHECK CHECK!!! Cease fire bells clanging. Too late, of course. We could see it going – that lovely red tracer – but perhaps whoever was on anchor watch across the water couldn’t see it coming towards him. Anyway, it missed (otherwise you’d have heard this dit well before now!). It missed across his bows by about 10 yards – which, after all, is as good as a mile! Phew, close to a Court Martial though.

But that was the end of the serial, and baby chef never did get his last three shots in. Just think what he could have done. We hightailed out of there rather quickly.



And so we returned safely to Leith at the end of a pretty eventful and rather different RNR fortnight. The following day I was back in my solicitor’s office in London. “Did you have a nice holiday?”, somebody asked.

## It's a Small World

Stephen Isacke, Tarn et Garonne, France

I recently stumbled across your excellent TCA website and whilst in the Remembrance & Obituaries section, I was intrigued to see my late father staring back at me ! It was the article about Captain Jeremy Stewart and the photo of him next to the Emir of Kuwait. My father, Chris Isacke, was SO 9MSS at the time and CO of APPLETON and I found the very same photo in my father's collection.

Also in the collection was the traditional Ship's Company photograph [*opposite* ], taken in September 1965. Might any of that Ship's Company be reading this ?

When APPLETON decommissioned for the last time, my father acquired the ship's bell but sadly never hung it anywhere for fear of it being stolen. I am now in possession of the bell and it is proudly displayed outside my house in SW France. It couldn't be much further from the sea but at least it is close to a body of water !

I followed my father into the Navy and my first ship after leaving Dartmouth was BRONINGTON, Sep 75 - Mar 76. When I got news of my appointment a few months earlier, I can't say I was thrilled at the prospect of six months, in winter, in Scotland, especially when two of my colleagues had bagged a 9-month round the world cruise ! That said, it proved to be a beneficial and enjoyable experience and my reward was that Part 2 of my Midshipman's time was spent in sunnier climes on ARK ROYAL, the other side of the Atlantic.

After leaving the Navy in 1993, I eventually settled in East Anglia and, amongst other things, flew for the local police forces. Many a happy hour was spent at Wattisham Air Base, so I will have flown over the Editor's house from time to time !

### ***It gets even smaller...***

*When your Editor was a Cadet at BRNC Dartmouth in 1957, Lt Cdr Chris Isacke was one of our two Divisional Officers in Drake Division !*

*He was a distinguished Helicopter Observer in the days of dunking Whirlwinds and did his best to persuade his young protégés to join the Fleet Air Arm – some did.*

*It is a remarkable tribute to our website, and to those who have contributed to it over the years, including Rik Furnival, Bob Dean and the present team, that it can evoke memories from long ago – in this case from 64 years ago ! ... **Editor***



HMS APPLETON MS9 1965



Sonnette du Vaisseau

## CHAWTON Afloat Again

TCA member John Duffy has proudly shown us the radio-controlled model of CHAWTON he recently commissioned from model-maker Barrie Spooner, a former UC2. The model has working navigation lights, rotating radar aerial, trainable Bofors and a smoke generator in the funnel. Quite a masterpiece !



## Ramblings from REDPOLE

Doug Andrews, Ware

There I was, a mere stripling of 17 years and barely out of school, having volunteered to become a vital part of the backbone of Britain's defence and ready to do my duty as a Probationary Stores Assistant (Victualling) - yes, a potential Jack Dusty.

One of the main obligations of service in RNVR at that time if one was to qualify for one's annual Bounty, was to carry out 14 days' training annually with the Fleet, and having furnished the Sea Training Office on President with some convenient dates, found myself in September 1952 aboard **HMS Redpole** - a Modified Black Swan Class Sloop, recently re-categorised as a frigate and currently used as the Navigational Training Ship.

I had been allocated duties in the Cox'n's Office, where I was very quickly armed - if that is the right word - with a tin of Bluebell metal polish, some old rags and a hank of wire wool, which I had never before seen, and ordered to clean not one but two portholes. Sounds simple enough, but this included the scuttles, deadlights, butterfly nuts etc., the whole gamut. I quickly got started, but no-one had told me how to extract a small portion of wire wool from the hank, and my first mistake was to try and tear off a piece by brute force, which resulted in steel splinters in several fingers which were still being dug out weeks later.

I had previously taken a pride in 'polishing things', in that I had always helped my older brother with his Sea Cadet uniform and kit - his drum, his .303 rifle, plus blanco-ing his belt & gaiters etc., (don't ask what he looked like on one occasion, having been caught in a heavy rain shower) so I set to work with gusto and soon had both portholes positively gleaming. Secretly rather pleased with my efforts, I reported to the Chief Cox'n that I had finished them. Without inspecting them, he said "Well done, lad - by the way, did you grease them?" "No Cox'n, nobody told me to." "You'd better do them again then, they'll be green by now!" he replied - and he was of course, right. The passage of the ship through the water caused a fine salt spray which caused some form of verdigris (if brass is susceptible to it, which I doubt) to form very quickly! I duly cleaned them again, greasing as I went, and it was of course easier, second time around.

Later, I managed to redeem myself, by producing two pieces of golden toast on the office heater in time for the Cox'n's afternoon tea-break.



## **REDPOLE Second Dit, Doug Andrews**

Whenever I came across naval discipline and justice in action, I was always impressed with how swift and effective it was, and a classic example was provided when still serving in REDPOLE.

One forenoon, a dispute arose between two ratings which resulted in them swapping blows with each other on the upper deck, and this quickly came to the notice of the First Lieutenant. Both combatants were thereupon ordered to muster on the quarter-deck in P.E. kit in the First Dog Watch, when 'clear lower decks, hands muster on the quarterdeck' was piped. The crew quickly formed a ring in the limited space available, and two pairs of boxing gloves were produced. Having put the gloves on, the two ratings were ordered to fight two 3-minute rounds, with a third round of indeterminate duration which would end as soon as one chap knocked the other one down, at which point they were ordered to shake hands, and as far as officialdom was concerned, that was the end of the matter.

Shortly afterwards, one of my messmates received a letter from home from which he learnt that his father in Scotland had died. He told no one, but later that evening he went ashore by himself and drank himself into oblivion. How he managed to negotiate his way through the dockyard when returning onboard in complete darkness later was a complete mystery, but on arrival, his behaviour was to say the least erratic. He was causing a disturbance, at one time heaving a heavy metal 'spitkid' in the confines of the mess, and all this shortly before Evening Rounds was due to take place.

The Killick of the mess took it upon himself to go down aft and ask to speak to the First Lieutenant. 'Yes, what is it Hookie? Do we have a problem?' he asked. 'Yes Sir, there's an incident up for'ard, would it be possible for you to delay Rounds for 10 minutes?' 'Is it serious, do I need to get involved?' 'No Sir - don't ask!' 'Very good, you've got ten minutes!' 'Thank you Sir.' Returning to the mess, a hatch in the messdeck was opened and the drunken chap was manhandled into the storage space below, and the hatch firmly closed again. There was a couple of minutes of commotion from under our feet, and then silence.

Evening Rounds duly passed off without incident, whereupon the sleeping rating was returned to the mess. The loyalty of his messmates had kept him safe from the punishment that could have resulted from his behaviour, and I believe he proceeded on a Compassionate Long Weekend Leave shortly after to be with his family. It could all have ended so much worse.

I was impressed with the complete confidence the First Lieutenant had shown in our Leading Hand's discretion in advising him that it would be better if he didn't pry too deeply into the problem, and this confidence was not misplaced. Everyone was a winner.

# Only Having a Laugh ...



*VMT to Shipmate Andy of Stowmarket RNA for sharing with us this dit from his time in PENELOPE.*

Ship's Chaplains move between ships in their Squadron / Parish at regular intervals. Our worthy made such a transfer one Saturday morning and was promptly invited to the Chief's Mess that evening.

Waking on Sunday morning, the Chaplain discovered to his horror that he had left various bits of kit in the previous ship and did not have any communion wine for that morning's service.

Then he remembered that the Chief's Mess had some wine and enquired about 'borrowing' a red, only to be told that all they had left was some white.

This wasn't seen as a problem; the Chiefs came up trumps and the Chaplain had communion wine for the service.

Only he, and a couple of Chiefs, knew that the wine used was in fact a rather dashing white with a splash of Dubonnet to add some colour !

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# SOVIET INTEL

Commander Charles Wylie, Fareham

During my time as MCM 10 a huge NATO exercise was held that involved carrier groups and a large convoy to be delivered to Falmouth, where the approaches had been 'theoretically mined'.

Knowing that I did not have the appropriate expertise, I sent my trusty Chief to set up an MCM HQ and base, with an ops room and maintenance facilities (in portacabins) with fuel in a railway wagon, and everything needed to run the show.

He called me after a few days, saying "Right, Sir, I want you to arrive at Falmouth Station at 1010 on Thursday in best bib and tucker, sword and medals."

He wanted me to do something useful by touring the B&Bs where staff were to stay " ... to charm the landladies in your usual way, Sir."



Overlooking our 'secret' base was the stern of a Soviet merchant ship in dry dock, with more cameras than the paparazzi - There's good advanced planning for you ....



## Ey Up, Sithee ...

First ten years of the White Rose Branch  
Buster Brown, York



Coming up to the tenth Anniversary of the forming of the White Rose branch of the TCA. I thought readers of TON Talk may be interested in how it all came about. After asking TCA stalwart Pancho Brett for help and advice. I put a letter in TON Talk looking for expressions of interest. Our first meeting was arranged in the Punch Bowl pub for Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

This was attended by, from left to right in photo Myself, Trevor Watson (ctb), Stuart MacDonald (ctb), Stan McLellan, Pancho Brett and Les Sharpe.



We agreed to hold our next meeting on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October to enable those still working to attend.

That is when Terry Foreman, Dave Parrish, Alan Clayton and Roy Roden (ctb) came to join. A post-Christmas dinner was organised for the twenty-first of January 2012. One of the attendees, Dennis Cook our Membership Secretary, gave us a few tips on running a branch. For the dinner we had twenty four members and guests. We have met regularly on licensed premises ever since, until Lockdown interrupted our social programme

Our first cruise on the river Ouse through York, on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2012 was a great success and very well attended. Since those days I'm afraid problems with health and members Crossing the Bar have seen our membership decline somewhat but we have also attracted some new members, including Mike Martin, Alan Hewitt, Phil Pallent, John Rogers, Derek Arundale and Pete Underwood and we would welcome more. Those of us who remain are very enthusiastic and looking forward to shortly resuming our usual face to face meetings and Up Spirits. - See also report of meeting of 26 June on Latest News page of our website.

Minesweeper/ Minehunter crews are a special breed and we should all try to meet up as often as we can to keep that spirit alive.

***Tha' can allus tell a Yorkshireman – But tha' canna' tell 'im much  
... Editor, a Lancashire Lad***

## Let's play trains ...

This saga started innocently enough with an enquiry via the TCA website from Colin Hendry, once Curator of the Scottish Naval Collection display at Port Edgar. He had re-discovered among the exhibits in the collection the striking trophy, pictured below that had apparently been awarded to Sub Lieutenant Stansfield, Navigator of LEWISTON . The tally reads "ON TIME AGAIN, WATCH FOR A TRAIN, TRAIN IN SIGHT, FREE BEER TONIGHT- HMS LEWISTON 1969-70."

Colin had been told that it was a tradition that if a train passed overhead at the same time as a ship sailed under the Forth Bridge, the officer on watch would have to buy in the beers for the bridge and fo'cstlemen.

He presumed that the vibration of the train on the structure would have resulted in a shower of rust, dust and pigeon droppings falling upon the ship, making additional work to clean the upper deck, having just left harbour all neat and squared away..



Colin's question was whether this practice was a one-off just for LEWISTON, or whether the habit might be more common among vessels based at LOCHINVAR.

Not having had the pleasure of serving in Scottish waters and therefore unaware of native tribal customs, your Editor turned to Commanding Officers who had that experience and was soon rewarded.

Our Presided, John Lippiett, confirmed that the practice was honoured aboard EASTBOURNE, when based at Rosyth and Bernie Bruen was able to add lots of detail:

*Yes, this was a definite 'thing' that happened - if rarely. The rules were not laid down anywhere and were more myth than tangent. The occasion fell into two categories, one rare and the other even rarer still. It was the Navigator who was involved, (not the officer of the watch) he being responsible for the ship's position and ETA entering or leaving HMS Lochinvar and (after it closed) Rosyth.*

*On the rare occasion that the ship passed under the rail bridge as a train was passing overhead, the Navigator was indeed 'fined' a round of drinks - for causing much extra work for the crew in removing fall-out from the upper deck. However, Navigators always tried to achieve this precise piece of ETA-excellence as a mark of pride in their art. This is why a copy of the British Rail time-table for the area was always to be found tucked into the chart table shelf, alongside the tide tables and referred to avidly each entrance/sailing.*

*Should the even rarer event, that of having two trains passing in opposite directions above the ship as it passed below, the Navigator would receive a bottle of Champagne from the Captain and each train-driver a bottle of whiskey from the same source. The occasion of this occurring was 'rocking-horse teeth' stuff but it is known that, on such occasion, each of the three parties involved in the driving did their utmost to ensure a favourable outcome.*

*I only saw the first happen once. Geoff Mackett was the Navigator of Gavinton in 1977/8 and managed to pass under a single train. On that occasion the Captain (Lt Cdr Robbie Kerr) bought him Champagne for executing a job well done.*

*The second occasion was when I commanded Gavinton in 1984/5. The Navigator (Lt Alistair Halliday - later Commodore) had been relieved by Sub Lt Stuart McQuaker, who was taking the ship out of Rosyth for the first time. He achieved the legendary two-train R/V, and I remember thinking to myself, "We seem to have a good one here." I sprang for a case of Champs, which was divided 50% for Stuart and 50% for the train drivers. They took some tracking down but did not begrudge us the deviation from the 'traditional' whiskey. I was right about the McQuaker. He ended up as a Commodore too.*

*That is about all I have on this one; but it certainly 'ticked the box' on what was rapidly becoming, and now probably is - a myth !*

**Perhaps someone currently serving in 1 MCM could advise if the modern RN has time for such frivolity ... Editor**

# **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 6) and CHIDDINGFOLD (2/3) plus the Sandown class MCMVs SHOREHAM (1/4) and PENZANCE (1/3), all supported by RFA LYME BAY. LYME BAY has relieved CARDIGAN BAY which returned to the UK on 18 June.

In early June, PENZANCE performed survey operations off the coast of Kuwait in company with the Kuwaiti Naval Force's patrol vessel KNS ISTIQLAL. CHIDDINGFOLD held a 'lift the ship' event in aid of the World Wildlife Fund. In late June and early July, CHIDDINGFOLD, PENZANCE and SHOREHAM conducted Maritime Security Operations in the Gulf with the Type 23 frigate MONTROSE, LYME BAY and units of the US 5<sup>th</sup> Fleet.

## **HUNT Class**

LEDBURY (2/4) has been undergoing operational sea training in Scottish waters and has frequently encountered BANGOR (1/8) doing the same. She celebrated her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday on 12 Jun and is the oldest operational ship in the Royal Navy. In late June, Robert 'Scarlett' Johansen, a member of her Marine Engineering department suddenly and unexpectedly passed away aged 34. He had moved his wife and four children to the UK from Fiji. MIDDLETON (2/2) has been spotted leaving and entering Portsmouth and operating off Portland. She dressed overall for the Queen's birthday on 12 Jun.

## **SANDOWN Class**

PEMBROKE (1/4) completed her Baltic deployment with SNMCMG1 (Standing NATO MCM Group 1) with a visit to Świnoujście in Poland and returned to the UK via Rosyth on 7 June. BLYTH (1/2) visited Oban with HMS CHARGER in mid-June. In July, BANGOR (1/8) underwent signature ranging at NATO FORACS (Naval Forces Sensor & Weapons Accuracy Check Site), Stavanger. She has also been undergoing operational sea training in Scottish waters and has frequently encountered LEDBURY doing the same.

## **MASTT (Maritime Autonomous Systems Trials Team)**

The third and final Royal Navy autonomous minehunting boat was delivered to Faslane in June. RNMB HEBE can work in isolation on operations but also integrated with existing equipment. Together with her sister vessels HAZARD and HARRIER, HEBE is capable of working in different configurations – manually, remotely or autonomously – to detect and classify mines and maritime ordnance.

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.

## Visits to Minewarfare School and EGUERMIN

Progress, albeit slow, is being made with arranging visits for TCA members to the Minewarfare School at HMS COLLINGWOOD and EUERMIN, the NATO Centre of Excellence for Minewarfare, located in Ostend.

**The visit to the Minewarfare School** has had to be re-scheduled due to Covid. It will now take place, hopefully on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2022, to tie in with our Committee meeting.

The visit will include our presentation of the painting “*Minesweeper Sailors through the Ages*” to the school, followed by a tour, during which we will receive an update on current MCM technology and techniques. The visit starts at 10.00 and transport will be available from the Royal Maritime Club.

This visit is geared for members only and, since COLLINGWOOD is an RN establishment, facilities for those with disabilities may be limited.

The school can accept 12 of us and there are still a few places left, so *please hurry to contact Hon Sec if you would like to join us.*

**The visit to EGUERMIN** at Ostend has provisionally been arranged for mid-June 2022. (date to be confirmed). A travel and accommodation package has been negotiated with Tailor and Made travel of Bury St Edmunds which includes travel by Eurostar and the Channel Tunnel from St Pancras Station in London (Depart 11.04) to Brussels, then by Belgian Rail to Ostend (Arrive 16.16) plus four nights B&B accommodation at the 3-star hotel Ter Streep, about 200 yards from the seafront in Ostend, 9 euros taxi from station and half a mile from EGUERMIN.

The package is priced at about £495 per person sharing a double room, though Eurostar fares may increase next year. Travel insurance is recommended. An optional day excursion to Bruges can be arranged.

Half a dozen members have already expressed interest in this visit and the list for bookings will remain open until 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022. More details are available from HonSec. Some members may prefer to make their own travel arrangements and we have hotel prices for these options.

Wives and partners would be very welcome to participate in this excursion, but they may prefer to explore the delights of tourist-friendly Ostend, rather than sit through updates on sonar and robotics when we visit the school ...

## 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**

None – A first and hopefully a one-off.

### **REJOINED – Welcome Back**

**Leonard Virgo (RN)** Lancashire Served on HMS SHOULTON HMS NURTON HMS MAZXTON L0764

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

**David Woolgar.** To:- Shropshire L2087 - See page 3, *Who's Who*

**David Mayo.** To:- Edinburgh F0688

**Nikolas Marlowe-** Dauncey To:- Lydney, Gloucestershire. F2350

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

**Peter Harrison F0949** – See page 3, *Who's Who*

### **LOST CONTACT.**

*Anyone knowing current address please advise Membership Secretary*

**David N Humphrey.** Last Known Address:- Dunedin New Zealand L1653

**Frederick Breeds.** Last Known Address:- Seaford East Sussex L2069



## Crossed the Bar

***E.A Michael Spicer RN***

*Stevenage F1240*

*Served in HMS WALKERTON 1958-59*

***LRO Rodney Cox RN***

*Bournemouth, F2362*

*Served in HM Ships HOUGHTON 1965-67, WOLVERTON 1970-73.*

*ALVERTON 1967*

**May They Rest In Peace**



### **From the Archives**

*"... Well the anchor was  
attached when I signed for it .."*

**Anyone own up to this one ?**

# SLOPS

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## Post Bag

**FROM: Dave Fricker,**

**MoD [N] Hydrographic Office  
Civilian Staff, Portsmouth 1986-2012**

The rare photo of MADDISTON and DUFTON in April's edition active was fascinating.

After sale, DUFTON definitely lay here at Portsmouth in the '70's awaiting her fate. I recall her very well indeed.

The CMS's owned by Pounds initially spent some time at their Portchester Creek moorings, before a number were further moved into the Yard to lay-up, but most were actually finally broken up elsewhere.

**FROM: Brian Hargreaves,  
Tynemouth**

The picture of DUFTON and MADDISTON is in the lower Medway, with the former Kingsnorth Power Station chimneys in the background.

I believe both vessels were originally sold to Pounds and then, as seemed common practice, sold on to Liguria and Kitson Vickers respectively. However apart from being before February 1975 when MADDISTON arrived at Sunderland I cannot add a certain date to the picture.

**FROM: Michael Dyson, Selby**

Further to Gerry Nunn's question about MADDISTON and DUFTON being photographed together in the April edition of TON Talk, I believe that

the photo was probably taken in Portsmouth round about January 1975.

MADDISTON spent her whole career in Operational Reserve until attempts were unsuccessfully made to sell her in the early 1970's.

She had been laid down at Harland and Wolff in Belfast on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1955 and was launched by Mrs Duckworth, wife of Captain A.D.Duckworth RN rtd, Secretary of the Institute of Naval Architects, on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1956. After completion on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1956 she was ferried to Hythe, where she underwent the usual trials and storing. During 1957 she was at Beaulieu for preservation before being towed back to Hythe for preparation to be towed to Aden, still in Reserve.

The tow took place in the summer of 1958, via the Mediterranean and Suez and she remained, partially preserved at Aden until 1961, when she was towed to Malta to await a refit.

This took place in No.2 dock from June 1962, when she was alongside PAS Tug *Frisky*. She remained at Malta until April 1963, when she was towed to Gibraltar, again in Reserve.

Except for occasional refits and sea trials, she remained alongside at Gibraltar until June 1969, when she was again towed to Hythe, this time for the Disposal List (Sales). She was not sold and by 1973 she was at Portsmouth for de-equipping, which took place in 1974. At this time only

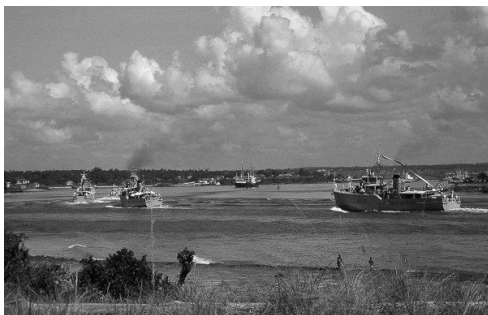
BOULSTON, DUFTON and MADDISTON were at awaiting disposal. Although BOULSTON and MADDISTON were both sold for scrapping in October 1974, neither ship appears to have been moved straightaway.

It is likely that BOULSTON had gone to Hythe by the time of the photograph – leaving just DUFTON and MADDISTON alongside each other for a brief time.

**FROM: John Hake, Ellesmere Port**

Re: Richard Gleed-Owen's letter in Ton Talk 209 about seeing 'sweepers in Mombasa, I was an LREM on BURNASTON at the time.

Attached a photo of the three 'sweepers he mentions, APPLETON, BURNASTON & CHAWTON of MCM 9 entering Kilindini Harbour, Mombasa on route from the Gulf to Gib, the date was 4<sup>th</sup> April 1969.



We met with three 'sweepers heading out to the Gulf in Mombasa plus the one that Richard didn't mention, BRINTON, our ship's dog Flakers was given a draft to BRINTON and went

back to serve another commission in the Gulf.

We carried on around Africa, calling at East London, Simonstown, Walvis Bay, Takoradi, Dakar and finally Gib, where we paid off and flew home on 28th May 1969.

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

A propos the piece in June's TON Talk it wasn't only the RN which had cap tallies.

Many of the larger yachts in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century had them for their crews. I have two examples from Sir Thomas Lipton's Shamrock and also from yachts owned by Rear Admiral the Hon Victor Montague, he of the eponymous whaler.



**From: Peter Hall, Norwich, via our Website:**

Does anyone recall Peter Hall, former AB, in APPLETON in the Gulf in 1962/63 and SHERATON in the Far East 1965/66; on both occasions sailing from UK.? Please advise ...

**Editor**



**FROM: Chris Player**

Bryan & Betty Player in front of the Oak tree that dad grew from an acorn he had picked up on the Meridian line at Greenwich Royal Park in 1987.

The sapling was re-planted at the National Arboretum on September 10th 2000 as a focus for the TCA Memorial .

The tree has since matured into a fair size .

## Admirals' Ukkers ?



RIGHT, THAT'S THE NEW RULE ON EIGHT PIECE MIXY BLOBS SORTED.

### ***Actually ...***

Vice Admiral Sir Jonathan Woodcock KCB, OBE (on the left), takes over from Vice Admiral Sir David Steel KBE, DL as Second Sea Lord (Head of RN & RM pay, personnel and shore side accommodation matters) on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

Vice Admiral Woodcock served in that role until 2018.

Vice Admiral Steel had held the post from 2012 – 2015.

He was TCA Guest of Honour at our Reunion in 2014 and was appointed Governor of Gibraltar in June 2020.