



# SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION BARROW-IN-FURNESS BRANCH NEWS LETTER



## The June Word



My two computers, main and backup, have failed me big style, as such all my historical points of reference are now out of my reach, hidden somewhere on my hard drive, and I have been cut off from the internet for almost three weeks, as a consequence everything is backing up and I am tearing what little is left, hair out. Therefore I am struggling to meet Ben Britten's deadline, but here goes anyway. On the Branch Organization front, everything is ticking along quietly in the background, with our Branch Officers Committee still continuing to meet on a mid monthly basis. I believe that this vital work helps our full Branch Meeting run all that smoother, and I thank them all on your behalf for that extra commitment. John Houlding our Vice Chairman has written his third article on the Explanation of Intent of our Branch Rules. As with April's newsletter I again thank John for this helpful article that amplifies the nuances within our Rules that many of us, if totally honest, hardly ever read, so John's article is a welcome remainder. Last weekend Bob Palmer and I traveled north to Faslane. This was my first experience of visiting the West of Scotland Branch and a return to the Warrant Officers and Senior Rates Mess after a very long absence, and very pleasant it was too, but more of that in a moment. On the Chaplain's front I can report that the Branch Standard has been paraded at yet another Primary School Assembly with another scheduled. For me it's a very good way of explaining the history of Standards and Regimental

Flags from the Romans to present day whilst at the same time promoting the work of the Submariners Association. Via my Army contacts I have been able to obtain the Army Manual on Drumhead Services, so with a bit of luck and a lot of prayer the BaeSystems Chaplain and I should be able to get it right on the Veterans Day Parade 10th June. With the important Church season of Pentecost upon us this coming weekend I am going to be increasingly busy, for the next few weeks so I will sign off, and catch you all later.

Regards Jonsey

## Faslane Visit 18-20th May 2007

First there were more, then there were four, and finally just Bob Palmer and I were left being driven north in HMS Astute Ships Car that had been arranged by Coxn. John Hendron. It was a win-win situation, with the ships driver plus one being able to get home to Helensburgh for a weekend and Bob and I were chauffeur driven door to door. We left at 1130hrs on the Friday arriving at the base approximately 1530hrs after the usual performance of getting passes we eventually met up with the other Association Visitors in the SR's Mess. In total there were nine members two from Barrow: four from Blyth & Wansbeck: and three from Sunderland, the Northern Ireland contingent did not appear. Our Host and Mess Liaison representative was Mr. George Gere who is a Member of the SR's Mess. Given the circumstances of the upheaval caused by the major accommodation-rebuilding taking place and the SR Mess in its typical weekend lack of bodies mode he served us very well. Our accommodation was a cold ten-

bedded double bunk transit dormitory with ill-fitting windows that let in the wind, as one of the lads said it was just like Ganges in the 1950's all over again, but having survived the first night things could only get better, and the bonus being, the accommodation was free. The weekend schedule followed a typical Submariners Run Ashore Welcoming Drinks Evening Meal Drinks West of Scotland Branch Meeting Up Spirits More Drinks Bed-Breakfast (After we had thawed out) Too early for Drinks? Trip round the Loch on a Police Launch - Visit to HMS Vanguard - This trip was spoilt in that an obdurate security guard kept us waiting 45 minutes in the rain because there was a slight problem with our passes. His side kick told him not to be so pedantic but he would not budge, therefore we had to be content with a whistle stop tour of the submarine and the scheduled drinks had to be curtailed. Back to the Mess Pre lunch Drinks after lunch settled with bottles of wine, settled down to watch the FA Cup Final on the Big Screen - Supper Drinks Quiz Night More Drinks Skipped Breakfast Pre Brunch Pint Brunch Departed Faslane 1230hrs 1540 hrs Spark Bridge Royal Oak car park - Ships driver delivered car to the WEO - Phil Palmer arrived to take us all home but not before we shared a couple of pints in the beer garden would I go again - YES! - YES! - YES



## Social scene for June



It's been a quite period on the social scene since the Annual dinner dance, but things are looking up in the near future with the impending launch of Astute and the Annual BBQ coming close together.

First the launch week end of Astute: it looks like we are going to get a few visitors coming from other branches and maybe the Leicester Senior services club, we are trying to organise some form of reception for them, nothing is firmed up yet, details will be hopefully be available at the June meeting.

The list has started for the Annual BBQ at the Vickerstown institute on the 7th July, there is not long to go and I will need numbers by June 22nd, so that I can give Brigham plenty of notice for ordering supplies. It is always a great night, with good food, a raffle, Rum barrel and we have an excellent entertainer this year called Leah Simone, she is just starting out on her career and I have been to see her, she is a star of the future. Tickets are just £7.00 per head, bring your friends and have hootenanny! If you want tickets and cannot get to the June meeting ring me on 474927.

The car booting for funds for the 45th Anniversary is ongoing with about £100 raised to date, not bad really from two sales, we should raise more when the weather on car boot days picks up.

Myself and Lynne will be organising another quiz night for August to bridge the gap between the BBQ and Ladies night, no date picked yet.

Well that's it for this month, don't forget the BBQ hope to see as many of you there as possible.

Colin Hutchinson - Social Sec

## 4th Astute Class Sub

BARROW'S economy got a massive boost last week with a £200m order for the first leg of work on a fourth Astute-class nuclear submarine.

Another contract, worth hundreds of millions of pounds, to complete the building of the attack submarine will follow late next year.

Audacious, as it will be named, is expected to cost around £1bn, with about 40 per cent of that accounted for by work at Barrow.

The order was a breakthrough for shipyard chiefs and the Keep Our Future Afloat Campaign, who have both been lobbying for the government to order boat number four to keep skills and suppliers in place.

It came just 18 days before the roll out and naming of the first of the class, the future HMS Astute, on Friday June 8.

BAE said: "BAE Systems has today welcomed the announcement of a contract for approximately £200m by the UK Ministry of Defence for the start of the construction of the fourth Astute-class nuclear-powered attack submarine as good news for the UK's submarine design and build capabilities.

"This contract runs to March 2008 and covers initial build work on the submarine.

"The MoD aims to contract for the whole boat by late 2008, and detailed terms and conditions will be agreed over the intervening period.

"The final contract placed will cover all aspects of the construction and completion of the submarine."

Murray Easton, managing director of BAE Systems Submarine Solutions, said: "The order represents another key milestone in the overall Astute-class submarine project, and importantly will help sustain key skills and capabilities across the project



## Saturday is Tiswas Day...Again

IF THE names Trevor McDoughnut, Spit the Dog and the Phantom Flan Flinger spark memories, then read on.

A generation after its Saturday morning mayhem ended, cult children's TV show TISWAS returns for a 21st-Century reunion.

One of the mainstays of the anarchic show – which served as a launchpad for the careers of entertainers such as Chris Tarrant and Lenny Henry – was presenter Sally James being bombarded with badges, uniforms and other paraphernalia from the Armed Forces.

It was all started by the Military Police who sent her their trademark red caps, but unsurprisingly the RN got in on the act and basically took over; by far the biggest response Sally got was from matelots who sent in cap tallies by the sackful.

Three decades on, the team behind TISWAS (actually 'This Is Saturday, What A Show', or perhaps, 'This Is Saturday, Wear A Smile') are keen to hear from sailors and marines who sent tallies or other kit into the show. You can contact producer Mike Smith by e-mail at Universal Media.

Among those who got in on the TISWAS act 30 years ago were crew of carrier HMS Hermes. Back in the 70s chef Ian Coomer (known as 'Big Bad Batts') dressed as that infamous pie thrower with shipmates to raise money for a good cause.

Three decades on the wheel has turned full circle; he's now Sally James' driver.

As for the show itself, it ran from 1974-1981 on Saturday mornings when Saturday mornings on mainstream TV were taken over by children's programmes.

The 90-minute TISWAS Reunited show will air on ITV1 on a Saturday night in June

## Secretary's 'Dit'



**Firstly an apology from the Committee. For various reasons the May Branch Meeting was brought forward to a 1900 start this was for one Meeting only. Efforts were made to advise all Members of the changed time but (probably inevitably) some were not advised in advance and missed the start of the Meeting. We can only say we are sorry to those who were missed out and were disappointed. Given the circumstances we either had to change the start time or find a different venue for one meeting only!**

It was a fairly quiet month for the Branch during May we did help out at the Keswick to Barrow Walk by manning the Visitors Gate at the BAE Sports Ground a big thank you to all who helped out! June however looks as if it is going to be quite busy particularly in the first ten days! Twenty seven ex-ASTUTE SA Members requested to attend the new HMS ASTUTE 'Roll Out' and 'Launch' on 8th June. All of these have been allocated places by the BAE Organising team although, unfortunately, some have since had to drop out owing to poor health - but two of our four Branch Members ex-ASTUTE have been added to the list. Also three members of the National Committee (including Dave Barlow and myself) and the National President have received invitations. The Branch is looking to organise at least a 'Meet and Greet' for the ex-ASTUTE's and a tour of ONYX for them whilst they are in Barrow.

Leicestershire Senior Services Association will also be visiting Barrow on the Weekend of the ASTUTE Launch and they will be included in the 'Meet and Greet' probably a 'Pie and Peas' Evening at the Harbour. They have also been offered a tour of ONYX on Saturday 9th or Sunday 10th June. As June sees the 25th Anniversary of the end of the Falklands War some events are being co-ordinated by the Barrow Council, BAE and the Veterans Agency during the weekend of 8th to 10th June. HMS EXETER and HMS LANCASTER plus two Training Vessels (BITER & CHARGER)

will be visiting Barrow for that Weekend and will be berthed in Buccleuch Dock. The BAE Yard and HMS EXETER will be 'Open to the Public', the other Ships can be viewed from the dockside and HMS ONYX will be providing Tours - but for Organised (and invited) parties only. Other Events include a Drumhead Parade of Associations and Ex Service Organisations and a presentation of Veterans Badges for those entitled on Sunday 10th June at 1300. If you were serving in 1984 or previously you are now entitled to claim your Veterans Badge. Efforts by the NWE Mail have identified 200 entitled Veterans (up to 19th May) who will get their badges at the Parade. If you have missed out you can still claim your Veterans Badge via e mail via webiste

**[www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk) or by ringing 0800 169 22 77.**

However back to Branch Business. We still need replacements for Bill Cole and Alan Hoskins on the Committee so we are looking for two Members to step forward. Its not an onerous job - your commitments are one Committee Meeting per month and the Branch Meeting and, of course it would be helpful if you could assist with organising some the various Branch functions. We still need a volunteer for the position of 'Slops Representative' to take over the reins from Alan Hoskins. So come on - step forward - and volunteer for one of these Posts - you'll be quite surprised how much you'll enjoy it!

Membership of the Branch continues to creep upwards and a few more (including re-joiners) are expected shortly. Overall Membership remains at a high level of over 150 - moving further onwards and upwards when the latest applications - including two recently received via the website - are processed.

My list of Phone Numbers, Addresses and 'e' Mail addresses for Branch Members still needs a few corrections. If you are now on 'e' mail (I know that several more are thinking about it and some have changed providers) whether you are on the Net for the first time or if you have changed your service provider make sure you

tell us as soon as possible so we have accurate and full records.

A re-issue of the Submariners Association Rules & Constitution (reflecting changes agreed at the 2007 National Council Conference) will be available during June. I will be collecting our Branch allocation at the NMC Meeting which co-incides with the National Draw at Lincoln and they will be distributed - one copy to each Branch Member.

As previously advised the Barrow Branch is to host the 2008 National Council Conference in March 2008 and the 2008 National Draw to coincide with the 45th Anniversary of the Barrow Branch. We now have a team of volunteers to organize the Conference Weekend in March but we need volunteers to organize the National Draw in June 2008. Remember - one volunteer is worth ten 'pressed men'!

Well that's my lot for this month - over to the rest of the Committee for their contributions. See you all at the June Branch Meeting on Tuesday 5th June and at the usual time of 2000.

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### Book Review

Whilst moving the David Tull collection of books to the safety of the MOD(N) store one book was accidentally left in my car and I ended up reading it over a recent weekend, and I can recommend it as a good read. The book is "Longitude by Dava Sobel" ISBN 1-85702-571-7

Longitude is the dramatic human story of the epic scientific quest. The longitude problem was the thorniest dilemma of the eighteenth century. Lacking the ability to measure longitude, sailors through the great ages of exploration had been literally lost at sea. At the heart of the Dava Sobel's fascinating brief history of astronomy, navigation, and horology stands the figure of John Harrison self taught Yorkshire clock maker and his forty year obsession with building the perfect timekeeper. Battling against the establishment, Harrison stood alone in pursuit of his solution to the longitude problem. (Jonesy)

## BRANCH RULES EXPLANATION of INTENT



### Third Article

#### 4. Officials of the Branch

*(a) The branch shall elect a Chairman, a Secretary and a Treasurer who shall each hold office for a three year period, elections taking place at the AGM with only one of these officers elected each year. A Vice Chairman shall be elected, preferably at a different election to the Chairman, who shall be replaced immediately should he be elected to any of these other branch offices - at the same AGM that that election takes place.*

*(b) The branch may elect a President each year at the AGM. This position to be regarded as an honorary post awarded for recognition of service to and on behalf of the branch.*

*(c) The branch shall elect to permanent office a member to fill the duties of Standard Bearer; He should have the bearing and capability to suitably represent the branch in these duties.*

*(c) The branch shall seek volunteers, or appoint members to arrange branch official and social functions. These members shall form the social team coordinated by one who will be the Social Secretary. Any assistants to the Social Secretary shall be known as the Assistant Social Secretaries. The social team shall not require election or periodic re election to this position but shall be generally 'accepted' by the membership.*

This is fairly straight forward, and provides an elected committee of branch members who shall hold office for three years each being elected in rota so that the branch should not suffer a lack of continuity by all the committee standing down in the same year.

Our President is nominated and on an annual basis which is an unusual process but allows the branch to recognize the efforts of members who have given the branch outstanding service. Such nominations may be submitted to the committee by any fully paid up member of the branch.

We still have to rely on a number of volunteer members to fill the post of Standard Bearer and our thanks must go to Ginge Cundell, Bob Palmer, Bob Faragher and also Alan Jones who have all taken on the role over the past year or so since Dudley stood down. If there is an able bodied member out there who sees himself in this very capable but occasionally strenuous role please give your name to the committee.

Our thanks to Colin and Lyn Hutchinson for so capably taking up the role of Social Secretary they are doing tremendously well. Of course shared workloads are always welcome so any volunteers to help or join the Social team should give their names to Colin.

#### 7. Management of the Branch

*(a) A committee which shall consist of the following, shall manage the branch:-*

*i) the President, Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer; (any two to attend a committee meeting)*

*ii) a representative from the welfare committee.*

*iii) a representative from the social committee.*

*iv) the delegate to the National Council to be invited (if not one of the above)*

*v) any branch member who is also a member of the NMC may be invited to provide advice or assistance on a matter of National business.*

*vi) the editor of the branch news sheet to be invited (if not one of the above)*

*vii) the branch web site manager to be invited (if not one of the above)*

*viii) four branch members who are not included in the list above shall be nominated at each AGM to represent the members, a minimum of two should attend a committee meeting.*

*A quorum shall be any two of the main branch officers (see 11(a)(i) above), plus one welfare and one social committee representative, plus any two of the nominated branch members.*

*(b) Each committee member attending a committee meeting has the right to one vote, except the Chairman (member chairing that meeting) who has a casting vote.*

*(c) The committee shall only meet when there are matters to discuss which will benefit the branch and the running of the next branch meeting. No fixed time shall be set for these meetings but they will generally be arranged 7 to 10 days prior to a branch meeting giving time for (postal) actions requesting clarity or further information to be carried out before that next meeting in support of matters to be raised.*

*(d) The type of business the committee should consider shall include:-*

*i) Review of progress of any actions placed at the last branch meeting*

*ii) Review of all business to be brought before the branch at the next meeting, combining similar topics and arranging the agenda to facilitate a balanced meeting.*

*iii) Review and safeguarding of branch assets, financial or otherwise. This shall include consideration of the membership - nominations for 'Life Member' - urging payment of unpaid memberships - agreeing recommendations to the branch regarding lapsing of memberships etc.*

*iv) Review of proposals for the National Council Conference, seeking clarification from the National Secretary and/or from an invited branch/NMC member, preparing a recommendation to the branch for the next meeting.*

*v) Provision of support, as practicable, on any matter raised from the welfare committee*

*vi) Provision of support, as practicable, for any request from the social committee.*

*vii) Provision of agreed inputs to the branch news sheet editor, by message if not attending.*

*viii) Receive and provide support or advice to the SHC committee to keep the membership up to date with the activities of the SHC.*

*ix) The committee shall consider the need for any disciplinary action or arbitrate in the resolution of any disagreement amongst branch members, which may otherwise bring the name of the branch into disrepute. See also clause 15 of these rules.*

*(e) All matters concerning the branch must be brought before the branch at the next meeting and voted on by the members.*

*In the event of an urgent and important matter and where an extra-ordinary branch meeting cannot be convened, then the committee is allowed to make a decision on behalf of the branch.*

The management guidelines laid down in rule 7 are intended to be just that. Guidelines. It is not intended that the management of the branch becomes over officious or boring in fact just the opposite. The management of the branch should become practically invisible so that normal meetings are occasions to be looked forward to and enjoyed.

Rule 7c regards the periodicity and purpose of the committee meetings. This has developed into

a regular committee meeting midway between normal branch meetings the aim of which is to manage as much of the mundane branch business outside of normal meetings. To protect the interests of the branch the committee includes a number of none branch officials who shall ensure decisions are not made outside the responsibility vested in the committee. Also that all decisions made "in committee" are available to the whole branch membership through the committee and branch minutes. In particular all financial matters shall be brought to the attention of the branch. Decisions made by the committee are deemed to be reversible should the membership decide they were not made in the best interests of the branch.

The decision to elect the Branch Delegate to the Submariners Association National Council at the branch AGM each year (Rule 9) and to invite him to attend committee meetings is to ensure, as much as possible, that our delegate is in tune with the thinking of the branch membership on all matters such that he can suitably represent the feelings of the branch in any debate at Conference.

I look forward to any questions or feed back on any of the branch rules. These will be discussed at the next committee meeting following receipt and a response will be given initially to the member asking the question to ensure that the response satisfactorily answers their query. The question and response will then be included in the next edition of the news letter for all members to digest.

Many thanks from your Vice Chairman

John Houlding



## **Wait is almost over for Astute**

AFTER years of waiting, in little over four weeks the Navy's first hunter-killer submarine in a generation will roll out of her shed for her launch.

HMS Astute is set to emerge from the huge construction hall at BAE Systems' Barrow yard on June 8 almost the end of a journey which began in July 1994 when Whitehall invited tenders from business to build three Fleet submarines.

GEC Marconi was picked to build the trio and possibly two more boats in December 1995 but it has taken more than 11 years, and a takeover of the Barrow yard by BAE, to turn those original plans into an 7,800-tonne leviathan.

Astute's designers claim she is a more complex piece of kit than the Space Shuttle. Inside her 97m (318ft) hull are 23,000 pipes (which run to more than six miles) and more than 60 miles of cables, while her computer systems are driven by five million lines of software code.

All of this is enclosed within the outer casing, which is covered with 39,000 acoustic tiles.

On a more personal level, for the first time submariners will no longer have to 'hot bunk' but will be given their own beds; there are even 11 spare bunks for visiting crew/VIPs/assessors.

Although Astute is set for launch on June 8 (she will actually slowly emerge from the ship hall on a huge transporter), it will be Easter 2008 before she appears at her home base of Faslane and 2009 before she is commissioned.

Boats two and three in the £3.6bn programme, HM Ships Ambush and Artful, will be rolled out within two years of Astute's launch.

**It is hoped to have more on the Astute launch in the July issue**

## Latest UK Armed Forces Attitude Surveys Published May 2007

The latest UK Armed Forces internal attitude surveys, which have been regularly published since 2002 as part of the Department's commitment to openness, have been published today, Wednesday 2 May, on the Ministry of Defence website.

The latest statistics show that:

Pride remains high within the Armed Forces. 92 percent of Army officers and 79 percent of soldiers feel proud to be in the Army. Pride in the Royal Navy is even higher, with 97 percent of officers and 80 percent of sailors proud to be part of the Royal Navy.

Job satisfaction levels in the Forces also remains high. 78 percent of Army officers and 59 percent of soldiers are satisfied with their current working life. 94 per cent of Royal Marines are proud of the job they do with 80 per cent of Royal Marine officers rating their morale as good or very good.

For all three Services, the inevitable impact of Service life on family life, including the amount of time spent away from home, remains a main point of dissatisfaction. However, the majority of the soldiers surveyed (61 per cent) said the frequency of operation tours were "about right" or "too few". Service personnel are compensated for these differences in lifestyle and working conditions through the payment of an additional 13 percent of 'X-factor' pay. Personnel completing a six month operational deployment are also eligible for the new £2240 allowance.

Defence Minister Derek Twigg, welcomed the publication of the surveys, saying "The young men and women that I have spoken to whilst they serve their country in Iraq and Afghanistan, tell me that their morale is high, and that they are trained and equipped for the job.

"These surveys offer a useful snapshot of attitudes. They help

the Armed Forces target issues that concern our people and inform changes in policy and new initiatives. This ensures the Services remain a top quality employer."

The surveys feedback a sample of views from across the Armed Forces to the Chiefs of Staff of the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force. Previous trends from these surveys have informed decisions on single-Service personnel initiatives and resources. Since these latest surveys were completed, the MoD has improved the operational welfare package for deployed personnel, introduced a £2240 tax-free operational allowance, and delivered new armoured vehicles for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan together with the latest in personal equipment such as body armour and helmets. The MoD has also confirmed that £5bn will be spent on forces accommodation over the next 10 years.

The Army survey was conducted between September 2006 and January 2007 and was distributed to total of 5,550 of which 2062 responded a response rate of 30 per cent. Of those respondents, 61 per cent were officers and 30 per cent were other ranks. The total trained strength of the Army as of March 2007 is 99,280.

The Royal Navy survey was conducted between July and August 2006 and surveyed 1,207 respondents of which 50 per cent were Officers and 50 per cent ratings (a response rate of 30 per cent out of a total survey distribution of 4,001). The total trained strength of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines as of March 2007 is 35,030.

The Royal Marine survey was conducted between July and August 2006 and surveyed 261 respondents of which 40 per cent were officers and 21 per cent were other ranks. (a response rate of 26 per cent out of a total survey distribution of 1,000). The total trained strength of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines as of March 2007 is 35,030.

The RAF survey was conducted in February, May, August and November 2006. The surveys were distributed to a total of 8,000

of which 3,829 responded (response rate of 47 per cent). 66 per cent of respondents were officers and 44 per cent were airmen. The total trained strength of the RAF as of March 2007 43,660.

Areas highlighted to the Army by this survey include the notice given to soldiers before they do extra duties and the standard of Army accommodation, in which there is ongoing considerable investment, but for which there is no quick practical fix. Despite these challenges, since the last survey Army retention rates have actually improved. This may, in part, be due to the recent well publicised increases in Army pay, including the introduction of new financial inducements for those with specialist skills. On operational tours, 50 percent of soldiers feel that, although the Armed Forces are very busy at the moment, the frequency of operational tours is "about right". 39 percent of soldiers think that there are "too many" operational tours, but for 11 percent of the soldiers surveyed, there are "too few" operational deployments at the moment.

For the Royal Navy, job satisfaction, job security and pay are the three most important factors in encouraging personnel to remain in Service. Promotion prospects and the impact of Service on domestic life remain the most significant retention challenges. 70 percent of RN officers and 58 percent of naval ratings are satisfied with the frequency of their operational deployments.

For the Royal Air Force, 74 percent of RAF officers, and 64 percent of airmen are satisfied with the frequency of their operational deployments. 93 percent of officers and 85 percent of aircrew say that they have enjoyed their life in the RAF.

The technical annexes of the Single Service Continuous Attitude Surveys are available on the FOI section of the MoD website: [www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk).

These are the last of the Single Service Attitude Surveys, as from now on they will be conducted on a tri-service basis.

## HMS Astute



ALTHOUGH I have only recently joined HMS Astute as her Commanding Officer, I am delighted to be able to write on behalf of the entire crew.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to the fund-raising event for the families of the late Paul McCann and the late Antony Huntrod who tragically died recently onboard HMS Tireless.

The total amount pledged continues to rise but currently stands in excess of £18,000, which is a huge testament to the generosity of the local community.

In particular, special thanks must go to Murray Easton (managing director, BAE Systems), Councillor Ken Williams, the mayor of Barrow, the Barrow Submariners Association, FAST, Rolls-Royce, Thales, Weir Strachan and Henshaw, the K2B Walk Charity Committee and Babcock Naval Services.

The evening itself was a great success and the Friars Public House was full to bursting.

The entire crew were overwhelmed by the response from the people of Barrow, and we feel proud to be living amongst such a generous and warm-hearted community.

COMMANDER M J D  
WALLIKER OBE RN  
HMS Astute

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HM SUBMARINE: SIDON

It was fifty one years ago last June that HMS Sidon sank in Portland harbour. Thirteen men lost their lives including a Royal Naval Surgeon who had attended the

stricken boat from the depot ship, HMS Maidstone.

The previous evening, after a day's exercising with other members of the flotilla together with anti-submarine frigates, experimental torpedoes had been transferred to Sidon from the submarine Springer on which I was serving as a seaman at that time. The reason for handing the torpedoes over was because our boat was due to leave for a visit to Germany the following day.

That next morning, some other submarines had already left from alongside HMS Maidstone and were of to their diving areas to take part in anti-submarine exercises. We were about to slip our lines from Sidon and head out of the harbour when one of those experimental torpedoes exploded. And we could do nothing- nothing except lay off and make way for rescue teams.



In the history of disasters, especially after all these years. that incident might not rate very high except of course for the families concerned. But I'll never forget the feeling of utter frustration and powerlessness that I'm sure was shared by all of us on the Springer as we left harbour and said our last farewell to Sidon.

Alec Giles



## THE TOY

The Submarines lie quiet  
now night has fallen  
They're safe beneath the  
"maidstone's watch full  
gaze"

Gently rocked by wavelets  
from tide's flow  
Like sleeping children tired  
from their day's play.

Are they so tired from diving  
south of Weymouth  
From playing tag deep down  
among the rocks and shoals  
While scurrying frigates  
searched and tried to find  
them  
By listening to the beat of  
there pulse?.

Sleep Sidon, dream of hiding  
'neath those waters  
Of playing with your brand  
new shiny toy  
But when you wake- take  
care and treat it softly  
For grown up toys can  
sometime lead to tears

The sun has risen clear 'bove  
Portland Harbour  
The "Maidstone", she has  
fed her hungry brood  
As one by one they glide  
beyond her comfort  
She signals them farewell  
and safe return.

It's time to go why are you  
hesitating?  
It's wrong to keep friends  
waiting for their game  
Come Sidon slip your lines  
and lets be playing  
Today's the day we'll find  
out where you hide.

The shrieking, putrid geyser,  
it roared skyward  
No instant smell of death but  
it was there  
The world and time stood  
still or that is how it seemed  
As that graceful crippled  
vessel slowly died.

No she won't be out to play  
today or ever  
Her heart's been torn from  
out her slender frame  
By a brand new top range  
toy she played with  
A grown up toy that this  
time lead to tears.

Alec Giles

AN EXAMPLE of one of those tales which might be true, but over which I have my doubts, was shown to me this week. Nevertheless I am sure that, like me, there are many readers who would like to believe it. It concerns a retired lady who is claimed to have written the following letter to her bank.

*Dear Sir,*

*I am writing to thank you for bouncing my cheque with which I endeavoured to pay my plumber last month. By my calculations, three nanoseconds must have elapsed between his presenting the cheque and the arrival in my account of the funds needed to honour it.*

*I refer, of course, to the automatic monthly deposit of my pension, an arrangement, which I admit, has been in place for only eight years. You are to be commended for seizing that brief window of opportunity to debit my account £30 by way of penalty for the inconvenience caused to your bank.*

*My thankfulness springs from the manner in which this incident has caused me to rethink my errant financial ways.*

*I noticed that whereas I personally attend to your telephone calls and letters, when I try to contact you, I am confronted by the impersonal, overcharging, pre-recorded, faceless entity, which your bank has become.*

*From now on I, like you choose only to deal with a flesh and blood person.*

*My mortgage and loan payments will therefore and hereafter no longer be automatic, but will arrive at your bank by cheque, addressed personally and confidentially to an employee at your bank. whom you must nominate*

*Please find attached an Application Contact Status, which I require your chosen employee to complete. I am sorry it runs to eight pages, but in order that I know as much about him or her as your bank knows about me, there is no alternative.*

*Please note that all copies of his or her medical history must be*

*countersigned by a solicitor; and the mandatory details of his / her financial situation (income, debts, assets and liabilities) must be accompanied by documented proof*

*In due course, I will issue your employee with a PIN number which he / she must quote in dealings with me.*

*I regret that it cannot be shorter than 28 digits but, again, I have modelled it on the number of button presses required of me to access my account balance on your phone bank service*

Let me level the playing field even further. When you call me, press buttons as follows:

*1 To make an appointment to see me.*

*2 To query a missing payment.*

*3 To transfer the call to my living room in case I am there.*

*4 To transfer the call to my bedroom in case I am sleeping.*

*5 To transfer the call to my toilet in case I am attending to nature.*

*6 To transfer the call to my mobile phone if I am not at home .*

*7 To leave a message on my computer (a password to access my computer is required. A password will be communicated at a later date to the Authorised Contact.)*

*8 To return to the main menu and to listen to options 1-8*

*9 To make a general complaint or inquiry, the contact will then be put on hold, pending the attention of my automated answering service. While this may, on occasion, involve a lengthy wait, uplifting music will play for the duration of the call.*

*Regrettably, but again following your example, I must also levy an establishment fee to cover the setting up of this new arrangement.*

*May I wish you a happy, if ever so slightly less prosperous, New Year.*

*Your Humble Client.*

## BAE Systems

BAE Systems Submarine Solutions has won a multi million £ contract with Navantia SA of Spain to supply pressure hull domes for the S80 submarines being built for the Spanish Navy

This is the first submarine export order in more than 30 years for Barrow and was won in the face of fierce international competition.

Submarine Solutions will fabricate and assemble fore and aft pressure hull domes for four diesel-electric S80 submarines under the terms of the multi million-pound agreement. The company will also provide technical support and assistance in aspects of pressure hull fabrication to Navantia as the overall S80 programme develops.

The domes will be manufactured using the new £2 million 2,500 tonne dome press facility created in the NAS, which will also be used to create the pressure hull domes for future Astute submarines.

BAE Systems Submarine Solutions has already begun work on the contract programme. The first two boat sets will be fully welded and completed in Barrow. The last two will be partly assembled and welded in Barrow, with final welding set to take place in Navantia's facilities in Cartagena, Spain with support from BAE Systems Solutions as required.

BAE Systems Submarine Solutions managing director Murray Easton, commented: "We are delighted to have won the contract to collaborate with Navantia on the S80 programme, to use the vast wealth of knowledge and capability for conventional submarine development and construction that exists alongside our nuclear build capability. It is also a welcome return to the export market, although the Astute programme remains the primary focus for the yard."







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## DISCLAIMER

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## News Letter Contact Information

Do you have a story to tell or have information you feel should appear in the news letter then ring Ben Britten on 01229 820265 (evenings) or if you wish to send me an article please ring for postal address. or send your contribution by e-mail to:

**ben\_britten89@msn.com**

Constructive suggestions about the news letter are very welcome. The news letter will be published in the last week of each month IE last week of June for the July 2007 issue please try and have any information with me by the **15th of each month**. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition.



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



## Members Birthdays June 2007

Plater. G	03/06
Riley. B	03/06
Kimber. T	03/06
Haythornthwaite	09/06
Nolan. A	12/06
Brown. C	17/06
Palmer. R	17/06
Walker. K	21/06
Brailsford. R	21/06
Downer. B	23/06
Pillifent. A	25/06
Griffiths. A	29/06
Pallister. D	29/06
Johns. D	30/06
Dervey. I	30/06



## The Editor

The way that the News letter is currently identified by Volume and number has over the past few years caused a problem and I therefore intend to bring the next issue July in to line with the way the news letter is numbered on submariners website so July will be issue 85. Issue 1 was published in July 2000.

Late breaking news that has come to my attention is that Lady Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall will launch Astute on the 8th June 11am. Prince Charles will not accompany her.

Did you server in the forces before 31 December 1984, if you did you may be entitled a Veterans Badge. Info obtained from website

[www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk) or by ringing 0800 169 22 77



## The names of those that 'Crossed the Bar' in May

**Bill Shadbolt was the oldest Member of the Submariners Association and would have been 100 in November this year!**

Dolphin Branch	27 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2007	D L (Dave) Spencer	Warrant Officer Coxswain	TBA	59	Submarine Service 1970 to 1990 in REVENGE (S), SUPERB, SCEPTRE, TRENCHANT and TALENT
Essex Branch	May 2007	William Charles (Bill) Shadbolt	Leading Seaman	D/J 108155	99	Submarine Service 1933 to 1945 in L56, SALMON, CLYDE, SEALION, THAMES, H33 and SHARK
Blackpool Branch	May 2007	G (George) O'Donnell	Stoker Mechanic	TBA	77	Submarine Service 1951 to 1957 in SUBTLE, SELENE, SOLENT and THERMOPYLAE
Non Member	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2007	R R (Ginty) McInnes	Able Seaman (UW3)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service 1964 to 1969 in OCELOT
Gosport Branch	May 2007	J (Joe) Alford	Chief Petty Officer Coxswain	P/JX 916202	72	Submarine Service 1954 to 1974 in TOKEN, TALLY HO, TRENCHANT, SENTINEL, SCORCHER, ACHERON, ARTEMIS, TRUNCHEON, ANCHORITE, TIPTOE and AENEAS
Non Member	May 2007	Rowland 'Bill' Sykes	Lieutenant Commander	N/A	78	Submarine Service 1950 to 1958 in AENEAS, THERMOPYLAE (53 to 55) and SOLENT
Gosport Branch	May 2007	R F (Bob) Morby	Stoker 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	P/KX 738259	80	Submarine Service 1946 to 1957 in THERMOPYLAE, TABARD, ALLIANCE and SOLENT