



# 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

Issue No: 193

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

July 2016



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Cover Picture: 'The 'Best Dressed?' Competitors at the Branch BBQ

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## **EDITORIAL**

Hello Everybody.

Another month gone by already – and more than half way through the year already. Still at least it's the summer, sunshine, holiday time and the kids have broken up from school!

Events in the past months were a few less than in June but many members will have enjoyed the Race Day at Cartmel and the Branch BBQ at the Crofters. Apart from the Cover Picture there is a selection of photos of both events in this edition – can you find yourself in one of them?

Following on from the Submariners 'Freedom of Barrow Parade' in June the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment followed suit in July. Their Parade was mid-week but there was a good turn out by Barrovians to see them March from Holker Street down Abbey Road and then up Duke Street to the Town Hall Courtyard where they were inspected by the Mayor. And very smart they were to! Branch Member Mac McLoughlin was there to see

his grandson on Parade and several other Branch Members were there to watch as well.

Some of you will have heard that HMS AMBUSH has been damaged in a collision with a Merchant Vessel off Gibraltar – luckily there were no injuries reported but the damage to the Fin will take a bit of time to repair. There are some pictures in this issue so you can see what the damage looks like.

In this issue you will also find the regular items of 'Submarine and Submariner Losses in WWI' the 'K26 Story' and 'Submariners Crossed the Bar'. Our frequent contributor Bob Faragher also tells us of his latest adventure – a trip to Fleetwood with a new Crew Member – Dave Oakes.

Finally thank you to everyone who has asked how I am after my recent adventure of head butting the pavement on Barrow Island. I am much better now but it certainly slowed me down for a while!

See you all at the August Branch Meeting on Tuesday!  
Barrie Downer

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## **CHAIRMAN'S DIT**

Hi All

Well summer is here, well sort of. Usual English weather some sun and lots of rain. However, the two outdoor social events this month were both blessed with good weather.

The Cartmel Race Day was up to its usual high standard made all the better this year because I was about £20 up. I am sure that the race night planned for a bit later in the year will bring me back to earth as I am sure that Alex makes sure I don't get as much as a sniff of a winner. My group of ten decided that rather than make up our own picnic or buy at the course we got "Delish" in

Crellin Street to make up a picnic for us and it was excellent. Cost us £60 between the ten of us and we had far more than we could eat and it was all good quality. It was well worth it and I am sure we will do the same again next year. Only drawback is that they only cater for a minimum of ten.

The BBQ held at the Crofters pub was also a good day and the food was a big improvement on the previous years. Got to say that, I suppose, as my son Stephen came all the way from Lincoln to cook for us. The only mishap was that it coincided with his wedding anniversary but Hey Ho worse things happen at sea.

Hope you can make it next year son, and I am sure that Alex will try and keep clear of that date.

The branch has an extensive set of archive documents, with minutes, correspondence etc. going back till when we started. When Ron was our Secretary he apparently had enough room to stow all the archive material but we don't have that luxury anymore. Quite naturally Ron wants us to take ownership of it so we have looked at alternatives. I approached the RBL and they have kindly agreed that we can store our archives there but would need a stowage locker. Barrie, who knew the amount of material and advised that the large metal 6' x 4' lockers would do the trick so we have looked around to acquire one. One of the committee pointed me in the direction of the St Mary's Hospice furniture store near the football ground and as luck would have it they had exactly what we needed, and lockable too. After a bit of banter about being a poor military veterans group and mostly pensioners to boot I was able to purchase it at a reasonable price. By the time you read this I hope to have it ensconced in the RBL. It may be that we need to get it down to the basement so I may be looking for a volunteer force to help with that.

The committee have also been looking at changing the start time of our meetings. It has come apparent that

some of those who have to travel are having to leave straight after the meeting to catch the last train with no chance to have a chat and a drink with their chums. After a debate the committee are recommending that we start at 19.30 for a trial period but I will be asking you the members for endorsement at the meeting on Tuesday. A time of 19.00 was also discussed but it was felt that it is just a bit too early for those still working. If you, the members, at the meeting do decide to bring the start a bit earlier then it would have to be classed as a trial until the AGM as it needs an amendment to the Constitution and Laws of the branch to make it permanent. If you want to air your views and vote on it then be there on Tuesday.

Barrie Downer had a bad fall during the month which put him out of action for a while. He made it to the BBQ resplendent with the remains of a black eye and new glasses but from what I could see his right arm was working OK. Hope your health is getting back on track now Barrie.

That's all for now, see you Tuesday.

Regards

**Dave**

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## SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

Hi Shipmates

My apologies, for not being at the August Branch Meeting; first meeting I have missed since I joined – anniversary and a family holiday are to blame.

The members draw was not won last month so will stand at £25 in September and don't forget to get your birthday boy beer at the meetings – this time both August and September issue will be done at the September meeting.

July saw us take our annual trip to Cartmel; the sun shone, the coach was practically full, Dickie Cambridge celebrated his 21st birthday (again!!!) and I did very well on the nags; what a great day. Then a week later we had our annual BBQ at the Crofters; the sun shone, lots of people turned up and the food was cooked to perfection by Dave Barlow's son Stephen. Very many thanks to Stephen and all who helped me get through that day. Also, to all of the members who came along to these events and supported me.

### Diary Check

**Saturday 17th September** is the last trip on the **Barton Canal**. Different to the last two times with us going south instead of north (change of scenery) and the food will be the good British staple of fish and chips. There are no pubs to stop at on this route so we will be straight into drinking, picking up the food from the local chippie and then singing along to live entertainment. A must if you haven't been before a definite for those who have enjoyed this trip the last two times. Don't miss out so get your names to me soonest. First come first served and when it is full there is nothing more I can do. Due to fuel increases etc. the cost of this trip will be £32:50 per person this year; still a fantastic bargain. These tickets are selling very well and I only have 15 places left. Please pay up at or before the September meeting.

**Saturday 1st October** is our annual **Race Night**, I will be selling the ownerships of the horses and the stable lads at the September meeting; great way to be part of it even if you can't make the evening, also it is a great return on your investment when the horse wins. The food will be Kath Brown's pie and peas and the night will be a great evening IF I can get your support.

Be advised to clear **Friday 11th November** in your calendars so you can attend the **Ladies Night Dinner Dance**; special wartime and remembrance theme with a great menu, great price and great entertainment.

**Saturday 17th December** we round another year off with the **Christmas Parties** (both kiddies and adults on the same day – but not at the same time). The children's party will be limited to 50 and I will be opening the list in September and closing it at the end of October – Father Christmas needs enough time to get the presents made (or delivered from north London). The adult party will be great entertainment, bring a plate and the £100 ticket giveaway – not to be missed.

Finally, I am working on the 2017 social programme so if you have any suggestions (printable ones only please) then send them my way and I see if I can get something sorted. So have a great summer and I will see you all at the September meeting

Alex Webb, Social Secretary

## AUGUST BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August  
Committee Meeting As required

## SEPTEMBER BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> Sept  
Canal Trip Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Sept  
Committee Meeting As Required

## OCTOBER BRANCH CALENDAR

Race Night Saturday 1<sup>st</sup>  
Branch Meeting Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup>  
Trafalgar Ball To be advised  
Committee Meeting As Required

## BRANCH BIRTHDAYS AUGUST 2016

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| W. (William) McLaughlin | 03/08/1946 |
| J.A. (Buck) Rogers      | 05/08/1959 |
| A. (Alan) West          | 09/08/1931 |
| R.H. (Robert) Hagen     | 10/08/1944 |
| G. (Whisky) Walker      | 11/08/1948 |
| Arthur Lyness           | 14/08/1968 |
| M.J. (Paddy) McCormick  | 18/08/1955 |
| D.J. (Dave) Parsons     | 18/08/1946 |
| D.B. (Dave) Harwood     | 21/08/1951 |
| D. (Dave) Sales         | 29/08/1953 |

Happy Birthday to you all!

## SUBMARINE LOSSES OF WWI

Four Submarines were lost in July 1916 and these were B10, E4, E41 & E16. Also one other Submariner from G5 was taken ill and died. The first Submarine lost (luckily without casualties) was:

### SUBMARINE B10

On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1916 B10 (Lieutenant Kenneth Michell) was tied up alongside the Depot Ship MARCO POLO in Venice. During an air raid by Austrian aircraft B10 was damaged by a bomb and sank. The Submarine was later raised and placed in dry dock for refit/repair. During these repairs the Submarine was set on fire by a welder's torch and was written off.

### SUBMARINE E4

Whilst carrying out anti-submarine exercises off Harwich, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1916, in conjunction with Submarine E41 and HMS FIREDRAKE, Submarine E4 was hit, whilst she was dived, by E41 which was acting as a surface target. E4 did not resurface and the whole crew died. The Submarine was raised, the bodies of the crew recovered and buried in a common plot in the Shotley (St Mary) Cemetery in the Submarine Enclosure. E4 was re-fitted and returned to service. The Crew at the time of loss was as follows:

#### Officers:

Lieutenant Commander Julian Tenison Tenison  
Lieutenant Stewart Briscoe Dundee-Hooper  
Lieutenant William Hunter RNR

#### Ratings:

PO Charles William Repper 227906  
PO James Henry Salisbury 201219

L/Sea Alfred Henry Baldock J5988  
L/Sea Henry George Carpenter 228307  
L/Sea Francis Henry Jolliffe 219416  
L/Sea Frank Richardson Matthews 229890  
AB Harry Preskett J1004  
AB Andrew Bagwell J9207  
AB Alfred Henry Broad J6514  
AB Frank Edward Cooley J1314  
AB William Thackray Fenwick J3846  
AB Frederick Noel Nichols 219985  
Sig Maurice William Tovey J1071  
L/Tel Leonard William Smith J9412  
Boy Tel John Denison J44738  
ERA 1 Henry Baker RNVR /Tyneside/T/5158  
ERA 2 Jocelyn Alfred Millard M3565  
ERA 3 John Coster Warwick M6325  
ERA 4 Ronald William Hodgson M1500  
SPO William Wallace Gadsby 294719  
L/Sto Charles Henry Dudley K6508  
L/Sto John William Gibson K7355  
L/Sto Harry Hewlett 310896  
Stoker 1st Class Cyril Bacon K15163  
Stoker 1st Class James Bacon K18571  
Stoker 1st Class George Henry Bennett K14986  
Stoker 1st Class William Charles Edward Halls K21878  
Stoker 1st Class Sidney Snow K2650  
Stoker 1st Class John James Ward K11010

### SUBMARINE E41

Whilst carrying out anti-submarine exercises off Harwich, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1916, in conjunction with Submarine E4 and HMS FIREDRAKE E41 hit the dived E4. E41 was badly damaged and took in water through the Battery Compartment. E41 sank and sixteen of the crew members died. The submarine was later raised, refitted and re-commissioned for further service. Only three bodies were recovered when the submarine was raised. One other body was washed ashore in Belgium later. The others were never found. The crew was made up of the following personnel:

#### Officers:

The following Officers survived the sinking:

Lieutenant Alfred Michael Winsor  
Lieutenant George John Mackness, DSC  
Temporary Acting Lieutenant William Murray, RNR  
Sub Lieutenant John Pocklington Money, Royal Navy  
The following Officer was lost:  
Lieutenant Charles Thomas Klemp RNR

#### Ratings:

The following are known to have survived the sinking:  
L/Sea Robert Sydney Ireson 206039  
Ord Tel Archibald Symington J35237  
SPO William Brown 154094  
In addition to these three ratings listed above some ten others survived – but are not yet identified.

The following are known to have died the sinking:

L/Sea Christopher John Ashby 236506  
AB Albert Victor Beail 228842  
AB Frederick Henry Gaunt J6168

AB George Frederick Roach J12094  
AB Alfred George Stewart J7784  
L/Sig William Alexander Grant 223970  
ERA 4 Sydney Monckton M2665  
ERA 3 Herbert Nelson Saywell M3326  
L/Sto Walter Frewer 312441  
L/Sto John Garland 310934  
Sto George Calvo K14055  
Sto Charles Ceal Daniels K22606  
Sto Jack Evans K9478  
Sto Frederick Gribble K2533  
Sto John Wells 17402

NOTE: William Brown's survival was remarkable - he found himself trapped alone inside E41 when the submarine sank. By his own efforts and his extensive knowledge of the submarine systems he managed in darkness to isolate the compartment, flood and equalise the space and make a free ascent escape reaching the surface successfully about half an hour after the collision.

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#### **SUBMARINE G5**

A member of the crew of Submarine G5 is reported to have died on 20th Aug 1915. He was taken ill and died. He was:

Chief ERA Edwin J Philpotts 269254

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#### **SUBMARINE E16**

Submarine E16 (Lieutenant Commander Kenneth Duff-Dunbar was one of a batch of nine 'E' Class submarines ordered in the 1911/12 Naval Estimates. On 22 August 1916 E16 was sighted on the surface some thirty-five miles east of Yarmouth by the sister submarine E38. A group of warships was also sighted by E38 a short while later. Splashes were seen on the surface in the distance which may have been depth charges exploding. There were also reports of German warships attacking a periscope on the same day. E16 did not return from patrol and was presumed to have been lost.

NOTE: The wreck of Submarine E16 was found in early 2001 by a German diver, Rolf Schuett, in the Heligoland Bight north of the Dutch Island of Terschelling. It was found to have a large, gaping hole in the hull, which indicates a mine or a torpedo explosion. It was thought E16 was sunk after entering a minefield from the swept channel - the reported damage may be the confirmation of this theory. The divers reported a second submarine wreck in close proximity to E16. See Daily Mail article of Saturday 1st September 2001 by Jonathan Brocklebank.

The crew of E16 was as follows:

##### **Officers:**

Lieutenant Commander Kenneth J Duff-Dunbar DSO  
Sub Lieutenant Alexander David Gibson-Carmichael  
Sub Lieutenant Alistair Gordon Cameron DSC, RNR

##### **Ratings:**

PO William George Castle 194895  
L/Sea Charles Lake 206229  
L/Sea John William Wray Anfield J1302  
L/Sea Frederick James Beard 222602  
L/Sea Alfred Thornton 228151

AB Arthur Bowler 234252  
AB William Henry Bulbeck J4675  
AB Peter James Frampton 210057  
AB Edwin Jack Page J6829  
AB Herbert William Peerless J4887  
Sig James Hughes 240077  
Tel Sidney Arthur Claridge J23632  
CERA William Smail Reid 270677  
ERA 2 Arthur Edward Wade, DSM 270991  
ERA 3 Edward William Reginald Bevan, DSM M1189  
ERA 4 George Edgar Morgan M310  
ERA 4 George Wilbraham M11731  
SPO Patrick Horgan 295011  
L/Sto Robert Boagy K1409  
L/Sto William George Pickering 221754  
L/Sto Thomas Hegarty K17241  
Sto Thomas Carpenter K12154  
Sto Frank Edkins K17671  
Sto Herbert Houghton Grice K17216  
Sto John O'Neill K16227  
Sto John Sampson Prior K8930  
Sto Percy William Sharpe K20813

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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 June for the July 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!

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#### **ANOTHER VOYAGE TO FLEETWOOD**

By Bob Faragher

On 25th June in Fleetwood it was their Regatta weekend, and the arrival of their new lifeboat. Naturally I wanted to attend. I had the boat ready to go a couple of days before the event, however, my wife gets worried if I sail on my own, (can't think why). The Friday night before I



was due to sail, I met Dave Oakes in the nautical club, and he was happy to join me.

I collected Dave from his home and proceeded to the beach ready for board. Harbour stations was for 1100 Hrs. We got the dinghy into the water without hurting ourselves. It's worth mentioning that I had broken my golden rule "Never sail with a Tiffy!" I was to pay for this later. The weather was good and the wind favourable, we slipped the mooring on time along with a few other vessels also going over the bay. It proved to be an excellent sail across the bay; it was easy because my vessel knows its own way.

Myself and my passenger (sorry) crew relaxed in the cockpit and enjoyed the experience. We were interrupted by an inconsiderate Merchant vessel which we noticed had been anchored just to the west of Glasson fairway. We were about to pass in front of it when it decided to proceed, thus delaying us a bit, at least he didn't try to sink us.

We eventually passed fairway buoy and proceeded down the fairway. Just about this time, Fleetwood regatta had started, and we were faced with a large number of yachts sailing towards us in very limited space. We skilfully managed to get through them without a collision, using our considerable seamanship skills or luck. Radioed Fleetwood Dock, who gave us permission to proceed into the marina. We berthed just inside the lock gates so we could get an easy get away the following day.

It was 1430 and we immediately noticed the Fleetwood yacht club was open and serving golden nectar. We decided it was our duty to sample the beer and have a crack with the assembled mariners. However, this got a bit boring and so Dave and I set off for the flesh pots of Fleetwood. We started off in the Kings Own Royal Border Regimental Club where the beer was only £1.90 per pint. This we could not afford to miss. We also met up with the bold Albert Scott, a former trawler man, and member of the White Ensign society. I have known this man for many years, and it's worth mentioning, he is well into his 80's and still sails his 31ft yacht single handed all over the Irish sea and beyond. He also likes a dram. The moral is, try not to give anything up. We then proceeded to investigate The Steamer - excellent pub. We had a crack with a few locals and eventually decided it was time we took bunkers, and so we departed to the chippy.

On getting back to the Marina, the bar was still open and so we felt obliged to give them a little custom, after which we went back to the boat for a stand-easy. After stand easy and a small kip, we proceeded back ashore to sample the cheap booze in Fleetwood. As usual, we started off in the Kings Own. Once again had a crack with some of the locals, I also met a lady with whom Ginge Cundel had been on Face Book with for some time. Unfortunately we had to pass on the bad news of Ginge's 'Crossing the Bar'. She was pretty upset.

Having exhausted our dit spinning in the Kings Own, we repaired to the Steamer, where there was rather a tasty female entertainer performing. We met a few old acquaintances in there, and remained until about 0100.

Since we were due to sail the next day we decided to return to the boat. However, on getting back to the marina, we discovered the Yacht Club bar was still open. We therefore felt duty bound to patronise them for a couple. Unfortunately this got out of hand, and at 0300 the Commodore - not so politely - asked us to Foxtrot Oscar back to our boat. This we conformed with!

Saturday morning arrived late. It was obvious that the trip back was, to say the least, going to be lively, and wet. However, Dave organised us a healthy breakfast in the Yacht Club, so we were well bunkered before we set sail. We eventually sailed about 1430. Sailing out down the fairway was wild enough, but once in the Bay, it was blowing a near gale from the west, and the rain was horizontal. Dave was less than impressed and retired below to take charge of the starboard berth. He successfully managed this for the next two hours crossing. I clipped on my safety line so as not to become a Morecambe Bay statistic, and kept looking below to see if Dave was ok. He was a funny colour, and had his eyes shut most of the time.

Eventually, I saw Piel Island in the haze, and we were almost in Walney Channel. At this stage we were getting a bit of a lee from the south end of Walney and the sea had gone from wild to rough. I thought this a good time to try and raise my Oppo. This was difficult, since he could not hear me and kept closing his eyes again. However, once abeam Piel, he started to respond. Dave informed me that he had never felt so sick, but at least he didn't call for Huey, for which I was grateful. He was able to assist in picking up our buoy and sorting out the boat before going ashore.

Having said all that. It was a great run ashore.

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### MY MEMORIES OF HMS VALIANT

By Melvyn Whymark

Fifty years ago this month the first 'All Britain's nuclear submarine entered service at the height of the Cold War. HM S/M VALIANT's crew were pioneers of the nuclear age, playing a deadly game of cat and mouse with the Russians beneath the ice of the Arctic Ocean. Melvyn Whymark, from Clacton, was one of the men who served aboard her. It was danger money which lured a young Melvyn Whymark to work aboard the Royal Navy's submarines.

He joined the Navy in 1959, aged just 17, and served on the Battle Class destroyer HMS TRAFALGAR. Men lucky enough to get a bunk to sleep in had to squeeze on to an 18-inch wide bed. The rest slung their hammocks above the tables on the mess deck. Getting out of bed ran the real risk of stepping in a shipmate's breakfast, remembers Melvyn, from Clacton.

In 1963 he grabbed the chance move over to submarines. The Navy paid an extra 6s 8d a day 'hard-layers money' for the added danger. "In those days it was a lot of money so I took it," he said.

"My first submarine was HM S/M ACHERON and after that I joined HM S/M OPOSSUM and from there I went on board HM S/M VALIANT." VALIANT had

been built by Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness and was the Navy's first 'all British' nuclear submarine.

Melvyn worked as an underwater weapons technician with torpedoes, depth charges and mines. "We used to service all the weapons," he said. "I really enjoyed myself in submarines - more so than on surface ships. "It was hard work but you played hard as well. When you were ashore you really let yourself go. Drinking, smoking, women - you name it we did it! "We got up to mischief in many ways. But when you were at sea you really did have to work hard.

"You didn't just have weapons duties, you had ship duties as well. "If you were on the surface you could be on look-out, or you would be looking after the cleanliness of the ship." He took home £17 a fortnight. Mystery missions took VALIANT under the ice of the Arctic to spy on the West's enemies during the Cold War. "We weren't supposed to know where we were going but we were up off Murmansk with the Russians," said Melvyn. "There was one time we surfaced a bit too quick and caught the conning tower on a Russian ship and had to limp back to base at Faslane in Scotland and then to Barrow-in-Furness to be repaired. "In those days we weren't allowed to talk about it. It was top secret and we had all signed the Official Secrets Act.

By Editor: Melvyn's recollections are a bit out here - either that or the reporter misheard him - it was WARSPITE that had the bump and came back to Barrow. VALIANT did 'limp back' from one patrol 'up north' but my recollection is that it was problems with one main engine and one TG (on different sides) and single loop operation which were the reason for the slow trip home.

Melvyn continued "Conventional submarines you could stay out for about six weeks. They were restricted (in dived endurance) by the length of time the batteries would last. "On a nuclear submarine you could stay down as long as your food and fresh water lasted."

In 1967 VALIANT set a Royal Navy record of sailing 12,000 miles submerged for 28 days from Scotland to Singapore. The crew took being cooped up and cut off from the outside world for long periods in their stride.

"You were so busy you didn't worry about it," said Melvyn. "It was just something you accepted." Living on top of a nuclear reactor also failed to worry the men. Melvyn said: "All you knew was the reactor was driving the boat. I wasn't in the engineering department so it didn't really interest me much, so long as we got from A to B."

Despite being armed to the gills with more than 30 torpedoes - nicknamed "fish" - he never fired anything in anger. "We used to empty a couple of torpedo tubes and put the torpedoes in storage racks and fill up the tubes with provisions - tinned food and cans of beer," said Melvyn. "If we had needed to fire we would just have discharged the lot out to sea and loaded up the torpedo." There were lighter moments on board too. One day Melvyn's torpedo officer boss was on watch on the VALIANT's conning tower. "We were on the surface in a force nine gale and the boat was rocking away," he

said. "He was on the bridge and sent a message down to the control room for someone to come up to the bridge with a cup of cocoa. They used to drink it a lot to stay awake." The officer was amazed when Melvyn appeared on the bridge without having spilt a drop of the brew. "You can imagine climbing a vertical ladder with a cup of cocoa in a force nine gale wasn't very practical," said Melvyn. "When I got up there he said 'How the hell did you manage that?' "I said 'Easy sir. I took a mouthful out at the bottom of the ladder and put it back in at the top!'"

Melvyn was 26 when he left the Navy in 1968. He married wife Marie and worked in construction and engineering before going on to Anglian Water and Tendring Water until retiring in 2005.

VALIANT was decommissioned in 1994 and is now laid up in Plymouth. Melvyn is attending a reunion there next month to mark the submarine's 50th anniversary. "They can't scrap those nuclear submarines because of the reactors inside them so they have to put them in a submarine graveyard," he said. "I'm really looking forward to going back and seeing the old girl after all these years. "We didn't get any medals or any recognition for what we did in the Cold War because it was top secret. "But I enjoyed the comradeship more than anything - you never forget it."

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### MARITIME TRIPS

Maritime Trips - hosted by Mike Critchley have arranged the following tours:

7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> September      Glorious Gosport! A look behind the Navy and Military scene during the local heritage weekend - a very full programme and Harbour tour.

15<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> October      Historic Malta - includes the Military Tattoo and Trafalgar Night Dinner. (LIMITED AVAILABILITY)

Maritime Trips is considering a possible visit to the Far East in November to include the International Fleet Review in New Zealand. Interested?

To learn more contact: Mike Critchley on [mikecritchley7@icloud.com](mailto:mikecritchley7@icloud.com)

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### BRANCH BBQ PICTURES







### CARTMEL PICTURES



### WARSPITE COLLISION CREW REUNION

From: Ian Wragg

E Mail: i.wragg2@ntlworld.com

Date: 8 April 2016

Comment: I have recently been in touch with Frank Turvey who was the 'on watch' Engineer on WARSPITE on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1968.

He is interested in meeting up with any of the collision crew who were on board that night.

Would it be possible for you to do an email shot to Association Members to see if anyone is interested?

I have about six people so far and I know one or two have fell off their perches. We are all getting on now so time is running short.

I was thinking of spring next year.

Cheers

Ian (Harry) Wragg



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## HMS AMBUSH DAMAGED IN GIBRALTAR COLLISION

(20<sup>th</sup> July 2016)



HMS AMBUSH being brought back to Gibraltar (Pictures- David Parody)



One of the Royal Navy's nuclear submarines limped back to port in Gibraltar after colliding with a merchant vessel. HMS AMBUSH, an Astute-class submarine, was "submerged and conducting a training exercise" when it was involved in what the Ministry of Defence described as a "glancing collision" off the coast.

A spokesman said the incident happened at about 1.30pm local time on Wednesday, adding: "The submarine suffered some external damage but there is absolutely no damage to her nuclear plant and no member of the ship's company was injured in the incident. "An immediate investigation is being conducted. "There are no safety concerns associated with HMS AMBUSH being alongside." They added: "We are in contact with the merchant vessel and initial indications are that it has not sustained damage."

The Astute class vessels cost more than £1bn each and weigh in at 7,400 tonnes.

They carry torpedoes, cruise missiles and the Royal Navy has previously said that HMS AMBUSH is equipped with "world-leading sensors". When HMS AMBUSH was commissioned into the Navy in 2013, the then First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, said it was part of a group of vessels that "represent the cutting edge of military technology and the future of UK submarine operations for many years to come".

## CROSSED THE BAR JULY 2016

| Branch                              | Date                       | Name                              | Rank/Rating                  | O/N         | Age | Submarine Service  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|-----|--|
| Submarine Officers Association      | 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 | Ian Inskip                        | Commander                    | N/A         | 72  | Submarine Service from 1968 to 1974 in ONSLAUGHT, SEALION (TASO on commissioning in 1970), ODIN & ONYX   |
| South Kent Branch                   | June 2016                  | Brian Robin Newton                | Electrical Mechanic          | P/MX 915658 | 80  | Submarine Service from 1956 to 1965 in TABARD, TURPIN, EXCALIBUR & STURDY  |
| Dolphin Branch                      | June 2016                  | Robert Risley Squires             | Vice Admiral                 | N/A         | 88  | Submarine Service from June 1948 to December 1981 in TABARD (3rd Hand), AMBUSH, AUROCHS (CO), AENEAS (CO), PORPOISE (CO), DREADNOUGHT (IL) & WARSPITE (CO) |
| Blyth & Wansbeck Branch             | July 2016                  | Edward Stanley Neal               | LTO                          | C/MX 745962 | 96  | Submarine Service from 1938 to 1949 in SANGUINE, TAURUS, TRESPASSER & THERMOPYLAE  |
| Southampton Branch                  | 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2016 | D A (Don) Hutchison               | Petty Officer Cook           | P/MX 896800 | 85  | Submarine Service from 1953 to 1959 in ARTFUL, ANCHORITE, TUDOR, ACHERON & SPITEFUL  |
| Sunderland Branch                   | July 2016                  | David O G Temple                  | Stoker 1 <sup>st</sup> Class | P/KX 596718 | 90  | Submarine Service from 1943 to 1947 in SCYTHIAN & SOLENT   |
| Submarines Association of Australia | July 2016                  | Peter Paffard                     | Commander, RAN               | N/A         | N/A | Submarine Service (RN) from 195* to 1967 in SCOTSMAN, TELEMACHUS, PORPOISE, TRUMP (in Australia) & OBERON  |
| Non Member                          | July 2016                  | Arthur Edward Charles Howard, DSM | Able Seaman (Radar)          | P/JX 415291 | 91  | Submarine Service in WWII in DOLPHIN & SCEPTRE   |

### K26 – THE STEAM SUBMARINE (Part 12)

(By O/N J98553)

#### HOW K26 SHOT THE ALBATROSS, I MEAN THE CENTURION

The gap between initiative and cheating shall we say, is sometimes narrow, you want results in some contest, you use whatever natural advantages you have - maybe some others too.

In 1930 the Royal Navy, the British Royal Navy, because of course there were at that time other Royal Navies, had a battleship which had been disarmed but would still steam. She had been fitted with a system of wireless control, her small crew would navigate her to some spot on the ocean, the crew would be taken off by a destroyer called the SHIKARI and from then on the somewhat antiquated battleship would be controlled by wireless from a distance. Her name: CENTURION.

H.M.S. CENTURION ran entirely automatically, controlled by pulses from SHIKARI. The purpose of course was to have a ship to fire at direct without any sort of danger. Battleships, cruisers, destroyers and even submarines, were allowed to have a go at the CENTURION. As submarines then carried mainly four inch guns, it was like shooting a sleeping elephant with a grape, the elephant would be unmoved, the CENTURION too! Very much like the delicate way in which coconut shy proprietors said; f,Arf way for ladies", a submarine was allowed to come up near the CENTURION and fire at her, even though a real battleship would have been able to blow a sub out of the water at that range, but there it was. It was practice of a sort. As the expert at foils has his button on the end, so the shells fired by ships and subs at the CENTURION had a filling of either salt or sand. It always rather puzzled me why there was an option. I used to wonder idly whether it was sharp sand or cooking salt, or what difference it made, if any, because, as you probably know, very many shells fired at sea go direct from the muzzle of the gun into the sea, touching nothing more substantial than air on the way. This has said to have been modified a bit with the advent of radar, but I'm still sceptical. Anyway, on the 29th May 1930, we nipped out to sea to shoot at the CENTURION. Our tonnage two thousand tons, hers 30,000. The SHIKARI took her crew off, the control gear worked well, the Centurion was big and black on the horizon.

A year ago Petty officer Sowden, the 2nd Coxswain, would have nipped up top when we surfaced carrying a one metre base rangefinder, a peculiar instrument whose accuracy was of the order of a rubber band. That is, he didn't believe his own instrument and often added a couple of hundred yards – freehand. But now, we were the possessors of an Asdic set which was not really intended for rangefinder but could be used for that purpose quite easily on a big fairly-near target like the Centurion. In the Asdic set too, we had something the other subs hadn't got. Moreover, we had three four inch guns. Oh yes. Sowden looked through his rangefinder, actually saw the target looming up like any other battleship looms, he called out ranges, he rotated Roller C, put on adjustment Q or whatever it was, looked out for parallax, end correction or prism halation or whatever it is one metre rangefinders get on hot days. But no-one paid any attention to Sowden ranges. Down, below Watto and Smith that fine old firm of Asdic operators were bouncing supersonic pulses off the CENTURION and through the normal channels telling the gunlayers just how far away the CENTURION really was, to the nearest inch, or say yard, when we opened fire we really could not miss. We didn't miss. All our canisters of salt or

sand rained down on the CENTURION doing her no more damage than could comfortably be eliminated with a pot of crab fat (Mediterranean grey paint and brush). Congratulatory signals "Good show Gunlayers Plaskett, Jeffreys, Didwell." A very belated "Good show" to the underwater astronomers Smith and Watts. A suggestion to P.O. Sowden that he put the rangefinder into its box and forget it, with its music, was made. It did look like an oboe, but there a man gets extra money for being an oboe player, forgive me, a Range taker, and though superseded, he had still to go through the motions. Well, cheating or initiative we shot the Albatross, sorry again, the CENTURION. Like I said on the 29th May 1930. It was; I wrote it in my diary. As my surface action station was on No. 2 Gun, I was loading and saw it all. I can remember thinking that, if the Centurion had been an enemy of the same size and had teeth, a couple of pots of paint would have been insufficient for our damage.

### VENICE

Venice, the jewel of the Adriatic. Maybe? We went to Venice as a flotilla, DOUGLAS - a destroyer, carrying Captain 'S' and his rather large head, which accounted for his nickname 'Nuttie' Thompson. He had been Captain of K.26 on her first cruise which went half way round the world, and he had a warm spot for us. He would send a signal to ask "What is the temperature in your Motor Room?" In a minute or two Whalley or the Signalman blinked back the answer, "One hundred and twenty". He would reply, "Charging I presume". It certainly was hellish in K.26's Motor Room when charging. We reached Venice with L.16, L.18, L.23, L.21, and L.26 all tailing behind. CYCLOPS - our Parent Ship tottered in a day later. K.26 rested between two arty shaped buoys in the lagoon, and the black gondolas moved slowly round this curious looking vessel. Argument between gondolier and passenger, generally followed by raised flat hands in the "I give up" position. A gondola approached, the passenger had some English. "Scusi", he called to Didwell "Sommergibile?" and pointed to our noble vessel. Didwell tucked his Bosn's call inside his jumper and waved a hand for'd and then slowly aft. Very distinctly he intoned "Steam Pig". The Italian looked puzzled, he said, "Stem Peg?" "That's right", said Didwell, "Steam Pig, on the secret list".

In the calm water of the lagoon our skiff with its outboard motor was very useful, and at night the engine was hung up next to the upper toilet and the boat secured to the after buoy. Two mornings later the boat was missing, it had been tied up securely, it must have been stolen, it was stolen. After a lot of signals had passed through the Naval arsenal and Director of Police the description of the boat was given to a very important police officer who came alongside in a vessel that could have carried two torpedoes and a gun. We filled in, "Six large brass plugs in bottom of boat", he looked puzzled, had it explained with a quick diagram on a signal pad and then he laughed. "To escape wiz zis shall be impossible". He was right, two days later the over-smart police launch zoomed up to our miniature gangway with the skiff towing behind with a small but fierce looking policeman steering it with an oar. The successful Police Officer stepped aboard - his face shining. "Good morning" he greeted the Officer of the Watch. "We have pleasure to return your boat". Invited below he told the tale. A boat was seen by one of his men being slowly rowed along a canal with a load of manure. The rower had been forced to rake around in the manure, and disclose one of the tell-tale six inch plugs. In the excitement the policeman, a native of some other part of Italy, not Venice mind, had fallen into the canal, the man in the boat had escaped. Two prisoners from the local jail had been employed to turn the boat upside down on shore, and it had been cleaned out, and now awaited our pleasure. The Second Sub. Currie, came of a farming family and asked, "The manure?" To keep the tale going. It is said the Police Officer shrugged his shoulders drank his pink gin and said, "Like everything unwanted in Venice they sweep it into the canal."

We formed some visiting parties for the Murano Glassworks, fed the pigeons, listened to the band on the Piazzo San Marco, and tried the Gelati. Not bad. I wandered down one of the back alleys and found a tiny electrical and radio shop. The owner in bad English got me to understand that he had been an Italian Navy Electrician in a submarine in the war. He did gestures to prove it, imitated the crash of depth charge, the boom of "canone" as he called it. In between times he sold me a Bell transformer and three Telefunken wireless valves. We exchanged many goodbyes. I regretted I had no Italian, I would have liked to know a bit about the Austrians and their Navy.

To impress us, new vessels of the Italian Navy moored up in the lagoon, a lovely light grey colour, sparkling brass, and in the morning their whole ship's companies doubled in a long continuous line round the upper deck to the music of a band. We liked it, it was a show. Why, we did the same in our 'custard ships' as we called the big cruisers and battleships. But we felt superior in our little old boats. One of old Joe Blake's tin fish'd sharpen off any one of those cruisers, and later they did, not exactly Joe Blake's tin fish, but some of the same sort, for by that time Joe Blake was down in a steel coffin off Portland Bill, Submarine M.2.

I like Venice, it looks better than it smells but the heroism of the people that built it, that formed a Navy, that pushed back the water, made the glass, and became known the world over, can't be gainsaid. The mosquitos of Venice ere no doubt related to those of Malta.

Long may the jewel shine!

To be continued in September 2016

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