



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:

THE BRANCH WREATH READY FOR LAYING ON REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2017

ARGENTINIAN SUBMARINE - ARA SAN JUAN

On 15th November 2017 reports from Argentina indicated that their Submarine, ARA SAN JUAN, with her crew of forty-four Officers and Ratings (including their first female Submarine Officer) had reported 'a problem' and had then lost communications and was presumed missing. The Submarine had been 'en route' from the southern port of USHUAIA to her home port of MAR DEL PLATA. A search was then initiated for the missing Submarine in the GULF OF SAN JORGE and the RN Ships HMS PROTECTOR and HMS CLYDE and an RAF aircraft from the Falklands were deployed to assist in the search as was the Submarine Special Parachute Assistance Group (SSPAG). No further communications were received from the SAN JUAN and nothing has been found by the searching forces. A further report from the Argentinian Authorities indicated that a noise had been detected which had been assessed as a probable explosion in that area about that time. It must now be assumed that the Submarine and her crew has been lost. ARA SAN JUAN was built in Germany in 1985 and arrived in Argentina in 1986. The Submarine is 66 metres (Loa) with a beam of 7.5 metres and is a conventional, diesel-electric submarine. ARA SAN JUAN was subjected to a mid-life refit in 2008 - difficult and complex work which took two years in the facilities of the Argentine Industrial Naval Complex (Cinar) to complete. A statement at that time stated that the refit would extend the life of the vessel for 30 years.

The Ministry of Defence has issued the following statement:

Ministry of Defence
November 2017

Defence Secretary statement on ARA San Juan

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said: "This has not just been an agonising time for Argentina, but for our whole international community, and this news is truly devastating for everyone involved in this week's search and rescue operation. When it comes to situations like this, nationality doesn't matter: all sailors have an obligation to help each other in a time of such desperate need. I'm extremely proud of the role our Navy and Air Force have played in the international effort to help, and I speak on behalf of those involved, and the whole country, in offering our sincerest condolences to Argentina and the family and friends of the crew."

Jim McMaster – the Submariners Association National Chairman has asked RASM if there is a Point of Contact to which we can send our Messages of Condolence regarding our brothers (and sister) on the ARA SAN JUAN and if there is a central point to which donations to the families can be sent.

I will keep you informed.

EDITORIAL

Hello Everybody

Welcome to the December Issue of Periscope View. It would not be right for me not to mention the tragic news of the loss of the Argentinian Submarine SAN JUAN with her entire crew. As you will see from the article above the MoD provided assistance and facilities to assist in the search and has offered condolences to the Argentine Government and the families of those lost. As Submariners we can all relate to these very sad circumstances and offer our own sympathies to the bereaved families.

The other sad news this month is that one of our own Members – Dave Wilson – has Crossed the Bar in hospital in Scotland. Dave was a great supporter of the Branch and Branch functions and regularly travelled to Barrow to join us at Ladies Nights and Dinner/Dances. We will remember Dave and the lost crew of ARA SAN JUAN at our December Meeting next Tuesday.

Thank you to all Branch Members who supported the November Remembrance events – Dave Barlow covers the Embankment Ceremonies in his Chairman's Dit – but I must mention all who supported the Saturday Ceremony at Barrow Station and the Sunday Ceremonies at the Memorial in Ramsden Square, at the Cenotaph in Victoria Park and at the War Memorial in Ulverston.

As part of our Remembrance Events I placed Poppy Crosses on the various graves at Thorncliffe - Commander Alistair Cumming, CERA Harold Jenner, Leading Stoker John Henry Curtis, Stoker Walter George Stone & Midshipman Robertson. All except Walter Stone have headstones so his Poppy Cross is placed in the approximate area.



One thing which was noticeable this year is that the War Graves Memorials have been cleaned meaning that they are more visible and easier to read. Also the grass had been cut short.

There are a significant number of War Graves in the Thorncliffe Cemetery – Army, Navy and RAF - and a number of which are for Commonwealth and Allied forces but, as far as I can see the only ones which are marked with Poppy Crosses each year are the ones which we support. Perhaps via our Tri Service Committee and

the RBL we can arrange for all War Graves to be marked with Poppy Crosses each Year



The Ladies Night Dinner Dance went very well – thanks to Alex for all the arrangements. I believe all who attended thoroughly enjoyed themselves. See you all at the December Branch Meeting next Tuesday. It is planned to be a short Meeting as Alex will

be conducting a Quiz Night afterwards – with food as well – so bring along wives, girlfriends, partners etc for a Social evening - don't be late!
Regards,
Barrie.

CHAIRMAN'S DIT

Hello All

By the time you read this I will be in Oz sunning myself and taking in the Ashes close up. I don't return until mid-January so my next meeting will be the February meeting. I can hear your hurrahs from here.

I will be attending the Submariners Association Australia Branch meeting in Fremantle on the 6th December and as usual I will be taking a bottle of Navy Rum which always goes down well.

Over the weekend of 4/5th November I went down to London to take part in the Submarine Memorial Parade. As Boris has messed up the Victoria Embankment with his cycle path and the adjacent road it is not dual carriageway anymore we now have the parade in the Middle Temple Gardens literally across the road. It is a lovely setting and a good fall back to the Memorial. On completion, a platoon of serving submariners take all the wreaths across to the Submarine Memorial itself under the supervision of the police and lay the wreaths on the Memorial with decorum. Our branch member Mark Butchart once again surpassed himself by reading out the names of the boats lost. In fact, the Audacious crew were in attendance in numbers so it was great to see so many well known faces from Barrow. As usual Dave Smith laid the branch wreath. I went to catch the late afternoon train home only to find that all trains going north from Euston had been cancelled due to an incident at Milton Keynes. I had no option but to return to the UJC, book in for an extra night and buy myself another bad head. I eventually got home OK on Monday afternoon.

A big well done to Alex Webb on another great Ladies Night. Rear Admiral Kilgour and his wife Janie were our guests and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves and asked me to pass on his thanks to you all but especially Alex. Janie sent thanks for her flowers and the box of chocolate for her birthday.

I was really pleased with the turnout for the Barrow Remembrance Day Parade and I saw that we had plenty of photos in the Evening Mail photo gallery. Many comments received on how smart we were. Well done to you all. Our own service in the RBL was again well received and for me quite emotional and I could see a few wet eyes in the crowd as well. Yet again for the 8th continuous year the Co-operative Funeral Care provided a limousine to take our less able members and wives from their homes to the Cenotaph and thence to the RBL or their home as they wished.





I have now received the Submariner Statuette and I have passed it to Barrie so that you can see it. I think the plan is to make the presentation to the Sea Cadets at their February meeting.

For those who weren't at the November meeting I have given due notice that I will be standing down as your Chairman at the AGM next April. Making this announcement now gives the branch 5 months to canvass a replacement. I will have been Chairman for 7 years and I feel it is time for new blood and new ideas to take this great branch forward. It will be great if more than one volunteer comes forward so that we can have an election.

Dave

SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

Hi Shipmates

November was a busy month for me, what with organising the dinner dance and getting all my ducks in a row for December's onslaught of activities; quiz at the meeting, widow's lunch, children's Christmas parties (2 in number). I for one feel the first of these went very well, just under 70 attended the dinner dance and it was a good evening. I hope that all who attended this enjoyed themselves and getting your own alcohol for the evening wasn't too onerous.

Also, we had the remembrance service which (for a change) was conducted under a very bright and welcome sun; I could have saved myself some money for another year by not buying one of Malcolm's submariner association rain coats – ho hum.

Anyway, we are now into the last calendar month of the year and I hope that you will support me for our Christmas party on the 23rd.

Diary Check:

I will be doing a quiz at the December meeting so bring along your partners for a quick meeting (courtesy of our Vice Chairman Barrie Downer) and I will provide some brain food to keep everyone's focus at its peak. Same routine as before; quick meeting followed by a quiz of a picture round plus 2 rounds of 20 questions, £1 per person and the winning team takes all.

The Widow's Lunch is at the Townhouse in Barrow on Friday 15th Dec at 1400 until whenever the ladies want to go home. This is being funded solely by the Association in place of the hampers that we normally give out. So far 17 of the possible 18 have accepted and all that remains is for me to get the ladies there and home safely with the help of some members who are free to assist me with the driving.

The Children's Christmas party is on Saturday 16th of December 1 – 4 and is now full. The more grown up party is on Saturday 23rd December and is £5 per ticket (available now), food is 'bring a plate', £100 give away, Denis Horan singing and a damned fine party just two days before Father Christmas visits us – only if you have been good and supported your social secretary at the functions!!!

Other items:

Members draw was not won last month at £10 for December.

Don't forget your birthday beer if you were born in the month of December – Micky Dack and others

It is my intention in 2018 to add a bit of drinking food to the end of our meeting, this cost will be met by the social fund and will be for those who hang around after the meeting to socialise.

I am currently putting together the social calendar for 2018 so if you have any ideas please bring them to my notice.

Alex

DECEMBER BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting & Quiz Night	Tues 5 th Dec
Branch Widows Xmas Lunch	Fri 15 th Dec
Childrens Xmas Party	Sat 16 th Dec
Branch Xmas Social	Sat 23 rd Dec
Committee Meeting	As Required

JANUARY BRANCH CALENDAR

January Branch Meeting	Tues 2 nd Jan
K13 Weekend	Fri 26 th to Sun 28 th Jan
Committee Meeting	As Required

FEBRUARY BRANCH CALENDAR

Morecambe First Footing	Fri 2 nd Feb
February Branch Meeting	Tues 6 th Feb
Committee Meeting	As Required

DECEMBER BRANCH BIRTHDAYS

L.W (Lindsey) Thwaites	02/12/1965
P.G. (Paul) Douglas	03/12/1965
G.S. (Stan) Livingston	06/12/1947
I (Ian) MacIntyre	11/12/1964
M. (Mick) Bown	15/12/1945
M.J. (Mike) Dack	17/12/1936
N. (Nigel) Hutchinson	26/12/1975
D. (Dave) Cattroll	28/12/1957
D. (Daniel) Carter	29/12/1978
T.D. (Terence) Pyne	31/12/1934

Happy Birthday All!

SUBMARINE LOSSES OF WWI

No Submarines were lost in December 1917. However, two Submariners are reported to have died. They were

Gunner (T) Herbert William Ellison, DSM

Herbert Ellison served in Submarines from 30th May 1909 to 19th November 1916. He was awarded the DSM for his services in Submarine E11 in the Dardanelles in 1915. At that time he had been a Petty Officer. He later served in Submarine J4 from 16th September 1916 to 19th November 1916 before his promotion to Gunner (T). After courses at HMS VERNON he served in the Torpedo Boat Destroyer HMS LAVEROCK. He is reported to have died in Plymouth Hospital after contracting meningitis. Herbert Ellison was the thirty-two year old son of Mr and Mrs Ellison of Manchester and the husband of Mary Fuller (formerly Ellison) of 10, Residence, Royal Naval Hospital, Chatham. He is buried in the Ford Park (formerly Plymouth Old Cemetery), Pennycomequick, Plymouth, Devon in Church S.1.6.

Able Seaman John Sharpe, DSM O/N C/J7687

John Sharpe served in Submarines as an Able Seaman from 24th September 1912 to 21st February 1917. Coincidentally he also served in Submarine E11 at the Dardanelles for which services he was awarded the DSM. Subsequently he also served in Submarine J4 from 16th September 1916 until 21st February 1917 when he was invalided from the Navy having been diagnosed with tuberculosis from which he died on 31st December 1917. John Sharpe was the twenty-five year old son of Mr and Mrs Sharpe of 3, Leacroft Road, Staines, Middlesex. He is buried at the Bournemouth (Wimborne Road) Cemetery, Bournemouth, Hants (now in Dorset) in Grave No. 1.4.8.3N.

REMEMBERING FORMER BRANCH

MEMBERS

DECEMBER

Mick Hulbert	2006
Tim Coop	2008
Keith Myers	2011
Sir Tim Kimber	2012
Tom Kennedy-Wilson	2012
Jan Mead	2014
Ginge Cundell	2015
Carl Moody	2015

RESURGAM

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 frozensouth55@gmail.com. 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 December for the January 2018 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!

A MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

From Jim McMaster 22nd November 2017
I am pleased to inform you that the following National Appointments have now been made:

Secretary Ian Vickers (Manchester)
Treasurer Nigel Mellor (Welsh)
Membership David Woolterton (Basingstoke)

These appointments are with immediate effect and will involve a substantial amount of 'double-banking' so until further notice please continue to address all your enquiries etc to the present members. I would ask all of you to be patient as these men get to grips with their new roles.

These appointments will be put forward for ratification at the forthcoming NCC in March.

I'm sure you will all join me in wishing Ian, Nigel and David every success in their new appointments.

SUBMARINE COMMISSIONING CREW LISTS

Still looking for First Commission Submarine Crew Lists as follows:

Diesel Boats:

OBERON, ONYX, ORPHEUS, ODIN, OTTER,
OTUS, UNSEEN & UNICORN

Nuclear Boats:

ASTUTE & AMBUSH

Also required are copies of any Crew Lists for subsequent Commissions of any conventional 'A', 'S', 'T', 'O' & 'P' Class and any Nuclear Boat. Have a look through your records and 'Ditty Boxes' and see what you can find. You can contact me by E Mail, Snail Mail or Telephone – see Page 2. Thanks,

Barrie Downer

"BARROW BUILT SUBMARINES"



This book (a revised and updated version of the 'Dive, Dive, Dive' book) is now available and can be ordered via the NavyBooks Website – go to Navybooks.com.

ISBN 9 781094 459736

The full price is £25 however, if you want to buy a copy of the book at the discounted price of £12.50 for SA Barrow Members.

Note that 7.5 % of the Royalties from sales of the book will be paid to the Barrow Branch and a further 2.5% to the National Submariners Association

Barrie Downer

THIS YEAR'S FLEETWOOD TRIP

(by Bob Faragher)

As always, we were invited to join the KORBR lads at their annual gathering in Fleetwood. Three of us decided to go, Micky Dack, Dave Oakes, and myself. All seemed to be going okay, but as usual things were not straight forward. We were unable to get our usual accommodation because they were booked up. Apparently, the weekend coincided with the last night of the Blackpool lights. However, we managed to get booked in to the North Euston Hotel. A good hotel, but unfortunately, somewhat more expensive than usual. To make things worse, our usual driver Stainless Steve was unable to drive us due to this being the last weekend the Walney Bridge can be lifted and Stainless had to get his boat under the bridge. Dave Oakes, however, agreed to drive and not have a drink on Sunday before we set off home.

Finally, we were organised and duly set off on Saturday morning. The drive down was uneventful and we arrived at the hotel about 1130. Having dumped our gear, we proceeded to the KOBRA Comrades club and joined the Barrow lads at the bar. We were provided with a membership card by Tom Berry of the Barrow branch, and this enabled us to get 10% off our beer price. This made the already cheap beer even cheaper. It goes without saying that we certainly did it justice. We also met some old Fleetwood friends. As always, we sat around telling lies to each other for a few hours.

Eventually we had the sense to realise we would need food and a stand-easy as we had to be out again for a serious session in the evening. We went back to the North Euston and grabbed a nose bag and a pint, and then it was time for kip.

On surfacing, we got a taxi to the Comrades Club to avoid Micky Dack falling over on the way. On arrival, we continued where we had left off during the afternoon. Owing to the amount of ale being supped, some of the afternoon's lies were repeated. Eventually, we decided we needed some entertainment, so we made our way to The Steamer where we knew there would be a group performing. We settled down to watch the group which was excellent; they were all older guys who could really play their instruments.

Eventually three tots of rum were delivered to us but we were not told who had bought them. We obliged by

standing and doing the loyal toast for which we received applause from the customers. By this time the drink was taking considerable effect. We noticed the percussionist had a huge bag full of hats and repeatedly changed them. I, unfortunately, gave him my veteran's baseball cap which he wore for a while and then to my disgust replaced it with a chief petty officer's cap. About this time three more tots appeared in front of us, this encouraged me to get up and dance with an unfortunate young lady.

Obviously, by this time we were well under the influence. I discovered the guy sending the rum across was the landlord. When I confronted him and asked why he was doing it, he said he was encouraging us to come back.

By now it was after midnight, so we got a taxi back to the hotel. On arrival we were asked if we wanted a drink, well, it would have been rude not to accept. He showed us into a room where we joined another couple who became confused with us. Eventually we tottered off to our rooms and collapsed.

Amazingly, we all made breakfast, and had the full English. Then, of course, we had to go to the Comrades Club for our final drinks. Unfortunately, Dave Oakes was driving so Mick and I made up for him. The last embarrassment was provided by a tall, very attractive, young lady. I introduced myself and used my best chat up line. It was to no avail, as when I asked her what she did, she told me she was a Docker. It turned out that she was a bloke who had gone through a sex change.

By this time, after a few more drinks most of which were bought for us, we decided to take pity on Dave and make our way home. Dave did a great job of driving except he missed the M6 turn off and when I woke, we were travelling through Lancaster. Not only that but I desperately needed to pump bilges. Never the less he got us back.

It was an exceptional run ashore, resulting in a two-day hangover. In addition, we had hardly spent any of our own money. Roll on next year!

Royal Navy declared ready to mount historic first public duties

24/11/2017

Royal Navy sailors have today been declared ready for the task of performing ceremonial royal duties in London for the first time ever this weekend. Eighty-six sailors from forty-five Royal Navy ships and shore establishments have learned the intricate routines and drill movements needed for royal duties at Buckingham Palace, St James's Palace, Windsor Castle and the Tower of London. They have spent the past month training at the Royal Navy's headquarters in Portsmouth, beating the parade ground as well as by providing the ceremonial guard for Remembrance Sunday in London.

Royal Navy ceremonial instructors have been supplemented in the latter stages by drill instructors from the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards, who have been

impressed by the Royal Navy's agility on the parade square. Colour Sergeant Elliott Fox, of the Coldstream Guards, said: "The training has gone well. Everyone's applied themselves to a really high standard. The Royal Navy ceremonial instructors have put a lot of effort into making our job relatively easy."

After training in Portsmouth, the sailors, submariners and naval airmen have now moved to Wellington Barracks in London, where they will mount their first Changing of the Guard under the close scrutiny of the Guards Division HQ.

Lieutenant Commander Steve Elliott, who will be the Captain of the Queen's Guard said: "It's great to do this ceremonial piece and have the Royal Navy in the public eye in this way"

The first Changing of the Guard will take place on Sunday 26th November 2017 at Buckingham Palace. Then, on Monday 27th November 2017, they will also mount guard for the first time at Windsor Castle.

Warrant Officer 1st Class Eddie Wearing, the Royal Navy's state ceremonial training officer, said: "It's daunting, but I'm very excited. To be the conducting Warrant Officer for the first mount ever in the Royal Navy is a massive privilege and an honour to do. I'm really looking forward to it."

Each period of guard duty lasts for two days, with each new guard assembling at the Wellington Barracks parade square before marching with the Royal Marines Band out to meet their ceremonial duties. Leading them throughout will be Lieutenant Commander Steve Elliott, from Portsmouth, who will be the Captain of the Queen's Guard. It is believed he will be the first person in the Royal Navy to assume the role since Sir Walter Raleigh in 1587.

"As we march out of Wellington Barracks for the first time I'm fairly sure everyone will feel an enormous sense of pride," said Lt Cdr Elliott, who is undertaking the role before he deploys on operations to Somalia in January. It's great to do this ceremonial piece and have the Royal Navy in the public eye in this way."

The ceremony of the Changing of the Guard can be traced back to Henry VII, when a royal bodyguard was created. Guards regiments were formed to protect King Charles II in 1656.

Royal Navy sailors have performed the Changing the Guard ceremony at Buckingham Palace for the first time in its 357-year history.

From Sky News

The ceremony has been taking place since the restoration of King Charles II in 1660.

It is traditionally performed by one of the five Foot Guards Regiments from the Army's Household Division, but crowds gathered on Sunday to watch 86 sailors carry out the intricate routine following a month of practice.

The sailors trained at the Royal Navy's headquarters in Portsmouth, with their new skills being polished by drill instructors from the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards.



They marched through the famous gates to the theme tune of Game of Thrones, watched by thousands of tourists.

Ahead of the ceremony, warrant officer 1st Class Eddie Wearing, the Royal Navy's state ceremonial training officer, said: "It's daunting, but I'm very excited."

"To be the conducting warrant officer for the first mount ever in the Royal Navy is a massive privilege and an honour to do. I'm really looking forward to it."

The roots of the Changing the Guard ceremony can be traced back to the reign of Henry VII when the first royal bodyguard was created.

But a group of soldiers from the Grenadier Guards, one of the five Foot Guards Regiments, were not worried they would be upstaged.

One said: "We've been doing it for 300 years. It's about time we let [the Navy] have a turn."

The Royal Navy's turn in the Changing the Guard ceremony is one of many events staged to celebrate 2017 as "The Year of the Navy".

It marks the arrival of several new ships to the fleet, including the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.



They marched to the theme tune of Game of Thrones



2017 is The Year of the Navy

Newsletter Quips

Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!

How does Moses make his tea? Hebrews it.

A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.

I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.

Haunted French pancakes give me the crêpes.

England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.

They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Type-O.

I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.

Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.

I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.

This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.

WARTIME MEMOIRS OF COXSWAIN OSCAR MOTH
(SURVIVOR FROM K13)

Transcribed by Barrie Downer from a copy provided by Dave Palmer – Sussex Branch

'Back to Malta and a Return to UK'

Our return trip through the Dardanelles took place on Sunday the 31st of October, 1915, by this you will see that we did practically the whole of the month of October 1915 in the "Sea of Marmora", a worthy feat for such a small boat as an 'H' boat.

In the Captain's official report, he says "The boat dived admirably throughout, but owing to her being only on one motor, "Full Helm" had often to be used to keep the boat on her course in "current Eddies". No obstruction other than the net was felt, but to give us as much chance as possible, the 'Forward Hydroplanes' were kept turned in the whole of the passage and the boat was dived only by her "After Rudders".

Then followed the Captain's recommendation for the different members of the crew, but his final recommendation said. "The whole of the crew behaved admirably although at times in a queer fix, and it was only because of their splendid behaviour that such a successful trip was made".

For work done in connection with our month in the "Sea of Marmora", the Captain was decorated with the Distinguished Service Order, and myself with the Distinguished Service Medal, but I consider that we only wear the decorations that rightly belong to the whole crew.

The next day we left "Kephala" escorted by the destroyer "Scourge" and proceeded to Mudros. We arrived in the afternoon, and had another hearty welcome. We secured to the "Adamant" our parent ship about 2.50 and we got the good news, we were leaving for Malta the next day, if our Captain could finish his report. It meant him working the best part of the night to finish this but he managed it and we left on the 3rd. of November in company with E14 and the SS Florian. We took the best part of four days getting to Malta as we encountered rough weather, but we arrived at daybreak on the 7th of November.

During our stay at Malta there is very little of interest worth recording, but needless to say we had a good time. All our defects were made good, which meant that our forward battery had to come out of the boat, to enable the dockyard workmen to repair our battery tank. We had a new set of wireless gear fitted and early in December we went to sea to enable us to carry out trials. We then returned to Malta and we spent Christmas and the New Year there.

On Sunday, 2nd January 1916, we again left Malta. This time we were in company with the "SS Homer City". I don't know for certain whether she was escorting us, or whether we were escorting her. I should think it would be the latter for she wasn't armed in any way, and all she was carrying was the Christmas mail for the Fleet. In her holds were hundreds of bags of parcels, and being that people at home would insist on sending such things as oranges and apples, to the Mediterranean, you can guess that by this time some of them had begun to smell high. It would have been another fortnight or so before they would be delivered, so goodness only knows what they would be like when they were delivered. We were now, all looking forward, to another trip in the "Marmora" but it was not to be, for although we were fitted up much better, we didn't get the chance, for the Dardanelles job was packed up before we arrived there, in fact we didn't get as far as Mudros.

The day after leaving Malta, the weather changed and it blew up very rough. We eased down to "Dead Slow", but even then it was so bad that we had to batten down and navigate the boat from below. This business is anything but comfortable, for with the engine running and only a small ventilator to supply the air, we soon got a very foul atmosphere, and besides this we have to stick being thrown about a good deal. It takes a good sailor to stick this and some of the younger members of the crew suffered very badly from seasickness. The next morning the weather eased up a great deal, and we were very pleased to be able to open up the Conning Tower Hatch. We now navigated the boat from the bridge and we were able to proceed a bit faster. Things went on alright until the morning of the 5th of January, and then it began to blow up again, by noon it had got very bad indeed and we had to abandon the bridge once more, but only after having our bridge screen torn to ribbons and the bridge stantions bent up very badly. We had to ease right down again and the most we could do was five knots•

During the night it eased down again and we once more went up on the bridge and at 3.0 o'clock in the morning watch, we met the light cruiser "Foresight". She told us that we were not to go to Mudros, but that we were to go into Milos, and await an escort to take us to a new patrol but where this was to be we didn't know.

We altered course and at 10.0 am we arrived at Milos. We were very surprised to find that the harbour had been netted in, and that the French had established quite a big naval base. We anchored quite near to the French flagship and waited to see what news we could get.

We got no real news until January 12th when a small ship named the "Folkestone" arrived. She told us that she had been sent as an escort for us, and that our new patrol was to be the "Adriatic". She also told us that, we had evacuated the Peninsular, very successfully, but that we had given the "Sea of Marmora" job up. This wasn't very good news for us, for we all thought that our fleet would have been able to force the Dardanelles, and we were also looking forward to another trip up ourselves.

We had orders to remain at "Milos" until the 14th and on that date we left at 7.0 am with our escort. As soon as we were clear of the land the weather came on rough again, but this time we were far better off than our "Escort" for she made very bad work of it, in fact she made such bad weather of it that we ran for "Cape Matapan" and got right in under the lee of the land.

We made four attempts to leave but it was not until 8.0 pm that we were really got underway again. Anyhow we had a jolly rotten night but managed to stick it and in the morning it cleared off. We arrived at Gallipoli "Italy", the next afternoon at 2.0 pm.

There were several Italian T. B.s in here and we secured alongside one of these. We filled up with fresh water and also provisions, and left the next day with another escort - this time an Italian T. B., for Brindisi at 6.0 pm. We found lots of French and Italian ships and also submarines, and we found that we were to run patrols with those.

I won't burden you with the details of the patrols we were put on, but we did plenty of sea time and only on one occasion did we see anything like an enemy. We did eight; or nine days on patrol, but in the middle we used to run into Barletta for one night. Soon after we arrived in the Adriatic, other British submarines arrived and afterward the "Adamant" arrived.

I will relate the incident in which we did see an enemy, to the best of my ability. It was at the time that we were evacuating "Durazzo" and we were sent over to see if anything was being transported by water. We left Brindisi on the 20th February and at about 10.0 am we dived. We dived toward "Durazzo" and at noon we sighted an enemy's submarine. I didn't know what it was - that we had sighted, but I knew by the way our Captain was working the periscope that he had something in line. It was just after noon and I had been relieved by the second Coxswain at the diving wheel, but hearing the periscope going up and down, I again went in the control room. I then asked the Captain if there was something doing, and he replied "Yes, I think: you had better get the crew to action stations". This I did as soon as possible and soon the order came to flood the torpedo tubes. I asked the Captain whether I should take her down after he had fired, but he said "No, I think we will come on the surface, that is if the torpedo runs alright". We got in a splendid attack and we got right in to eight hundred yards range and still we were not seen. "Stand By", "Fire" came the orders in quick succession, and seeing that the torpedo was running straight, the captain now gave the order, "Blow 3 and 4", "Surface". We came up very quickly and our Captain watched his torpedo run straight for the submarine. It appeared to hit just before the conning tower under her gun but there was no explosion. "Flood 3 and 4", "take her down", and this we did as quickly as possible. We were very lucky to get down as quick as we did for the submarine fired a torpedo at us but in this case it whizzed over the top of us. You will see that we were very lucky and they were very lucky also, for his torpedo had run over us and ours had run under them due in neither case to us who had fired. It was a bit of bad luck us missing as we did, but still I suppose they were entitled to as much luck as we were. Our captain says it was a "boat a good deal larger than us and she was laying on the surface, not moving at all, the reason he came on the surface was that he saw his torpedo was going to hit and he thought he would, save as much life as he could. The captain was very disappointed as he said if he had known the torpedo was going to miss he could have rammed her quite easily. We now came up to look but the enemy had dived and as we didn't think it wise to hang around here we made our way back to Brindisi and reported the occurrence. It was a very disappointed crew that took H1 back to Brindisi for we knew it was absolute bad luck which caused us not to have another hit to our credit.

Some days after this, H4 returned from patrol and reported firing two torpedoes at an enemy's submarine but in both cases the torpedo ran underneath. This led to experiments being carried out at Malta by H2 who happened to be there. These experiments proved our statements to be correct, for each torpedo fired, when picked up again was found to have had its balance chamber blown in by the force of the air discharge which is used to expel the torpedo. This caused an order to be sent round to say that all torpedoes of that mark, were to be returned to have their balance chambers strengthened.

Soon after this H3 was lost with all hands. How she was lost I don't suppose we ever shall find out, but she left to go on patrol and did not return to harbour. I lost some of my best pals in this boat for it will be remembered she was the boat which gave us all the trouble in crossing the Atlantic.

On returning from patrol on the 29th March, I found a relief had been sent out from England for me, and that I was to go home for a bigger boat of which there was plenty building. I didn't leave Brindisi until the 10th of April and then I travelled over land through Italy and France arriving at Fort Blockhouse on the 14th of April 1916.

The next few months passed with no items of interest which are worth recording. I was employed as an instructor in submarine work, to the new ratings who were joining the Submarine Service, to make good the loss of the brave lads who had already given their lives for King and Country.

To be continued in January 2018 with:

NEW RUSSIAN SUBMARINE

First upgraded Borei-class submarine ready for launch



YURI DOLGORUKY (K-535) is the third “Borei” Class submarine for the navy

Photo: Mil.ru

50 years after the Northern Fleet got its first ballistic missile submarine, SevmaSh Yard in Severodvinsk floats out its latest pride. “KNYAZ VLADIMIR” will be Russia’s most advanced ballistic missile submarine.



By Thomas Nilsen

November 06, 2017

This week marks the 50th anniversary since the Soviet navy’s first ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) was commissioned. The K-137 Yankee class, the first to be comparable with the U.S. Navy’s Polaris SSBNs, was cleared from the naval yard in Severodvinsk on November 5th and started to sail for the Northern fleet on 6th November 1967.

With thirty-four of the Yankee class commissioned between 1967 and 1974, and additional forty-three of the follow-up Classes Delta-I to Delta-IV built between 1973 and 1990, the vessels became the world’s most numerous submarine design carrying ballistic nuclear missiles. There are still some few Delta-III submarines sailing for the Pacific Fleet and six Delta-IV submarines sailing for the Northern Fleet. All Delta-IV subs are based in Gadzhieyev on the Barents Sea coast of the Kola Peninsula.

In a longer interview with the military newspaper “Red Star”, Navy Commander Admiral Vladimir Korolyov last week informed that the fourth of the new “Borei” Class submarine, named “KNYAZ VLADIMIR” (PRINCE VLADIMIR) will be put in water from the dock at SevmaSh Yard later in November.

“KNYAZ VLADIMIR” is the first of the upgraded “Borei” Class, named Project 955A in Russia. Little information is available regarding what constitutes the difference with the previous three “Borei” subs. The submarine will start sailing for the navy in 2018.

With four “Borei” Class submarines on the water, and another four still under construction, the vessels will gradually replace the Delta-III subs in the Pacific fleet. For the Northern Fleet, though, it is expected that the Delta-IV class submarines will be in active service for another ten to fifteen years alongside the new “Borei” submarines.

While the Delta-IV class vessels carry ‘Sineva’ missiles with liquid fuel, the “Borei” class vessels carry the new ‘Bulava’ ballistic missiles with solid fuel and more advanced independently manoeuvrable warheads.

“KNYAZ VLADIMIR” is powered by one nuclear reactor, has a crew of one hundred and thirty, and carries sixteen ballistic missiles.

Royal Navy Parts Cannibalisation – a Concern or a Crisis?

November 6, 2017

Taking spare parts and equipment from one Royal Navy vessel for use on another has always been standard practice on a modest scale. The National Audit Office recently published a report showing this ‘cannibalisation’ has increased in the past 5 years by 49%, an unsustainable growth rate that could further threaten the strength of the RN.

Parts ‘borrowed’ from other vessels, known as stores robbery (STOROB) only amount to around 1% of all the parts actually issued to RN vessels. Between 2016-17 there were 795 instances out of the approximately 80,000 parts the fleet

received in that time. Recent media headlines have suggested “the RN is eating itself” which is clearly an exaggeration, by the standards of most navies the RN still has a good logistic support chain, but it is being significantly weakened.

Concerns that cannibalisation was getting out of hand were raised as long ago as 2005, at the time the MoD admitted: “this trend is likely to continue and we expect to rely heavily on this practice in the future”. It was reported that, even while HMS BULWARK was completing her construction in 2004, she was being robbed of parts to equip her older sister HMS ALBION. The practice has continued and during the completion of the final Type 45 HMS DUNCAN, the ME department produced a T-shirt with a long list of the equipment robbed from them for use on sister ships. Between 2004-05 there was a dramatic increase in STOROB across the RN, going from around 10 per month to 30 per month. Now in 2017, with a fleet 30% smaller, the average is around 66 cases per month.

STOROB may be the sensible or only possible solution in some circumstances. For the sake of speed, it can make sense to borrow parts from a nearby vessel rather than delay sailing or accept a critical defect. Delayed sailings can have knock-on consequences down the line as another ship cannot be relied on time. Today, as the RN is striving to keep promises to its people about leave and more predictable programmes, borrowing a spare part maybe a better solution than disrupting schedules. For older vessels, some parts may no longer be available or the manufacturer no longer exists, although this excuse is less plausible for the newer ‘Astute’ Class submarines and Type 45 Destroyers.

A vicious circle

Borrowing parts from one vessel to fix another may be a pragmatic solution in the very short term but in the long run can cause other problems and is symptomatic of a fleet being hollowed out by both large and small cuts to its budget. SDSR 2015 was seen as signalling a positive future but pressure on the RN budget has remained overwhelming. Since 2015 the Navy has cut about 34% (£92 million) from its maritime support in-year budgets, a decision of desperation as this was sure to lead to problems down the road. These budget cuts have inevitably led to a reduction in stocks of spares and, in some cases, full technical documentation for complex items have not been purchased from the manufacturers.

Every time a part is robbed from another vessel there are impacts. 71% of the items are valued at less than £5,000 but cost of cannibalisation can be more than the price of the part. Removing a part that is in-situ may cause damage to the donor vessel as other parts have to be removed to gain access and important cables or pipes disconnected. Around 11% of cannibalised parts are damaged during removal or transit, potentially doubling the defect problem. Removing some parts may also void manufacturers warranties which adds to the costs if problems develop in future. The confined spaces of submarines can make access difficult and the job time-consuming, diverting resources from scheduled maintenance. Besides the time used to access and remove components, the donor vessel must then conduct testing to assess the impact of the missing item. Most seriously the ability of the fleet to send additional ships to sea in an emergency is undermined. If vessels alongside have donated spares to their sisters to get them to sea, either they cannot sail or must deploy with defects if required at short notice.

The deterrent effect and power of a navy is not just the ships at sea on the frontline at a given time, but the availability of other ships ready to join or replace them. Manpower and spares shortages mean that the ‘paper’ strength of the RN is increasingly divorced from actual strength.

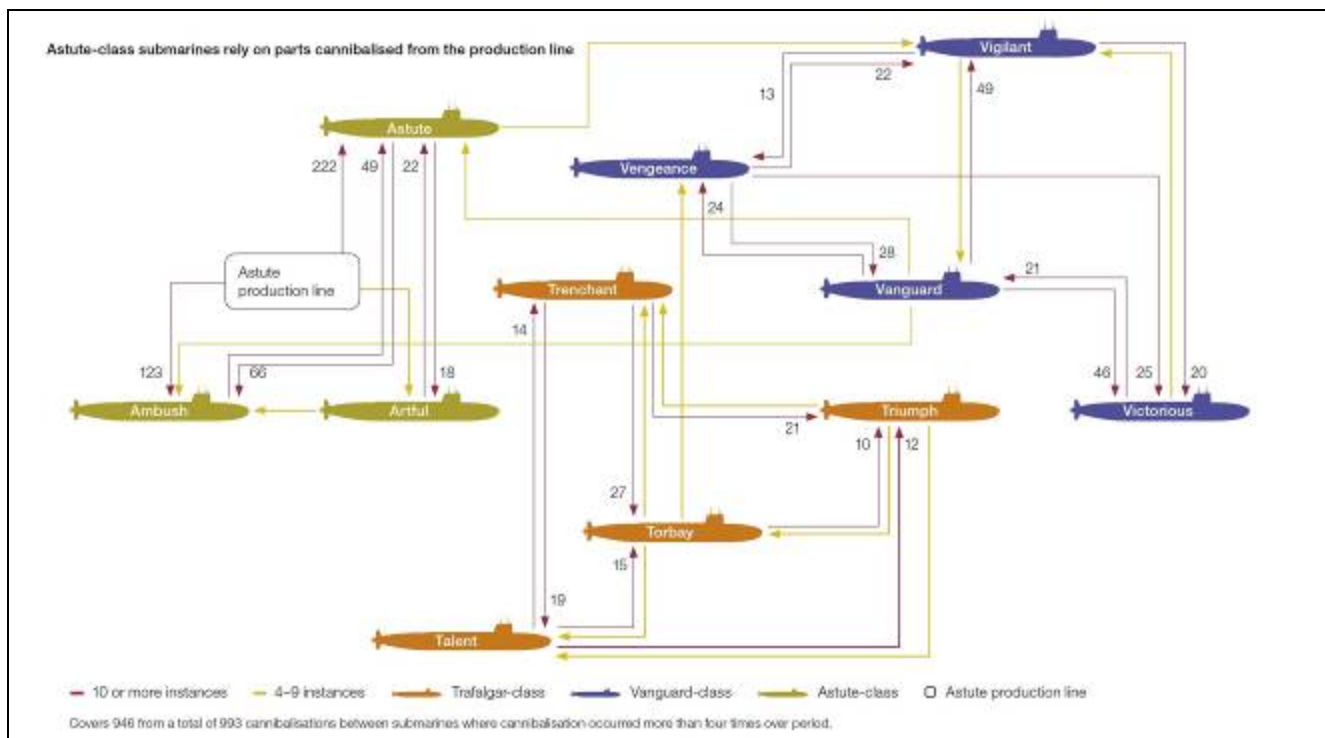
There is plenty of evidence that STOROB undermines the morale of engineers, particularly those serving on donor vessels who may be working hard to keep their vessel in peak condition, only to be told to remove working components. With an already serious shortage of engineering personnel, the last thing the RN needs are additional demoralising pressures.

Astute submarines

The cannibalisation of the ‘Astute’ Class submarines is perhaps the issue of greatest immediate concern highlighted by the NAO report. Costing well over £1Bn each, it is surprising that the active boats (the oldest of which has been in service for just 7 years) have had an annual average of 59 instances of cannibalisation. This is the equivalent of a part being removed or installed once every two days. In the past five years, the 3 boats recorded 506 defects, with 28% of them fixed through cannibalisation in 2016-17. The collision damage to HMS Ambush in 2016 has not helped the situation but it is clear that the problem existed long before this. Failure to purchase sufficient spares is another compounding factor in the troubled programme, boats under construction are being raided for spares need by those in service. Further cost-inducing delays undermine the availability of the critical SSN fleet which, during at least one week in 2017, was unable to put a single boat to sea.

Civil Service cuts have consequences

The report highlights the complexity of warships and support required to keep them going. The logistic and maintenance requirement for warships is consistently underestimated and often leads to questions about the amount of time ships have to spend alongside. Many people are dismissive of the Civil Service support provided to the forces. These “pen pushers”, doing important jobs behind the frontline, have suffered major reductions in manpower since 2010 but without a matching reduction in workload. The MoD Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) agency which is responsible for the logistic support of all three services, maintains an inventory of parts valued at £2.7 billion for the RN alone. DE&S has serious staff shortfalls and is 21% below strength at present. In 2014 the RN even seconded 30 personnel to DE&S to improve the situation, although staff numbers are slowly recovering. While it is popular to talk of cutting support jobs to “focus on the frontline”, the navy cannot function without competent and dedicated people managing the equipment supply chain.



The cannibalisation merry go round in the submarine fleet 2012-17. Clearly, an unhealthy situation that has contributed to the low availability of attack submarines. (NAO Analysis of MoD Data)

Strength in depth

If resolving the manpower shortage is the RN's most serious problem, the next priority must be increasing stocks of spare parts, portable equipment, ammunition and missiles. This is another symptom of a 'peacetime mindset' that would quickly be exposed if the RN had to fight in a real conflict. We need a new emphasis on contingency planning, strength in depth and resilience both in manpower and logistics, even if it comes at the expense of new kit. Unfortunately, with more cuts and "efficiencies" on the way it seems unlikely that the hollowing out of the RN will be reversed anytime soon. Expenditure on mundane behind-the-scenes activity may not get the headlines but is the difference between a showpiece navy and a credible fighting fleet.

The State of the Royal Navy Submarine Flotilla and UK ASW capability

November 15, 2017



HMS Trenchant conducts a personnel transfer during Exercise Saxon Warrior, 2017. (US Navy photo)

Rear Admiral Roger Lane-Nott was Captain of HMS SLENDID during the Falklands War and Flag Officer Submarines from 1993-1996. In this article, he examines the state of the submarine flotilla and the RN's ability to counter a growing Russian submarine threat.

At a meeting of the Commons Defence Select Committee this week there were some strong words from General Sir Richard Barrons who made the accusation that a lack of money and policy of denial have left the Armed Forces not fit for purpose and at risk of "institutional failure." At the same meeting the former First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas stated that "the country's ability to hunt Russian submarines was inadequate." That is an understatement.

The Submarine Flotilla is in a difficult place at the moment. The Flotilla moved everyone to Faslane but kept the Submarine School at HMS RALEIGH in Cornwall (good planning that). The four Vanguard submarines have been joined by the SSNs from Devonport and the Flotilla HQ moved from Northwood now under Rear Admiral Submarines – why

did we change from Flag Officer Submarines? West Dunbartonshire and the SNP are very hostile to the Navy and the Leader of the Opposition wants to scrap Trident despite supporting it being Labour party policy. We are struggling with the rump (3) of the Trafalgar Class and insufficient Astute Class (just 3 operational). Now we have the scandal of the Captain and Executive Officer of HMS VIGILANT being relieved due to inappropriate behaviour involving female crew members. How can you have women in submarines when the Navy has a no-touch rule is beyond me. Recruitment is poor and the challenge of recruiting and training nuclear engineer officers is still proving difficult.

Veteran submariners are dismayed at the current state of the Flotilla and what is a proud history. This year in June nearly all the living Submarine Qualified Commanding Officers got together to celebrate 100 years of the 'Perisher' and there was considerable chatter about the current state of the Flotilla and Government commitment to it. This is supposed to be the 'Year of the Royal Navy' but apart from HMS Queen Elizabeth, I can't see it. Of course, there is jam tomorrow in the form of the four 'Dreadnought' Class Trident submarines with a £31bn budget with £10bn contingency fund to build the successor submarines to the Vanguard class. This is good news, but the building rate of the 'Astute' Class is dreadfully slow and seven is just not enough. We need twelve at least and quickly but where is the political will?

While numbers and capability has been reduced to dangerous levels recruiting is a big challenge and the cuts of 2010 have left their mark. The strength of the Royal Navy in September 2017 was 22,470 plus 6,620 Royal Marines – a total of 29,420.

The submarine service in September 2017 had 840 officers and 3170 ratings making a total of 4,010. This is depressingly small. Despite these figures, submariners remain as stoical as ever. Jerry Hendrix in the National Review stated in May 2017 that *"The Russian Bear has emerged from a long hibernation to threaten American and NATO interests with highly capable submarines in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. But neither the United States nor its allies are prepared to meet the Kremlin's challenge."* And, he argued, that NATO had to strengthen its ASW equipment, skills, sensors and platforms.



The new threat? A Russian Kilo class SSK and a Victor III class SSN

The Anti-Submarine Warfare [ASW] capability of the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force is at an all-time low. Just 20 years ago we were the best in the world and admired by NATO nations, the USA and the Russians. What has happened is a loss of assets and a complete failure by Government and the Ministry of Defence to realise the importance of this defence capability.

ASW is not just a legacy of the Cold War when submarine, towed array frigates with helicopters and maritime air all ensured that Russian submarines never got the upper hand. In 1993 as Chief of Staff to Flag Officer Submarines I visited Severomorsk and met with the Commander of the Northern Fleet who admitted to me that the Royal Navy's ASW capability was much better and a real challenge for them.

Some would say that the submarine threat has reduced significantly since the end of the Cold War but today Russia is expanding its submarine force again and is choosing to test our resolve by deploying into the Atlantic, and further afield together with Russian Bear MPAs and threatening our shores and making efforts to track our Trident submarines as they leave their Faslane base.

Despite protests from Governments and NATO the chilling fact is that the organisations, relationships, intelligence, and capabilities that once supported a strong ASW network in the North Atlantic no longer exist. NATO, and the UK, are in a bad place with regard to Russia's underwater resurgence. *"Two things have happened"* naval historian Norman Polmar has said. *"One, their submarines are quieter, and two, we have dismantled a large portion of our ASW capabilities."* Developing an effective ASW capability requires the marrying of several layers of capability. Each layer has a particular function, contributing to the overall effectiveness of the UK's ASW performance. And this includes systems and skills.

We have lost the Nimrod MPA which was so good, SOSUS has gone, Towed Array frigates like the Batch 2 Type 22 have been sold for small sums to other nations. The air gap is filled at the tactical level by the Royal Navy's Merlin HM1 ASW helicopter and its AQS-950 dipping sonar. Required to prosecute a submerged target quickly, Merlin operates from its host platform, a Type 23 frigate. The Royal Navy will have 30 Merlins, scheduled to stay in service until 2029. What is far from clear is if and for how long these numbers can survive sustained spending cuts.

Nine new Boeing P-8 Poseidon MPA have been ordered but they are not due until 2020 and they are not enough. Seven planned 'Astute' Class SSNs is just so far off the force levels required that it will be difficult to deploy as we used to between 1970 and 2000. It is simply not enough if it is to be deployed East of Suez and be Tomahawk capable. The Type 26 frigate, the UK's indigenous variant of the Global Combat Ship concept, will replace the Type 23s as a multi-purpose but primarily ASW platform.

The submarine threat is a significant national security issue, not just a Cold War hangover. The UK remains committed to a minimum independent strategic nuclear deterrent. Whether it is a Russian Akula or another nation's submarine showing an interest, the single SSN supporting the deterrent is a critical strategic asset. And so is the MPA.

But an effective ASW capability is not just about protecting the deterrent. The oceans remain largely impermeable, where the simple – confirmed or otherwise – presence of a submarine can deny the use of a geographical area (as the Argentinians found out in 1982) because the risk of operating a strategic asset there is too great. Many nations are now investing in submarine capabilities. And these could pose a threat to commercial shipping transiting key maritime choke points around the world, or sea-based logistics chains supporting operations such as in Afghanistan – which a submarine is well placed to expose and exploit.

Apart from spending money on kit we can do more. First write a new UK ASW strategy that considers the Russian submarine threat and capability now and potential for the future. And then plan force levels to match the threat. Secondly, create a new ASW “*Centre of Excellence*” that can bring NATO’s navies together to create common NATO anti-submarine warfare tactics. And, thirdly, technological readiness setting up a NATO standard for encrypted transmission of ASW sensor data.

So, it is high time to take a serious look at the SSN numbers and the UK’s ASW capability and invest heavily in those layers of capability – MPA, Towed array frigates, ASW helicopters, and above all more SSNs. It would be nothing short of dereliction of duty not to do so.

SUBMARINERS ‘CROSSED THE BAR’ REPORTED IN NOVEMBER 2017

Branch	Date	Name	Rank/Rate	O/N	Age	Submarine Service
Non-member	1 st Nov 2017	Hugh Ross	Warrant Officer WEA	TBA	TBA	Not given
Non-member	1 st Nov 2017	Clive Johnson	Chief Petty Officer	TBA	TBA	Not given
Lincoln Branch	4 th Nov 2017	David O Pritchard	Able Seaman	P/JX 905685	81	Submarine Service from 1956 to 1958 in AENEAS (56-57), SEA SCOUT (57) & AMPHION (57-58)
Non-member	8 th Nov 2017	John Hedley Wilson	Chief CEMN	D051462Y	74	Submarine Service in VALIANT & RENOWN
Barrow Branch	8 th Nov 2017	David Wilson	Fleet Chief WEA	P/MX 933585	70	Submarine Service from 1957 to 1981 in TACITURN, TIPTOE, ANDREW, PORPOISE, RESOLUTION (S) (64 to 74), RESOLUTION (P), REVENGE (76 to 78) & RESOLUTION (81)
Non-member	19 th Nov 2017	Paul Skipworth	TBA	TBA	68	Submarine Service TBA
Former Gatwick Branch	Nov 2017	Paddy Bronte-Hearn	Leading Telegraphist	P/JX 184633	93	Submarine Service from 1945 to 1954 in SERAPH, TRESPASSER, SELENE, STYGIAN, TOKEN, SPORTSMAN, SCOTSMAN, SIRDAR & SCYTHIAN
Merseyside Branch	Nov 2017	C J (James) Wallace	Leading Stoker	P/SKX 902742	85	Submarine Service from 1953 to 1958 in TIRELESS, TOKEN, TEREDO, SANGUINE, STURDY & SENESCHAL