

TON Talk

Newsletter of the TON Class Association

Edition 217



August 2022



GANGES Mast Refurbishment

Rear Covers

TON Class Association

Patron HRH The Prince of Wales

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Founder: Jack Worth MBE

Editorial

HM the Queen's's Platinum Anniversary was celebrated with enthusiasm and joy; best of all by street parties in communities throughout the nation, with outpourings of respect and affection for our Gracious Lady - *See Dave Walker's Tribute at the head of Latest News for June on our website.*

Reunion, Nottingham 28-30th October. 50 members now booked. **Balances of fees to Secretary Matthew by 8th August, please.** Will those attending the Reunion, ***please bring a bottle*** as a Raffle prize – but no redundant Christmas presents, if you please ...

Sea Cadets. VMT to John Richardson of Darlington for offering to become our new Liaison Officer with TS Kellington in Stockton. As an RNR Engineer Officer, John served aboard HMS Kellington.

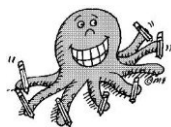
Any offers for regular liaison with T.S Highburton in Huddersfield and TS Dragon at Thurrock ?

Last call for Cenotaph Parade. Those wishing to march please register your interest with Secretary Matthew ASAP. RBL will close the list for tickets at end August.

Shavington TCA affiliated with the village of Shavington, near Northwich in Cheshire, about 25 years ago but the link faded away when the principals on both sides moved away/retired. We have now been contacted by the Community Manger for the Parish Council who has re-discovered the affiliation and has invited TCA to be represented at their Remembrance Day service. ***Volunteers please contact the Editor for details.***

TCA Website continues to receive enquiries from members of the public seeking to trace the service of relatives, particularly Grandads who served in sweepers in WW2. Editor's personal library, Wikipedia and the RN Patrol Service are helpful but enquiries for Service Records are directed to the National Archives at Kew.

Recommended Reading Summer edition of Vancouver Island Military Museum Newsletter under Further Info on our website. Inspiring story of the first woman to break the sound barrier, plus two brothers in FAA in defence of Malta.



Deadline for October's edition is 20th September

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Chairman's Corner

Salutations fellow members, there's been some notable representative events for the TCA in the last period.

During the Platinum Jubilee weekend, on Friday 3 June I was fortunate to have been invited to the National Service of Thanksgiving for HM Queen Elizabeth II's reign, held at St Paul's Cathedral, and in the company of Trudy, my wife. You might recall that Her Majesty's mobility was not on par that day and she was represented by the heir to the throne, and our Patron, HRH Prince of Wales. It was superb to see him in the full dress uniform of Admiral of the Fleet as he passed us in the aisle. At the Reception afterwards the Royal attendees were in a separate part of the Guildhall and it was at this point I knew I had missed a trick. Even though I was not there as Chairman of our Association, what I should have done is written to HRH's equerry beforehand, informing that I was in attendance as one of just 40 personnel from across the Armed Forces, and asking if I could meet our Patron in my capacity as Chairman of his TCA – I think he would've gone for it – maybe next time ! I did though meet the outgoing Prime Minister and CDS, Admiral Tony Radakin, and mentioned the TCA to them both.

Next up, on Saturday 25 June I was honoured again to have been invited to the Gala Dinner for Armed Forces Day National Event in Scarborough, and laid on by the Council at Scarborough Spa, again with Trudy. The lead Service for AFDNE 22 on Sat 25 June was the Royal Navy. HMS WESTMINSTER was in attendance, at anchor in the bay for the whole weekend, and RFA TIDESPRIING was at anchor on the day itself (being Duty Tanker she had to be elsewhere thereafter).

Finally, on Friday 15 July our President, John Lippiett, myself as Chairman, and Sam Cook as our Standard Bearer, along with several members of the TCA, attended the Dedication Ceremony of the Vernon Mine Warfare and Diving Monument at its place of installation in Gunwharf Quays, the site of the former HMS VERNON. Sam, as always, was well turned out, along with Jan Harvey, Standard Bearer of the MWA, and it is notable that Sam has been our Standard Bearer for 30 years now – quite the achievement – BZ Sam!

We have had several sad bereavements during July, including Wendy, wife of our Membership Secretary, Dennis Cook, Dulcie, wife of Vice President and Founder Member Chris Green and Susan, partner of Founder Member Cdr Bruce Nicolls. Sincere condolences from us all. TCA was represented at Wendy's funeral by Dave Parrish, who paraded the Northern Standard and Vice Chairman Peter Down represented TCA at Dulcie's funeral.

I'll finish with a final plea to those still making up their minds to consider support of our Reunion weekend at the Crowne Plaza, Nottingham over 28-30 Oct.

Best wishes to you all.

Bob Hawkins MBE

TCA Who's Who

President

Rear Admiral R John Lippiett CB. CBE. DL

Chairman

Commander Bob Hawkins MBE RN

A serving officer, so contact via Secretary only

Secretary

Matthew Salisbury

143 Redlands Road
Penarth, South Glamorgan
CF64 2QP
Tel: 02920 308 351
E-mail:
matthew@cavamh.org.uk

Vice Chairman &

Editor, TON Talk & Website

Peter Down

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

Treasurer

David Woolgar

Lime Tree House
Sandford Avenue
Church Stretton
Shropshire
SY6 7AE
Tel: 07410 988 470
E-mail:
djwoolgar@gmail.com

Membership Secretary

Dennis Cook

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

Chaplain

Rev. Trevor Filtness

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

Welfare Officer

Robbie Reid-Sinclair

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

COMING EVENTS

October 2022	Sat 29	TCA AGM & Reunion Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nottingham Booking Form from Editor
March 2023	Sat 11 11.00	TCA Committee Meeting Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth All members welcome.
October 2023	Sat 14	TCA AGM & Reunion Carlton Hotel, Torquay

Notes on TCA Committee Zoom Conference 4 July

Participating were: Chairman Bob Hawkins, Buster Brown, Bill Pollington, Dennis Cook, Sam Cook, Peter Down, Laurie Johnson, David Woolgar.

Apologies: Charlie Farnes, Rev Trevor Filtness, Chris Green, Robbie Reid-Sinclair, Matthew Salisbury.

1. Chairman Bob welcomed everyone to this Zoom Conference. It was clear that a lot was happening in the life of TCA and such informal catch up sessions were a valuable means for the Committee to be kept up to date and help us to direct TCA affairs in a responsible manner. It was agreed to hold such Conferences at broadly two-month intervals, next one being scheduled for early-mid September, so we will all be briefed prior to the AGM.

2. **Future Reunions.** Peter's recent discussion paper proposing a radical change in format was noted. Our ageing community, diminishing health, increased cost of living, especially for road and rail transport, are all factors which have dramatically reduced the numbers willing to attend Annual Reunions – so some reconsideration is appropriate.

Bookings for this year's Reunion in Nottingham are down to just 50. Next Year's Reunion has provisionally been booked at the Carlton Hotel, Torquay and will be held in our traditional weekend format. Any change to format would hence apply from 2024 onwards.

TCA Constitution requires us to hold an Annual General Meeting to report to all members significant matters concerning finance, membership, policies, projects and related matters and to provide members with an opportunity to question Officers of the Association on the conduct of our affairs. Traditionally this has been done via a face to face meeting.

The revised proposed format was for a mid-week, afternoon gathering at which the Chairman would present a report on activities and plans/aspirations for the future. The report would be prepared in advance from reports from all Heads of Departments, as at present. Following the Annual Report, there would be an opportunity for questions and discussion, followed by a buffet meal.

Some members may prefer to stay overnight for further socialising but each person attending would be able to make their own arrangements for accommodation e.g. B&B or Premier Inn, rather than the venue, if preferred.

It is anticipated that this format may be less expensive for those attending than our current model, although travel to the location may still be an issue.

The proposal for a revised format will be aired at the AGM and also in TON Talk, inviting members to comment and make positive alternative suggestions.

3. **Regional Gatherings** were also considered to be a valuable adjunct, as currently demonstrated by the White Rose Branch and previously by lunches held other areas. The Challenge will be to find volunteers to take responsibility for organising such events.

4. Limited Trials of **Payments by BACS** transfers have been held for renewal of Membership Subscriptions, sales and replenishment of Slops and bookings for the Reunion. Laurie, Dennis and Peter will continue to liaise with Treasurer David to define procedures and to confirm receipt of payments. Some amendment of documentation will be required before these facilities can be implemented, hopefully before Christmas.

5. **Inventory of Assets** Bill had circulated the current update to the inventory and explained that he had not yet examined in detail the five kitbags of drawings recently received from Portsmouth Dockyard. It is probable that we hold duplicates of some drawings and that some of the drawings recently received may concern modifications not of historical significance.

It was agreed that any materials deemed surplus to requirements should be advertised to members who may wish to acquire them prior to disposal. Members would have to meet the costs of post and packing.

6. **TCA Facebook Page** Chairman Bob undertook to contact Rik Furnival to explore if TCA could take over the Facebook page that Rik had set up some years ago.

7. **Fittleton Memorial** It was agreed to make an initial donation of £500 to the project to install a more significant memorial at All Saints Church Fittleton, now that permission had been received from Salisbury Diocese.

Phil Clarke of London Division Old Hands will be requested to keep TCA informed of progress. Thus far, over £4000 has been raised of the £12,000 estimated for the memorial. TCA may make a further donation as circumstances may require.

8. **BRONINGTON** Peter related information received via the national press about the activities of the group seeking to rescue Bronington and of discussions he has had with the principals involved. Peter's opinion, based on his visit to the ship in 2012 was that the vessel was Beyond Economic Repair at that time. A view subsequently endorsed by Rear Admiral Roy Clare.. In 2012 the upper deck was porous and dangerous to step on in several places, with 3 ft of water in the engine room and lower messdeck and a 10 degree list to starboard. The interior of the ship had been stripped of anything of value, partly by consortium of museums in 2007 and also by vandals.

The ship has received no maintenance since she left Manchester in 2002 and In 2016 the hulk sank with water over the maindeck, so her condition will not have improved.

Peter's advice was that TCA should NOT become involved in this latest "rescue project" and he expressed concern that the organisers had now initiated a crowd funding appeal for donations from the public. As far as is known, the organisers have not produced a business plan, either for restoration or subsequent use of the vessel, claiming that they are addressing one step at a time.

9. **Shavington Village**, which had one of the last affiliations with TCA has re-discovered the link and has asked for TCA to be represented at their service on remembrance Sunday. Members living in Cheshire will be advised via TON Talk.

10. **TS Kellington** John Richardson, our new Liaison Officer with Stockton on Tees Sea Cadet unit has sent a report on a favourable first meeting with the new Officer in Charge, Colour Sergeant Paul Hume SCC, RNR.

AOB

Dennis advised that we have just achieved our 2,500th member; LRO Damien Payton RNR who lives in Woodbridge, Suffolk. Dennis will prepare a formal certificate for him, which Peter will present, together with an invitation to attend our Reunion.

BREWERY RUN

Mick Donoyou

In 1975 the sweeper visited Copenhagen accompanied by several other TONs and the Frigate HMS JAGUAR with an Admiral on board who, on arrival, ordered a Shore Patrol, to be made up from members from all the sweepers, to report to him before proceeding ashore every evening.

I found myself "detailed off" for Shore Patrol on the same day as a "Brewery Run" to the Tuborg Brewery. I decided, reluctantly, it would not be a good idea to go on a Brewery visit in the afternoon if I had to report to the Admiral in the early evening.

The Cox'n asked me why I had not put my name on the list for the "Brewery Run" . I replied that I would not do that and also the Shore Patrol and I would do one or the other, but not both. The Cox'n (to whom I will always be grateful!) promptly put my name down for the "Brewery Run" and took me off Shore Patrol detailing somebody else instead.

The Brewery Run was most eventful and enjoyable and those who went were presented with a small medal by the Brewery which had the outline of the Brewery etched on the front. My "Oppo" and I pinned ours on to our Uniforms and, on being asked by strangers what the medals were, they got the answer that they awarded for "foreign" service by another country and were the "Danish CGB" - Conspicuous Gallantry in a Brewery.



MEMORIALS

MALTA

Sam Cook advises that he recently visited Malta and met Warren Zahra. As well as visiting old haunts, Sam took time to clean up the tablets at the Sliema War Memorial which commemorate TCA visits to the island. **VMT Sam.**



FITTLETON

Phil Clarke of London Division RNR Old Hands Association advises that the Parochial Church Council of All Saints Church, Fittleton, on the western edge of Salisbury Plain, has recently received permission from the Diocese of Salisbury to install a permanent memorial to the men lost aboard HMS FITTLETON on 26th September 1976.

The monument will take the form of a tablet of Portland stone, 28 x 25 inches, inscribed with the names of the eleven sailors who lost their lives in the incident, which was the largest loss suffered by the RNR in peacetime. The plaque will be placed on the North Wall of the church, directly opposite the entrance, so it will be immediately visible on entering. It is hoped that the ship's name-board will also be displayed there. The memorial will hence be readily accessible to the public.

So far just over £ 4,000 has been raised towards the cost of the memorial by donations from the Old Hands Association and members of the public, including former members of the RN and RNR. This is about one third of the amount estimated to be needed. More donations would be appreciated. Phil has set up a web domain, **www.hmsfittleton.org**. If you type that into your search engine it will take you direct to the page on All Saints website where details of how you can make donations are given.

You can also go direct to their 'Just Giving' page by using this link: **<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/hmsfittleton-appeal>**

The TCA Committee has agreed to make an initial contribution of £500 to this Memorial. HMS Fittleton. The men lost are also commemorated on the TCA Memorial at the National Arboretum and on the TCA website, in addition to the stained glass window in HMS President.

Dulcie Green – a Tribute

Tony Quick, Watford

A personal tribute to a lovely lady who, with husband Chris, are very special to both my wife Carole and myself. Chris and I served together in CONISTON in 1956/57 and TCA brought us back together again.

Dulcie was only a small child when her father lost his life as a Chief Petty Officer Stoker aboard HMS Glowworm when she had her fateful encounter with the German heavy cruiser HIPPER off Trondheim, Norway on 8 April 1940.

Detached and hopelessly outgunned, GLOWWORM engaged the cruiser and managed to fire her torpedoes before being set on fire with much of her upperworks destroyed. In an act of desperation, her C.O. Lt Cdr Gerard Roope rammed HIPPER, damaging her starboard side before drifting clear, then her boilers exploded, killing 109 men. Hipper rescued 40 of GLOWWORM's crew but sadly many died from their wounds.

Lt Cdr Roope was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for this action, partly upon the recommendation of HIPPER's Captain, Hellmut Heye, who had commented on the bravery displayed to the International Red Cross.

"Behind every Good Man, there is a Good Woman" I find this cliché is most appropriate in what I want to say as a tribute to a good TCA Friend's loving wife who has recently passed away. I could not let this moment pass without paying our sincere respects to Chris and the Green Family. It is relatively rare for our Ladies to get a mention in our TCA affairs. We often forget who has put up with our ageing frustrations, who washes and irons that snow white shirt for parades, who steals a secret peek at the saucy jokes in *TON Talk*, who sells the raffle tickets and clears up afterwards, who dresses up as a Princess for Reunions and who shows pride in being a Sailor's Wife.

Some may say "What's your point, this is a naval magazine ?" Wrong ! TCA has a social life as well.

Dulcie was Chris' wife for 64 years of happy family life. A "Portsmouth Lass", she has a distinguished Naval Family background. Her legacy still carries on that tradition for she and Chris have three sons, one of whom is now retired Lt Col Green RM. The Greens are a family which is most principled and private, yet generous with their support. Our thoughts are very much with you at this sad moment in your lives for, as old friends who enjoyed Dulcie's company for thirty five years, you do not mourn her alone.

For Chris, over sixty six years ago I carried your toolbag in CONISTON, I have never heard you use a swear word. Yes, I would do it all over again.

Condolences from all the ex-CONISTONs and your many friends in TCA.

*TCA was represented at Dulcie's funeral on 28 July by Vice Chairman Peter Down and his wife Doreen ... **Editor***

HMS SHOREHAM VISIT

HMS Shoreham M112 is due to be finally de-commissioned later this year and is currently on a Farewell Tour of British ports. She was first commissioned in 2002 and has given distinguished service on MCM and patrol duties in home waters, with NATO in Northern Europe and on long term deployments in the Gulf.

On 14th May she visited Shoreham by Sea in Sussex, where a parade was held to hand back to the Town Council the Freedom of the Borough that had been conferred on the ship in 2011.

The parade was observed by many citizens of Adur area during which the Ship's Company marched through the town with banners flying, drums beating and bayonets fixed.

TCA was represented at this ceremony by Lt Cdr Noel Atkins RD, RNR and CCY Dave Walker, pictured below with members of SHOREHAM's Ships Company. Both had previously served in HMS Sussex RNR Division based at Shoreham.





SHOREHAM
departs HMNB,
Clyde



March on the Guard

C.O. Lt Cdr Andrew Platt
returns the Charter of
Freedom of the Town to
the Mayor



Only Having a Laugh ...



Be careful what you wish for ...

A Bunting Tosser, a Dabtoe, and a Stoker catch a magic goldfish while out fishing in a boat.

The goldfish pleads to them: "C'mon guys, I have a family down there, don't eat me ! Here's what I'll do for you; Wherever you want to go, just say the place, and jump off the boat into the water and the very next moment you'll be there."

The Bunting Tosser comes forward and says: "I've missed my dear land of flags and morse and signals; I want to go back to HMS Mercury." He approaches the edge of the boat, yells "HMS Mercury !", jumps into the water and goes back to the big mast at Mercury.

Amazed, the Dabtoe approaches next, "I want to return to the land of guns and bangs and cordite." he says, and yells "HMS Cambridge! ", and in the same fashion as the Bunting Tosser, he ends up back on the range at HMS Cambridge.

Finally, the Stoker approaches the edge of the boat, and as he is thinking about where to go and prepares to jump, he slips and exclaims out loud, "### 'kin hell !" ... *And away he went !* ...

Love is ...

During stand-easy, Jack tells a messmate that he met his wife at a dance.

His messmate replies, "So you met your wife at a dance. Wasn't that romantic?"

"No", replies Jack. "It was embarrassing. I thought she was at home looking after the kids !"

VMT Gen Dit, Stowmarket RNA



Progress with APPLETON Model

Andrew Salmon



Times Past – from TON Talk 47 March 1994

The following has been adapted from an article originally published in a Merchant Marine magazine. Slight changes have been made to remove now unacceptable references to “foreigners” ... Editor

We had just picked up the Pilot and were entering the canal leading to the port, as the Midshipman returned from replacing flag Golf by flag Hotel. It being his first trip with us, he was having difficulty in rolling up the flag and stowing in back in the locker, so I showed him how and told him to “Let Go”, somewhat sharply.

Just then the First Lieutenant appeared from the bridge wing, where he had been checking that berthing lines were in order and, thinking that I was referring to the anchor, he shouted to the Foc'stle Officer to “Jump to it”. The port anchor had been cleared away, but letting go when the ship was still travelling at ten knots, proved too much for the windlass brake and the whole of the port cable was pulled out to the bitter end. I fear that the damage to the Chain Locker may be extensive.

The braking effect of the anchor and cable caused the ship to veer towards the swing bridge, though which we had intended to pass. The bridge operator showed considerable presence of mind in opening the bridge to let us through, but unfortunately, in the excitement, he forgot to halt road traffic, which is how a Volkswagen, two cyclists and a cattle truck carrying pigs, came to land on my foc'stle. In an attempt to slow the ship, the Foc'stle Officer let go the starboard anchor and it can only be viewed as bad luck that it fell on the bridge operator's cabin, putting him, and it, out of action. The ship's company have now rounded up all the pigs and I am pleased to report that none appear to be injured or distressed, although we will have a lot of clearing up to do before Rounds.

As the ship began to shear across the canal under the influence of both anchors, I ordered “Full Astern” and personally rang the MCR to ensure maximum astern revolutions. I was informed that the sea water temperature was 58 degrees and would there be a movie tonight ? The rest of this conversation does not add to the facts of this report.

Back aft they had their own problems: as the port anchor was let go, the Quarterdeck Officer was supervising making fast the stern tug. The sudden braking effect of the anchors caused the tug to run under our counter. Fortunately the towing hawser had been secured and delayed the tug sinking for long enough for its crew to abandon ship safely.

It is strange to relate but at the very time we encountered problems with the anchors, there was a power outage ashore. We were passing through an “Underwater Cable Area”, clearly marked on the chart, so perhaps the anchors may have touched something on the bed of the canal. It may be fortunate that the overhead high tension cables brought down by our foremast were not live at the time, but owing to the blackout ashore we cannot be certain where the pylons fell.

The reactions of civilians during moments of minor crises never cease to amaze me. As I write the Pilot is huddled in a corner of my cabin, having consumed most of my best gin, while muttering what may be prayers in his own language. The tug captain, however reacted more violently and had to be forcibly restrained in the Sick Bay by the Buffer.

I attach the names and addresses of the drivers and insurance companies, as they may assist Admiralty in recovering the costs for the damage done to my foc'stle guard rails.

I regret that the flashing blue lights and sirens now make it difficult for me to concentrate, but the Midshipman has been reminded that there is no need to fly the Pilot Flag after sunset.

I remain, Sir, Your Obedient Servant ...

SITS VAC

As we all age gracefully and in formation, declining health is taking its toll and we REALLY could do with a couple more active (younger, mere 60's ?) members to join the Committee and spread the load.

Volunteers please discuss what might be involved with Peter Down or Chairman Bob Hawkins.

PLUS, it would be sensible to plan for succession to Peter as Editor by appointing someone with some IT and literary skills as **Assistant Editor**.

It would be possible to separate the roles for Website and TON Talk, as in the past.

The website virtually runs itself and was set up so that any changes can be made by our Tech Support team at Spidesign. At present Peter has sufficient IT skills to make the updates himself, but all a new Editor would have to do is e-mail desired changes to Spidesign and they implement them, as part of our £40/month support package.

TON Talk magazine is more complex. Chasing up contributions from members, finding relevant stories from naval sources and often writing 50% of the copy, takes a fair bit of the Editor's time.

Liaison with the printer is not difficult as we now e-mail the finished text to them as Word documents for each article in sequence, together with a print plan. The printer then assembles the magazine in print-ready pdf format, which is sent back to the Editor for approval and sign off, OR for any last-minute corrections.

The printer then digitally prints and sends out the paper copies by post – a fulfilment service, including addressed envelopes, which costs about £180 + VAT per edition, plus UK and overseas postage. We get a 30% discount on UK post because the addressed envelopes are printed and bagged in post code sequence.

Editor e-mails the Proof Copy pdf to about 130 members who have agreed to reduce our postage bill by taking the electronic version instead of paper. This facility was originally introduced to save expensive postage to exotic places including Alaska, Australia, Argentina, Thailand etc but is now also used by TCA silver surfer members in the UK.

He also uploads the Proof Copy to our website, where it is accessible by the public – another reason to be cautious about what we may say in print.

We have developed quite a slick and cost-effective process, but none of this is magic and the Assistant Editor would be briefed on the tools and techniques employed. There may be scope for improvements e.g. by using of MS Publisher or similar packages,

Our printer, Gipping Press, is close to the Editor's home and liaison could well continue with Gipping by e-mail. OR, with goodwill, the process could be replicated with another printer, if preferred, by a new Editor.

If you would like to discuss possibilities for taking over as Editor, perhaps within a year or so, please contact Peter on peter.avoca@gmail.com

Dedication of VERNON Monument

Over 800 people attended the Dedication of the VERNON Monument of 15 July. TCA was represented by President Rear Admiral John Lippiett and his wife Jenny, Chairman Commander Bob Hawkins, Standard Bearers Sam Cook and Jan Harvey (MWA), Charlie Farnes, Terry Wood, Gary Faulkner, Gordon & Mrs Walker and Chris Green, while Rob Hoole and Sam were also members of the organising Committee.

The ceremony had originally been due to be held a couple of years ago when the monument had been installed but Lockdown intervened, so it was re-scheduled.

Former Mine Clearance Diving Officer Rear Admiral Paddy McAlpine gave the key address, reminding everyone that about one-third of all mines laid in the Second World War had not been cleared at the conflict's end. Today's divers are still called out to deal with around a dozen rendered safe or blown up around the UK each year. And mines are still being laid today, as witness the Gulf and Black Sea.



MYSTERY FIND IN GEORGIA, USA

An intriguing piece of historical research has resulted from an enquiry made to the website of Marshland Maritime Museum, which hosts our collection of TONs memorabilia.

Ben Kendrick is an experienced metal detectorist, living in Georgia and recently found the belt buckle pictured below (dimensions 2 x 1¼ inches), in the grounds of what had once been the Georgia Military Institute in Marietta. Friends speculated that the buckle might have belonged to a Royal Navy Petty Officer and, since it was found at a depth of 8-12 inches, it could date from the Colonial era. Ben requested assistance in tracing the origins of the item.



The easy part was discounting the probability of an RN origin, as the crown, scrolls at the sides and three diagonal stripes bear no relationship to RN badges. Similarly, until recently, RN uniforms did not include leather belts

The Georgia Military institute was founded in 1851 and was destroyed by General Sherman's "Marching through Georgia" in 1864 during the American Civil War (1861-65). The American Revolution occurred in 1775-1783, so it is extremely unlikely that there would have been any RN presence in that area thereafter.

Ben says that the buckle appears to be made of pewter and the distressed appearance of the front could be a result of deterioration during a long period in the ground. However the design of the clasp appears to be almost modern and the sharp 88 on the back suggests commercial manufacture and may possibly be a design number.

The American Revolution attracted support from a lot of political activists in Europe, notably from the outset, the French revolutionary Lafayette and the English author of "The Rights of Man", Tom Paine, both of whom lived in the new United States for a time.

1848 was known as the Year of Revolution due to turmoil in a number of countries in Europe, stirred up by nationalist passions and desire for voting rights. It is possible that disappointed activists with military or naval experience may have fled to the USA to pursue their ambitions.

In the Nineteenth Century there were at least a dozen Crowned Heads in Europe, many of which had a navy, from Scandinavia, Russia, Prussia, Netherlands, to Spain, Italy, the Balkans and Austria-Hungary, so no shortage of potential sources.

It is pure speculation, but one of these activists may have attended the Georgia Institute as an Cadet or an Instructor and brought the belt with him as a souvenir of home, BUT it is thought that most of Europe favoured the Northern Confederate States in the American Civil War, if only because of the issue of slavery. It is possible that the owner of the belt had a change of allegiance and threw the buckle away.

The three oblique stipes are a particular challenge; never part of an RN design, they may indicate a petty officer or *sous-officier* rank in other navies. USN WW2 uniforms has such stripes for Strikers, specialist mates for technical grades, and even today retains them as long service badges.

The Georgia Military Institute was not rebuilt but the area was later occupied by an agricultural college and, as recently as 1930s-1960s, by private houses.

Ben advises that he has also found buckles from sashes and shoes close to the area of this find, so an old provenance would not be impossible.

The challenge of identifying this belt buckle has been referred to friends of TCA with an interest in history in both the USA and Europe.

Best match for the crown seems to be that of the Netherlands (right) and the scroll resembles the "gingerbread" on the stern of Dutch vessels in the age of sail when Holland traded with the nearby West Indies.



However a parallel line of research has found a (dissimilar) crown, anchor and wreath badge for the Rhode Island Militia, although they dropped the crown after the Revolution and are not known to have served in the south. Research continues and the crown of Spain, *Corona Tumelar*, is also a good match. Neighbouring Florida was under Spanish control from 1513 to 1821 and cross border activities, including local raids, have been recorded.

Have you seen anything like this elsewhere, or **DO YOU** have any bright ideas ?

Otherwise, this enquiry may become one for the Antiques Road Show ...

Trumpers is back ! – with a Conundrum

We are delighted to advise that Rear Admiral Sir Horace Trumpington-Loudly CB, our favourite spokesman on naval affairs, has returned from isolation in the Anchorage Retirement Home for Seafarers during the Covid crisis and is well enough to get out and about to resume his pithy Observations.

Your Editor recently had the pleasure of having lunch with him at the Ferryboat, a delightful and historic inn at the mouth of the River Deben, near Felixstowe. Trumpers had been visiting some old haunts in East Anglia, chiefly Harwich where he had been C.O. of one of the TONs that formed the original 105 MSS in the early 1950's and the former GANGES site, soon to be turned into a housing estate, where he had once been an Instructor and Divisional Officer. - *See report on Rear Cover*

Charmed by the attentive and attractive young bar staff, Trumper's eyes then alighted on old print on the wall adjacent to our table – *See below*.



An unsigned painting, probably from the Victorian era, depicting a paddle tug approaching a merchant ship in a stormy sea. The old sea dog's eye was drawn to the accuracy of details including rigging, waves and a buoy sporting a pennant, and he began to speculate about the possible story behind the scene depicted.

Watery sunlight and a probable easterly wind suggest an early winter morning.

We asked the landlord about the provenance of the picture but he could not help "... it came with the pub when we took over, so it may have been hanging there for 100 years or more ..."

By then Trumpers was on to his third Horses' Neck, feeling replete and expansive, so he let his imagination roam.

On the horizon at left is what appears to be a Thames barge, so a location on the east coast is probable.

Given that Harwich, at the mouth of the Rivers Orwell and Stour, is just a few miles to the south west, the scene might well have been set close to where we were sitting.

The Gabbard pilot station is in this vicinity to this day, so might that be indicated by the pennant on the buoy ? Pilot vessels were usually sail craft based on the design of Shrimpers, and cargoes of grain from Australia were brought by sailing ships up the Orwell to Ipswich well into the 1890's.

But why is the merchantman under bare poles with no sails set ? – unusual as she would not then have steerage way, which would be helpful if she intended to pick up a tow into harbour from the paddle tug.

No black balls or other marks to indicate that she is at anchor, aground, or in trouble off a lee shore. Trumpers recalled that Trinity House drafted the first Regulations for Avoidance of Collisions at Sea in 1840, so perhaps the scene is set before that date ?

Can YOU add to Trumpers' guesswork ? - and can anyone identify the artist ?

Trumpers was conceived a few years ago by the Editor as a means of poking gentle fun at some of the more unusual decisions of their Lords Commissioners of Admiralty, as was, now known at the Ministry of Defence (Navy).

However, decisions in recent years by politicians of all persuasions stripped the Navy of ships, aircraft and personnel such that its condition was no laughing matter, so Trumpers was retired.

Hopefully new build ships, advanced technology and the traditional strength of character of the modern Jack and Jenny promise a brighter future.

*Trumpers returns and may his signals "I observe ..." once again strike fear among recipients ... **Editor***



Portrait of Trumpers by Tony Standish

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

Aubrey Manewell ME1 RN. Gillingham Kent.

E-mail:- aubreymanewell067@gmail.com. Served on HMS WILKIESTON 68-69 F2499

Damien Payton. LRO (G) RNR. Woodbridge Suffolk .

E-mail:- Damien.payton@gmail.com. Served on HM Ships LEWISTON, ALFRISTON, KELLINGTON, BILDESTON 1979-91 L2500

Thomas Preece. L/S RN. Monmouth Monmouthshire.

E-mail:- tjpreece@btinternet.com. Served on HM Ships GLASSERTON 1970-73, BEACHAMPTON 1973-75 F2501

Philip Carroll. A S/LT RN/RAN. Crediton Devon.

E-mail:- philipjcarroll@btinternet.com. Served on HM Ships GAVINTON 1985, BRINTON 1985 F2502

Joseph Kelly. A/B (MW) P/O (MW) RN/RNR. Co. Down Northern Ireland.

E-mail:- joekelly349@btinternet.com Served on HM Ships LEWISTON 1981-82. SHAVINGTON 1983-85 F2503

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

James Bisset. To:- Balerno Edinburgh. F0380

Robert F Richards. To:-Cromer Norfolk. F0074

George Lines. To:- Hamble Hampshire L1624

Malcolm J North. To- Barmouth Gwynedd. L0826

CHANGED E-Mail ADDRESS

Barry Harris. To:- navy1909@protonmail.com F1602

LOST CONTACT.

Anyone knowing current address please advise Membership Secretary

Robert Macpherson. Last known Address :- South Queens Ferry Scotland. F0517

William F Bygrave. Last Known Address:- Gosport Hampshire. F0079



Crossed the Bar

RS John Edward Smith RN Waterloooville F 1595

Served in HM Ships MARYTON /KILDARTON 1965, CHAWTON/WISTON 1969

Commodore Bryan Adams RN Not a TCA member but known to many.

A distinguished aviator and diplomat. Served in HMS HOUGHTON 1960-61

LRO Bernie Bristoll RN West Hendon F1883

Served in HM Ships HOUGHTON 1958/59 and LULLINGTON 1959/60

As a guide on HMS Belfast, Bernie gave demonstrations of morse to the public

Dulcie Green Wife of TCA Vice President Chris Green, Folkestone

Wendy Cook Wife of TCA Membership Secretary Dennis Cook, Worksop

Susan Hollins Partner of Cdr Bruce Nicholls, Staplehurst, Kent

L/S Edward Allen RN Manchester, F0460

Served in HMS ALCASTON 1953/55

Buffer of first commission of first TON in commission

AB George Downie RNR/RN Edinburgh, F1321

Served in HM Ships KILLIECRANKIE, 1953-56 & 1958-66,

PENSTON 1956-58 (Suez & Malta)

ERA George G Robertson RN. Dumfries Scotland.

Served on HM Ships MULL OF KINTYRE, BLAXTON, CONISTON,

LOCHINVAR 1968-69. HMS KEDLISTON 1969 F1176

CPO Robert P Phillips RN. Bognor Regis West Sussex.

Served on HM Ships WOLVERTON 1966-67, BEACHAMPTON 1968-69 F0957

May They Rest In Peace

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 MIDDLETON (MCM2 Crew 4) and CHIDDINGFOLD (2/1) plus the Sandown class MCMVs BANGOR (1/6) and PENZANCE (1/1), all supported by RFA LYME BAY. Crews rotate every four months. On 2 June, all the ships dressed overall for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. MIDDLETON celebrated her 38th year in commission on 4 July. In early June, BANGOR hosted members of the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme in Bahrain. The visit enabled 11 Members of Parliament, a Lord and a Baroness to meet Crew 8 and give them a sense of life on a deployed warship. She then continued supporting the International Maritime Security Construct's CTF Sentinel, reassuring the merchant shipping community while conducting maritime security operations. After an operational stand-down in July, she visited Dubai where her ship's company saw the city and enjoyed the weekend of Eid Al-Adha celebrations.

HUNT Class

Harland & Wolf have won a £55 million contract to prepare the former QUORN for transfer to Lithuania, which already operates ex-COTTESMORE and ex-DULVERTON. In early July, HURWORTH (2/3) visited Newcastle where she hosted the Lord Mayor, among other dignitaries, plus local Sea Cadets. BROCKLESBY (MCM2 Crew 2) visited Hull in late June to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Falklands war. Her visit coincided with ceremonies involving personnel from Rosyth-based TONs who manned the five converted minesweeping trawlers of the 11th MCM Squadron which deployed to the South Atlantic. She then carried the Armed Forces Day National Event flag from Hull to Scarborough.

SANDOWN Class

In May, SHOREHAM (1/5) completed a final short tour of the UK ahead of her planned decommissioning including a visit to her namesake port during which 1,500 members of the public toured the ship. In July, members of her ship's company joined members of the British Army and RAF in the Act of Loyalty parade at the palace of Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh. This was made extra special by the attendance of Her Majesty the Queen. PEMBROKE (1/2) has been conducting sea training off the west coast of Scotland. In early July, she visited Oban where she hosted 1,600 visitors as well as local dignitaries, Sea Cadets, schoolchildren, etc. After sailing, she laid a wreath commemorating the mining and sinking of the First World War minesweeper HMS JASON by the German submarine U-78 on 7 April 1917 with the loss of 30 crew. Her final resting place off the coast of Coll wasn't discovered until April this year. PEMBROKE later reported conducting gunnery serials and firefighting exercises at sea.

MASTT (Maritime Autonomous Systems Trials Team)

MASTT conducted trials at Portland during June then returned to Portsmouth in July for a maintenance period prior to the next Systems Performance Assessment Trials (SPATs).

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

Punchy Reunion

It took over half a century, but finally we got a reunion in May !

We all served together on the Punchy (9th MCM), taking her from Gib round to Bahrain. Who remembers us, and wants to come for a pint and swing the lamp next time ?

We hope to arrange another get together within the next six months.

We REALLY look forward to hearing from you !

Contact me, Brian (Ces) at **gangesbuoy@gmail.com** 07974 724259

From L>R - Brian (Cecil) Beaton (AB) - Chris (Buster) Brown (RO) - Terry (Mandy) Rice (AB) - Brian (Jonah) Jones (OEM) -



PEROMPAKAN - PIRACY and the ROYAL MALAYSIAN NAVY 1967-9

Commander David Frost RN, High Wycombe



This article is adapted from a longer piece first published in the Naval Review. Commander Frost served on loan to the Royal Malaysian Navy (Tentera Laut di Raja Malaysia) from 1967 to 1969; first as CO of a patrol craft and then as Staff Operations Officer to the Naval Officer In Command, West Malaysia at a time when Confrontation (1962-6) had just ended and the naval priority was anti-piracy patrols in the Malacca Straits

Royal Malaysian Navy

The origins of the Royal Malayan Navy, as it then was, go back to pre-WW II war years as RNVR Singapore but it resumed after the war with seven Seaward Defence Motor Launches, a controlled minelayer, a landing craft (gun) and a former landing craft which served as the engineering support ship in the northern end of the British naval base in Singapore. In the mid 1950s a new barracks and training establishment, *KD Malaya*, was built to provide the infrastructure appropriate to a growing navy.

By the time I arrived all the SDMLs had gone or been relegated to reservist training and there was a modern (in the main less than ten years old) fleet of one Loch class frigate [KD Hang Tuah – named after a famous fifteenth century Malay navigator cum pirate chief], six coastal minesweepers, 14 Vosper PCs, four Vosper Fast Patrol Boats, two inshore minesweepers, one LCT and a yacht/survey ship.

By 1968 the PC fleet had reached its planned 24 ships and although the LCT had been paid off, the total strength had risen to 38 ships. This was a mammoth expansion from the small fleet of less than ten years earlier and was only achieved with substantial assistance from the RN, RAN, RNZN and IN who provided officers and ratings to augment the Malaysians who were being trained as fast as circumstances would permit.

The operational headquarters had been shifted out of *KD Malaya* to a splendid new complex of offices, stores and workshops at Malaysian Base Jetty (MBJ), situated on Singapore island, at Woodlands, close to the Causeway to Johor Bahru and west of the RN Naval base. Virtually the whole navy was run from here under the command of NOIC West Malaysia although NOIC East Malaysia, in Labuan, had Operational Control of

ships in Sabah and Sarawak and there were RNOs in Penang, Kuching, Sibuan and Tawau running an assortment of small craft.

I was to command *KD Renchong* (named after a traditional small single-edged dagger) and be half leader of the 3rd PC squadron which would eventually number six ships. I had just under three years in as a Lieutenant and PC3 was seven months my senior. When *KD Renchong* was commissioned only the Ordinary Rates and I held our ranks substantively. A year later I was the most senior lieutenant in the RMN. I mention this because it is an indication of the level of experience that existed throughout the navy. Paradoxically much of the experience there was had been gained on the front line of Confrontation, the now largely forgotten small war waged by the Indonesians against Malaysia. Some PCs still had the bullet holes to show for it.

When I arrived *KD Renchong* was sitting on the deck of a Ben Line ship on her way out to Singapore, so I spent a few days at sea with PC3 as a useful introduction to the RMN. We commissioned on 12th May 1967 and after a short work up, went on patrol.

Patrol Regime

A four-ship patrol was maintained in the Malacca Straits on a two week on two week off basis. A further four ships were maintained in East Malaysia so more than a quarter of the fleet was at sea on operations at any one time. There were no leave or maintenance periods and such activities had to be fitted in when the ship was alongside or slipped for a bottom scrub.

Patrolling was mainly done at night and we had one night off in the fortnight. PCs had only two officers and not all first lieutenants had Bridge Watchkeeping Certificates, so this was a gruelling routine unless one was able to obtain a midshipman or allow the coxswain to take a watch. For a couple of patrols I managed to borrow a midshipman from an RN frigate in for a DED. Some ships patrolled by night and then anchored to sleep it off whilst others also kept at sea during the day.

Malaysia claimed a three mile limit and the Indonesians to the median line of the Straits but this was not accepted by Malaysia so jurisdiction was always an interesting topic. I normally chose a patrol line west of the main shipping route but east of the median line with the intention of intercepting craft heading across the straits. Others opted to patrol nearer the fishing fleets which were the main targets for piracy.

In addition to the RMN, the Royal Malaysian Police also conducted patrols. Their PX craft, of which there were 18, were slightly smaller and less well armed than the PCs but had a three knot speed advantage. There was never any coordination between their patrols and ours although we got to know some of the Inspectors quite well. Nor did we have any specific indication as to where the fishing fleet might be to enable us to arrange the patrols accordingly.

We received regular intelligence reports on piracy but all were historic. If memory serves aright they only came out monthly. The tales they told were always the same. In the

main the piracy appeared to be carried out by Indonesians, often men in military uniform, who had commandeered a fishing boat. Some reports spoke of Indonesian customs launches (BT boats) being involved – collecting customs duties on the High Seas as it would appear. On one occasion a PC arrested a BT boat which had boarded a fishing vessel. It was taken in and handed over to the police but the diplomatic dust then started to fly and eventually the boat was released without charges being laid.

The victims were usually Malaysian fishing boats although occasionally a barter trader was targeted. This was probably a reflection of the relative density of the two types of craft rather than a predilection for one or another. There was no discernable geographical pattern and the fact that most attacks took place at night was mainly due to the fishery also taking place at night. I have no clear recollection of the reported frequency of attacks but it was certainly in double figures most months.

I do not recollect any incidents of large ships being targeted, although this certainly happened later. I suspect the general level of naval activity would make this rather unrewarding as the large ships could easily have made distress signals whereas the fishing boats had no radio. I was interested to note that the Ben Line, and no doubt others, issued their masters with a couple of .455 Webley revolvers but whether these would ever have been used is a matter for conjecture.

Boarding Parties

The Vosper PCs were well suited to the task, if perhaps a little slower than would have been ideal. They were 103 ft long, had a crew of 22 and carried a Bofors 40/70 fore and aft. The maximum speed was about 20 knots and the nominal endurance around 1,500 miles. Fuelling could be a worry as the only place open 365 days a year was the Shell refinery at Pulau Bukum. Fuel was also available on weekdays at Port Dickson and on Saturdays too at Port Swettenham (now Port Klang). Neither was open on public holidays and as Chinese New Year lasted four days this could give rise to problems.

I kept the boarding party well trained and exercised. A GPMG was permanently mounted on the flag deck whilst at sea and a pistol kept on the bridge. Both were manned and loaded for routine inspections of small craft by day unless there was some reason to expect trouble. In this case and for all night investigations the full boarding party was closed up. Depending on the circumstances either A gun or a GPMG mounted on the starboard bow were manned in addition to the flag deck GPMG. Further fire suppression was available from a fully automatic SLR by the funnel. The four man boarding party was led by the first lieutenant and was armed with a pistol, rifle and sub machine guns. Weapons were fully loaded with the safety catch on.

Incidents

One night radar revealed what looked like a BT boat closing on a fishing boat. As we got nearer this was confirmed visually. What was not clear in the darkness was whether an attack was in progress. The BT boat had a five knot speed advantage and would undoubtedly leg it once he spotted us. I pondered whether I would be justified in using a

2" rocket to illuminate and then opening fire with the Bofors. As the circumstances were right on the limit of the ROE and we had never practised night firing due to an acute shortage of rockets I stayed my hand. This was perhaps as well. The BT boat eventually spotted us and high tailed it back into his own waters. It transpired he had never got closer than twenty yards from the fishing boat. Even so I felt this was enough to justify claiming that an attack had been frustrated.

Some months later another PC CO took a less charitable view of the activities of a BT boat in Malaysian territorial waters off Tanjong Piai. He shot it up with a GPMG without any real justification and without causing serious damage. Anywhere else in the world it would have caused a major diplomatic row but the story only came to light by accident. It was followed by a fine display of leadership and support for subordinates. The CO got the dressing down of his life from NOIC, who barely drew breath before telling the Ministry of Defence that the action taken by the CO had been entirely justified.

In the second incident, also at night, the OOW spotted a contact heading towards Indonesia. We chased it for nearly an hour, probably into Indonesian claimed waters, before overhauling it and forcing it to stop. It was a small coaster little bigger than an MFV. I waited on tenterhooks whilst the boarding party did its stuff. Eventually the first lieutenant emerged to show what the search had revealed. In his hand were four hundred blue liners which the captain had bartered with the PC in the neighbouring patrol area the previous day. What on earth was the legal position of a ship stopped on the High Seas and found in unlawful possession of RN duty free tobacco? The captain, who no doubt was ignorant of the niceties of the law, was mightily relieved to be sent on his way with his booty intact !

The CO of one CMS had an interesting financial proposition put to him. A PC had arrested an Indonesian attempting to smuggle opium into Malaysia and the CMS was called to assist. After some high level political deliberations it was decided to hand the smuggler over to the Indonesian police. When this was relayed to the smuggler he was most unhappy and offered to go ashore and sell the opium with a view to splitting the proceeds with the CO. This was turned down so the next offer was that the smuggler should be allowed to go to Malaysia, sell the opium and give the CO all the money. Finally would the CO just take the opium and let the smuggler go as the CO would do best that way? Eventually, after some hours, an Indonesian police launch appeared out of the darkness and took the, by now very unhappy, smuggler away.

Apart from the incident mentioned above neither we nor the police, so far as I was aware, caught any pirates in the two years but the constant patrolling was appreciated by the fishermen and traders who earned their living in the Straits. Initially we were treated with great suspicion and thought likely to indulge in a little robbery ourselves. As time wore on a different and much more friendly attitude became evident.

Job Change

A year after I arrived a reshuffle was decreed and instead of remaining in *KD Renchong* to become PC3, I was moved ashore as SOO. Driving a patrol craft was great fun, and commanding the squadron would have been even more so. Being SOO to a NOIC who

ran 38 ships was job satisfaction of a different order. The staff was modest for such an enterprise particularly as we had to do work ups and inspections as well as the routine operational activities. Apart from NOIC and his secretary, a Lieutenant SD(W), there was a Staff Officer (Admin), a Gunner G and a Gunner TAS, briefly an SCO, plus an Able Seaman who ran the Ops Room. I think I can honestly say I have never worked so hard in my life. Apart from two weeks leave not a day passed, even at Christmas, without at least an hour being spent in the office.

With the arrival of the last PC it was possible to withdraw the minesweepers and survey ship from patrol duties and think about other things. The conduct of the Malacca Straits patrol was delegated to the senior officer afloat, leave and maintenance periods and even some foreign visits began to appear in the programme and several large scale exercises were planned and conducted. For one we used the Royal Apartments in the frigate as an HQ. The staff surreptitiously scrutinised NOIC each day to see if he was developing airs and graces from living in the King's cabin! The royal wardroom served as the Ops room and when things got fraught a steward would miraculously appear with a glass of cooling drink.

Cultural issues

Considering the mix of nationalities involved, the RMN ran remarkably well and was very professional. All business was conducted in English, except the coxswain's victualling returns. I often wondered if this was to conceal from the non-Malaysians the creativity of the accounting process. Speaking Malay was a major problem, not because it is difficult to learn, which it isn't, but because no educated Malaysian would speak to a European in Malay if he himself spoke English. More than half the newspapers that came on board *KD Renchong* were in English. Finding someone to speak to in Malay was quite difficult, so few of us achieved any worthwhile command of the language. In 1974 the Malaysians abolished the system whereby a school chose the language (English, Malay, Chinese or Indian) in which it taught and made all schools teach in the modern Malay language Bahasa Malaysia. Singapore went the other way and made English the official language but I read recently that Malaysia is about to revert to the former system because the standard of English has declined to the point at which it hampers Malaysian officials engaging in international trade.

Paradoxically, although you can eat very well in Malaysia at the numerous hawker stalls, the standard of food in the RMN was pretty grim. Some loan service officers ate the ship's food but the majority opted to victual themselves. This also tended to be a dreary exercise as it was the days before Delia told us how to cook for one and I ate ashore virtually every night when alongside. Pig was forbidden but no such deference was shown to Hindus since beef regularly appeared on the menu. The only exception was in the MOD mess in Kuala Lumpur where Muslims were served on blue plates and everyone else on pink ones. It was a treat to spend a night there and have bacon and eggs. Several kind families took pity on us bachelors who lived in a pig free environment and staged large Sunday brunches at which bacon, sausage, gammon and pork chops flowed freely.

A few weeks before I left serious race riots broke out, mainly in Kuala Lumpur. The United Malay National Organisation had, as predicted, easily won the election but two Chinese parties had done particularly well. Most states refused permission to hold victory parades but where they were permitted, as for one of the Chinese parties in Selangor, problems arose and eventually martial law was declared.

Being under martial law we had to wear uniform whilst ashore in Malaysia because assaulting a serviceman attracted the death penalty. What, I asked, without getting a satisfactory answer, was the correct rig for an RMN officer whilst riding his horse on a rubber plantation in Johore ?

Despite the sad ending of the race riots, I enjoyed a fantastic two years. At the time the piracy seemed real enough but looking back at our almost total failure to catch, or indeed see, any pirates one wonders if it wasn't all just a bit of a myth.

Most of the recollections are my own but I am grateful to Vice Admiral Sir John Forbes, NOIC West Malaysia 1966-8, my term mate Commodore H Arasaratnam RMN (1960-87), Commander Bryan Hyde-Smith RMN, who served in the RMN from 1955-72, and Lieutenant Commander Alasdair Cook, successively SOO to NOICWM and MCM25 in 1966-8 for their invaluable help in jogging my memory and correcting errors.

The modern Royal Malaysian Navy (TLDM) has come a long way since those days.



TLDM corvette KD LEKIR firing an Exocet during Exercise Taming Sari recently held in the north of the Malacca Straits. The missile accurately hit its target at a range of 20 miles.

SLOPS

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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
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State size, colour and logo required <i>Logo 1 = Mine and Keys, Logo 2 = Mine and TON silhouette Allow up to 8 weeks for delivery</i>			
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Post Bag

FROM: Cristopher Brown

Former Captain REME
via TCA Website

I've been going through the books of my late friend Ted Atkinson and found your complements slip inside his copy of "Jacks of all Trades".

As a "pongo", it reminded me that some years ago in 1972, I was serving in Northern Ireland as 2/C 15 Field Workshop (Airportable) REME, stationed in a hangar at RNAS Sydenham on a 6-month roulement tour. My soldiers visited HMS Caroline and her associated reservists.

I'll spare you most of the details, but with 4 other Manxmen aboard, we made a very happy weekend training trip with the Ton class Minesweeper of the moment.

When the Captain discovered that we were all from the Isle of Man, he changed his training schedule to circumnavigate the Island, leaving us to arrange a party on Saturday evening at Douglas.

With father on duty at Peel as a Coast Guard we submitted a CG Form 1 and made landfall at about midnight at Peel where father met us as the bow more or less loomed over the end of the pier. We jumped down and were driven to our homes.

I have some photographs but none show any identification details of the ship, other than that she was powered by Deltics.

I do remember seeing a red hand on the funnel. A detailed search of Ted's book 'Jacks of All Trades' has not yielded any details to help me to identify the ship.

Could you or a member of your association help me please?

The ship in question was HMS KILMOREY, tender to Belfast Division of the Royal Naval Reserve in Belfast, hence the Red Hand of Ulster badge on her funnel. Their headquarters was HMS Caroline - still afloat as a museum ship and sole survivor of the Battle of Jutland.

RN name for the ship was ALFRISTON (page 5 of Jacks of All Trades), pennant number M1103. Sweepers allocated to the RNR were assigned traditional local names and reverted to their "proper" name on return to the RN. I was part of the ferry crew that delivered the ship to Belfast in 1961 ... **Editor**

FROM: Lt Cdr Cliff Lewis (SCC) RNR
Training Officer, Marine Society & Sea Cadets, HMS President

When I took my current job at HMS President (13 years ago!), the office I moved into hadn't been used for some time, and whilst clearing the room and my desk area, two ship models of HMS

Bodenham and HMS Kellington in the same glass case; came to light. There were several cracks in the glass case, and both models were in poor repair.

At the time, we were looking to purchase a trophy to present to the Sea Cadet unit with the best Marine Engineering activity, and as our ME school was, at the time, aboard the former HMS Iveston in Tilbury, someone came up with the idea of using the model as a trophy, but It needed some tidying up first !

I took it home and decided to separate the two ships into two separate cased models. The Kellington model was repaired and converted to be Iveston, the original glass case repaired and this model is now proudly presented annually to our best engineering unit.



The smaller Bodenham model then sat in my home workshop gathering dust, until the Covid lockdown presented me with the opportunity to do something with it. It's now repaired and cased.

Lt Cdr Lewis has now kindly offered the model of Bodenham to Marshland Maritime Museum. Her history of transfer to the Navy of South Yemen has been updated on the TCA website.
... **Editor**

FROM: Pancho Brett, Doncaster

On June 7/8th we met at the Lakeside Hotel in Doncaster to celebrate 60 years since we commissioned the KEMERTON at Southampton on June 8th 1962.

Midshipman Roger Mortimer, Stokers Dave Glover, George Harrison. Pancho Brett and Bunting Tosser Scouse Bartell are all that survive from the 17 that met in Kemerton village in Gloucestershire 30 years ago at our first Reunion.

We celebrated our good fortune that Drafty had despatched us to this very happy, and therefore efficient, ship which is forever in our hearts.

We toasted absent shipmates, our ship and the Queen.

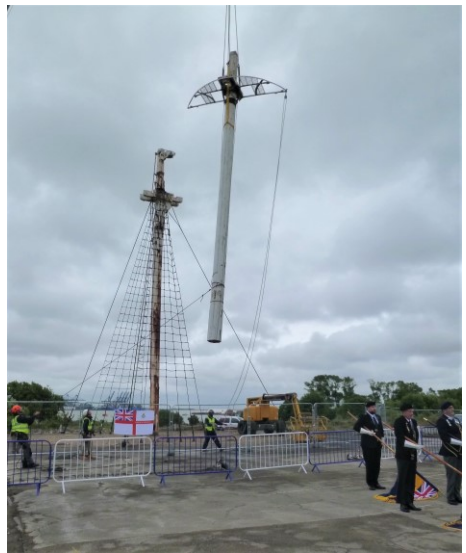
Roger Mortimer has composed an elegant poem, summarising that first commission and subsequent Reunions. Regrettably it is too long to be printed here, however here is a photo from the Reunion ... **Editor**



Refurbishment of GANGES Mast Commences

On 6th June, believed to be the 46th Anniversary of the last parade held at GANGES, a small audience gathered to witness the removal of the topmast for renovation.

The iron lower mast, which had been the foremast of the corvette CORDELIA [1881-1904] * will be sandblasted before renovation in situ. The upper yards and royal mast have already been removed, as they are rotted and unsafe. The main yard, from the armoured frigate AGINCOURT [1868-1909] **, appears to be in better condition and may be saved.



Wavensmere Homes, who are re-developing the site have undertaken to restore the mast and to retain the parade ground, as an open space. Current plan is that the mast should be back in place in good order by May 2023. Phase I of the redevelopment includes over 200 homes of mixed categories, plus community facilities and re-purposing of St Vincent and Nelson blocks and the swimming bath. Completion is aimed for 2025.

Unfortunately the Chiefs and PO's messes are too badly deteriorated and will be removed. Guard Room, Galley and Boys' accommodation have already been flattened.

The ceremony was supported by the excellent Blue Jacket Band of the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook, with representatives from GANGES Association, GANGES Museum, local branches of the Royal Naval Association, Royal British Legion, Babergh District Council and the Developers in attendance.

Notes:

Shipmates Tony Chaplin (left) and Peter Down represented Stowmarket RNA. Lt Cdr Chaplin served at *GANGES* in early 1960's as Chief Shipwright tending to the boats. Later, when appointed to the Maintenance Unit in Gibraltar, he was responsible for refitting TONs held in Strategic Reserve there.



Barrie Stockweb of *GANGES* Museum brought along a scale model of the mast.

History Details © Wikipedia

***HMS Cordelia** was an iron-hulled Comus-class corvette of the Royal Navy, built at the Portsmouth Dockyard and launched on 25 October 1881. She commenced service on the China Station before being transferred to the Australia Station arriving in April 1890. On 29 June 1891, during gun practice while on a cruise from Fiji to Noumea, a gun burst killing five, mortally wounded another and injuring thirteen crew. She left the Australia Station in late 1891 and was sold in 1904 for breaking up.

****HMS Agincourt** was a Minotaur-class armoured frigate with an iron hull and five masts, built in the 1860s, she spent most of her career as the flagship of the Channel Squadron's second-in-command. During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, she was one of the ironclads sent to Constantinople to forestall a Russian occupation of the Ottoman capital. Agincourt participated in Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee Fleet Review in 1887. The ship was placed in reserve two years later and served as a training ship at Portland from 1893 to 1909. Agincourt served twelve years as a depot ship for boys. In 1905 she was moved to Harwich and renamed *Ganges II*. She made her final journey, to Sheerness in 1909, where she was converted into a coal hulk known simply as C.109. She was scrapped on 21 October 1960.