



# 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: 226

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

April 2019



Editorial	Page 2
Social Secretary's Report	Page 3
Articles	Pages 4 to 6
Barrow Landladies WWII Style	Pages 6 to 9
HMS GANGES	Pages 9/10
Crossed the Bar	Pages 11/12

## BRANCH OFFICERS

Hon President:

Alan Hoskins

01229 588792

[Abhoskins@btinternet.com](mailto:Abhoskins@btinternet.com)

Chairman:

Richard Cambridge 01229 586668

[Richard.cambridge1@btinternet.com](mailto:Richard.cambridge1@btinternet.com)

Chaplaincy:

Brian Jones 01229 480380

[bmj.retired@btopenworld.com](mailto:bmj.retired@btopenworld.com)

Newsletter Editor:

Barrie Downer 01229 820963

[frozensnorth55@gmail.com](mailto:frozensnorth55@gmail.com)

Vice Chairman & Secretary:

Barrie Downer 01229 820963

[frozensnorth55@gmail.com](mailto:frozensnorth55@gmail.com)

Committee Members:

Mick Dack 01229 823202

Mark Butchart 07965 272933

[m.butchart@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:m.butchart@hotmail.co.uk)

Jeff Thomas 01229 464943

[jeffbrendathomas@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jeffbrendathomas@tiscali.co.uk)

Bob Faragher 01229 474284

[bob.seadevil@outlook.com](mailto:bob.seadevil@outlook.com)

Standard Bearer:

Bob Faragher 01229 474284

[bob.seadevil@outlook.com](mailto:bob.seadevil@outlook.com)

Slops:

Malcolm Hogg 07768 170325

[bloke52@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bloke52@hotmail.co.uk)

Treasurer & Membership

Mick Mailey 01229 821290

[Michael.mailey@btinternet.com](mailto:Michael.mailey@btinternet.com)

Welfare

Mick Mailey 01229 821290

[Michael.mailey@btinternet.com](mailto:Michael.mailey@btinternet.com)

Richard Britten 01229 820265

[r.britten@btinternet.com](mailto:r.britten@btinternet.com)

Website Manager:

Dave Oakes 01229 475140

[Dave.oakes@btinternet.com](mailto:Dave.oakes@btinternet.com)

---

**Cover Picture: 15th March 2019**

**Another traffic hold-up on Michaelson Road! The final piece of what will be HMS AGINCOURT, is carefully guided through the streets of Barrow Island.**

---

## EDITORIAL

Hello Everybody,

You get one Annual General Meeting (the SA National one) sorted out and then another one (the Branch AGM) comes along before you have time to think and get sorted out. Five of us from the Branch were in Leicester for this year's Reunion & Conference - me as the Branch Delegate, Dave Barlow, Dave Smith, Alex Webb and Mark Butchart - the latter four with their other halves. I won't go into what was discussed at the Conference as all that is covered in the Delegate's Report which will be briefed at our AGM and circulated with the Branch AGM Minutes.

The Conference this year was at the Holiday Inn in Leicester which is right in the centre of the City. I hadn't been to Leicester before and, as I had a bit of spare time on Saturday after the Conference, I was able to meet up with No. 1 son and his family (who live quite near the City) for a pint and a meal and look around the old part of the City and visit the Cathedral to see the tomb of King Richard (no longer buried under a car park!) and the other displays. The Cathedral is much smaller than I expected but was quite spectacular.

The Reunion Weekend was very busy, and apart from the business side - the Conference - it was good to meet up with old friends and to make some new ones. The Hotel did us proud - even managing 'S\*\*\* on a Raft' for breakfasts - but there was a sudden shortage of Boddingtons on Saturday afternoon - plenty of lagers and other drinks however!

RASM (Rear Admiral John Weale) was in good form at the Conference and at the formal Dinner on Saturday evening. He was able to tell us that, with the limited number of Submarines currently in Service - CASD was being maintained, all three ASTUTE submarines were out on patrol as were two of the three 'T' class available. This was his 4<sup>th</sup> and last Conference as RASM as he hands over the reins to Rear Admiral Paul Halton later this year. His has been the longest stint in charge of the Submarine Service since Commodore Roger Keyes and Commodore Sidney Stuart Hall who, between them, headed the Submarine Service from November 1906 to August 1919. Hall was in the job twice for two separate periods of approximately four years or so either side of just about four years and three months by Keyes.

Our Association President, Rear Admiral Neil Kilgour, made an interesting speech during which he suggested that the National Management Committee could make better job of Brexit than the Government and Parliament - even allocating the various negotiating roles to existing members of the NMC. The Conference seemed to think this might be good idea.

Anyway, Spring is now here, the clocks have gone forward, the evenings are getting longer so it must be time to get back out in the garden and cut the grass again. Best wishes to all!

Regards

Barrie.

---

## SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

---

### Hi Shipmates

This is my 7th Brief to the Branch AGM as the social secretary. The socials generally run well with the same faces making the effort to support and attend the functions, in fact a head count from one of the members at the St Patrick's night party identified only 7 members had made the effort to attend. In addition to the loyal supporters we seem to be attracting more of the Legion's clientele (thank goodness) to such events as the St Patricks and the Christmas Party. One thing I have noticed is that the away trips are becoming more popular; Cartmel & the canal trip are fully booked already.

This year's programme is similar to last year, however, support at the cabaret nights and the BBQ were particularly poor and I was anticipating discontinuing these and the Foxfield trip (due to lack of interest and income to support them) and even the members draw and birthday beers for members were in jeopardy. It was at the Christmas party I had very welcomed support which put the social fund back in the black and I decided that I could afford to continue with the members draw, the birthday beer, the meeting nibbles and a few free beers at Foxfield. However, I have still decided not to run a BBQ or cabaret night this year to see if they are missed at all.

I have been given a couple of ideas from Brian Downie for 'away days' and I intend to try and organise at least one of them this year. I want to open up the idea of a pub crawl along the Lancaster canal for us. The pubs in question are very close together and it will be along the lines of a gallon club challenge, with the option of drinking ½ gallon and also mix and match soft drinks for those who haven't kept up their training, obviously the gallon club certificate will only be given to those who achieve the feat. The details and planning will be presented in June for maybe an August/September day out.

I am only obliged to run a branch dinner and the dinner dance in November; the last couple of years the branch dinner has struggled to get 40 and the dinner dance not more than 60 at the last one; if this continues over the next 12 months I will be asking the committee if they still want me to organise these given that they are so poorly attended.

I am continuing to endeavour to keep the prices down by not including wine at the events; this was a request from several members, and I will continue with this. I would also like for you to understand that these events have been kept at the lowest price possible for the last 6 years but with things changing rapidly with costing from hotels, entertainment and coach companies I have been forced to add a pound or two onto some of the events.

### Diary Check:

I have decided that I will hold 2 quizzes a year and the first one will be on completion of the May meeting, so please bring along your better halves for a very easy and not too long quiz. It will be a £1 per person entry and the winning team will win the total pot. Also, on the evening I will knock up a first rate chicken curry.

If you have your name down for the canal trip on Saturday 29th June then please can I have payment at the May meeting; it is £37.50. For your money you will get transport to and from Barton Grange, some aperitifs on the coach, there will be a wine and nibbles table on arrival, a 4 hour barge party with music and buffet, an 'absent friend's' cocktail and carriages just before our trip home. Kick off will be at 2 and I will have you back home for about midnight. This trip is full, and I am running a reserve list, after the May meeting (unless you have verbally agreed with me) I will make places not paid for available to other interested parties.

Saturday 6th July is the revised date for our members free drinks at the Prince of Wales, Foxfield, there will be a committee meeting at 12; where the branch kindly buys us a beer and a pastie for our efforts throughout the year. Then from 2pm until the pot runs dry will be free beer for any member who wishes to join us.

If you have your name down for the Cartmel trip on Saturday 21st July then please can I have payment of £13.50 per person at the June meeting? This trip is also full -with a reserve list running - so once again payment and securing of your seat is imperative as after the June meeting I will assume you do not require the place. Please note that payment is for a return trip to and from Cartmel and does not include entry to the race course.

### Other items:

Our Ladies Christmas party has been pre-booked at the King Alfred this year due to the ladies saying that they would prefer hot, savoury food as opposed to sandwiches and cream cakes.

Please be advised once you have paid for an event it will be up to you to sell on your tickets if you can't make it.

However, if the reason is a genuine crisis then I will do all I can to fill the place and get you as much of your money back as possible.

The members draw was not won in March so stands at £10 for April. Don't forget your birthday beer if you were born in the month of April. The food for the meeting will be hotdogs.

Finally, I would like to thank the regulars who support the functions. I would also like to thank my committee colleagues who support me with my endeavours and my unofficial social secretary assistants. Also, my thanks goes to the Legion and the staff for their support throughout the year.

Thank you.

Alex

### **APRIL BRANCH CALENDAR**

Branch Meeting (AGM)	Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr
ANZAC Day Wreath Laying	Sun 28 <sup>th</sup> Apr
St Georges Day Parade	Sun 28 <sup>th</sup> Apr
Committee Meeting	As required

### **MAY BRANCH CALENDAR**

Branch Meeting & Quiz Night	Tues 7 <sup>th</sup> May
Committee Meeting	As required

### **JUNE BRANCH CALENDAR**

Branch Meeting	Tues 4 <sup>th</sup> Jun
Armed Forces Parade & March	Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jun
Canal Trip	Sat 29 <sup>th</sup> Jun
Committee Meeting	As Required

---

### **APRIL BRANCH BIRTHDAYS**

T.A. (Tom) Rawbone	02/04/1958
R. (Joe) Cornelius	04/04/1947
J.D. (John) Flower	06/04/1959
R.W (Edward) Anderson	10/04/1956
O. (Axel) Rose	12/04/1995
D. (Dave) Craven	15/03/1950
K. (Karl) Allerton	17/04/1971
M (Michael) Corran	17/04/1958
J. (Jamie) Reid	19/04/1985
J.V. (John) Hart	18/04/1934
S.N. (Steve) May	18/04/1963
I. (Ian) Winstanley	28/04/1950

**Happy Birthday All!**

---

### **REMEMBERING FORMER BRANCH MEMBERS 'CROSSED THE BAR'**

#### **APRIL**

Joe Burlison	1984
Leonard Ingram	1984
Harold Carter	1984
Norman Cloke	1985
Mick Terry	1992
James Vince	1997
Tony Mitchell-Knight	2001
Frederick Jordan	2001
Graham Harries	2003
John Dixon	2009
Donald Wade	2017

#### **RESURGAM**

---

### **DISCLAIMER**

This Newsletter is published by the Submariners Association (Barrow in Furness) and is © 2019. The opinions expressed in these pages are not necessarily the opinion of the Editor, The Submariners Association, the MoD or the Submarine Service unless otherwise stated. The Submariners Association may not agree with the opinions expressed in this Newsletter but encourages publication as a matter of interest.

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 The Firs, Dundalk Street, Barrow Island, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2RZ You may also send your contribution by e-mail to me on [frozennorth55@gmail.com](mailto:frozennorth55@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 April for the May 2019 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!

---

### **SUBMARINE COMMISSIONING CREW LISTS**

Still looking for more 'First Commission' Submarine Crew Lists as follows: Diesel Boats: PORPOISE, RORQUAL, GRAMPUS, NARWHAL, CACHALOT, WALRUS, OBERON, ONYX, ORPHEUS, ODIN, OTUS & UNICORN.

Also, any Crew Lists for any Re-commissioning and Re-dedications of any Conventional 'A', 'S', 'T', 'O' & 'P' Class and any refitting Nuclear Boat - SSN or SSBN. 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 above. Thanks, Barrie Downer

---

### **VOICES FROM THE DEEP**

A while ago the Submariners Association sponsored a book - 'Voices from The Deep - Submarine Poetry - An Anthology' (see front cover below) as a way of raising funds for the Association. It had been thought that all copies of the book had been sold but, recently, Barrow Branch Member & Association Vice President Dave Barlow, discovered a full box of forty copies in his loft. After discussing this with Jim McMaster these books have been offered to Association Members on a 'first come first served' basis at £5.00 per copy (inclusive of post and packing) with all proceeds going to the Association funds.

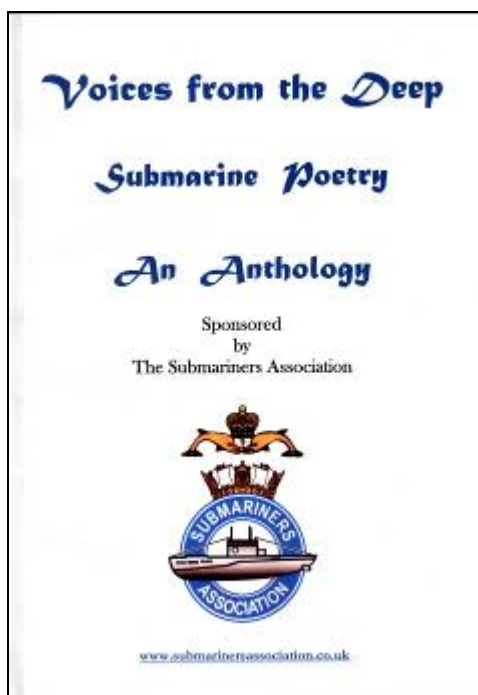
Orders for the Books should be sent to:

Barrie Downer, The Firs, Dundalk Street, Barrow Island, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2RZ

Cheques (£5.00 per copy) should be made payable to the Submariners Association and enclosed with each application.

P.S. Order now to avoid disappointment – twenty - one have already been sold to date 17<sup>th</sup> March!





### **ANOTHER REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

I have recently been re-reading and digitising all those 'Gus' Britton 'Fore-Ends Newsletters' and other dits which used to appear 'SOCA NEWS' (later 'SUBMARINERS NEWS') – both forerunners of our current 'IN DEPTH' News Letter. As well as reminding me what a wealth of information was contained in them about Submarines and Submariners – many of whom are no longer with us - the exercise of reading the Gus's very quirky and often very outspoken stories also reminded me about how important it is to capture memories and information before it is lost forever.

The following request appeared in Gus's 'Fore-Ends Newsletter' dated 25th December 1995:

'The Director (of the Submarine Museum) is very keen to have written and taped accounts of your life in submarines during any period but especially the last war sailors who are getting a bit thin on the ground. Take your time and write down the date of writing, your date of birth, where born, family life, joining the Andrew, joining submarines and then as much detail as possible about your life in boats. Take your time over it and you'll find that the memories start coming back once you start. If you record your story start off with the date. Names, places, people etc. with as much detail as possible. What chefs thought of cooking, what they cooked, what they cooked on, gunlayers - what they had in the magazine, colour coding of ammunition, coxswains - victualling and medical problems, engine room staff - all that technical stuff. What you thought of submarine life, officers and crew, every little facet of life undersea. Any Submariner - officers or rating reading this are welcome to contribute. I know that there was life aft of the forward torpedo compartment water tight door so let's hear about it. Names are very

important. Also add what ships you were on before and after submarine service.'

Today the request should probably be slightly reworded – there might possibly be a few gunlayers left, but there are now a lot less Diesel submariners around than there used to be, some of our early Nuclear submariners are slipping away, Coxswains no longer look after medical issues and perhaps we should substitute 'Aft of the Missile Compartment' Bulkhead or the 'Reactor Compartment' bulkhead for the 'Forward Torpedo Compartment Water Tight Door' but the general intention is still the same – to get the information recorded - although I wouldn't want anyone to compromise their signature on their Official Secrets Act declaration!

If you can spare the time to record your details, thoughts, memories and any anecdotes of your time in Submarines – do it now! Send your stories to me and I will pass them on to the Submarine Museum – now part of the National Museums of the Royal Navy.

Barrie Downer

### **Royal Navy Submarine Museum**

#### **Move of Museum Archive**

The Submarine Museum Archive is moving to a purpose built store in Portsmouth Dockyard which means that our Curators will be unable to fulfil research requests until Spring 2020. The NMRN archivists, including those covering submarine heritage matters, are currently unable to respond to enquiries or requests for access to the collections as they undertake the move of the collection into new accommodation in Portsmouth. This includes being unable to facilitate research appointments or reproduction requests, as the collections will be physically inaccessible while they are packed and moved.

The majority of the Submarine Collection in the Museum TORBAY Building will move into a new purpose build facility in Storehouse 12 in Portsmouth Dockyard. Some large items may go into a suitable building in the Explosion Museum.

Please note, this means 'Historical Enquiries' will receive no response.

The NMRN looks forward to opening an improved 'Collections Access' service in Spring 2020. Please resubmit any queries after that time. Look for updates on the project, NMRN collections and the future service on the NMRN website and social media pages.

### **St PATRICK'S PARTY**

Another one of Alex's Social evenings which seems to have been enjoyed by all who were there. Everyone seemed to enter into the spirit of the evening as can be seen from the photos below.

The entertainment was a selection of the traditional Irish songs which everyone can join in (and did) despite Denis Horan struggling with a bad throat.

There was plenty of food – with quite a few going around the buoy- so I don't think much was left over.

The Raffle was well supported with plenty of prizes – unfortunately – none of them came my way!  
 People were still dancing, talking and drinking when Margaret and myself went home at a quarter past eleven.  
 A selection of the photos follows:



### BARROW LANDLADIES

This following item comes from one of Peter Schofield's pieces of research. The articles are taken from 'Good Morning' - the daily paper of the Submarine Service of 28th December 1944 (the newspaper was provided by the Daily Mirror to all submarines wherever they were in the world) and it has links to Barrow which he thought might be of interest. The item provides an insight into legendary Barrow Landladies whose services were always in demand especially during the war years. The language is a bit cheesy but it would have been commonplace at the time.

#### **Sandwich will go down nice, Boys!' says Ma Berrill"**

Her name is Mrs Mary Berrill- but to scores of men now sailing the seas in submarines she's just "Ma" Berrill.

"All the nice girls love a sailor," says an old song, but Ma Berrill loves all sailor boys with a motherly love that goes right down to her heart.

Her husband was in the Royal Navy more than 30 years ago. She has a son in a Cruiser today. But it is to the boys of the Submarine Service that 'Ma' Berrill's heart goes out today.

Her home at 87, Ramsden Street, Barrow in Furness, is a harbour of homeliness for which many mothers all over Great Britain will be grateful when their sons tell them about it.

'Ma' Berrill collects lonely submariners. She has a recipe for curing them of home-sickness. It is simply to look after them as a mother would care for her own son.

"I never turn a sailor boy away if I have a bed to put him in," she told a 'Good Morning' Reporter. "Often, when all my beds are occupied, I invite submarine boys who tell me their lodgings are not so comfortable, to come up and spend the evening with us."

"We have jolly parties. There are always tea and sandwiches for them, and sometimes they bring their beer in. they are far better having a drink here than in some places. It is no uncommon thing for boys to come to my door and say that

Tommy So-and-So, or Nobby Somebody-Else, told them in some remote part of the world to come and see if I could put them up if ever they came to Barrow."



Bernard Bailey was a young batchelor until 'Ma' Berrill found him a wife. The Wedding took place from "Ma's" house. "Ma" often wonders where Bill McGurk has got to. Bill did not lodge with her but often went up with hi shipmate 'Nobby' Cole.

Yes, though the boys may dream of home they are not the only dreamers. "Ma" Berrill not only remembers their names: she knows the submarines they wrre in.

When the 'Good Morning' mem wrre at "Ma" Berril's house she was carving up a joint of pre-war size.

"There are a lot of us," she sid. "I have a vey big naval fmily, "Believe me, my boys know how to eat."

How would one of "Ma" Berrill's sandwiches and a nice cup of tea go down now, Ginger? Or are you one of those tough boys who drink beer with their Sandwiches?

### **A VETERANS FAMILY GREET'S O/S VICTOR MCLEAN**

It took all of our Winning Ways and the help of a tough sailor to get this delightful picture of your pretty girlfriend for you, Ordinary Seaman Victor McLean.

Mary was a it suspicious when we called at the Jackson home – No. 89 Ransden Street, Barrow in Furness – and said "Good Morning." Thought we were trying to drag her into a contract than hasn't been made yet – and you know what we mean.

So she went to tell papa all about us, and, very much to our surprie, Veteran Thomas Henry Hackson, A.B. S.T.came dashing round the corner into the sitting room, his face covered with lather and a brush in his hand, to see what the boys were up to.

Then it was Mary's turn to get a surprise.

"Good Morning." - Good Gracious. Good afternoon!" said Pop.

Yes, he was surprised, too. This was the day he had been looking forward to, and it happened just when he was home on 48 hours leave.

"Good Morning" couldn't have called at a more approprite time.

In less time than it takes a submarine to get into action, Tommy had the soap and the whiskers off his face and was pushing Mary in front of te camera...

"It's all right if Dad says so," Mary agreed.

And Dad really ought to know, because he's had thirty years' service in the Royal Navy. More than eighteen of these years have been spent in Submarines. He's 48 now, and since he was a mere lad he's only had the ttree yearsjust before this war in civvies.

"Tell Vic I'm looking forward to seeing him again," said Mary. I.m still working at the ship and doing my bit at the W.V.S. canteen in my spare time. I'm going there now for an hour or two, and then I'mgoing to write to Vic and tell him you've been."

Now your little sweetheart, Brenda wants to speak to you, Vic. You'll see her in the picture, too. All the boys call you "Mac", she says, but she thinks Vic is nicer

Brenda speaking: "Remember I'm nearly six years old now, you great big sailor. I know you used to have to take me to school when I was nly a little girl – just five I was then – but I can go all by myself now – so there. Don't forget to write to me again, and when you come back to barrow we'll sing some more songs together and have lots of fun.



Whereupon, twelve year old Joan, tinkling on the piano, was so jealous that we couldn't get her in the picture at all. By the way, who's the genial looking lady in the picture? Why, if it isn't "Ma" Berrill from next door; and we believe you used to call her Mary, too, when you lived next door to the other Mary. Let us leave them to fight it out while you walk with us in fancy down the road. A.B. S.T. Tommy Jackson leads the way, with a "Good Morning" reporter on his left and our photographer on the right-hand side. Tommy guides us safely into a port of call on the right-hand side. Three thirsty men drink a toast to an absent submarine man. "Pity Mac ain't with us now," says Tommy, and we all agree.



Left to Right: Mary Jackson, Tommy Jackson, Brenda Jackson, Mary "Ma" Berrill

### Background

Taking details from the 1939 Register the Berrill's lived at 87 Ramsden Street - Mary Berrill was born on 13th September 1894 (listed as unpaid domestic duties - otherwise - a housewife!) and her husband was James Berrill - born 26th October 1886 and listed as a Dock Labourer (heavy). Their next door neighbours were the Jackson's at 89, Ramsden Street. Thomas Henry Jackson - born Darlington 20th October 1896 was listed as Able Seaman O/N J21086 in HMS DRAKE, Vera Jackson was born 8th June 1903 (also listed



as unpaid domestic duties). Their daughter Mary Jackson - born 13th May 1926- was later Mary Watson (so it looks like she didn't marry Vic McLean after all)- and Brenda Jackson - born 22nd February 1939 - she was later Brenda Mackinnon. The Record for Joan Jackson – not in the picture - is currently not 'open' which indicates that she might still be alive or has only recently died and no one has requested to open her record in the register.

The Navy Service Record for Thomas Jackson (covers 30th October 1912 to January 1929) which confirms that he was a Submariner.

Able Seaman (ST) Thomas Henry Jackson O/N J21086(Dev) served in Submarines from 1st August 1917 to 17th October 1922 in HMS DOLPHIN, TITANIA, DOLPHIN, TITANIA, L19 (9th September 1918 to 30th June 1921) & DOLPHIN. He also served in Submarines from 1st May 1925 to 3rd May 1928 in DOLPHIN, MAIDSTONE, H22 (12th February 1926 to 6th October 1926), MAIDSTONE, VULCAN, 'E' Gp SMs in Reserve (7th October 1926 to 13th March 1927), H24 (14th March 1927 to 29th March 1927), 'E' Gp SMs in Reserve (30th March 1927 to 25th April 1928) and DOLPHIN. Only eight years in Submarines – not the eighteen claimed by "Good Morning!"

---

### **'HMS GANGES'**

(From the Recollections of Desmond Gerrish)

Joining the Royal Navy. I joined in September 1947 at age 16, as a Boy Seaman, 2nd Class. I went to H.M.S. GANGES, a huge training barracks for boys (3,000 of us) on the estuary of the broad River Stour at Ipswich. GANGES trained only seamen and communication boys. Electrical engineers, stokers, cooks, stewards and medical boys all went to their own individual specialist barracks dotted around the U.K.

The first five weeks were spent in an Annexe Camp across the road from the main barracks, where they kept the new entries (200 every 5 weeks) separate from the hurly-burly of the real GANGES, while kitting out with Navy uniform which clothed you entirely, learning basic marching, learning to live in a Mess and doing basic school tests. We were batched together in groups of 30 for our entire time in GANGES (15 months) and lived in the very well-designed dormitories containing 30 beds and lockers, with a dining area occupying the first third of the Long Dormitory. No frills, but excellent quality throughout – for instance, excellent parquet floors and immaculately clean paintwork everywhere. Cleanliness was almost a religion at GANGES.

Once you had learned the rudiments of GANGES living, you moved over to the Main Barracks in the same batches of 30, which had fused in the Annexe. GANGES was laid out in groups of 10 Dormitories called Divisions. We went to Blake Division. All ten Divisions were named after R.N. Admirals – Rodney, Nelson, Drake, Raleigh etc. The 10 Divisions were all linked by glass-roofed covered ways – we call them Malls in modern parlance. The enormous Galley (cookhouse) was situated centrally, where 5 boys from each Dormitory collected the food in large metal dishes to race back to the Dormitory Dining Area.

#### **Daily Routine:**

##### **Monday to Friday:**

6.30 a.m.	Out of bed. Collect hot cocoa and hard tack biscuits.
7.00 a.m.	Sweep covered ways and general clean all round.
7.30 a.m.	Breakfast and clean Dormitory.
8.30 a.m.	Assemble on huge parade ground for Prayers, Notices and Ceremonial March-past.
9.00 am	To classes. Classes included ordinary school subjects – Maths, English, History, Geography, Mechanics and Electricity. Seamanship classes - rope work, sailing, anchors and cables, sheer-legs, chartwork and rule of the road, signalling by semaphore, Aldis light and masthead flag signals, damage control and firefighting in ships, 4 inch twin turret gun drill, rifle range sessions and Physical Training (gym work), swimming and lifesaving.
12 noon	Lunch in Dormitory, wash up dishes etc. Change into sports rig.
1.15 pm	To allocated sports event, which was a rotation of soccer, hockey, cricket, gymnastics, swimming, cross country, track events, sailing, rowing, rifle shooting, cutlass drill.
4.00 pm	Showers. Change back into uniform. Tea.
4.30 – 6 pm	Classes again.
6.30 pm	Supper and free time. Occasional cinema, concerts, boxing matches all in the huge gym and rotated in allocation by Divisions.
10.00 pm	In bed and lights out.

##### **Saturdays:**

**Mornings** Wash clothes in the purpose built laundries – huge sinks, endless hot water, scrubbing brushes and hard tack Admiralty soap bars, together with hot air drying rooms.  
Backward classes for any subjects that groups were lagging in.

**Afternoons** Organised recreation. Top teams had regular fixtures with outside teams, both inter – R.N. and local schools, in soccer, rugby, hockey and cricket. I was not good enough to get into any of the GANGES First Teams – out of 3,000 very fit 16/17 year olds – these teams were of County standard. Fortunately, there were 2nd, 3rd and 4th GANGES teams in all the main sports and from time to time I won a place in these, in soccer, hockey and rugby. To keep the emphasis on more boys playing in matches than boys as mere spectators, there were many inter- GANGES games, like every Dormitory produced teams to play the other 99 Dormitories.

The sports fields were fabulous. At least 15 soccer pitches, 10 hockey grounds, 8 rugby pitches etc. All kept in immaculate condition by an army of civilian Grounds staff.

We were allowed to be spectators at the sort of semi-finals and finals of Cup Matches, or the occasional blood match like GANGES 1st Soccer XI playing H.M.S. Vincent, our mirror image in Portsmouth.

Some Saturday afternoons were spent on the River Stour, sailing Naval whalers (crew of 7) or rowing the whalers – very strenuous activity and of course there were organised races in both sailing and rowing. I nearly forgot the twice as large Naval cutters with a crew of 12. We spent more time in the cutters than the whalers.

You could qualify to be a boy coxswain for both cutters and whalers by passing a practical test and this allowed you to sail or row these boats, complete with a crew of other boys, under your command without a Petty Officer Instructor aboard. I became a boy coxswain early on and added another badge to my uniform.

**Saturday evenings** Free time. You were never allowed out of GANGES.

**Sundays:**

Usual morning clean up all round.

Church parade in Best Uniforms, on the Parade Ground - in the gym and covered ways if raining. After lunch we had genuine free time for the rest of the day – write letters, darn socks etc. and generally laze around.

---

SUBMARINERS 'CROSSED THE BAR' REPORTED IN MARCH 2019						
Branch	Date	Name	Rank/Rate	O/N	Age	Submarine Service
Non-member	15th February 2019	Gerard James (Gerry) Thwaites	Commodore (E)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service from 1981 to 2007 in RENOWN (1981 to 1983), VULCAN (1984), VALIANT (DMEO 1987 to 1989), NTD Faslane (1998 to 1999), FOSM Staff (2000 to 2001), FHQ Portsmouth (2002), 2SL Staff (2003 to 2004) & SULTAN (2005 to 2007)
Non-member	26th Feb 2019	Iain Jackson	Warrant Officer (R)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service TBA
Non-member	28th February 2019	David Nelson	TBA	TBA	81	Submarine Service TBA
Nottingham Branch	7th March 2019	John Nott	Stoker Mechanic	D/SKX 852608	88	Submarine Service from January 1951 to January 1952 in SANGUINE
Non-member	4 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	David Michael Rich	ME1	K963913	TBA	Submarine Service from 1962 to 1972 in AMPHION, ANDREW, TACTICIAN, AENEAS & ANCHORITE
Nottingham Branch	7th March 2019	John Nott	Stoker Mechanic	D/SKX 852608	88	Submarine Service from January 1951 to January 1952 in SANGUINE
Ex Tasmania Branch	9th March 2019	Donald James Parker Watson	Lieutenant Commander RAN	N/A	TBA	Submarine Service in AMBUSH (1950), SCORCHER (1951), TELEMACHUS (1953)
Non-member	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	David John Stevens	Chief Yeoman	N/A	89	Submarine Service from 1944 to 1957 including TABARD
Non-member	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Mike Chapman	Naval Chaplain	N/A	79	Chaplain at DOLPHIN and NEPTUNE in 1960s/1970s
Non-member	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Paul H Cripps	Chief Petty Officer Coxswain	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service (RN) from 1962 to 1983 in ONSLAUGHT (1962 to 1965), TALENT (1966 to 1968), GRAMPUS (1968), ACHERON (1968 to 1970), SETT (1973 to 1975), VALIANT (1975 to 1977), PLATYPUS & ONSLOW (1981 to 1982) & RAN) from 1993 to 1998 in PLATYPUS, OTWAT (1984 to 1986 & 1987 to 1990), ONSLOW (1992 to 1994) & OTAMA (1994 to 1997)
Ex Barrow in Furness Branch	20th March 2019	Henry D Stuart (Lofty) Sibbitt	Leading Ordnance Electrical Mechanic	M961476	79	Submarine Service from August 1963 to January 1969 in WALRUS (29th June 1963 to 26th September 1963) & ORPHEUS (24th March 1964 to 19th April 1967)
Ex West of Scotland Branch	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Derek James Anthony, MBE	Rear Admiral	CO17251Q	71	Submarine Service from September 1970 to December 1990 in WALRUS, OPOSSUM, REVENGE (S), ANDREW, OXLEY, OBERON, ONSLAUGHT (CO), SOVEREIGN (IL), WARSPITE (CO from 8th April 1986). Also, CUMBERLAND (CO from January 1992) and FOSNNI (from August 2000)



Submarine Officers Association	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2019	Orme Oliver	Lieutenant	N/A	TBA	Submarine Service from 1954 to 1959 in AUROCHS, ALARIC, ARTFUL, SCOTSMAN & DOLPHIN (Training)
Welsh Branch	28th March 2019	Ian Watson-Smith	ME1	P059379	80	Submarine Service from 1962 to 1970 in ASTUTE (twice) & TALENT

## Royal Navy submarine hatches should be made bigger to fit obese sailors, peer suggests

Submarine escape hatches should be made bigger to accommodate obese people in the military, a peer has suggested.

The problem of overweight service personnel was highlighted at Westminster by Lord McColl of Dulwich, a consultant surgeon.

The Tory peer and former professor of surgery at Guy's and St Thomas' Medical School pointed out Britain's latest fighter planes had had to be fitted with modified ejector seats because pilots were getting heavier.

Speaking in the House of Lords, Lord McColl said: "By far and away the most serious eating disorder is the obesity epidemic which is now impinging upon the armed forces.

"Ejector seats in fighter planes are having to be modified because of obesity.

"We may have to enlarge the escape hatches of submarines to allow (people to get out)."

The comments come after the Telegraph revealed Britain's new fighter jets have been fitted with super-boosted ejector seats because RAF pilots have grown heavier in recent years.

Each F-35 plane has been equipped with a seat capable of ejecting a person weighing nearly eighteen stone, documents show. Defence sources said the seats had been designed to cope with the "increasingly diverse physical profile" of modern aircrew. An RAF survey last year found 4,272 airmen and women classed as clinically obese, the highest level ever recorded. Health Minister Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford said: "While I don't feel able to comment on ejector seats or submarine hatches... I do believe that obesity is a serious issue."

Earlier, she had been pressed over steps being taken by the Government to ensure that people suffering from an eating disorder were able to access treatment and support. Lady Blackwood told peers: "Eating disorders are life-threatening conditions and it is the priority of this government to ensure that everyone with an eating disorder can access quick, specialist help when necessary." She pointed to a reduction in waiting times for children's eating disorder services, while a review was being carried out to look at securing future improvements to adult facilities.

Liberal Democrat peer Baroness Parminter, who raised the issue, said: "Hospital admissions in the last six years have more than doubled whilst outpatient services for adults are under-resourced and they are unable to support people to be treated in the community. "What is the Government intending to do to improve adult eating disorder services to treat these life-threatening severe mental illnesses."

Lady Blackwood said: "While we have made a lot of progress with children's eating disorder services we must not forget adult services." She highlighted a commitment to pilot four-week waiting times for adult community mental health teams. A Ministry of Defence spokesman said that fitness standards in the Royal Navy had been maintained and there was no need, or plan, to increase the size of hatches on submarines as a result of personnel issues.

By Editor: The above item is, apparently, serious matter for Parliament although it has the touch of an April Fools Day item from the National Press