



# 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 Veterans Platoon at the St Georges Day Parade**

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## EDITORIAL

Hello Everybody,

Well, that's another month slipped by whilst we weren't looking! Luckily the weather was pretty good for much of the month, so I hope you all got out into the garden to mow the lawn, do the weeding and plant your flowers and veg!

We now seem to be in the Bank Holiday season. Having just got past Good Friday and Easter Monday this coming weekend sees the May Day Bank Holiday and shortly after comes the Spring Bank Holiday!

Can I thank all those who supported our ANZAC day commemoration at the AE1/AE2 Memorial on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April. We seem to be getting a few more attendees at the ANZAC ceremony each year – there were six Standards present this year plus we were supported by our colleagues from the other Service Associations. Alan Hoskins pointed out that our Ceremony took place just about half way between the actual ANZAC Day and the 104<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the loss of HMAS AE1 on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1915.

I must also thank all Branch Members who supported the DOLRA St. George's Parade and Service at St George's Church which followed our ANZAC Commemoration. I counted eight marching Members – including Alex Webb on his first outing as Standard Bearer plus four non-marching Members who met us at the Church. The Service at St George's was conducted by the Rev Gary Cregeen for the last time as he is off to a new posting later this year. The Lesson was read by Lord Cavendish and the Address was by the Lord Bishop of Carlisle. There were nineteen Legion and

Association Standards on Parade - which is the most I have seen at a St. George's Parade. Afterwards it was back to the Legion for a few beers, a Tot, Pie & Peas and a Raffle. All in all, a very good day – and the weather was nice as well!

You learn something new nearly every day! We all know that St. George's Day is always on 23<sup>rd</sup> April – unless, of course - the 23<sup>rd</sup> April falls in Easter Week! Then St. George's Day falls on the Monday following Easter Week which, this year, is the 29<sup>th</sup> April! Apparently, according to the Church Calendar, Saints Days cannot be celebrated during Easter Week. We all knew that – didn't we - so now you all know! This was all explained to us by the Lord Bishop during the Service at St George's as, I suppose, several people were a bit confused as to why the Parade was a week later than usual

Don't forget that the May Branch Meeting will be on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May and that there will be a Quiz to follow the Branch Meeting so - make sure you bring along Wives, Girlfriends, Partners etc and have a bit of fun in good company – with a Raffle - as well as food on offer – see Alex's report to follow! So, don't be late – and bring your money - £1 each to enter the Quiz!

Best wishes to all!

Best Regards

Barrie.

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## SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

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### Hi Shipmates

I hope you have had a good Easter and are enjoying the spring. Not a lot happened in April socially but that doesn't mean I wasn't busy stocking up on wine and spirit for the forthcoming canal trip. I have also been on Standard Bearer training and I can now honestly say it isn't as easy as Gordon and the rest of the team make it look.

### Diary Check:

After the meeting on the 7th of May there will be a quiz accompanied by a chicken curry and the fixings, please bring along your better halves and let's have a nice and easy quiz which will be complete no later than 10. Entry fee £1 with the winning team pocketing the lot.

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 per person. 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 2pm and I will have you back home for about midnight. I have had a few drop outs so I now have 3 places available for anyone who wants to come along.

Saturday 6th July is the revised date for our member's 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 pasty 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 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:

The members draw was not won in April so stands at £15 for May. Don't forget your birthday beer if you were born in the month of May. The food for the meeting will be chicken curry.

I have done a reconnaissance run into Lancaster to check out the pubs for a 'gallon club' challenge. I will need to price up transport, but I think that it is looking good for about Saturday 7th September. I will keep you updated with the rules and costing as I know

Thank you.

Alex

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### 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
D Day Parade (Ulverston)	Thurs 6 <sup>th</sup> Jun
Civic Sunday Parade	Sun 16 <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

### JULY BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting	Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup> Jul
Foxfield	Sat 6 <sup>th</sup> Jul
Committee Meeting	As required

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### MAY BRANCH BIRTHDAYS

T H (Hugh) Porter	03/05/1958
D.A. J. (David) Smith	06/05/1952
D.A. (David) Cooper	07/05/1954
D.E. (Dave) Barlow	09/05/1947
N. (George) Hildrew	12/05/1947
K. (Ken) Brumby	17/05/1944
S (Stacey) Phan	17/05/1986
B. (George) Hyde	19/05/1960
C. (Cedric) Madin	21/05/1930
J. W. Wilkinson	24/05/1985
T.C. (Tim) Chittenden	25/05/1951

S. (Sam) Benzie	25/05/1992
C. (Colin) Small	26/05/1967
D. (David) Leather	29/05/1980
J. R. (Roddie) Blaney	29/05/1967
R. (Ben) Britten	31/05/1955
B. M. (Brian) Jones	31/05/1934

Happy Birthday All!

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

#### MAY

Edward Moffat	1989
Albert Cheale	1990
George Day	1986
Tom McQuade	1993
Kenneth Walker	1996
Ernie Newton	2001
Harry Wetton	2007
Donald Michie	2007
Stuart Hammill	2010
David Jenkins	2013
David Dunford	2013

#### RESURGAM

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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.

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#### **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 [frozensnorth55@gmail.com](mailto:frozensnorth55@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 May for the June 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!

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#### **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

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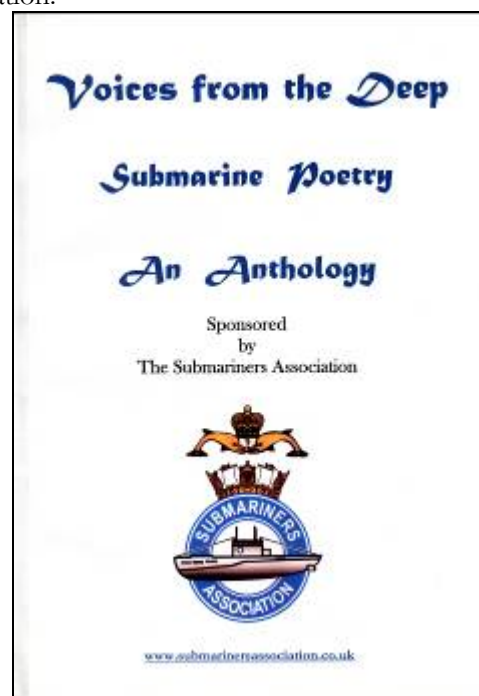
#### **VOICES FROM THE DEEP**

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:

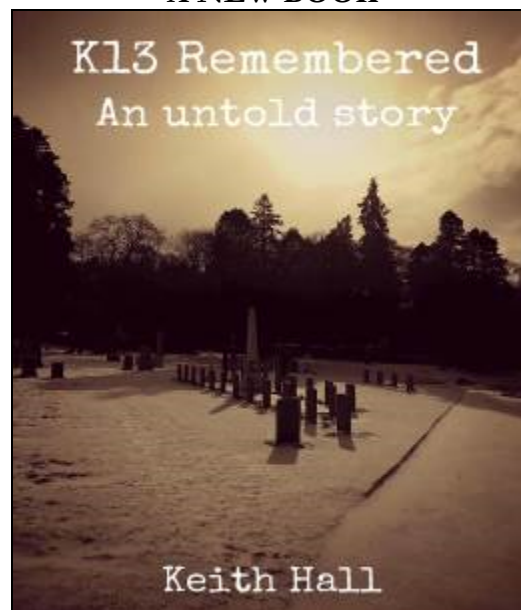
Barrie Downer, The Firs, Dundalk Street, Barrow Island, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2RZ

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



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#### **A NEW BOOK**



This is an untold story of British submarine K13, which flooded and sank in the Gareloch in the early afternoon of Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 1917 shortly after her final acceptance trial dive. Of the eighty men on board, thirty-two people lost their lives.

The Board of Inquiry laid the blame for this accident solely on Lt Arthur Lane, the vessel's engineer. Triggered by the seemingly nonchalant way The Board of Inquiry came to its verdict, supported by his personal conclusions after thorough examinations of detailed archived records, personal accounts and in-depth analysis of the evidence, Keith Hall was determined to

write this book questioning the legitimacy and accuracy of the Board of Inquiry. This book aims to provide the reader with an alternative account. It also aims to clear Lt Arthur Lane's name and reputation. Something he wasn't able to do himself as he tragically lost his life with the sinking of the submarine. Available from Amazon Kindle in e book and hardback in mid-May

### THE ANZAC PARADE 2019



HMNBC 21/18 Thursday, 11 April 2019

### THE NEED TO FEED – CATERING TEAM RECOGNISED FOR CONTRIBUTION TO COUNTRY'S DETERRENT

It's not just an army that marches on its stomach – Royal Navy submariners patrol on their stomachs too and that's why HMS VENGEANCE (Port)'s Catering Services team have picked-up an award for their exemplary work.

For every hour of every day, non-stop for the past 50 years, a deterrent submarine has been patrolling somewhere in the earth's oceans.

Able to create its own power, oxygen and water, about the only thing limiting the length of a deployment is the need to feed. And, to put it into perspective, that's

breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks, for some 140 people for months at a time. That's a lot of snacks!

The crew can't just pop down the shops for a loaf, so enter the Catering Services team from HMS VENGEANCE (Port). The small, eight-person team are experts in supplying the Royal Navy Submarine Service, pulling-out all the stops to make sure their Vanguard class submarine can keep submerged and patrolling.

On Wednesday, April 3, the Catering Services teams' contribution was formally recognised when they were presented with the Fleet Catering Award for 2018-19.

"The Catering Services team of HMS VENGEANCE (Port) are more than worthy recipients of the Fleet Catering Award for 2019," said Commander Douggie Ward MBE, Commander Logistics for the Submarine Flotilla.

"They face catering challenges unknown by their General Service counterparts in having to produce balanced, interesting and healthy meals long after the fresh produce has run out; there is simply no option of a replenishment at sea or a top-up on a port visit for this team."

Crewmembers on board a Vanguard class submarine look forward to mealtimes. As well as being responsible for keeping hunger at bay, submariner chefs also help to maintain high-morale and wellbeing.

But the Royal Navy chefs can't cook-up a storm unless they have the ingredients to work with. Supplying and storing the food is a major challenge and one that the Catering Services team have got down to a fine art.

"Food is massively important on board," said Warrant Officer 1 Michael Ellison, a Logistics officer with the Submarine Flotilla's Catering Services Waterfront Support team. "On patrol basic things become very important and the quality of the food is a fundamental part of maintaining morale. The chefs on board will prepare a meal every six-hours.

"It takes around three-days to store a submarine with fresh, frozen and dry goods, and the way we get supplies on board hasn't really changed from Nelson's day. It's a whole crew commitment and everyone gets involved in a human chain running from the dockside to inside the boat."

He continued: "There are freezers and fridges on board of course, but every bit of available space on a submarine is used. We must plan carefully because you don't want fresh food stored in a hard-to-reach place at the back where it will go bad.

"Submariners are creatures of routine and so they expect curry on Wednesdays, fish and chips on Friday, and a roast on Sunday. There would be some really unhappy submariners if they didn't have Cheesy Hammy Eggy - Royal Navy staple!

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## SCRAPPING NUCLEAR BOATS

The 'Demonstrator phase' of dismantling the nuclear submarine HMS SWIFTSURE completed in August 2018 at Rosyth. Work is about to begin on the disposal of HMS RESOLUTION. This Government and the

Ministry of Defence is, at last, making the first small steps on long road to remove the fleet of decommissioned boats.

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## DRUG PROBLEM IN SSN

Seven sailors have been kicked off a Royal Navy 'hunter killer' nuclear submarine after being caught taking cocaine, The Mail on Sunday has revealed.

In one of the worst scandals to hit the Navy, the crew members from HMS TALENT – which is armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles – were ordered off the submarine after testing positive while on duty.

The sailors attended a party after the 5,300-ton boat docked at Devonport Naval Base. They failed a compulsory drugs test when they returned to the sub the next day to prepare for a sensitive mission to track Russian submarine movements in the North Sea and the Arctic Circle. When Royal Navy doctors confirmed the results last week, senior officers ordered that they be handed over to military police.

Defence sources said HMS TALENT had been due to sail from Devonport on Friday, but the 280ft-long boat had remained at the Plymouth base.

The reason for the delay is unclear, but TALENT requires a full complement of crew before going to sea and, typically sails with a crew of 120 to 130 personnel, including 20 officers. The Royal Navy declined to provide the ranks of those who failed the drug tests.

A Navy source said: "This is a major embarrassment for top brass. It takes years to train submariners to perform highly skilled and highly sensitive roles at sea and the Navy has just lost seven guys due to one night of stupidity."

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## QinetiQ SUPPORT TO THE MOD

A funding injection is part of an existing £5.6bn deal with defence supplier QinetiQ, which trials and tests everything from missile systems to underwater sensors and night vision capabilities.

The funding will support the employment of around 1,800 people across 16 MOD-owned testing sites through the Long-term Partnering Agreement (LTPA) with QinetiQ.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said: "Ensuring our cutting-edge equipment is tried and tested before it is sent to the frontline is crucial to our military's capability."

"This £1.3bn investment will not only guarantee our Armed Forces' have the reliable, state-of-the-art weaponry they need, but will also support jobs across the nation."

The £1.3bn boost, which will also deliver £85m of savings and modernises the contract mechanics, will ensure essential test and evaluation services for many of the MOD's high-profile programmes continue to be supported until March 2028.

Those programmes include the QUEEN ELIZABETH aircraft carriers and the DREADNOUGHT submarines. As well as the funding injection, QinetiQ and the MOD have agreed a portfolio of investments, worth £190m, to improve capability resilience and to ensure that the Test and Evaluation sites around the country, including MOD Pendine in Wales, MOD British Underwater Test and Evaluation Centre (BUTEC) at Kyle of Lochalsh in Scotland, and MOD Boscombe Down in England, remain fully operational.

The latest £1.3bn commitment will also cover the running costs of training services, equipment and the operational staff that support the test and evaluation ranges.

Chief Executive Officer at DE&S, Sir Simon Bollom said: "This latest contract amendment under the LTPA demonstrates how we are continuing to support our key defence programmes by investing in essential test and evaluation services. This is another example of how DE&S is working collaboratively with industry and the Front-line Commands to ensure our Armed Forces have the best value equipment and training to meet the operational demand."

QinetiQ Chief Executive, Steve Wadey said: "Today's agreement enhances our contribution to the safety and operational effectiveness of UK armed forces in an era when threats to our security remain acute and are changing rapidly."

"In line with our strategy, we are introducing innovative ways of working and making selective investments to reinforce the UK's position as a world-leader in the generation and assurance of military capability. This will enable us to support the MOD's future programmes and win more work from both UK and international customers."

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### **MARCHING IN THE DARK?**

Whatever next! 'Elf and Safety' gone mad or what!

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) has ordered its sailors not to march in pre-dawn darkness on the way to a traditional ANZAC Day commemoration service because of health and safety concerns.

A small town in the state of New South Wales which traditionally hosts an April 25 commemoration to remember those who have fallen in all wars has been told that concerns for the welfare of RAN participants precludes them from marching to the event in the dark. Instead they will be required to form up at the ceremonial service site and wait for it to begin.

The South Coast Register reports a highlight of the ANZAC Day dawn services at Greenwell Point comes when sailors join other ex-service personnel in making the solemn 450-metre march from the nearby main street to Anzac Park. Along the way they are applauded by locals in honour of their service to their country.

The Australian Defence Force has now decided to ban the practice. According to the 'Register', defence said nearby naval establishment HMAS ALBATROSS was providing a guest speaker, catafalque party and flag bearers for the Greenwell Point Dawn Service and that would have to suffice. Captain Fiona Sneath from HMAS ALBATROSS Nowra defended the decision, saying the "no marching" edict stays:

The instruction to HMAS ALBATROSS personnel, while different to what may have occurred in the past, has been provided cognisant of procedures traditionally observed by service personnel attending dawn services, and the particular physical and environmental conditions expected at Greenwell Point on April 25, 2019," Local commanders are responsible to ensure that risks to members on duty are reduced as reasonably practicable for dawn services across Australia.

A representative of the local Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL), Mr. Fred Dawson, told the 'Register' he and his members had been left "dumbfounded" at navy's decision not to allow personnel to march. "It is disappointing, but it's not really my place to comment on defence protocol. But aren't the armed forces about risk? "To say we were dumbfounded was really an understatement," Mr Dawson continued. "We were all gobsmacked. We were in disbelief." "It's beyond a joke," he added.

Such has been the local response to bureaucratic decision that an urgent meeting has been called by representatives of the Australian Defence Force and the local Nowra community to explain the move.

The "no marching in the dark" controversy comes in the same week members of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) were told to think of women and take a "gender perspective" during bombing operations in war zones.

As 'Breitbart News' reported, the "Gender in Air Operations" doctrine informs pilots what they should do before dropping bombs in war zones to ensure women aren't placed in danger. One hypothetical example included in the RAAF guide highlights how destroying a bridge, being used by enemy forces, could force local women to walk further to perform basic domestic chores.

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## US General Accountability Office Says Columbia Submarine Risks Running Over Budget Due to Immature Technology

By: Ben Werner April 8, 2019 8:05 PM



Artist's impression of the planned Columbia-class submarine.  
Naval Sea Systems Command Image

The Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine, the Navy's top acquisition priority, is at risk of running over its \$115-billion construction budget because the service underestimated labour costs and overestimated the savings associated with awarding a multi-year contract, according to a General Accountability Office report released Monday. It also risks running over schedule: several critical technologies are not mature enough to keep up with an aggressive construction schedule, the GAO says, and if any of the technologies encounter a production setback during development, fixing these technologies will require additional labour hours and drive up production costs.

Already, the Columbia program experienced manufacturing defects with the new class of submarine's missile tubes and with the integrated power system, requiring added labour costs to correct, according to the report. When the program had to design a new software tool that's used to generate submarine designs and work instructions due to obsolescence in the original software, developing the new tool proved so challenging that it forced the hiring of 150 additional software engineers and delayed the completion of some designs. The new software now takes longer to generate instructions than initially expected, further adding to the cost. "The Navy's \$115 billion procurement cost estimate is not reliable partly because it is based on overly optimistic assumptions about the labour hours needed to construct the submarines. While the Navy analysed cost risks, it did not include margin in its estimate for likely cost overruns," the GAO report reads.

A Naval Sea Systems Command spokesperson acknowledged a request for additional comment but did not immediately provide a statement on the GAO report. "The Navy anticipates that it will need 12 million labour hours to directly construct the lead submarine - referred to as touch labour. This represents 17 percent fewer labour hours than what was needed for the lead Virginia-class submarine when adjusted for weight differences," the GAO report continues. "However, the touch labour hour estimate is overly optimistic—with assumptions on construction efficiencies that are either unsubstantiated or unprecedented compared to Virginia class and other shipbuilding historical data."

One example the GAO uses to illustrate the risk the Navy faces is a manufacturing defect in the prototype propulsion motor that is part of Columbia's integrated power system. Fixing the problem required extensive repairs and consumed nine months of the cushion built into the production schedule at the land-based test facility. The Navy's solution is to test the motor during the time initially allotted for making any final design changes before starting production. "This could constrain opportunities to implement timely, corrective actions if problems are discovered during testing," according to the GAO. Since January 2018, such added labour costs have had a dramatic result on the Columbia program's costs. The GAO analysis found that "less than a dollar's worth of work has been completed for each dollar spent."

The Navy does not agree with all of the GAO's findings. In a February 2019 letter included in the GAO report, Kevin Fahey, the Department of Defence assistant secretary for acquisition, counters the GAO's concerns regarding the integrated power system's prototype motor. "While the vendor manufacturing the motor has experienced delays in manufacturing the prototype motor, the rest of the integrated power system is being installed and tested at the test facility," Fahey's letter states. "In addition, as briefed to GAO, the Navy has taken proactive measures to mitigate the impacts associated with the late delivery of the prototype motor. The actions taken by the Navy retain margin to lead ship production motor in yard delivery date."

Responding to Fahey's letter, the GAO stated, "the Navy's plan to concurrently test and finalize the design increases the risk that any issues identified in testing could delay the delivery of the system to the shipyard. As a result, we continue to identify this as a key risk to the program. Additional details on this system are classified." The Pentagon and the GAO do agree the Columbia-class supplier base remains a high risk to construction. Fahey's letter states early prototype efforts identified issues with suppliers that are being fixed. The GAO is concerned with the shipyards' and suppliers' ability to build Columbia-class submarines at the same time work progresses on building the Virginia-class fast-attack submarines.

“To achieve Columbia’s aggressive construction schedule, while simultaneously building Virginia-class submarines, the shipbuilder is working to ensure that it has sufficient shipyard capacity—including new facilities, additional suppliers, and an increased workforce,” the GAO report states

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## **‘HMS GANGES’**

The Desmond Gerrish Biography Continued:

### **1947 – 1948, At Ganges**

The Ranks were:

Leading Boy

Petty Officer Boy

Instructor Boy and I achieved all three promotions. The top rank of Instructor Boy was very special as there were only 10 of us out of 3,000 boys. It meant remaining at Ganges for an extra full term (4 months). The authority that went with the rank was awesome. Duties included taking command of Daily Parade and March Past – 3,000 boys, a full Royal Marine Band, a huge Boy’s Drum and Bugle band, a Boy’s Guard and all Officers and Adult Instructors accompanying their Divisions for the March Past. The salute was taken by the Captain of Ganges or the visiting Admirals. Minor movements of this huge parade, like Dressing the Ranks, Coming to Attention, Standing at Ease were carried out by a short roll on the drums followed by a single loud beat. Major movements were controlled by your voice alone and it had to reach the very back of the Parade Ground, crisp and curt.

You stood on the rostrum alongside the Captain, who, to us boys, was next in line to God. He would deliver his opinions as to the quality of the March Past and his highest accolade was “A satisfactory March Past, Gerrish”.

Other duties included teaching New Entries over at the Annexe, teaching backward classes in Ganges, inspecting kits and Dormitories and general policing the smooth running of the daily routine from dawn to bedtime. Punishments at our disposal were harsh and terribly effective. The common one was to turn out the entire Dormitory in marching dress, carrying the heavy 303 Lee Enfield rifle for drill at the double on the Parade Ground in their precious free time slots. Often the punishment was for the misdemeanour of one individual, who would be leaned upon again by the other 29 members of the Dormitory. No one, but no one, argued with Instructor Boys. Adult Instructors used these same exhausting punishments for remedying sloppy behaviour by their classes. A boy would collapse and subsequently die about once every one or two years from those punishments, with only a modicum of protest from relatives, Press and M.P.s. Thankfully, I never drove any boy to anywhere near complete exhaustion.

The adult administration could order punishments ranging from caning to fines, after hearing the case by Officers. Serious offences were heard by the Commander or Captain as laid down by the Admiralty Law. The Captain had powers ranging from jail sentences (Naval Detention Quarters in Portsmouth) to dismissal with disgrace from the Royal Navy.

Sometimes, we Instructor Boys discovered serious crimes and gave evidence at the subsequent hearings. Unofficially, but universally accepted by all at Ganges, Instructor Boys would deal with minor offences by a few lashes with a knotted rope across the rebel’s backside. Marginal cases of minor/not so minor followed the time honoured code of the Instructor Boy offering the offender “official report or my punishment”. The latter was always chosen. Cover-ups were superb. From time to time M.P.s responsible for governing military training in the U.K. would visit Ganges and probe for unofficial punishments by questioning boys at random. The answer was monotonously the same from any Boy – “Oh no Sir”! The answer simply said we wanted no outside interference to the Rule of Law we found fair and just.

In this young, generally very tough, community of potential R.N. sailors there would be a sniff of mutiny. One occurred in my time. A Dormitory, which had more than the usual sprinkling of rebels and whose collective I.Q. fell far below the average, had undergone a year of despairing efforts by the Administration to get this bunch of 30 boys up to an acceptable level of knowledge and moral competence. Their Instructors were not the best either. The mutiny started when they were told they were to be held back for an extra term at Ganges. They collectively said they would no longer obey any orders. Events moved with great speed and slickness. The Captain ordered the rogue Dormitory to be placed on Shotley Routine. This was the well documented contingency plan – two Instructor Boys move into the Dormitory permanently and the two best instructors take overall responsibility for getting the Dormitory back to normal.

The ‘mutineers’ knew the sequence of events as well as we did. They accepted us two Instructor Boys to live with them in their Dormitory without hostility. We quickly got their consensus to buckle down to the inevitable duel of strength, where time is the only variable. Both sides know Officialdom will win. The only challenge for them is how long can they put up with a particularly harsh routine before agreeing to conform again. This bunch lasted about 5 or 6 days. An unrelenting routine from dawn to lights-out of being hounded through endless parade drills, standing at attention for long periods, heavy, grinding chores such as loading bags of spuds into the Galley, hours rowing the heavy cutters against the tide, etc, and eating their sparse meals standing.

The Peace Treaty goes like this:

Us	-	We are impressed with their strength and grit
Them	-	They respect us by being tough but fair
Us	-	We’ve seen many classes qualify that were only half as good as you
Them	-	Tarnation, we can qualify like falling off a log if we want to!

Us - Why don't you?

Them - We will!

And they do.

All classes leaving Ganges go to destroyers in the Training Squadron based at Rosyth, near Edinburgh, for 3 months of sea training. Very unpleasant it was too.

The worst aspect was the food. Small warships, destroyers and below operated a ridiculous system, blatantly called 'Canteen Messing'. Each Mess of approximately 20 sailors was allocated a notional sum of money. You 'spent' this allowance by shopping from the ships butcher and grocer. You prepared the raw food in the Mess and then took it to the Galley for the ship's chefs to cook it. All this in a corkscrewing, bucking destroyer, playing war games in the winter gales around Scotland. As learners we ate very badly but survived. This system was very popular with the older hands for 2 main reasons:

You chose your own menu

Any 'allowance' left at the end of the month was paid to the Mess in hard cash.

Admiralty found resistance to modernising this feeding system from The Fleet in general until about 1950, when new Classes of destroyers and frigates were built with larger Galleys and meals were provisioned, menu'ed and cooked by the Supply Officer's team of properly trained cooks.

Living conditions were, of course, very crowded in all sizes of warships that had survived the war. The number of men Admiralty had to cram into every ship was mainly dictated by the number of guns the ship had. For instance, the universal twin 4-inch mounting needed 8 men to each barrel, which equals sixteen, plus another sixteen to keep a flow of shells from the deep magazines.

The average destroyer had four twin guns, so the total started at 128 men for its main gun armament alone. Add to this the torpedo crews, the smaller AA guns like Bofors and Oerlikons, depth charge and smoke float crews, radar plotters, engine crews, medicos and you arrive at the number of men in an average size of destroyer as 280.

Back in your own living quarters, called a Mess Deck, you had a communal rack to stow your very tightly rolled up hammocks during daytime. Each man had a locker, no bigger than a tea chest, for all his uniform clothes. One table, two benches and a small cupboard for your cups, plates or cutlery. And that was it for 20 men.

The training programme for us included all everyday seamanship skills – working anchors and cables manning the ships seaboard (the whaler), steering the ship, lookouts, working the ship's berthing harnesses, towing another destroyer, searching the upper-decks for foul weather etc.

The military training covered firing the guns, torpedoes and depth charges. The latter contributed to the crew's food rations – fresh fish.

The Captain would have the destroyer steered to find a shoal of cod. The sonar man would con the ship over the shoal, pretending it was a submarine and we (the depth charge crew) would fire to kill. In fact, the explosions mainly stunned the shoal, which would float up to the surface and be whipped into the steamboat. A good shoal could produce a couple of hundred huge cod.

Any ship any man joins is instantly allocated his Action Station. Mine in this ship was on the Bridge as Captain's Messenger. Our Ganges ranks no longer prevailed, but our first ships made ex P.O. and Instructor Boys as Messdeck Leaders and ex coxswains, as coxswains of the ship's boats.

Ganges invariably marked Instructor Boys' records as Officer Candidates and your subsequent Captains made sure you got the most responsible jobs and on-going on the spot instruction from all the ship's officers. Strangely enough, the greatest support and spontaneous teaching came from the ship's crew themselves, ranging from the senior Chief Petty Officers to Stokers in the engine room. Their motivation in this was summed up by the simple phrase, "Oh well, as you are going to become an Officer, we might as well make sure you will be a good one". And remember, all these adults had just come through the war.

Our rank at this time remained Boy Seamen First Class and the next step up to Ordinary Seaman occurred on your 18th birthday. Below that age, Admiralty acted as our 'parents' and strictly controlled our supervision by written laws. At Ganges we were permanently confined to camp. In these Training Destroyers, the Captains could allow us out of the ship to the canteen and cinema inside the Naval Dockyard at their discretion. We had to be back on board by 9 pm. We were allowed out to afternoon sports events, there and back in Naval coaches. Set amounts of your pay were given to you in cash, for pocket money, the rest went directly to your parents. You were forbidden alcohol, but you were allowed to smoke the small amount you could afford out of your pocket money. In a ship you became eligible for the same Duty Free smoking allowance as everybody else – 600 cigarettes a month, at very cheap prices, and pocket money could absorb this.

Leave was generous. 2½ weeks at Easter, Summer and Christmas and your rail fare paid by Navy, plus Navy transport to the nearest main line station. We travelled in uniform and only wore civilian clothes when you got home. Navy even gave us picnic bags for your journey.

After completing our Term in the Training Destroyer Squadron, we were sent to our home barracks to await being sent to ships of The Fleet as permanent crew members. Every sailor on joining the R.N. was allocated one of the three home barracks for life. These were Chatham, Portsmouth and Devonport. We liked this period of about 6 weeks, since you were back in good R.N. shore accommodation with not much to do.

And the barracks was a transit base for the entire adult population of the R.N., so we shared some of their privileges like cinema every night and later 'lights out', even though we were segregated in a building for boys only.

### **The Kitbag**

Made of almost indestructible light brown canvas, standing 4 ft high cylindrical, marked with your name and number and a padlock for locking. Your entire kit travelled with you in this monster plus your personal hammock roped up like a tight sausage.

So, eventually, in dribs and drabs, we were allocated to ships of the Fleets. There was the Home Fleet (European waters), the Mediterranean Fleet, the Far East Fleet, subdivided into the famous China Fleet (Yangtze Incident) and the West Indies Fleet.

Me and about 5 others were allocated to a destroyer in the Med. Fleet – H.M.S. Chivalrous. First we travelled in a Troopship from Southampton to Gibraltar. At Gib. we moved over to our new ship which was not up to standard and after a few days we witnessed the fiery Rear Admiral of Destroyer Squadrons in the Med. storm aboard to inspect the calibre of the ship and hear him tearing off a blistering criticism to the C.O., ending with "Your destroyer is not a fit ship for young trainees, who will move now to a better destroyer and you will go to sea under intensive manoeuvres until your ship gets itself up to Fleet standards".

We moved immediately to the destroyer nominated by R.A. (D) and watched our first ship proceed to sea under a black cloud. The three Destroyer Squadrons sailed several days later for Malta and our new Guardian, R.A. (D) chose to fly his flag (himself onboard) on our ship.

Unbelievably nowadays, he also shipped his wife back to the Main Base at Malta. She was given the Captain's Cabin and free access to the open Bridge. We learned, in hours, to fear her more than the splendid Admiral. She would rise at dawn to inspect the brightness of the brass we polished feverishly during the Morning Watch on the Bridge and then scan the sea as to the tightness of formation of the 24 destroyers racing in tight company at speed to Malta, all under her Admiral husband's command. We hit a Mediterranean gale 'en route' and I remember being on duty as Messenger on the Bridge at night, when a hatch door in the Gunnery Director above the Bridge flew open. The Officer-of-the-Watch, driving the ship, with enough problems of his own to contend with, shouted through the wind-lashed spray (open Bridges in those days) "Gerrish, get up there and shut that damned hatch". Even now I wonder how I did it. Except for our previous training, which imbibed you with the knowledge that orders were given for the utter necessity and you obeyed them without question.

After a spell in Malta to restore and paint up the ship, we sailed in company with another destroyer for a cruise around the Greek Islands. We spent a few days in Athens and, now we boys were proper ship's company, we were allowed to go ashore in daytime. So, we did all the tourist sites, which were deserted after 5 years of war followed by the Greek Civil War – Communists against Royalists – which was in full swing in the mountains at the time of our visit. Indeed, Admiralty carefully kept the entire Greek coast covered with pairs of destroyers in case the Greek fight escalated across the water to Communist-ruled Albania.

We changed our pound notes in Athens for 40,000 Drachmas each, which would give us lots of spending power in the more remote Greek ports, where last week's rate of exchange of 20,000 D's to the pound still prevailed. This was my first experience in currency markets. We went next to Salonica. Most pleasant visit. Wonderful food in the cafes and marvellous beaches (kept out of minefields though) all around this busy fishing port.

News came in that all C.W. candidates (potential Officers) were to be sent to cruisers, which had a schoolmaster and classrooms. I was transferred to H.M.S. EURYALUS, when our destroyer got back to Malta, with a little apprehension on my part. In general, most sailors preferred the informal, friendly style of life in destroyers. Cruisers, battleships and aircraft carriers, while having the better living quarters and more creature comforts, were much more formal and less personal. In small ships you knew everyone onboard well and lived in close company with the ships' Officers. The big ships were 600 men upwards and there was enough space for the Officers to live detached and aloof from the men. EURYALUS was one of 4 cruisers in this Squadron, Liverpool, Newcastle and Phoebe, the others. Mountbatten, having just finished being the last Viceroy of India and having ended the war in the rank of Admiral of The Fleet (top R.N. ranking) as Supreme Commander in Burma, asked Admiralty if he could come back in the R.N. at a lower rank to continue his Naval career. He was made Rear Admiral and given command of this newly formed Mediterranean Squadron. He and his staff lived in the LIVERPOOL (flagship), though he regularly lived for short periods in his other 3 cruisers, so we got to know him quite well. There were 6 of us C.W.s in EURYALUS and we quickly settled down in this new life. Once again I was detailed to be Captain's Messenger, but this time he was a senior four-stripe Captain, R.N. and I had a much bigger ship to find those people he wanted to speak to or pass his orders to. Worst part of this particular job was having to be in my best uniform while on duty with him and just try going down the engine room to get, say, the Engine Commander in my spotless white shorts and shirt, without smearing grease on your clothes.

On 21st May our group started the first really demanding Course – Gunnery. This great empire was based at Whale Island, near the northern end of Portsmouth Harbour and had been growing in stature for over 200 years, as Naval guns advanced in size and accuracy. The Navy with the best guns and gunners ruled the oceans, right up to the 2nd World War, when the submarine and aeroplane interrupted this supremacy.

**SUBMARINERS 'CROSSED THE BAR' REPORTED IN APRIL 2019**

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank/Rate</b>	<b>O/N</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Submarine Service</b>
Essex	19 <sup>th</sup> December 2018	Donald Arthur Lawrie Birrell	Sub Lieutenant RNVR	N/A	95	WWII Service in UNITED, VIRULENT & SIBYL
Non-member	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	John Robert Styles	Lieutenant Commander	N/A	93	WWII Service in X-Craft
Gosport Branch	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Anthony Howard Edge	CPO Mechanician	K907800F	84	Submarine Service from 1960 to 1976 in GRAMPUS & OLYMPUS (1st Commission Crew on 7th July 1962) & NARWHAL
Blyth & Wansbeck Branch	5 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	James S Johnstone	Leading Ordnance Electrical Mechanic	P/M980963	75	Submarine Service from 1961 to 1967 in NARWHAL SEALION & VALIANT
Non-member	April 2019	Cyril Davis	Leading Stoker	TBA	97	Spare Crew in HMS MEDWAY on 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1942
Merseyside Branch	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	John Henry 'Jack' Billington	Chief Electrician	D/MX 856421	96	Submarine Service from 1942 to 1947 in SCORCHER, SEASCOUT, AMPHION, U-1407 (METERORITE)
Beds & Herts Branch	17th April 2019	David George Charles Gunter	Chief Petty Officer Marine Engineering Artificer	D112706Y	65	Submarine Service from November 1979 to August 1993 in CHURCHILL (November 1979, on 'recommissioning' at Chatham in May 1983 to June 1986) & RENOWN (1990 to 1991)
Ex Merseyside Branch	19th April 2019	Donald James Morgan	Chief Petty Officer Coxswain	P/JX 820147	87	Submarine Service from December 1954 to July 1972 in TIRELESS (twice), SUBTLE, THULE, ANCHORITE (on Commissioning at Singapore) on 11th October 1962, TOTEM on 'Commissioning' at Gosport on 28th January 1963, ORACLE, ALARIC, TAPIR & AURIGA 9on 'Commissioning' at Devonport on 7th October 19650
Non-member	20th April 2019	John Sanders	Artificer	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service TBA
West of Scotland Branch	April 2019	M (Tonto) Kingshott	Fleet Chief Petty Officer Marine Engineering Artificer (P)	M913920D	82	Submarine Service from September 1962 to February 1982 in PORPOISE, TALENT, WARSPITE (1st Commission Crew) on 18th April 1967, RESOLUTION & COURAGEOUS
Non-member	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	Colin Ellmore	Marine Engineering Mechanic (M)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service including OPOSSUM
Non-member	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	Michael Joice	TBA	TBA	74	Submarine Service 1963 to 1979 in ARTFUL & CACHALOT
Non-member	April 2019	Philip (Manfred) Mann	Cook	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service in RESOLUTION (P) (2nd Commission Crew 1971) & WARSPITE (2 <sup>nd</sup> Commission Crew 1973)