



# PERISCOPE VIEW

The Newsletter of the Barrow-in Furness Branch  
of the  
Submariners Association

Patron: Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce KG GCB OBE DL

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**Cover Picture: Dave Barlow presenting Barrow Branch Crest to Alan Thomas (Australia Branch) & below – Handing over a Bottle of Navy Rum**



## **EDITORIAL**

### **Hello Everybody.**

Bob Faragher has written us another one of his 'Dits' – this time on 'Falling Down Thursday' - the now regular weekly gathering on Thursday afternoons at the Hope and Anchor in Ulverston. If you haven't been yet I'm told it is a very enjoyable social occasion which should not be missed. Best not to drive there however! The WWI Submarine losses Month by Month is continued in this issue. Two Submarines were lost in

March 1916 – both with all hands and one Submariners in RNH Haslar. The Submarine K26 story continues this month with Chapter 12 – "Cockroaches – or are you still using that old formula?"

Branch Serving Member Mark Butchart has recently been the recipient of RASMs Commendation which was presented to him in a Ceremony at Faslane – see article on Page 7. This was partly the result of his Naval Service but also his services to the Veterans Community

locally and to the Submariners Association both nationally and at Branch level. Well done Mark!  
Don't forget to contact Alex to get your tickets for the St Patrick's Day Party in March and the other events which Alex so professionally arranges for us.

See you all at the March Branch Meeting on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March.

Regards to all,  
**Barrie Downer**

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### Chairman's Dit

**Hi All.** Well, I arrived safely in Perth, Western Australia during a heat wave. A number of bush fires to the South which was a concern to the locals but luckily hasn't affected us. I have discovered though that a heat wave of 40+ degrees is better than a cold, windy and wet climate. It has cooled over the past few days to a mere 30 degrees so it is more comfortable.

Last week I went through to Fremantle to join the Australian Branch for their regular monthly meeting. I was welcomed by the President (equivalent of Chairman in UK) Alan Thomas who hasn't lost any of his Welsh accent and of course by the members which numbered about two dozen at a guess. Their meeting followed a similar format to ours. One difference was that they used the traditional tot to toast Absent Brethren early in the meeting. They had members coming from many miles away and one member had left home at 07.00 to arrive for the 12.00 meeting. Dedication! I presented

the President with a branch crest and a bottle of Navy Rum both of which were well received. I sent a couple of photos so hopefully Barrie managed to find room for at least one of them.

I saw a clip on Facebook of Mark Butchart receiving his Commendation from RASM. I am really proud of what Mark has achieved and he is a credit to the Submariners Association in general and the Barrow Branch in particular. BZ Mark. Hopefully Barrie will find a slot for his citation.

It is about that time when the sun has passed its zenith so a beer by the pool is beckoning.

Please accept my apologies for not being at the March meeting but I will be home in good time for the April AGM. See you all then.

Best regards,  
**Dave**

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### SECRETARY'S DIT

**Hi All.** The Branch Annual General Meeting will be the April Meeting which takes place on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April – and don't forget that the AGM always starts half an hour earlier at 1930. As yet there have been no proposals put forward for the AGM – if you do have any suggestions to make about the running of the Branch or ways we can improve our co-operation with other organisations etc. please let the Committee know as soon as possible so we can put together the AGM Agenda at a Committee Meeting.

This year, at the AGM, the Secretary Post is available as are the posts of Vice Chairman and Website Manager. Volunteers should put their names forward to the Committee – again - as soon as possible. Also if you wish to volunteer for the Branch Committee including as Welfare Members put your names forward.

Two Volunteers are also required to Audit the Treasurers Books – If this is something you can do please contact Mick Mailey directly and agree a suitable time before the AGM.

Also John Hart has advised us that he wishes someone to take over from him in co-ordinating Stewards for the K2B, Christmas Lights and other events. John has been doing this for many years but has now decided to stand down. It's not a very onerous task but requires close liaison with the Town Hall, the K2B Committee etc. Volunteers please? John will brief you of the requirements.

I have been advised by Ian Hilbeck that his revamp of the Barrow Submariners Website is almost complete. He says:

"I've reached the point where it makes sense to cutover to the new site so I can concentrate my effort on finishing the new one without the distraction of having to maintain the current site too. To this end I'll need to freeze the data on the old site after this weekend. There'll be a period of a week or so while I do a last data transfer and the domain servers propagate and you can then start to update the branch pages on the new site."

One major change you will see is the discontinuance of the FORUMS pages which have been used less and less over the last year. However Ian has opened up the Facebook page to User Postings and it will be able to be used to promote any Branch Events or Announcements. Anything posted on the Facebook page will automatically feed to the latest news section on the New Site.

He has also introduced a commenting system where visitors can comment on most of the articles on the site. This will be moderated and may be turned off if it goes the way of the FORUM and becomes too onerous to maintain

It might take some time to get used to the new Website but please take a look when it's fully up and running and let Ian know any issues you find so he can fine tune it.

Now an important reminder - several Members still need to pay their Subs for 2016 and are in danger of being 'Lapsed'. The Treasurer tells me that several other Members have still not updated their Standing Orders to reflect the new Fees and, consequently, owe the Branch varying amounts before they are fully 'Paid Up'. I will E

Mail relevant Members in case things have slipped your mind.

If you are not sure if you are fully 'Paid Up' please contact the Treasurer – his details are on Page Two. Alternatively make sure you bring along your Subs for 2016 (£20.00) to the March Meeting if you haven't

already 'Paid Up'. If you need a Standing Order form to update your payments let me know and I'll send you one or you can pick up one from me at the Meeting

Regards

**Barrie Downer**

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## SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

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**Hi Shipmates,** February; a very fine month to be born, saw the Branch dinner sold out with over 50 signed up for this very relaxing and enjoyable evening at the Chetwynde Hotel. Given I have to produce my entry for the magazine before the event I shall give you the low down in April's edition.

March (Saturday 19th) we have the 'not to be missed' St Patrick's Day party. This is going to be a fantastic get together with lots of fiddly diddly music courtesy of Denis 'Paddy' Horan and once that is done then it will be good old fashioned singing and dancing night. There will be lots of homemade Irish stew, Irish decorations, the chance to win a 'pot of gold' and lots of fun and games to be had; at a cost of just £5 you won't get a better bargain this side of Dublin. This is a ticket only affair, due to the catering aspects, which are on sale now, so don't miss out!!!!

April 30th is our corporate footie day at the Blue Birds; this being their final home game of the season to Wrexham. Again this event will be subsidised by the social fund to the tune of £5 and will only cost you £35 per person. For this you will get VIP treatment from 1pm, free alcohol, free programme, free lunch, free brief from the new manager, free seat in the stand to watch the match, free half time crisps and alcohol, free full time sandwiches and alcohol until you are thrown out at 6pm. Fantastic day out and lots of laughs; you never know Barrow may even win the match???? I have sold out of these places so to ensure yours, please get your money to me at/by the April meeting.

A bit further down the road is the Cartmel trip on Saturday 16th July, I have organised a coach with the cost being £12:50 per person return leaving at 12 noon and returning by 7pm. I am getting a lot of support for this so; if you do want to come along with us, please get your requirements to me soonest so you don't miss out. This day is lots of fun with free flowing abuse and fun from start to finish. You don't have to know anything about horses to pack a picnic and sit in the sun drinking and eating. Occasionally getting up for a courtesy break and put a pound on some outsider to romp home – just ask Dickie Cambridge, he goes every year.

Don't forget to attend the meeting to get your birthday boy drink and also be part of the draw which stands at £20 in March – starting to get big money; can you afford not to be there?

**Alex Webb**

**Social Secretary**

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### MARCH BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> March
St Patrick's Social	Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> March
Committee Meeting	As Required

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### BRANCH BIRTHDAYS MARCH 2016

R. (Bob) Arthur	07/03/1948
F. (Frank) Bowen	01/03/1928
D (Dave) Craven	15/03/1960
R (Robin) Emmerson	11/03/1943
T.R. (Charlie) Henshaw	05/03/1946
A.B. (Alan) Hoskins	31/03/1949
H. (Hughie) Short	17/03/1940
G (Graham) Teal	31/03/1971

**Happy Birthday to you all!**

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### SUBMARINE LOSSES OF WWI

Two Submarines were lost in March 1916 both with all hands. One other submariner was reported to have died.

**Stoker 1st Class Harold Rubin Wherry** O/N K20198 of HMS DOLPHIN died on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 1916. The Devonport Rating had been taken ill and he died in RNH Haslar. Harold Wherry was aged nineteen years old and he was the son of Frederick and Alice Maud

Wherry of 12, Stenlake Terrace, Prince Rock, Plymouth. He was buried in the Plymouth Old Cemetery (Pennycomequick) in Grave No. D.8.6.

The first Submarine lost was:

#### **Submarine E5**

On 7th March 1916 Submarine E5 was on patrol in the North Sea north of Juist Island when it was sighted by a German Battle Cruiser SMS SEYDLITZ. An attack was carried out on the Submarine - apparently without effect. Later a Submarine, believed to be E5, was sighted by German Cruiser SMS REGENSBURG further east and close by a German minefield off the west of the Ems River. Submarine E5 was not seen again and is thought to have been lost in the minefield. The crew of E5 was:

#### **Officers:**

Lt Commander Harrington Douty Edwards DSO, RN  
Lieutenant Sidney Frederick Watson, RN  
Lieutenant Thomas Humphrey Bor, RNR

#### **Ratings:**

Petty Officer Arthur Robert Owen 199878  
Petty Officer William James Arnold 197172  
Petty Officer Alfred Joseph Pendred J2418  
Leading Seaman John Thomas Bassett 203189  
Leading Seaman William McDowell 211344

Able Seaman James Lefever J11476  
 Able Seaman Charles John Oates J4526  
 Able Seaman Henry Warkman Atkinson J12152  
 Able Seaman William Parker J6076  
 Able Seaman Arthur Robert Thirlwell 23517  
 Signalman Howard William Kingcombe J11519  
 Boy Telegraphist William Edwin Shepherd J35848  
 CERA Ernest William Morris 268807  
 ERA Philip Buchanan RFR  
 ERA Frederick William Davis M496  
 ERA Cecil Rice M7200  
 Stoker Petty Officer Francis Garratt Cowburn 309136  
 Leading Stoker William Arthur Bonner K13881  
 Leading Stoker Robert Arthur Powell K798  
 Stoker 1st Class Albert Aldred K12395  
 Stoker 1st Class Robert Leonard Chinn K14836  
 Stoker 1st Class Allan Denzil Dale K15770  
 Stoker 1st Class George Goff K20958  
 Stoker 1st Class Frederick Joseph Lane K/16052  
 Stoker 1st Class Frederick George Moore K14005  
 Stoker 1st Class Ernest Smith K17473

The second Submarine was.

#### **Submarine E24**

E24 sailed from Harwich on Tuesday 21 March 1916 with orders to carry out a Mine Laying Operation in the Heligoland Bight. The Submarine did not return from this operation and is assumed to have been mined on or about Friday 24 March 1916. The wreck of E24 was mistakenly (?) salvaged in 1973 and inspection of the hull confirmed mine damage. The CWGC Records indicate that the remains of twenty five submariners were recovered from the wreck of E24 and that, in July 1973, these remains were subsequently buried in the Hamburg Cemetery. Examination of the submarine confirmed the mine-tubes were empty and that it was most likely that E24 was sunk by a German minefield. Submarine E24 is commemorated on a memorial in the Churchyard at Sullington in Sussex. The crew of E24 was:

#### **Officers:**

Lt Commander George Wyatt Edgell Naper, RN  
 Lieutenant Rider Morris Waterhouse Greiffenhagen, RN  
 Lieutenant George Alexander Harris, RNR  
 Lieutenant Russell Ernest Birch, Royal Navy

#### **Ratings:**

Petty Officer Richard Henry Rogers 232625  
 Leading Seaman Arthur James Flack 239733  
 Leading Seaman Walter Hubert Hawke 237738  
 Leading Seaman Henry Keat 209295  
 Able Seaman Cuthbert Henry Kerswill 235202  
 Able Seaman Thomas Arthur Kirby 233418  
 Able Seaman Frederick Egan 8844  
 Able Seaman Harry Maeers 236964  
 Able Seaman Edwin Wallace Gange J6270  
 Able Seaman Walter Henry Sewell 227577  
 Able Seaman Frederick Arthur Trendell J3319  
 Able Seaman Alfred Samuel David Chadwick 231479  
 Leading Telegraphist Alexander Carpenter J9416  
 CERA Victor Harold Campbell Lovell 270685  
 ERA Edward Scarlett 271096

ERA Isaac Bass 271517  
 ERA Samuel David Mitchell Fitzwater 271709  
 ERA Robert Hopkins Wilson M3333  
 ERA Arthur Norman Martin M508  
 Stoker Petty Officer George Oakley 286552  
 Leading Stoker Albert Edward Ford 310486  
 Leading Stoker William Bennett K11735  
 Stoker 1st Class Harry Lace Bibbey K13947  
 Stoker 1st Class Ernest Samuel Brown K27161  
 Stoker 1st Class Cornelius Michael Connolly K21324  
 Stoker 1st Class George Edward Deves K19163  
 Stoker 1st Class Stephen Thomas Taylor K22859  
 Stoker 1st Class William Luxton Kelley K9685  
 Stoker 1st Class John William Watts K11064  
 Stoker 1st Class Ernest Fielding Willcox K12550  
 Stoker 1st Class Walter Witchell K10223  
 NOTE: The crew of E24 was larger than for other E Class Submarines as some were specialists carried for the Mining equipment. Also one additional Command qualified Officer - Russell Ernest Birch - was on board for familiarisation purposes

### **FALLING DOWN THURSDAY**

By our Roving Reporter – Bob Faragher

Falling down Thursday takes place each Thursday at the Hope and Anchor in Ulverston. A group of Submariners, theirs partners, and an assortment of other former servicemen, and seamen get together and drink their health and everyone else's health.

Some of us manage to get through to Ulverston from Barrow more on a monthly basis, others who live in the area are there every Thursday.

On this occasion the attendees were, Ken and Mrs Brumby, Bob and Mrs Hagan, Christine, and Kate, Mr and Mrs John Sullivan, (former Army/RAF) Bob Faragher and Sally Arnold (former Army/Oaklea Trust), Dudley, Dicky Cambridge, Dave Craven, and Dave Oakes. Quite an assortment! The only thing was that we missed Ginge Cundell not being with us, he never missed.

Dave Oakes and I set off with our trusty chauffeur Stainless Steve. We collected Sally Arnold with whom I worked with in a previous life. She is well acquainted with a couple of Submariners, namely Hughie Short, and Micky Dack, so she knew about the Thursday meetings and wanted to go, so we being gentlemen obliged. In view of the fact that Dave and I only get to go once a month we provided a bottle of rum for the event.

Proceedings carried on as usual, lots of dits, and tales of heroic deeds, (Dicky Cambridge). It became very difficult to follow what was actually going on, but as I remember, it was definitely funny. Young Sally Arnold, a pretty lass, was the centre of attention for Dicky Cambridge, (no surprise there then!). Eventually Dudley relieved him and, as always, was the absolute gentlemen.

As seems to have become habit, if there is a job to be done, I seem to get it. Because I had brought the rum I was elected rum Bosun. This was okay, but it wasn't like the old days when Rum Bosun and ticker off used to get a wet of everyone's Tot, not so in this case. However,



there was plenty to go around, and plenty of Queens. Ken Brumby unfortunately missed the Rum. He was late due to a visit to the dentist, we all sympathised. The landlord also gets a Tot, because he is an excellent Landlord. Very few pubs would allow a bunch of old people to provide their own rum! On the down side, much as we were looking forward to it, no one was sick over Dicky Cambridge. Still, you can't have everything. Can't remember everything, but our chauffeur arrived and transported myself, Sally, and Dave home safely. Thank goodness for Stainless Steve.

### **DISCLAIMER**

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Nothing printed may be construed as policy or an official announcement unless so stated. Otherwise the Association accepts no liability on any issue in this Newsletter.

### **NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFORMATION**

Do you have a story to tell or have information you feel should appear in the Newsletter then ring Barrie Downer on 01229 820963 or if you wish to send me an article my postal address is listed above under Committee Members. You may also send your contribution by e-mail to me [barrie@downer55.freemove.co.uk](mailto:barrie@downer55.freemove.co.uk). Come on – every Submariner has a story to tell – some more than one! Let's see yours in print!

Constructive suggestions about the newsletter are also very welcome. The newsletter will be published in the last week of each month i.e. the last week in March for the April 2016 issue. Please ensure you have any information with me by the 15th of the month to ensure its inclusion in the next issue. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition – keep them stories coming!

### **£200 Million boost for Successor Submarine design**

On 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 the MOD announced a £201 million package to support further design work for the Royal Navy's next generation of nuclear submarines. The funding will enable BAE Systems to develop the design of the submarine, including the layout of equipment and systems, and to develop manufacturing processes, including the production of early prototypes. The announcement comes ahead of the next phase of the programme later this year. The new submarine will be one of the stealthiest submarines in the world. It will also be the safest and most technically advanced submarine ever built in the UK.

Work on the submarine's design will draw on cutting edge capabilities in innovation, design and engineering,

employing around 2,500 highly-skilled people in the UK from BAE Systems, Babcock and Rolls-Royce. Hundreds of potential suppliers, including Small and Medium Enterprises, have also been identified across the country.

Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said: "The round the clock nuclear deterrent is as crucial to Britain's national security now as it has ever been. We use it every day to deter extreme threats that cannot be countered by any other means. When there are 17,000 nuclear weapons in the world, we can't wish away threats we face now and those that may emerge in the 2030s, 2040s, and 2050s."



Chief of Materiel (Fleet) Vice Admiral Simon Lister added: "We are now in the detailed design stage of the most technologically advanced nuclear submarine in the history of the Royal Navy. Building on cutting edge developments carried out by the MOD, BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce and Babcock, this funding will allow us to continue to move forwards with the programme."

The funding, is part of the overall £3.3 billion package announced in the last parliament for the Assessment Phase of the Successor submarine programme.

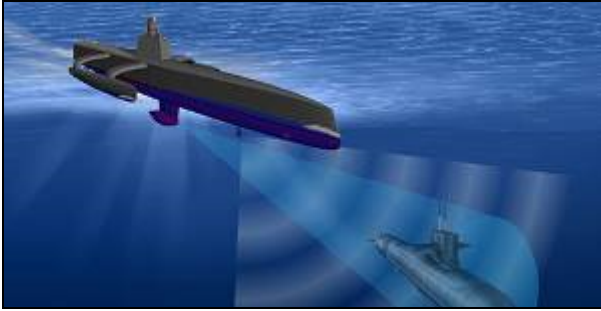
The current four Vanguard Class submarines – which currently maintain the UK's nuclear deterrent - will be replaced from the early 2030s.



Within the next four years all the UK's submarines will be based in Scotland. This will lead to the creation of 1,400 new jobs taking the total number employed at HM Naval Base Clyde to 8,200 by 2022.

## **130-Foot Crewless Ship to Set Sail in Spring)**

By Stew Magnuson 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016



The United States Defense Department's agency devoted to cutting-edge technologies, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has big plans for 2017 including the launch of a 130-foot autonomous ship that will begin sailing the seas this year. The Obama administration requested \$2.973 billion for DARPA for fiscal year 2017 (the same amount in its 2016 request) and \$105m more than what was appropriated, said DARPA Director Arati Prabhakar. That amounts to only 2 percent of federal R&D expenditures, but the organization has had a large impact, she added.

"We are an organization that has been designed from the beginning to take risk and manage risk in pursuit of off-scale impact," she said.

The funding will go toward three major strategic areas: rethinking complex military systems; mastering the information explosion; and developing the seeds of new technological surprise, she told reporters Feb. 10 during a briefing at DARPA headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. As for the first category, Steve Walker, DARPA deputy director, said, "We need to continue to think how to build highly capable military systems, especially to prepare for fights with highly capable adversaries."

The military can't continue to rely on big, monolithic weapons systems that take years to develop. It will never have them in time or in the numbers required to fight advanced adversaries, Walker said.

"We need to mix it up. We need to build war-fighting architectures that are more heterogeneous in nature, hard to target and rely on smaller and cheaper microelectronics technologies," he said.

One example is the Anti-Submarine Warfare Continuous Trail Unmanned Vessel which will be the largest unmanned surface vehicle ever built at 130-feet long, Walker said. It will be christened in April in Portland, Oregon, and then begin to demonstrate its long-range capabilities over 18 months in cooperation with the Office of Naval Research and the Space and Naval Systems Warfare Command.

Imagine an unmanned surface vessel following all the laws of the sea on its own and operating with manned surface and unmanned underwater vehicles," Walker said.

We think the real cost savings will be in operating this vessel at sea compared to how we operate vessels today,"

he added. It could be used for counter-mine missions, reconnaissance and resupply, he added.

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## **SUBMARINER COMMENDED FOR PROFESSIONALISM AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Submariner Mark Butchart was commended by the Head of the UK Submarine Service for their outstanding professionalism and stakeholder engagement on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

Leading Engineering Technician Mark Butchart received his commendation from Rear Admiral John Weale, Rear Admiral Submarines at a ceremony at HM Naval Base Clyde, home of the UK Submarine Service.

"He has performed superbly on operations and in ashore support for their submarines, and worked tirelessly to promote the Service with important community and stakeholder groups," said Rear Admiral Weale.

Leading Engineering Technician Mark Butchart has served on both Swiftsure and Astute Class submarines during his 15 years of Royal Navy service. He is currently the liaison between the Astute Class Build Group and the Submariners Association and the Royal British Legion in Barrow-in-Furness, where all of the UK's submarines are built – including Butchart's current boat Audacious. He also completed the solemn task of reading out the names of all 167 submarines lost at sea at the Submarine Service memorial in Westminster in November 2015, addressing 500 people, including HRH Prince William the Duke of Cambridge.

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## **Could New Technology Compromise Britain's Nuclear Submarines?**

A powerful group of MPs has written to two major defence contractors questioning whether new technology could undermine the ability of Britain's nuclear submarines to operate at sea without being detected. The Defence Select Committee letter, to BAE Systems and Babcock, refers to the current Vanguard-class vessels in service, as well as the Successor submarines which are planned to replace them.

It notes the development of new technologies such as underwater drones, and questions what impact they could have on submarine detection, and what countermeasures are in place to deal with the threat. The committee has asked for a reply by the end of the month. A date for a vote on the Successor programme is yet to be announced, but it's believed that it could take place as early as March. The letter is set out below:

"The Defence Committee is conducting preparatory work in advance of the expected debate and vote in the House on the Successor Programme.

"As part of that work, the Committee would like to gain a better understanding of the extent to which new technologies could make it impossible for the Vanguard class to operate undetected at sea."

"Therefore, I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with an assessment of:

- (1) The current military technologies available to detect and track submarines.
- (2) Whether new technologies, for example underwater drones, are being developed which could accurately detect and track submarines."
- (3) The feasibility of such technologies to operate effectively.
- (4) What the timescale would be before such equipment would become operational.
- (5) What advancements in submarine design are being considered to combat detection by such equipment."

### **MARITIME BOOKS LTD**

Maritime Books Ltd has successfully moved premises to Heathland's Business Park, Liskeard.

Some of the books now available are advertised at the end of this News Letter on Pages 13 & 14 as is information on a supplier of Ships Badges and Crests.. All orders will be satisfied, as usual, within one working day.

Contact Ian Whitehouse, Maritime Books Ltd 01579 343663 [ian@navybooks.com](mailto:ian@navybooks.com)

### **CROSSED THE BAR FEBRUARY 2016**

Branch	Date	Name	Rank/Rating	O/N	Age	Submarine Service
Submarine Association of Australia	30th Jan 2016	Michael J Davidson	Commander, RAN (ex RN)	N/A	TB A	Submarine Service in SEASCOUT, ACHERON, ALCIDE, TIPTOE, REPULSE & SMEO PLATYPUS
Brierley Hill & West Bromwich Branch	2nd Feb 2016	Peter Bailey	Able Seaman (RP2)	D/J X 721106	91	Submarine Service from 1944 to 1947 in UPSHOT & VARNE
Beds and Herts Branch	4th Feb 2016	Basil J Backhouse	Chief Radio Mechanician	P/M 946685	77	Submarine Service November 1961 to June 1972 in ONSLAUGHT (62-63), GRAMPUS (1966 to 1967), RENOWN (P) (1st Commission Crew) on 15th November 1968 & SWIFTSURE (1970 to 1972) Died 4th February aged 77
Dolphin Branch	4th Feb 2016	K J (Keith) Knight	Chief Petty Officer WEA	D069559R	69	Submarine Service from April 1967 from February 1996 in REVENGE (P) (1st Commission Crew) on 4th December 1969, COURAGEOUS (1st Commission Crew) on 16th October 1971, SOVEREIGN, SPLENDID (1st Commission Crew) on 21st March 1981 & TRENCHANT (1st Commission Crew) on 14th January 1989
North Staffs Branch	6th Feb 2016	George H Woodward	Stoker Mechanic	D/KX 164677	91	Submarine Service from April 1943 to December 1946 in H33 (43), THULE (43-44) & TABARD (45)
Eastern States Branch	February 2016	John E Bish	Leading Seaman (UW3)	P/SSX 883180		Submarine Service from July 1954 to February 1960 in TRUNCHEON (1st Commission on 21st January 1957), TELEMACHUS, AUROCHS & ANDREW
SAOC West	February 2016	William (Windy) Thomson	N/K	N/K		Submarine Service in GRILSE & RAINBOW

### **K26 – THE STEAM SUBMARINE (Part 9)**

By Jack Phillip (Nick) Nichols O/N J98553

#### **COCKROACHES**

#### **OR, "ARE YOU STILL USING THAT OLD FORMULA?"**

The Cockroach is a member of the Orthoptera so my encyclopedia tells me, and being brown in colour is called the black beetle. In the treatment of the cockroach infestation my encyclopedia recommends straight up, slicing up cucumber and strewing the slices about, "They will render the cockroach helpless, say this learned tome. With laughter, I presume. It does not say what happens after. Surely Mr. Cockroach gets over it. It does not say that cucumber is fatal to them. An alternative suggestion is a beer trap into which they are supposed to fall and be drowned. I suspect the cockroach, clever old orthoptera that I know him to be, would get round that beer trap lark. I could imagine him organizing a scheme where several volunteers jammed the mechanism and allowed the remainder to get at the beer, have a merry evening and sleep it off. Encyclopedias are written by 'Experts' and of course you know what they are; mainly



idiots.

Now in 1929 K26 British Steam Submarine was infested with cockroaches and in addition had a few rats, and though I blush even now to mention it, on occasion a few, well I won't lie, a lot of fleas. The rats lived low down in the bilges behind air bottles, complicated pumps, nests of pipes and so on where no traveller of human size can ever come. With extreme trouble you can gas him, and then you smell him for many months while his corpse dries out. So, warfare on a large scale against rats is not, or was not, often undertaken. They rarely walked over us in the night. Sometimes someone would say that he had seen a big father rat sitting on an overhead pipe and cleaning his whiskers. Without flashlight photographs we were sceptical. But old what's-his-name, the cockroach he was clearly visible, you could smell him too, and from time to time he lost his balance. If he walked along an electric lead or a pipe of even considerable girth. The smell of food directly below would cause him to swoon like a Victorian maiden with an 18 inch waist, and fall straight down. If your plate of pork and beans happened to be below him, and there was a piece of pork in the can then for naming purposes only in those days. With his well-known colour and the well-known colour of tomato sauce and only a 40 watt bulb you could crunch something that wasn't pork and equally certain wasn't a bean. No it was a girt cockroach whose flavour is not really worth describing. They walked also above bunks, said to be attracted by Sailors socks. Not the smell of socks, but probably the texture, woolly socks seemed the most cockroach attractive, cotton socks the least. As terylene and nylon had not been invented then there are of course no records of socks of that material. They, that is the cockroaches, not the socks, were not class conscious as many cockroaches fell down in the Wardroom as fell in any other part of the beat, meal for meal, pipe for pipe, cable for cable. They were gregarious and loved warmth, and gathered behind the electric lamp fittings like old grannies in a snug. If you looked at them with a magnifying glass, which we borrowed from the end of the Signalman's telescope once, and destroyed half the visual communications of the boat for some time in the process, you could see them waving feelers and nodding their heads. We presume that they were arguing the merits of say a sixty watt lamp and a forty. There may have been some old, old cockroach there who could tell them of the lovely golden glow that used to come from a fifty candlepower carbon lamp, now rarely met with. Well, the combined alertness of Nelson, Avery, and Regan, nationalities in sequence, Turk, Englishman, Irishman failed to keep the cockroaches at bay in the Ward Room, so it was decided to apply for an official de-infestation which is not easy to spell out in semaphore, and appeared, so I am told as devastation after being relayed through Castille. Nothing was heard whilst the mills of Admiralty ground slowly, incidentally they are eight times slower than those of God, if you are the least bit interested. But one day we rose to be told that tomorrow we should sleep, eat, and have our being in the Cyclops whilst the cockroaches were being exterminated. About nine in the forenoon of the day of the cockroach blitz, a small gang of men brought some little steel gas cylinders aboard and distributed them around in the lowest parts of the boat. We asked "Here Jo' what's in these cylinders?" The only answer we could get was "Deddlygas". We asked again slowly. Every time we asked we got the same answer "Deddlygas. We had wanted a chemical formula, not a group name, nickname or general title. We would have been satisfied with a name like "Di-hydrous carbonate of Asiatic waterfowl" or "Arsenuretted dichloro-benzine nitrate." But there we were "Deddlygas" was what we were told. When we were all out of the boat the foreman went through the boat wearing a complicated respirator with what looked like little oven doors in it. He turned on the valves came up on the casing and we, the sailors banged the hatches down. Bud approached the big crash, the foreman. He offered him a cigarette he took it, a light, he lit up. He smiled. Bert said, "it's a very important job yours, what is the gas you use for cockroaches." Jose smiled, "nice chap has given me cigarette, wants to be friendly, I will of course give him the information he wants." I moved forward, Bud cocked his ears, Bert Single smiled in expectation "iss very good stoof, is kill all a cockroach like magic... we call it Deddlygas Seenyor." Bud laughed, "What no other name?" The man puffed on his cigarette. "No Seenyor, always, I been in de yard six years, always Deddlygas." "Deddlygas" said Bud "That about sums it up. Next morning we opened up the boat, and switched on the fans we lowered portable fans after a while as the gas began to clear. When well diluted it had a nice smell some said it smelled like stewed plums. Every compartment had dead cockroaches, strings of them, little ones, big ones, young ones, old ones, dead, dead, dead. One hundred per cent kill. The workmen gathered the cylinders put them in the handcart and wheeled it away. The foreman as befits a senior man, got on his bike and rode away. Before going he smiled at Bud and asked, "You been below Seenyor?" Bud said, "Yes I've had a look round, heaps of 'em all dead." The foreman smiled, "You can't beat Deddlygas, cockroach fleas too, Sahah!" He went. Bud said, "There you are Nick, you can't beat Deddlygas".

Well, for a few days that's what we thought too. We shovelled the dead up and pitched them into the harbour. Stoker Fawkes the enquiring type wanted to count them or at least weigh them. We told him go jump in the harbour and we'd sling 'em in and he could start counting them. He didn't accept. Six days later Scotty dropped a corner off a slice of bread and jam. He was talking at the time so he did not immediately pick the morsel up. A minute or two elapsed, Scotty said positively the last word about Plymouth Argyll or whatever it was and bent down to pick up the sticky bread. From the bread a small shadow seemed to come and swell and disappear. Oh yes, hundreds of tiny cockroaches had sped from the bread scattering to the furthest corners of the Beamery. We cottoned on as the Japanese now say, they got it from the Americans and they probably got it from us, and we had it from the Chinese, so it's almost back home. The Deddlygas was splendid for live cockroaches, it turned them into dead cockroaches overnight. But it didn't kill the eggs and here we were with an entire new population of young lively cockroaches. Three weeks, and all the spaces behind the lamps were filled with middle-aged cockroaches chatting away. They had no aged historian telling them about the old time lamps, hotter, better-coloured, longer lasting etc. He was dead.

A signal asking that the boat be dis-infested again brought back an Admiralty letter which was in those far back happy days described as "tantamount to a rebuff". No one suggested cucumber or beer traps, we lived with them at least another fourteen months. When K26 was broken up in 1931, it was on the hard at Sliema that the unfeeling oxyacetylene tore my love to pieces, it is rumoured that cockroaches by the million or at least the hundred thousand marched off up the slope. It is a long time ago, but may be a folk tale exists in some very old hotel in Sliema, that some of the cockroaches present there are lineal descendants of first flotilla submarine cockroaches the cream of them being able to trace their ancestry back at least to the Deddlygas. They would I suppose be wearing white woollen sweaters no doubt in memory of the good old submarine days, when there was pork in the tin, with the beans, and jam had real fruit in it, and L.T.O.s had an interest in chemistry, dignity, and loyalty.

### COCKROACH

Didn't you see a chapter earlier on with the heading "Cockroach? No, you didn't, what you saw was a heading, "Cockroaches", which is plural! Look back now, see the difference, this is singular, and it is the name of a man, a very good man. A man now dead or I'm a Dutchman. Obviously, that was not his real name, he would, being a Maltese, be a Spiteri, a Muscat, a Zammit, a Caruana, an Azzopardi, a Gatt. But no one ever called him anything but Cockroach. Like Figaro, it was Cockroach here, Cockroach there, always Cockroach. What was this Cockroach? You may well ask. He was the top man for many years of the Submarine Dhobeying firm. "What?" you say, "A sort of male washerwoman?" Be careful; would you speak disparagingly of Napoleon, of Homer, of Garibaldi, of Mussolini even, just because they were foreigners? If you would, this book is not for you, close it now, and see what you can sell it for second-hand. You probably only borrowed it from the free library anyway.

Cockroach was a personality. I seek back for another such personality in history. No, never in one person alone, could I find a parallel. I say he was a combination of Wellington, Washington, and Wallace. Sorry about the alliteration, but if I'd said Wellesley it would have sounded the same. Picture the upper deck of the CYCLOPS, an old, old merchant ship doing as best she can the duties of a Submarine Parent Ship. It is Saturday afternoon. Tomorrow is Sunday, as you would expect. On the morrow, as the best authors say, is the Commander-in-Chief's Inspection. Tomorrow: Captains of Submarines, Jimmies of Submarines, third Harrys of Submarines, Sub Lieutenants who shave perhaps only once in three days, such is their youth, will be a-tremble. Not only must their vessels be spotless and immaculate, which is the same thing if you look it up. But their crews too, must be dressed in white raiment without a blemish. About two hundred men are on or in the well-deck whichever you prefer, talking, smoking, glancing up the road towards Strada Zachara. Suddenly the great man is here, no trumpet heralded him, his minions carry large canvas bags. Cockroach has arrived.

The conversation goes as follows. "Orright Savins I got him, dere you are one six suit - you pay now. I see you next week?" Orright." Cockroach, two six suits one pair of overalls." "Orright Tims here you are - one and six. No! No change for your quid. Give me next time you see me."

A Captain's Steward hurries forward, a different bag is opened, starched drill suits do not mingle with overalls and sailors' trousers.

"One a starched suit, three pair socks, four pair short knickers, two dress shirt, two poplin white shirt, one civvy shirt and a bath towel alla correct." "Put it on the bill Cockroach." "O.K. Captain L.23 - on de bill. Who next?" "Allo Scotty, I put a patch from your drill trousers, stand up a straight nobody notice, one singlet, two shorta pants, with last week four shillings orright?" "Right Cockroach. "My overall." "O.K. Trussler in de bag - iss right here one overall, .two ducka suit, alla most worn out - one and six - you pay now okay."

In a little while the well deck is clear, the bags are folded, Cockroach smiles. Every man's account is there right there in his little head - and not only number six suits, but Officers' starched suits, gay coloured shorts, striped sheets, jodphurs for the polo up the Marsa, socks, which when produced bring a cheer from the merry men of the CYCLOPS and subs. His young men pick up the bags, one of them whistles the dghaisa and the dhobeying firm goes ashore. All has been washed, ironed, delivered. Just as the last bag is being stowed in the boat an untidy sailor runs down the gangway, it is four o'clock, the sun is declining, the sun is needed for drying.

Yes! Yes! The sailor Nichols K26. An untidy feckless fellow says "Cockroach you know that it is tomorrow Admiral's Inspection. Can you?

He puts a suit which looks like a coal bag into Cockroach's hand." "Will it be all right?" Cockroach keeps the suit out of the bag, carries it himself. "Orright Niggles I send a boy up - soon as it ready." "Thank you Cockroach" says Nichols, he knows he's O.K. for tomorrow, only got to borrow a cap ribbon and get a rub of old Honey's blanco. The boat shoves off and glides to shore, where no trumpets sound!

Next morning at Divisions bugles sound, swords clank, the Captains of Submarines smirk at the little compliments and imagine increased bands of gold braid encircling their arms. The 2nd Tiffies think about being First Class Tiffies and moving from Eastney to North End, with even a possibility of Cosham, or indeed Waterlooville. The Stokers all become Leading Stokers in the imagination of their hearts. I thrust my chest out and hope against hope for a red ink recommend at the end of the quarter. Whilst standing beside me almost un-recognisable in a lovely white suit, brand new cap ribbon, lovely white doeskin shoes too large by far but stuffed with signal pad stands Nichols, anxious only to pass muster and praying that he will not be picked out to muster his bag. For his kit is short of certain items which he intends to get, one of these days. The saluting stops, the Admiral and his staff depart, Nichols returns the cap ribbon and the shoes, relieved that Tims and Overton have to muster kit, they've got it you see. Compliments that were issued, are

now repeated. Officers go round saying "Good show". I surely don't have to remind you do I? I mean the hero of the piece, the man without whose foresight, strategy, organizing ability, it would have been a total failure. Let's give him three cheers, he has always carried us through. Now whilst the Captains and Jimmies are toasting each other in the pink gin, come on us chaps in the know, "Three cheers for Cockroach. "Hip hip hurray, hip hip hurray, hip hip hurray." "On caps".

**To be continued in April 2016 with: HELMETS, SUN – OR – SUN HELMET SAGA**

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### **A Speech by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas.**

Almost 18 months ago, on a dark November day, the Navy Board met in Scotland to determine our SDSR strategy. We made what, in retrospect, was a quite extraordinary decision to define a highly ambitious future for the Royal Navy, based around 3 core capabilities of Continuous At Sea Deterrent and Carrier Strike, together with Amphibious Readiness. It was reasonable in terms of an aspiration for a great nation. But it was extraordinarily ambitious simply because of the wholesale political and budgetary uncertainties of the time.

Yet, with May's General Election everything changed, and the first part of our plan looked possible. The newly elected majority government had already committed to renewing the deterrent, and to bringing both our 2 new aircraft carriers into service, so the big building blocks of our future were already in place, even before the SDSR began. And then the July budget last year defined a financial future of 2% for defence that gave our plan fiscal depth, perhaps not so much in the very early years, but certainly thereafter. So, our focus switched, therefore, to making sure that the totality of these strategic promises were met, and that the necessary supporting and enabling components were properly credible. And that, by and large, is what the SDSR delivered:

Eight highly credible anti-submarine warfare Type 26 frigates;

Nine new Maritime Patrol Aircraft necessary to protect the deterrent and support sea control;

At least five, and listening carefully to the Prime Minister and Chancellor, probably more, new general purpose frigates too;

More F35B jets flying from our carriers, and earlier than planned;

Plus the Fleet Solid Support Ships necessary to sustain their global reach.

So nothing fancy, merely the necessary supporting components to deliver these 2 strategic responsibilities credibly.

A Balanced Fleet

But there are 2 other really noticeable features of the SDSR. Firstly, we've met this objective while maintaining investment in a balanced fleet. The Royal Marines remain the UK's 'go-to' contingency force. The drumbeat of submarines under construction at Barrow continues, with signs of improved support performance. Every helicopter type in the Fleet Air Arm is being replaced or upgraded. There are 4 new tankers as well as supply ships for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Plus investment in larger patrol ships, unmanned mine countermeasures technology, Special Forces, reserves and all the other capabilities which deliver power at sea, and from the sea.

National Shipbuilding Strategy

The second noticeable feature was that 2015 marked the first time in decades that the Royal Navy emerged from a defence review unscathed. In fact, we're set to grow, in ships and people. The increases may be modest for now, but soon the government will unveil its National Shipbuilding Strategy. It will set out plans to replace all 13 Type 23 frigates on a one for one basis. This will be achieved, as I've said, with 8 Type 26 anti-submarine warfare frigates together with at least five general purpose frigates. Those 2 small words, "at least", are hugely significant. For the past 20 years, and longer, we've have to make do with the words "up to". Remember the phrase "Up to 12 Type 45 destroyers", which of course became 8 and then 6? So I don't know about you, but I'll take the words "at least" over "up to" any day.

Carrier Journey

And none of this journey and outcome happens by accident. SDSR 2015 was a huge team effort across the Royal Navy, and defence. Yet the seeds were sown many years ago, decades ago in fact. It's down in no small part to the strategic foresight and steadiness under fire of the men who have stood in my place, and all those who supported them, many of whom are here tonight. And while there have been setbacks along that journey, too often the focus was on what was lost, when it should have been on what was retained. Because the navy of tomorrow is born out of the navy of today; and our case was reinforced, year-after-year, by our sailors and marines on operations, demonstrating what we offer the nation. Nothing is more reflective of this truth than our carrier journey.

This year, this month, marks the fiftieth anniversary of Denis Healy's seminal 1966 defence white paper, which cancelled the CVA-01 carrier project. 50 years. Some thought, perhaps hoped, it would mark the end of British carrier based air power. Yet there followed in the 1970s perhaps some of the most imaginative staff work the Ministry of Defence has ever seen as 3 "through-deck cruisers" slowly, quietly, evolved into small aircraft carriers. And so began what Nick Childs aptly termed "the Age of Invincible": 3 decades of carrier operations: in the Falklands, followed by Bosnia, the Gulf, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone. Indeed, those who argue that the Queen Elizabeth class carriers are too big, fail to appreciate that their size was determined precisely because of experience gained through back-to-back operations in the 80s and 90s. It's now

18 years since George Robertson stood up in Parliament and set this project in train. It's not been an easy journey since then.

There were a few moments when it was frankly touch-and-go. Plenty of people predicted they wouldn't be built, or that they would suck the rest of the navy dry. Even 5 years ago, we had commentators helpfully suggesting that the Libya intervention was evidence yet again that we could rely on land based air power for future operations. Not only had they forgotten the lessons of 1982, but they seemed not to notice when France and Italy deployed their carriers, despite having airfields within easy reach, or our own brilliant creative use of HMS Ocean for Apache strike, which once again showed that the navy does not let the nation down. And just look at where we are today. In the United States, the first squadron of US Marine Corps F35Bs is operational, with UK personnel alongside them every step of the way. This summer you'll see the F35 in UK skies. Get used to the sight because many more are coming our way.

Meanwhile, in the Gulf, our frigates and destroyers have been working with US and French carriers. Our people have been integrated with theirs; in both cases honing the skills that will serve our own carrier centric future. And then in Rosyth, HMS Queen Elizabeth's diesel generators and gas turbines are up and running. Her radars are turning and burning. She is alive. Prince of Wales is catching up fast: now structurally complete; the first members of her Ship's Company joined last month.

HMS Queen Elizabeth's sails from Rosyth later this year. It will be a great day for the Royal Navy. It's the day when the ghosts of 1966, and 1981, are finally laid to rest. The 50 year circle will be closing. But as you will appreciate, to view these two ships as a mere replacement for the Invincible class, or a return to the halcyon days of fast jet carrier operations in the 60s and 70s, is to underestimate entirely what they represent in both practical and symbolic terms.

From the mid-2020s the UK, already one of only three nations to maintain a Continuous At Sea Deterrent, will become one of an equally select few to wield a Continuous Carrier Capability. Indeed, it was telling that it was the Chancellor of the Exchequer who announced that more jets would be ordered sooner than expected to "step up the carrier punch of the United Kingdom". These ships symbolise our military strength, our engineering and technical ability, our global economic ambition and our international authority. So thank you. Through the years we've stuck to our course. We've quietly and persistently made the case... well, perhaps not always quietly. There is now a huge amount of work in the years ahead. But the Royal Navy is heading forward at full steam to where we belong, back as a big deck carrier operator; back at the heart of our nation's defence; back to the front rank of maritime powers.

#### Innovation and the future

So in the last few minutes, I want to look ahead. Those who know me well know that I couldn't be on my feet without saying a few words about innovation. Innovation in the minds of some is fundamentally about technology. But innovation is much more about attitude than technology.

So what the navy, or perhaps more widely defence, needs to do is create the environment in which people feel free to think, free to change, and comfortable in taking risk. There is no doubt that the world that the world in which we are operating is changing rapidly.

So the utility of innovation, the flexibility of our approach to leadership, war fighting and capability, has at the very least to match, if not beat, what today's enemy can achieve. Meanwhile, underwater, some of you will know, and I won't expand, we have seen extraordinary performances from our submarines.

We have met our operational responsibilities precisely through imaginative, innovative, utilisation of underwater technologies, and all credit to our submariners for their phenomenal performance.

So I just wanted to say that the future of the service shouldn't be seen through the binary utility of innovation in a technical sense. It will be through the attitude of our young leaders, and through the imagination of our command and management structures. And that more than anything else, is our future.

#### Conclusion

So the SDSR 15 marks the start, not the end, of the Royal Navy's ambition. Much of this will fall on the shoulders of the young men and women stepping off the parade ground at Raleigh, Dartmouth and Lymington. But the commitment, the enthusiasm, the professionalism do not change. They have fantastic careers ahead of them, in a Royal Navy now growing in size and ambition, as well as capability. If I could do it all again I would in a flash, and I'm sure many of you would too. But the next generation will continue what you, and what I, have always sought to do: To protect and advance our nation's interests; To take the UK's message of maritime prosperity and ambition around the world and, when called to do so, to "engage the enemy more closely"...to fight and win.



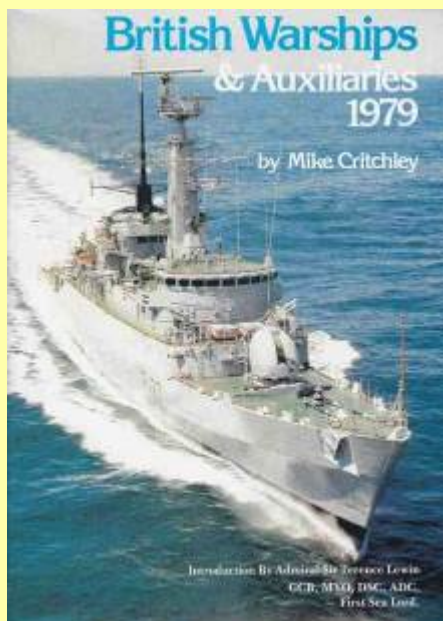
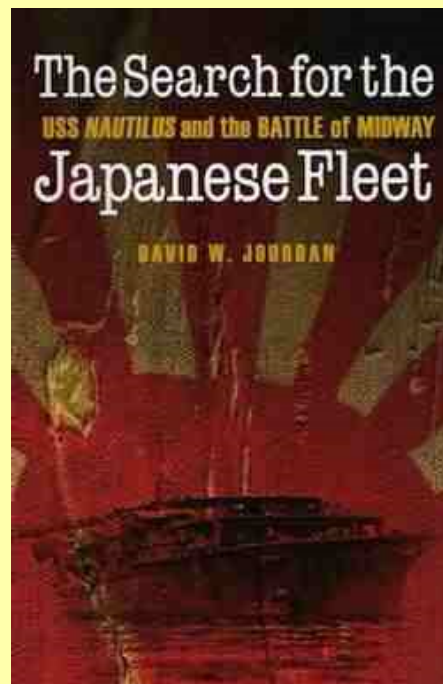
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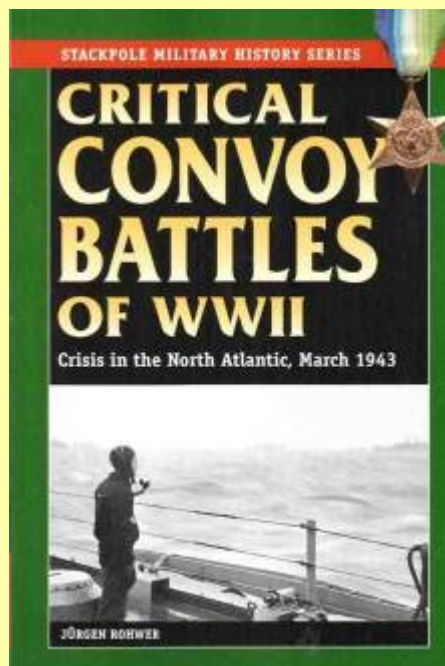
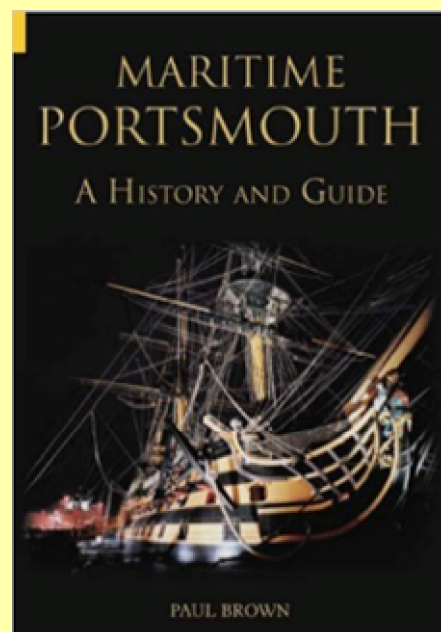
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