



# IN DEPTH

Official Newsletter of the Submariners Association

Patron: Admiral Sir James Perowne KCVO, KBE

Vice Patron: John Weale CB, OBE

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

October 2025



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**PRESIDENT**  
**Commodore J Le S Perks CB**

**The Submariner**

**“Of all the branches of men in the Forces there is none which shows more devotion and faces grimmer perils than the Submariner; great deeds are done in the air and on the land, nevertheless nothing surpasses your exploits.”**  
**Sir Winston Churchill 1943**

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**Cover Picture:        KING CHARLES III PRESENTS THE LETTERS PATENT FOR THE ROYAL PORT OF BARROW**

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**EDITORIAL**

Hello Everyone

Greetings from the Royal Port of Barrow in Furness. King Charles II recently visited Barrow and conferred the Royal title on the Barrow Docks and surrounding areas.

Once again apologies for the later than usual arrival of In Depth No 90- my excuse this time is that it was for reasons beyond my control - a Royal Visit to Barrow, an SSBN returning from a very long Patrol and also couple of later submissions required a few changes to the layout.

You will still find all of the usual items in this Edition but this Edition sees the final section of 'Submarine and Submariners Casualties of WWII.

Anyway I am sure you will all find something interesting to read.

Please note that 'In Depth' Issue No. 91 will be published on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026. Contributions (especially reports of Branch Events and Socials) are required to be with the Editor (me) by 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025 - see contact details below.

Please make sure I get your contributions in good time by Email or Snail Mail as appropriate!

Regards, Barrie Downer

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### Submariners Association Chairman's Update

By Andy Knox, National Chairman

As we head into the final quarter of 2025, I am pleased to report that planning for the future of the Submariners Association is well underway and firmly on course. Our Committee has now finalised the strategic planning process to ensure the Association remains relevant, sustainable, and supportive of both our veteran community and the serving Submarine Family. With our eyes firmly fixed on the horizon, we are laying down strong foundations that will carry us through next year and beyond.

Many of you may have noticed that the Website has not been updated with branch events etc. over the last few weeks, unfortunately we are in the process of a Webmaster handover which should be complete by the end of this month. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Gary Strange for building and maintaining the current website for the last couple of years, I think you will all agree, Gary has done a fantastic job.

One of the most important steps we've taken recently is the formal engagement of a professional charity advisor to guide us through our transition towards charitable status. We are fortunate to be working alongside Craig Fulton, a former Submarine Commanding Officer, who brings a unique combination of leadership, naval insight, and charitable governance experience to the table. His contribution is already proving invaluable as we ensure that our governance structures, objectives, and member services align with best practice. I will be inviting Craig to next year's AGM to present his advice to all in attendance so that we can all make the important decision as to whether or not we proceed.

Turning to 2026 – the 125th anniversary of the Submarine Service – plans are already shaping up for what will be a historic and emotional year for all of us. I'm delighted to confirm that next year's AGM and Family Weekend will be held in Liverpool, a city with deep naval ties and a proud maritime heritage. The event will be extra special as we incorporate a Gala Dinner to mark the 125th anniversary of the Silent Service. We will honour our history, celebrate our people, and raise a glass to those who have gone before us.

I have engaged with the serving community and we are looking to reinstate the 'GAMBIT DINNER' within HMNB Clyde, this event will form part of the 125th Anniversary next year alongside HMNB Devonport.

I have also had a conversation with Thales UK and there is potential for the company to hold an event at their Glasgow site in October next year, more details to follow in due course...

I had the pleasure of attending a meeting with the new Commodore Submarines (Cdre Ben Haskins CBE) who is definitely in support of the Association moving forward and stated that he will encourage stronger links with the serving community.

I have also spoken to RAdm Andy Perks OBE (Head of the Submarine Service), who will be in attendance at November's Remembrance Parade, he is also a supporter of the Association and officially joined last month.

To support our activities and legacy projects for the anniversary year, we are also launching a range of bespoke Submariners Association gin and rum – each bottle a collector's item and a toast to our proud heritage. Sales of these spirits will go directly towards funding the Association's work, supporting both veterans and serving personnel. Keep an eye out for launch details and how to get your hands on a bottle (or two!).

The Submariners Association continues to grow in strength, reputation, and purpose – thanks to your continued support, your attendance at events, and your belief in our shared mission. Whether you are a long-standing member or a recent recruit, we are all part of something special.

See you in Liverpool.

Yours aye,

Andy Knox

National Chairman

Submariners Association

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### SA SECRETARY'S REPORT

Hello shipwrecks, one and all.

I hope of you well and ramping up for Halloween and future Christmas festivities. Grab a wet, pull up a bollard and see below, a few worthy points to note.

#### **Zoom Calls**

It is intended to resume the Secretaries Zoom Calls The next two are planned for

Weds 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Weds 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025

All details for the Zoom Calls will be sent via email and the expected time for the calls will be approx 1900 - 2000. It is understood that not all Secretaries will be able to make the events, but it is hoped we will catch all Branches over

2/3 calls. It is intended to invite all SA Branch Chair persons to the Zoom Call and as many of the SAC will be online as possible.

#### **O/S Email - RFI**

Can those Branch secretaries who have not responded to the email requesting name and email address for their Branch Chairperson, please do so ASAP.

#### **November Ceremonies 2025**

This will take place as always at Middle Temple on Sunday 2nd November 2025. Email sent to Secretaries with all details and timings; any issues please raise them ASAP. Any Branches require a wreath please contact the Chairman and pay the Treasurer as per email details, previously sent. If a Branch is intending to take their own wreath again, please let the Chairman know. Parade Marshall for the year's event will be Paul Swaby.

#### **AGM 2026**

Work is ongoing for the 2026 National SA AGM. It is planned for Liverpool and most likely the Adelphi Hotel. We have the local Merseyside Branch looking into the event. We should have full details for the next In Depth issue. This event will most likely double up as a 125th Anniversary Gala Dinner.

#### **Website Issues.**

New email addresses have been allocated to some of the SAC Members - details have been sent to all Branch Secretaries via email. They are also listed below.

Andy Knox (Chairman) - [chairman@submarinersassociation.com](mailto:chairman@submarinersassociation.com)

Graeme McCabe (Vice Chairman) - [vicechairman@submarinersassociation.com](mailto:vicechairman@submarinersassociation.com)

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Stevie Middlemas (Membership Secretary) - [membershipsecretary@submarinersassociation.com](mailto:membershipsecretary@submarinersassociation.com)

#### **SA Gin**

This will be specific to the SA with the 1st batch consisting of 380 bottles. A 2nd batch maybe considered once the first batch has been sold. We are looking at a specific SA Rum for the 125th Anniversary.

#### **Closing comment**

If anyone has any questions wrt above or anything else, please fire me an email, either directly using the email address above or via your Branch Secretary.

Keep smiling, be happy and get on depth.

Stickie 😊

Ian 'Stickie' Leach

Secretary for the Submariners Association Committee

Link the Submariners Association - <https://submarinersassociation.co.uk>

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### **Outgoing SA Webmaster Report**

Farewell Note

I would like to thank all Members for their support during my time as Webmaster. It has been a privilege to serve the Association and to help develop the website on your behalf.

The website's management will now pass to JB Media. While I am saddened by this change and the way it has come about, I remain proud of what we have achieved together, and I wish the Association every success for the future.

For clarity, the formal handover will only take place once the appropriate assurances are in place to confirm that members' personal data will be managed securely and lawfully by the third-party company now engaged.

With best wishes,

Gary

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### **A Message from the We Remember Submariners Charity Reporting Submariners Crossed the Bar (CTB)**

One of the main objectives of the We Remember Submariners Charity is to ensure that no Royal Navy Submariner shall pass without recognition of their service. Something all those serving, veterans and families would want as well. This is achieved by funding a wreath, or donation in lieu, as specified by the Next of Kin, for the Funeral, along with a Card of Condolence and Memorial 'Moly' pins, to the immediate family, once we are made aware.

The key message here is that **'once we have been made aware'**. It requested that if you know a Submariner has 'Crossed the Bar', you report it to the WRS via our Facebook page, the WRS Website or using one of the following links

Crossed the Bar Notification - We Remember Submariners

Crossing the Bar – The Submarine Family

Email: CTB Manager at [ctb-info@weremembersubmariners.com](mailto:ctb-info@weremembersubmariners.com)

The family's permission is required before we can publicly announce the CTB. If you know the family, please ask them to contact the WRS. It is helpful if you can give the CTB date, their Rate or Rank and any appropriate career details.

Membership in the WRS is encouraged so that we can continue to support Submariners and their families.

We Remember Submariners Membership - We Remember Submariners

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### DISCLAIMER

This Newsletter is published by the Submariners Association and is © 2025. 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 Submariners Association accepts no liability on any issue in this Newsletter.

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### VETERANS IDENTITY CARDS

Not got your Veterans ID Card yet?

Please see the link below for an update on applying for Veterans ID Cards:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hm-armed-forces-veteran-cards-will-officially-launch-in-the-new-year-following-a-successful-assessment-from-the-central-digital-and-data-office?fbclid=IwAR0Vp4vH\\_D7kQUr6N96pgKEz5zZteXeCPgNj2wVHLt8SGEbPqGxjBUcQW8M](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hm-armed-forces-veteran-cards-will-officially-launch-in-the-new-year-following-a-successful-assessment-from-the-central-digital-and-data-office?fbclid=IwAR0Vp4vH_D7kQUr6N96pgKEz5zZteXeCPgNj2wVHLt8SGEbPqGxjBUcQW8M)

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### AN SSBN RETURNS TO FASLANE

A Royal Navy Vanguard Class submarine has returned to HM Naval Base Clyde after more than six months on deterrent patrol, continuing the UK's unbroken record of Continuous At Sea Deterrence (CASD) stretching back to 1969. The submarine left Faslane in March and has spent over 200 days at sea, one of the longest patrols completed by the fleet. Another Vanguard class boat has already sailed to take its place, maintaining the country's nuclear posture under Operation Relentless.



Around 140 submariners endured the routine of life underwater for over half a year, separated from their families and operating without pause. They were welcomed back on 1st October by relatives waving flags on the jetty, ending months of absence.

Defence Secretary John Healey joined the crew for their final passage home, accompanied by Chief of the Defence Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Knighton, First Sea Lord General Sir Gwyn Jenkins, and Chief of Defence Nuclear Madelaine McTernan.

The group toured the submarine and met personnel to hear first-hand accounts of the patrol.





The Vanguard Class, equipped with the Trident missile system, continues to provide the UK's strategic deterrent until the new Dreadnought Class boats come into service. Increasingly lengthy patrols have become more common as the Navy sustains the deterrent with an ageing fleet while preparing for transition.



The return was recorded by Royal Navy photographers LPhot Daniel Bladen and LPhot Bill Spurr, who captured both the official welcome from leadership and the reunion of submariners with their families at Faslane

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## SUBMARINE & SUBMARINER LOSSES OF WWII

Note that, as the Second World War concluded on 15th August 1945, this Issue sees the last of my Reports of 'Submarine & Submariners Losses of WWII'. I will be including a new item in the In Depth Newsletters from IN DEPTH No. 91 onwards – not sure what it will be yet but watch this space

### JULY 1945

No Submarines were lost in July 1945 but five Submariners are reported to have died – all in pretty unfortunate circumstances. They were:

One Member of the Crew of Submarine **HMS SATYR** is reported to have died on 4th July 1945.

**PO John Thomas Rodham P/JX 149922**

John Rodham was born in Newburn, Northumberland on 29th October 1913 and he was the son of John Thomas Rodham (a steel worker) and Anne Rodham (nee Harrison). In 1921 he, his widowed father and younger brother Charles Nicholas were lodging with relatives at 43, Boyd Street, Newburn. John Rodham joined the Royal Navy as a Seaman in 1934 and was allocated the Official Number P/JX 149922. He volunteered for Submarine Service in 1937. He was married to Honor Gatrell of Lordswood, Hampshire in Southampton in early 1939. At the time the 1939 Register was taken in September 1939 Able Seaman (ST) John Rodham and Honor Rodham were lodging at 11, Woodbine Terrace, Blyth, Northumberland. He is reported to have served in HMS DOLPHIN and the Submarine Depot Ship HMS TITANIA and he was a survivor from Submarine HMS PANDORA when it was bombed and sunk at Malta on 1st April 1942. He was later drafted to Submarine HMS SPORTSMAN and was awarded the DSM – see Supplement to London Gazette dated 15th August 1944 for service in the Mediterranean and in the Aegean sea.. He was later drafted to Submarine HMS SATYR. Thirty two year old John Rodham is understood to have died at 105, Newbridge Lane, Chesterfield from pulmonary tuberculosis on 4th July 1945. He was the husband of Honor Rodham (nee Gatrell) of Lordswood, Hampshire and he is commemorated at the Sheffield City Road Crematorium on the Screen Wall Panel No. 3. There was a son, Gary Rodham. John Rodham's wife later remarried.

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One member of the crew of submarine **HMS VOX** is reported to have died on 11th July 1945. He was:

**AB (LTO) Hector Charles Seymour Munro C/JX 394662**

Hector Munro was born on 7th August 1923 and he was the only son of the four children of Sir Arthur Herman Munro - 14th Baronet of Foulis-Obsdale, Scotland and Violet Beatrice Powles. He joined the Royal Navy, qualified as an Able Seaman (LTO) and served in Submarine HMS VOX. It is understood that he shot himself whilst HMS VOX was at Sydney, Australia 'whilst the balance of his mind was disturbed'. He is understood that had he lived the twenty one year old would have become Sir Hector Munro, 15th Baron Munro of Foulis-Obsdale. Hector Munro is buried in the Sydney War Cemetery, Rookwood in Grave No. 2Z. A. 10.

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One Member of the Crew of Submarine **HMS SUPREME** is reported to have died on 12th July 1945. He was:

**AB Albert Fraser MacIntosh D/JX 196729**

Albert MacIntosh was born in Nantwich, Cheshire on 28th August 1906 and he was the youngest son of John and Jane MacIntosh. In the 1921 Census he was listed as an Office Boy living with his guardians at 12, May Street, Chorlton on Medlock. In the 1939 Register he was reported to be a Newspaper Salesman (canvasser) living at 33, Westwood Street. He is understood to have joined the Royal Navy, trained as a submariner and was drafted to Submarine HMS SUPREME. It is understood that he died in the Withington Emergency Hospital, Manchester on 12th July 1945 following a brain haemorrhage. Thirty eight year old Albert MacIntosh is buried in the Manchester Southern Cemetery in Sec. Q. Coll. Grave 326. - Screen Wall Panel 25.

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A Submarine Command Qualified Officer died on Thursday 19th July 1945. He was:

**Captain James Gregson Roper OBE, RN**

James Roper was born in Leeds on 25 February 1901, the son of John Gregson Roper and Marion Roper. Having joined the Royal Navy as a Special Entry Naval Cadet, he was appointed to the Battleship HMS REVENGE on 11 October 1920 in the rank of Midshipman. Promoted to Sub Lieutenant on 15 September 1921, he subsequently moved on to complete Lieutenants' Courses at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, where promotion to Lieutenant followed on 15 April 1923. An appointment to HMS DOLPHIN '*for Submarine Training*' came next before moving to HMS CONQUEST at Chatham '*for HMS K14 as Third Hand*' to date 23 August 1924. Just one year later, he moved on to '*HMS H43 as First Lieutenant*'. Hehe was appointed to the Submarine Depot Ship HMS LUCIA at Devonport '*for HMS L69 as First Lieutenant*' on 28 April 1928, before completing his Commanding Officers' Qualifying Course (COQC) in 20 April 1930. His first command appointment was to the

Submarine Depot Ship HMS VULCAN *'for HMS H32 in Command'* on 21 April 1930. He was briefly appointed to HMS DOLPHIN on 19th September before returning to Submarine H32 on 16 October. Promoted to Lieutenant Commander on 15 October 1931, he served in the Battleship HMS RESOLUTION from 3 October 1933 before joining the Submarine Tender HMS FERMOY on 23 April 1934. There then followed command appointments in HMS L22 and HMS SHARK until promotion to Commander on 30 June 1935. Commander Roper attended the RN Staff Course from 4 January 1937 before serving in HMS PRESIDENT, in the Plans Division. On 1 November 1938 he joined the cruiser HMS BELFAST completing at Belfast *'as the Commander'* on Commissioning. He was awarded an OBE *'for exemplary conduct and cheerfulness in adversity after an explosion had occurred in his ship'*. On 18 February 1940, James Roper joined the Submarine Depot Ship, HMS AMBROSE, at Dundee in the rank of Acting Captain *'in Command and as Captain – 9th Submarine Flotilla'*. An appointment to HMS DOLPHIN *'as Chief Staff Officer to Rear Admiral Submarines'* followed on 8 February 1942, lasting until 19 April 1945 when he joined HMS LOTHIAN *'as Chief Staff Officer to Rear Admiral Commanding Force X, Pacific'*. James Roper died in an aircraft accident in Australia on 19 July 1945. He was the husband of Margaret (Peggy) Roper of 10, Yarborough Road, Southsea, Hampshire and he is commemorated in the Sydney War Cemetery in the Rookwood Necropolis, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia in Grave No. No 22.B.7.

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One member of the crew of Submarine **HMS STUBBORN** is reported to have died on 28th July 1945. He was: **Lieutenant Peter David Victor Jones**

Peter Jones was born in Southsea, Hampshire on 16th October 1920 and he was the son of Edward Victor Jones (an insurance manager) and Agnes Jones (nee Harland). At the time of the 1921 Census Peter was at home with his parents at 38, Shafmoor Lane, Hall Green, Birmingham and his elder sister Eileen and brother Kenneth Norman. Peter joined the Royal Navy and was promoted to Acting Sub Lieutenant on 23rd August 1942. In February 1943 he was serving in the Submarine Depot Ship HMS FORTH. Promotion to Lieutenant followed on 16th August 1943. On 20th September 1943 he was appointed to the Submarine Depot Ship HMS CYCLOPS *'for Submarines'* and on 4th December 1943 Peter Jones was appointed to *'HMS STATESMAN as First Lieutenant'*. This was followed by an appointment to Submarine *'HMS STUBBORN as First Lieutenant'* in April 1944. On 13th July 1945 HMS STUBBORN left Fremantle for a 10th War Patrol with orders to operate in the southeast of Java after stopping off at Onslow, Western Australia to 'top up' with fuel on 16th/17th July. Several small ships were sunk and, on 27th July at 1950 STUBBORN went alongside a junk in position 08°05'S 118°03'E. Peter Jones and L/Sea Kennedy boarded to investigate the cargo. Whilst manoeuvring to obtain a position to get out as soon as possible if needed, the junk broke adrift. It was not possible to close it again in the shallow water. L/Sea Kennedy was able to swim to STUBBORN but Peter Jones was not able to as the distance became too great. Peter Jones was told by megaphone that STUBBORN would wait for him to return. He was searched for during the night and following day but he was never seen again and he was listed *'missing presumed killed'*. Peter Jones was the 24 year old husband of Doris Caroline Jones (nee Butcher) who he had married in Gosport in the 3rd Quarter of 1943. He is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval War Memorial on Panel No. 88 Column No. 3.

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## AUGUST 1945

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No Submarines were lost but five Submariners are reported to have died in August 1945. They were:

One Member of the Crew of the Submarine Depot Ship **HMS CYCLOPS** is reported to have died on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1945. He was:

**A/ERA4 Henry Alfred Polatch C/MX 92400**

Henry Polatch was born in Croydon in Surrey on 7th April 1916 and he was the son of Frederick Stephen Polatch (a Royal Navy Gunner) and Lily Kathleen Polatch (nee Dyster), of Purley, Surrey. In the 1921 Census the Polatch family were listed as living at 44, Pendevon Road, Croydon and his father was now listed as a ledger manager for a corn and seed merchant. Henry had an older brother Stephen, a younger brother Walter and a younger sister Irene. In December 1935 both Henry and his elder brother Stephen were seriously injured when a motorcycle they were riding was in a collision with a car in London Road, Ashford in Kent. Henry was later awarded damages for his injuries. Henry Polatch joined the Royal Navy as an Acting Engine Room Artificer and in August 1945 he was serving in the Submarine Depot Ship HMS CYCLOPS. It is reported that he died on 11th August 1945 from multiple injuries sustained in an explosion which occurred during demolition training exercises. Twenty nine year old Henry Polatch is buried in Grave No. 63 in the Tobermory Cemetery, Kilninian and Kilmore Isle of Mull. Note that his younger brother also joined the Royal Navy - Petty Officer Writer Walter Polatch served in HMS HURWOTH but was lost at sea on 22nd October 1943.



One Member of the Crew of Submarine **HMS THULE** is reported to have died on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1945. He was:

**ERA3 Harold Victor Williams D/MX 102756**

Harold Victor Williams was born in Bristol in Gloucestershire on 3rd July 1920 and he was the son of Henry Randall David Williams and Phoebe Helen Williams. In September 1939 he was listed as an Improver Turner at the Over Engineering Works in Bristol and he was living at home with his widowed mother at 12, Narrowways Road, Bristol. After the outbreak of the Second World War he joined the Royal Navy as a Direct Entry Engine Room Artificer and trained as a Submariner. By August 1945 he had been advanced to Engine Room Artificer 3rd Class and he was serving in Submarine HMS THULE (Lt Commander A C G Mars, Royal Navy) at Fremantle in Western Australia. Twenty five year old Harold Williams is reported to have died on 14th August 1945 having committed suicide by drowning himself *'whilst in a depressed state of mind'* whilst HMS THULE was at Fremantle. Harold Williams of 12, Narrowways Road, Bristol is buried in the Perth War Cemetery in Grave No. L.C.3. His widowed mother was listed as his Next of Kin.

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One Member of the Crew of the Submarine Depot Ship **HMS WOLFE** is reported to have died on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1945. He was:

**LSto Douglas Charles Swadling P/SKX 1146**

Douglas Charles Swadling was born in Marlow, Buckinghamshire on 20th May 1922 and he was the son of Charles Henry and Alice May Swadling. He had a younger brother Gordon Swadling. In September 1939 he was employed as a Gas Fitters Mate and was living with his parents at 130, Little Marlow Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire. After the outbreak of WWII he joined the Royal Navy as a Stoker. By August 1945 he had been advanced to Acting Leading Stoker and he was serving in the Submarine Depot Ship HMS WOLFE at Trincomalee in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). He is reported to have died on 14th August 1945 from injuries received in an accidental fall on board HMS WOLFE. Twenty three year old Douglas Swadling is buried in Grave No. 1.B.7. in the Kannatta Cemetery in Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).

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One Member of the crew of Submarine **HMS SEADEVIL** is reported to have died on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1945. He was:

**AB Roy Clayton C/JX 698628.**

Roy Clayton was born in Halifax, Yorkshire on 30th March 1926 and he was the son of Ernest Clayton and Minnie Clayton (nee Crowther). He attended the Haugh Shaw School and, after leaving school he worked as a motor driver for Messrs. J E Jowett & Sons. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and trained as an Able Seaman and as a Submariner. He married Eleanor Elizabeth Garrett in Surrey in the 3rd Quarter of 1944. In August 1945 he was serving in Submariner HMS SEADEVIL in Malta. Nineteen year old Roy Clayton is reported to have been drowned in Marsamxett Harbour in Malta on 21st August 1945. Nineteen year old Roy Clayton, who left a wife and a six week old daughter - Yvonne Ellen Clayton - is buried in the Royal Naval Cemetery at Malta in the Protestant (Men's) Section in Plot F Grave No.138

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One member of the RN Liaison Crew of HM Norwegian Submarine **UTSIRA** is reported to have died on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1945. He was:

**A/LSig Norman Askew D/JX 184581.**

Norman Askew was born in Chester-Le-Street, County Durham, on 29 December 1923, the son of John Askew and Hannah Jane Askew (née Turnbull). When the 1939 Register was compiled in September 1939 he was at home with his mother and siblings at No. 5, Robinson's Buildings, Washington, County Durham and Norman Askew was reported to be an Apprentice Blacksmith. It is not reported when he joined the Royal Navy but he was trained as a Signalman and, in August 1945 he was serving as a Leading Signalman in His Norwegian Majesty's Submarine UTSIRA at Ubatatstonen, Bergen in Norway, as a member of the RN Liaison Crew. It is reported that he died on 22nd August 1945 from an accidentally self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. Norman Askew is buried in the Holy Trinity Churchyard in Unsworth Parish, Sunderland, County Durham in Plot E. Grave 1.

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### **SUBMARINE COMMISSIONING CREW LISTS**

Do you have any Submarine Commissioning, Decommissioning or Re-dedication Crew Lists. These are required for an ongoing Project - the construction of a **'Chronology of Submariners'**. This Chronology is very useful when a Submariner who is not an Association Member 'Crosses the Bar' and details of his or her service are requested by the various Submariners organisations.

What I am looking for are 'First Commission' Crew Lists as for PORPOISE, GRAMPUS, CACHALOT, WALRUS, OBERON, ONYX, ORPHEUS, ODIN, OTUS, UNICORN, AUDACIOUS, ANSON &

AGAMEMNON. Also Crew Lists for Commission or Recommission of any 'S', 'T', 'A', 'O' Class or 'P' Class Diesel Boats, 'V', 'C', 'S', 'T' & 'ASTUTE' SSNs & 'RESOLUTION' or 'VANGUARD' Class SSBNs.

Crew Lists for any Commissioning or Decommissioning of any Diesel 'A', 'S' or 'T' Class Boat refitting in Home Dockyards or in Malta, Singapore or Sydney are also required if available! Have a look through your Records and 'Ditty Boxes' and see what you can find. Scanned copies are preferred but any original paper Lists sent will be copied and the originals returned. You can contact me by E Mail, Snail Mail or Telephone - see Page 2.

Thanks, Barrie Downer

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### **DONATIONS & BEQUESTS**

For anyone thinking about making Donations or leaving a Bequest in your Will please remember one of the following:

- (1) The Submariners Association
- (2) The Submarine Fund – part of the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) – details can be found on RNRMC Website.
- (3) We Remember Submariners
- (4) The Royal Navy Submarine Museum. Any Donations or Bequests for the Submarine Museum should be directed to either the 'Friends of the Submarine Museum' or to the 'National Museum of the Royal Navy'.

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### **SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

#### **OCTOBER 2025**

#### **Registered Members:**

At the Start of July 2025 it was reported that there were 1,240 members registered on the website. The rate of new registrations had slowed significantly, which was to be expected. Members, currently, are able to manage their own data. If your contact details (e.g. mobile number) change, please update your profile accordingly.

Many Registered members have still to connect with their local Branch. Branch Meetings and Social Activities are a great way to rekindle the camaraderie enjoyed during service (or continue it if still serving). Please consider reaching out to your local Branch if you haven't done so already.

#### **Website Contributions:**

Submissions from branches or individuals have noticeably declined compared to last year (2024) peak.

Thank you to those who do submit posts. These are vital for keeping the website engaging for both current members and potential visitors.

If Branches or individuals attend events or visit places of interest, please share photos and any relevant information for publication.

#### **CTB Process:**

I have raised several times with the SAC that the process for reporting CTBs is, once again, not functioning as intended.

A documented and agreed process was created and published on the website to address previous issues, caveats included.

I would ask all members to revisit and familiarise themselves with this process. Doing so may help reduce some of the long-standing challenges we continue to face in this area.

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### **SUBMARINE M1 MEMORIAL SERVICE**

A 'Basic' programme for the Service has been agreed, as follows:

Wednesday 12 November 2025 14:00

St Annes Church, Sunny Walk, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth, PO1 3NA

Programme:

13:45 Meet outside St Annes Church

13:55 Attendees seated as directed by Reverend Stephen Wilson RN

14:00 Service commences, followed by a wreath laying ceremony under the M1 memorial

Those wishing to attend should enter HM Naval Base on foot via Lion Gate (through Victory Gate and turn right, recommend no later than 13:30 to facilitate entrance into HM Naval Base)

I will have a chat with the Chaplain re entry into the Naval Base, I have a sponsor if required (CDR Phil Boakes ME Engineer who works in the yard)

All visitors to HM Naval Base must submit their Full Name, Date of Birth, Place of Birth and current address to [tonyrowan2003@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tonyrowan2003@yahoo.co.uk) by COP 31 October 2025.

## Remembering HMS E24

Recently WRS were able to lay a wreath in remembrance of Captain George Naper and crew lost on HMS E24. In 1973 German divers hunting for a lost U- Boat discovered the wreck of a conning tower marking the site of a lost submarine.

When the boat was salvaged, they realised that it was the wreck of HMS E24 lost while mining off the Heligoland Bight on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1916.

The remains of crew are buried in the WWI section of The Commonwealth War Graves area of Ohlsdorf Cemetery in Hamburg, Germany. This is the largest cemetery in Europe and beautifully landscaped and tended. We Remember Submariners laid a wreath for the crew at 1100 on Sunday 7th September 2025.

In Cuxhaven the very modern Windstarke 10 Museum (Gale Force 10) has now created an exhibit of the conning tower of HM Submarine E24 in subdued lighting illustrating the vision of the conning tower as it lay on the seabed for many years marking the gravesite of E24. There are also exhibits of artifacts recovered from inside the submarine. The museum management were very hospitable and allowed us to lay a WRS wreath at the base of the conning tower. We were most grateful. We gave a short few words of remembrance for the lost crew. A member of the Gatwick Branch of the GB Submariners Association made the trip, as each year they also attend the memorial service at St Marys Church in Sullington, West Sussex, where there is a monument erected to mark the loss of Captain G W E Naper and crew of HMS E24 and other British casualties.



The Museum: The conning tower and some other items had been placed in a museum of wrecks in Cuxhaven and left in the open air for several years. This wreck museum was in need of renovation and the City of Cuxhaven moved the exhibits to be merged with the former fisheries and maritime museum, providing two former fish processing buildings – Fischhalle VII and VIII and, in 2013, added a new Atrium between the buildings to become a very modern and professional exhibition of Maritime History. Well worth a visit,

Terence Anthony Nowell  
We Remember Submariners

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## THE ON-LINE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE (OBOR) AN UPDATE



The OBOR content continues to make progress thanks to our amazing team of researchers, with stories now written for approximately one thousand of the 5,947 people listed (some 16.7%). Visitor comments continue to come in at about 14 per month and we have now had 208 comments on people alone - plus some on individual boats on which visitors or their families may have served. Clearly some of these are indicating that memories of

those that sacrificed their lives in the submarine service remain alive for many people. The OBOR sub-title "*Only the forgotten are truly dead*" seems very apt. If you had shipmates or family who died in submarine service, please look them up and leave a comment."

Peter Jeanneret



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### **King Charles III welcomes newest addition to Navy's fleet of nuclear-powered Submarines**

Story by Kim Pilling, PA

22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025

The King has welcomed the newest addition to the Royal Navy's fleet of nuclear-powered submarines. On Monday, Charles visited the BAE Systems shipyard in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, to read the Commissioning Warrant at a formal Ceremony to mark HMS AGAMEMNON entering operational service.



"AGAMEMNON has been in the front line, an enduring symbol of British strength and victory. As the crew of this boat, you now send that proud tradition into the future."

Earlier, Mr Healey – the Defence Secretary - conducted a steel-cutting ceremony at BAE for HMS KING GEORGE VI, the fourth and final Dreadnought Class submarine.

The Dreadnought submarines, due to enter service from the early 2030s, are the replacement for the Vanguard-class submarines, which currently deliver the Continuous At Sea Deterrent (CASD) for the Royal Navy.

Steve Timms, Managing Director, BAE Systems' Submarines business, said: "It's a privilege to host these ceremonies at our shipyard. Cutting steel on the fourth Dreadnought submarine demonstrates the significant progress we've made on the programme whilst the sixth Astute class boat, HMS AGAMEMNON, joins the long and distinguished list of Barrow-built vessels to be Commissioned into the Royal Navy."

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### **King Charles Visits Barrow to Mark Royal Status**

Published 22 September 2025 - Images PA Media

**King Charles III arrived in Barrow-in-Furness to recognise the Cumbrian town's "critical contribution" to industry and national defence.**



The port town is home to the BAE Systems' shipyard where the UK's nuclear-powered submarines are being built. When the prime minister visited Barrow in March, he confirmed that King Charles had agreed to grant the title of the Royal Port of Barrow on the area around the shipyard and docks. Crowds, including many schoolchildren, cheered as the King arrived in the town to bestow the honour. The Mayor of Barrow - Fred Chatfield - said: "I never ever thought I'd be Mayor, let alone in my year to meet the King and on such an auspicious occasion."

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cumbria Alexander Scott said: "This is a historic day for the Port of Barrow and for the people of Barrow, as we celebrate the port's royal status. "It really is a very prestigious honour."

People gathered throughout the day to catch a glimpse of the Royal party. Among them were Bina Lowcock and her son Kiaan who said he shook the King's hand. "He was very nice, I liked it," he said.



**Onlookers snapped photographs and took videos on their camera phones**



**Families lined the town centre in the hope of meeting the King**

The King visited Barrow Town Hall where celebrations included a performance by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. At the BAE Systems shipyard, he read the Commissioning Warrant at a formal ceremony to mark nuclear submarine HMS AGAMEMNON entering operational service. Monday's ceremony also recognised those who built, staff and support the vessel, while the King spoke with construction staff and the submarine's serving personnel and their families.

The submarine is due to begin sea trials before going into active service. Named after the commander of the mythical Ancient Greek forces in the Trojan war, it weighs 7,400 tonnes and is 97 metres (318ft) in length - the



same as four buses. HMS AGAMEMNON can strike land targets up to 1,000 miles away, serve as a launchpad for raids by teams of Royal Marines Commandos and gather intelligence. Dignitaries attending included Defence Secretary John Healey, who said: "This is truly a remarkable manufacturing feat - to take a piece of steel and to forge it into one of the most technologically advanced machines anywhere in the world."



The King also met four-legged friends on his visit

## Barrow Memorial Service held for World War One Australian Submarine Crews



The Barrow community came together last weekend to honour the lives of crew members who went down with two locally-built submarines.

A Re-dedication Service was held at the Barrow Australian Submarine Memorial on Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup> in tribute to the WWI Australian submarines AE1 and AE2. This date was chosen because it was the 111<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the loss of Submarine AE1 – the first Submarine loss of WWI

These were the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) first two submarines, built by the Vickers Shipyard in Barrow and commissioned into Service in February 1914.



The Service of Rededication was organised by the Barrow-in-Furness Branch of the Submariners Association in conjunction with the Barrow Town Council and BAE.

It also marked the Unveiling Ceremony of a QR Code Plaque - sited centrally at the foot of the Memorial - enabling access to an 'Online Book of Remembrance' (OBOR) listing all Submariners and Submariners lost in Royal Navy Submarines.

The OBOR is an ongoing project by the 'Society Of Friends of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum' to record the story of all those lost Submariners - also allowing family and friends to contribute their memories. The QR Code Plaque was provided by the 'Friends' and the black marble plinth on which it is mounted was funded by BAE.

*Photos courtesy of BAE and The Mail (Barrow)*

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### **ASTUTE Crew Row Outgoing Skipper Ashore in Traditional Farewell from Submarine**

22 August 2025

Officers from HMS ASTUTE rowed their outgoing Commanding Officer in Devonport Naval Base to the cheers of fellow submariners. Commander Chris Bate was given a traditional send-off in a Cornish gig as he left the attack submarine for the final time.

Before departing, he addressed the 100-strong crew of the A-boat, which is based on the Clyde but is in Plymouth for a refit, on the jetty, thanking all for their efforts during his 29 months in command.



“It has been a pleasure to serve as the Commanding Officer of this great submarine and I want to thank you all for your dedication and professionalism throughout my time on board,” he said.



**Commander Bate acknowledges the salute from his crew as shipmates row him ashore**

During more than two years in command of the first boat in the class of seven hunter-killer submarines, Commander Bate and his crew patrolled the Mediterranean and North Atlantic, safeguarded home waters, helped with the training and assessment of future submarine Commanders (the Perisher course), tested their mettle against the newest boat in the class, HMS ANSON, and supported the opening stages of this year's Carrier Strike Group. Among Cdr Bate's last acts as Commanding Officer was to host Her Majesty The Queen last month [July] at a ceremony marking the end of HMS ASTUTE's first commission (15 years, the longest in the Silent Service's history). Command of the submarine now passes to Commander Bob Church from the Royal Navy's Submarine Support Group. Under him ASTUTE will undergo her Mid Life Re-Validation Period (MLRP) conducted by the crew in conjunction with MOD experts, defence firm Babcock and scores of contractors

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NOTE (by Editor): Some of you might be surprised to hear that HMS ASTUTE is now starting a 'Mid-Life Update' (a REFIT by any other name) after a 'Fifteen Year 1<sup>st</sup> Commission'. Not as surprised as I was to realise that, when I came to Barrow as a Weapons Systems Overseer for ASTUTE Class Submarines for the MOD in October 2003, nearly all the bits and pieces for HMS ASTUTE were lying on the floor in the Devonshire Dock Hall or scattered around the Stores waiting to be put together. At that time only three ASTUTE Class Submarines had been ordered and BAE were effectively 'Starting Again from Scratch' in Submarine building. How time flies!

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**BABCOCK CONTRACT**

The MoD has awarded Babcock a £114M contract to prepare for the first nuclear defueling of a decommissioned Royal Navy Trafalgar Class submarine in over 20 years. The contract covers work to remove the fuel from four boats, most likely ex-HMS TRAFALGAR, TURBULENT, TIRELESS and TORBAY – the oldest T-boats in storage at Devonport. It is unclear why the five older S-class boats are not being defueled first. The expenditure of £millions for zero operational gain is depressing but cannot be avoided. Past failure to address submarine disposal in a timely manner has left the RN saddled with an unpleasant hangover from the time when it fielded a vigorous SSN fleet.

Of the sixteen decommissioned boats now in storage at Devonport, twelve still have their nuclear fuel on board. Until 2003, boats had their fuel removed soon after decommissioning but the facilities for defueling were deemed no longer safe enough to meet modern regulation standards and the process was halted. This meant fully fuelled boats have been stored afloat for the last two decades while a solution was developed at a glacial pace. The submarines that have not had fuel removed have their reactor primary circuit chemically treated to guarantee it remains inert, and additional radiation monitoring equipment is fitted.

Work has been underway for some time at No. 14 Dock in Devonport to prepare for this activity. The cranes used to remove nuclear fuel have been replaced with a much safer Reactor Access House. The RAH is moved over the reactor compartment on rails, and the Reactor Pressure Vessel containing the fuel is then lifted the very short distance into the enclosed house above. The RPV is classed as Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) and will temporarily be stored in purpose-built buildings above ground at Sellafield. Successive governments have failed to sign off on plans to build a subterranean Geological Disposal Facility. In a laborious process, each boat will have to be dry-docked and the fuel removed, then return to storage to await full dismantling, which will be years away.

In more positive news, progress continues to be made with the ex-HMS SWIFTSURE in Number 2 dock at Rosyth. Her fin was recently removed and she is on course to be fully dismantled by the end of 2026. Over 500 tonnes of

conventional waste have already been removed and recycled from SWIFTSURE with 90% of her total weight expected to be recycled. She will be the first nuclear submarine in the world to have been fully dismantled as opposed to having the reactor compartment cut out and buried.

Submarine	Location	OSD	Hull age	Reactor	Notes
Dreadnought	Rosyth	1980	65	Defuelled	
Conqueror	Devonport	1990	56	Defuelled	
Warspite	Devonport	1991	60	Defuelled	
Churchill	Rosyth	1991	57	Defuelled	
Swiftsure	Rosyth	1991	54	Defuelled	LLW removed Dec 2016 - Aug 2018. Fully dismantled by 2026
Courageous	Devonport	1992	55	Defuelled	Preserved as a museum vessel
Revenge	Rosyth	1992	57	Defuelled	LLW removal began Mar 2020 (delayed by COVID)
Valiant	Devonport	1994	62	Defuelled	
Resolution	Rosyth	1994	59	Defuelled	LLW removed Dec 2018 - Mar 2020
Repulse	Rosyth	1996	58	Defuelled	
Renown	Rosyth	1996	58	Defuelled	
Splendid	Devonport	2003	46	Fuelled	
Sovereign	Devonport	2006	52	Fuelled	
Spartan	Devonport	2006	47	Fuelled	
Superb	Devonport	2008	51	Fuelled	
Trafalgar	Devonport	2009	44	Fuelled	
Sceptre	Devonport	2010	49	Fuelled	
Turbulent	Devonport	2012	43	Fuelled	
Tireless	Devonport	2014	43	Fuelled	
Torbay	Devonport	2017	40	Fuelled	
Trenchant	Devonport	2021	39	Fuelled	
Talent	Devonport	2023	37	Fuelled	
Triumph	Devonport	2024	34	Fuelled	
Vanguard	Devonport	2031*	33		Exact OSD dependent on Dreadnought programme
Victorious	Devonport	2034*	31		
Vigilant	Devonport	2037*	30		
Vengeance	Devonport	2040*	27		

OSD = Out of Service Date    Hull age = from year of launch to 2025    LLW = Low Level (nuclear) Waste    \*Estimated OSD

### £114m Contract awarded for Submarine Steam Systems

By George Allison - June 12, 2025

The Ministry of Defence has awarded a contract worth over £114 million to Scott Aerospace in Bristol to provide support for the Royal Navy's submarine mechanical and secondary steam propulsion equipment. Announced on 11 June 2025, the framework agreement—known as the Submarine Mechanical and Secondary Steam Propulsion Equipment Support (SMASSES) contract—covers the supply of spares and repairs across a wide range of components critical to the operation of the UK's nuclear-powered submarine fleet.

According to the published award notice, the contract includes support for both first-level and non-first-level equipment within submarine mechanical systems, as well as key components of the secondary steam propulsion system. These include main and auxiliary steam system valves, steam drains, gland steam system valves, main steam turbines, turbo generators (mechanical), and associated ancillary equipment.

The contract scope also covers:

- Obsolescence and risk management
- Safety and environmental management
- Quality assurance, including a dedicated Quality Management Plan
- Helpdesk support during business hours
- Performance monitoring and reporting
- Provision of all associated project documentation

Work will be delivered primarily to Royal Navy submarine bases in Portsmouth and Faslane, with all deliveries confined to the UK. The contract has an initial duration of three years, with two additional one-year extension options available at the MoD's discretion. If both options are exercised, the agreement could run until 2030.

Scott Aerospace, based in Bristol, is the sole supplier named on the contract.

NOTE: George Allison has a degree in Cyber Security from Glasgow Caledonian University and has a keen interest in naval and cyber security matters and has appeared on national radio and television to discuss current events. George is on Twitter at @geoallison

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### Work begins on future British nuclear attack submarine

From the UK Defence Journal

By Craig Langford - June 28, 2025

Babcock has confirmed it has begun long-lead work on the UK's future SSN-AUKUS nuclear-powered submarines, with new contracts secured during the past financial year for the first elements of the vessel's weapon handling and launch systems. The company disclosed the update in its preliminary results for the year ending 31 March 2025, positioning the announcement as a key milestone in its growing contribution to next-generation submarine programmes.

*"Our Mission Systems business was awarded two significant contracts in FY25," the company reported. "These included a contract for Long Lead Items for the Astute replacement, Submersible Ship Nuclear AUKUS (SSNA), enabling us to place orders for the first elements of the Weapon Handling and Launch System."*

The contract represents one of the first known UK industrial contributions to the SSN-AUKUS programme, which will deliver a new class of conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines to the UK and Australia. Babcock's involvement in providing early components for the launch system suggests a continuity of expertise built up through its work on the Astute and Dreadnought programmes.

The SSN-AUKUS class is intended to replace the UK's Astute-class submarines from the late 2030s and form the basis for Australia's first fleet of nuclear-powered attack submarines under the AUKUS security partnership. Babcock's experience in complex submarine manufacture, integration and sustainment across both the Royal Navy's and US Navy's strategic deterrent fleets has underpinned its growing role in transatlantic collaboration. The company is already a long-term supplier of missile tube assemblies for the UK's Dreadnought and US Columbia classes, and this year secured an additional order for 36 tubes from General Dynamics Electric Boat.

*"Our leading position in advanced manufacture of missile tube assemblies led to a further contract award of 36 missile tubes by General Dynamics Electric Boat, who is responsible for the design and the construction of the U.S. Naval Columbia submarines programme,"* Babcock noted.

The Mission Systems division was also awarded *"an additional contract to supply Integrated Tube Hulls in support of the US Columbia Class programme,"* further broadening its role across allied submarine programmes.

Babcock's participation in SSN-AUKUS comes amid a strategic push to increase UK industry's role in submarine component development and systems integration. As part of AUKUS Pillar 1, the UK and Australia are jointly developing the SSN-AUKUS platform with support from the United States, and the UK is expected to deliver the lead boat for the Royal Navy in the late 2030s.

Babcock is one of several UK defence firms expected to contribute heavily to the design, supply chain, and construction of the class. These initial contracts reflect the early-stage investment now being made to prepare UK industry for the scale and complexity of the SSN-AUKUS build and sustainment programme.

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### Safety order after fire at nuclear sub shipyard

BBC News, North East and Cumbria 16 June 2025

BAE Systems has been told to improve its safety practices following a fire which broke out at its nuclear submarine shipyard last year. The blaze struck in the early hours of 30<sup>th</sup> October at the firm's site in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, where the UK's nuclear submarines are built.

No-one was seriously injured and Cumbria Police said at the time that there was *"no nuclear risk"*, but the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) said five staff members had entered the site of the blaze while it was still burning. The ONR has told the company to put arrangements in place *"to ensure the protection of workers in the event of a fire"*.

BAE said the safety of its employees was its top priority.

Of the five workers who entered Devonshire Dock Hall, two were then taken to hospital. However the pair were then soon discharged and able to return to work the same day, the ONR said.

The ONR said BAE's procedures to ensure workers did not enter places of danger without *"appropriate safety instructions"* were *"inadequate"*.

There was also a lack of guidance to inform staff about what they should do in the event of a fire, it said. The regulator said the firm needed to demonstrate suitable emergency arrangements in the event of a fire were in place by 12 September. BAE said it was considering the regulator's finding with the *"utmost seriousness"*.

*"We are now working to demonstrate our undertaking of the proposed remedial actions,"* a spokesperson said.

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By Editor: One implication of the ONR report is that no-one should have gone into the DDH to see what was happening and, potentially, sort out a minor problem before it got completely out of hand. Had the worst happened and the DDH and its contents burned to the ground presumably the ONR would have been unconcerned – about the loss of one almost complete SSN, large parts of the Trident Replacement Programme and billions of pounds worth of critical National Defence Infrastructure.

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### **Rolls-Royce nuclear deal 'will safeguard city jobs'**

10 June 2025

Steve Beech & Gavin Bevis BBC News, Derby

Bosses at Rolls-Royce have said winning a government contract to build three state of the art nuclear reactors will help to safeguard research jobs in Derby. The company has been selected as the preferred bidder to provide small modular reactor (SMR) technology, which it is hoped could bring down energy bills. Tuesday's announcement follows a two-year bidding process run by Great British Energy - Nuclear, which saw Rolls-Royce competing against several international rivals. The firm says the £2.5bn deal will allow it to potentially become a world leader in what it sees as a growing international market. Chancellor Rachel Reeves has committed £16.7bn to nuclear power projects as the country shifts away from fossil fuels.

Officials hope SMRs will be cheaper and quicker to build than traditional power plants, and projects could be connected to the grid by the mid-2030s. Rolls-Royce's reactors are likely to be built on the sites of existing nuclear power plants across the UK, with the hope of reducing the UK's reliance on imported gas.

a million homes for at least 60 years. Company bosses told the BBC the contract announcement would protect research jobs at its Jubilee House base at Pride Park. The procurement process has taken two years

The news has been welcomed by Baggy Shanker, Labour MP for Derby South and chair of the all-party parliamentary group on small modular reactors. He said: *"This is a major step forward for Britain. Selecting Derby's very own Rolls-Royce SMR as the UK's preferred bidder shows the power of backing British engineering, skills and ambition."*

Catherine Atkinson, Labour MP for Derby North and vice-chair of the all-party parliamentary group, added: *"This is about delivering practical change: lower bills for families, new opportunities, and a more secure future built here at home. "Cities like Derby have the skills and ambition to lead the way."*

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### **Canada down selects two Shipbuilders for future Canadian Patrol Submarine Project**

Government of Canada press release Published on 26/08/2025

The Government of Canada has announced that it has shortlisted two major shipbuilders to continue the procurement process for Canada's future patrol submarine project (CPSP), which will replace the current fleet of Victoria-class submarines.

Through Canada's defence policy 'Our North, Strong and Free' the Government of Canada is providing members of the Royal Canadian Navy with the equipment they need to keep Canadians safe and maintain current and future operational readiness. Canada has the longest coastline in the world, and it is essential that the Royal Canadian Navy be equipped with superior underwater surveillance capability to protect our country's security and Arctic sovereignty.



TKMS Type 212CD



**Hanwha Ocean KSS-III**

The Royal Canadian Navy requires a new submarine fleet that will be deployable in the Arctic with extended range and endurance that will provide stealth, persistence and lethality as key capabilities. The future Canadian Patrol Submarine will employ a unique combination of these attributes to ensure that Canada can detect, track, deter and, if necessary, defeat adversaries in all three of Canada's oceans. It will enable the Government of Canada to contribute to international security through deployments alongside allies and partners, while creating opportunities to strengthen Canada's defence and marine sectors.

Today, the Honourable Joël Lightbound, Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, and the Honourable Stephen Fuhr, Secretary of State (Defence Procurement), announced that the Government of Canada has identified German company Thyssen Krupp Marine Systems (TKMS) and Korean company Hanwha Ocean Co., Ltd. (Hanwha) as the two qualified suppliers for the Canadian Patrol Submarine Project (CPSP).

This decision was informed by a thorough assessment of Canada's requirements for the CPSP, including construction and delivery timelines for the new submarine fleet. Canada also engaged with other governments and militaries to exchange lessons learned and to gain insights into their respective submarine acquisitions, infrastructure and sustainment programs.



**Victoria-class submarine HMCS CORNER BROOK on Arctic patrol during 'OP Nanook' sails past an Iceberg on 14<sup>th</sup> Aug 2007.**

Photo : Cplc Blake Rodgers.

As the current global environment continues to evolve, the CPSP is an opportunity to diversify Canada's defence partnerships and collaborate with allies and partners, while creating long-term opportunities for Canada's marine and defence industries. The identification of qualified suppliers is a critical milestone for the CPSP. It is a positive

signal that the Government of Canada is taking the necessary steps to provide members of the Royal Canadian Navy with the equipment they need, and that it is prepared to move quickly and decisively to ensure delivery of the first Canadian Patrol Submarine no later than 2035.

As part of the next steps, Canada will conduct in-depth engagements with the two qualified suppliers to continue to advance the procurement process. The Government of Canada remains committed to engaging Canadian industry and creating high-paying jobs at home through the CPSP. As such, Canada intends to leverage work on the submarines to generate economic benefits for Canada's marine and defence industry throughout the fleet's operational life.

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### **CHANGES IN THE BARROW SHIPYARD**

The updating of facilities in the Barrow Shipyard is still progressing although the visual evidence of these changes has been difficult to see of late. However, as those of you who regularly cross the Michaelson Road Bridge will have seen, the new 'Wet Dock Quay' for the DREADNOUGHT Class boats is gradually emerging from the waters of the Devonshire Dock and the framework of the new Support Building has rapidly arisen from its foundations.

The 'Old' Wet Dock Quay is currently occupied by HMS AGAMEMNON. When AGAMEMNON leaves Barrow HMS ACHILLIES will take her place there - in the not too distant future. But the first occupant of the 'New' Wet Dock Quay will be the 'First of Class' HMS DREADNOUGHT to be followed in due course by HMS VALIANT, HMS WARSPITE and HMS KING GEORGE VI and, a bit further in the future, by the 'New' AUKUS Class boats.

Works still to come in the Shipyard include the complete 'Re-Cladding' of the Devonshire Dock Hall and provision of a new 'Crew Accommodation Building' and 'Offices' to replace the 'Temporary' facilities provided for the Vanguard Class build programme over 40 years ago.

Then there is that big empty space off Michaelson Road (where the old ASTUTE Store used to be) where there are plans to build a large new facility – nothing started there yet - but not sure whether they are still waiting for the last remnants of the previous building to be demolished

Below are two photographs - one showing the progress with the 'New' Wet Dock Quay and its supporting buildings and the other being an artist's impression of a DREADNOUGHT Class boat alongside. One might be forgiven for wondering whether there will be sufficient space in the Devonshire Dock to turn the Boat around so she can pass though the Michaelson Road Bridge 'bows first' on exit or whether she will need to go out stern first!! Still I'm sure someone has thought about that and will let us know.



**Progress on the New Devonshire Dock Quay**





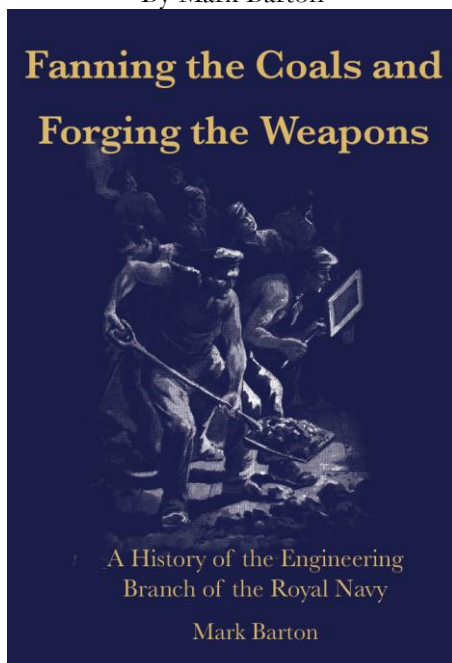
Artist's Impression of a DREADNOUGHT Class SSBN alongside at the New Devonshire Dock Quay

## BOOKS & REVIEWS

Usually there are only one or two books which are suggested for inclusion in IN DEPTH but, unusually, there has been a bit of a rush of suggested and recommended reading for this issue. Unfortunately I haven't got space for all of them in this issue so below you will find a selection which, hopefully, you will find interesting

### The Submariners Great Escape

By Mark Barton



Some time ago I was given one of those random tasks from my boss that any ex-RN will recognise tend to come along. In this case it was for 'The Year of Engineering'- can you just write a History of the Engineering Branch? - clearly with no funds being

allocated to do so and it being on top of my actual main job. All because he recognised I was used to researching naval history and I was a marine engineer. Initially I had hoped there would be a suitable history out there and I could wriggle out of it. Perhaps fortunately there was not one and so, using my background which is social history and working from objects, I produced an initial history that was used internally in the four months I was given to do it. With now being able to spend more time researching and collating information, I have been able to considerably expand and improve that original work and was recently able to publish the book **'Fanning the Coals and Forging the Weapons - A History of the Engineering Branch of the Royal Navy.'**

The title is from the Book of Isaiah 54 if people do not recognise the quote. While there are books out there that cover eras, places, single specialisations I have still not found anyone else who has tried to bring it together with all of the five current groups of ME, WE, MESM, WESM and AE and their various predecessors. The book focuses largely on the era up to the end of World War II although it does endeavour to bring the story up to date and focusses on people not equipment and it brings many new accounts to life.

One of my favourite discoveries was about the two submariner ERAs who escaped from Colditz. This investigation started by coming across a curling cup made by two artificers in Switzerland in 1943 and trying to work out how they got there to make it. The story below was gathered from a series of sources but an account can be found in the podcast “For you the War is Over Series 1 ERA Lister & ERA Hammond” although the broadcasters had no understanding of what an ERA was. The extract below from my book picks up the story.

Relatively few prisoners of war were naval as the chances of survival following losing an action were far less than for the other two services. Therefore, survival stories are relatively rare. There were at least two members of the Branch that were sent to Colditz: ERA Frederick W. E. ‘Wally’ Hammond and ERA Don ‘Tubby’ Lister. Both were submariners from the S Class Shark and the minelayer Seal respectively the only two submarines to be captured by the Germans. The crew of Shark were all taken off successfully and the Germans took the captured submarine under tow, but the crew had already set in motion her scuttling and soon the Germans found the submarine filling and threatening to pull their towing vessels under. The Germans, watched by the captured crew, had to cut the ropes and let her sink. Seal had been badly damaged and after considerable effort was able to get to the surface, but she was recovered by the Germans and actually used later as a U boat.

Both Hammond and Lister were sent to Marlag und Milag Nord camp at Tarnstedt, near Bremen which was the dedicated naval (both Royal and Merchant prison). Here they took part in a tunnel escape attempt, along with many others. It was a 240-foot-long tunnel and utilised bed boards to provide shoring for the tunnel. They had all the challenges of disposing of the sand the site was built on, utilising spaces under the huts. They had to create a track to help pull the sand out, making wheels using a lathe they made from an old gramophone. They escaped, along with an ERA Johnson, on the 6th of April 1942, but they were captured, Lister having reached Hamburg and been outside for eight days, with the other two captured after they separated on the second day. They were transferred to Colditz. This was before either the of the escapes made popular by the films *The Wooden Horse* and *The Great Escape* - which were October 1943 and March 1944. Once in Colditz they used the time to plan to escape again, putting materials aside, such as forged papers and cash so they could make better progress once outside. The first part of their escape was they used the fact that they were not officers to get themselves transferred out, although not before making a silent

working punch to remove rivets for the escape committee. Probably the simplest escape from Colditz achieved.

They were transferred to Lamsdorf Prison Camp (Stalag VIII B) and soon put the techniques they had learnt in Colditz. They managed to get themselves into a work party which got them out of the camp although they were still guarded. While working in a gas works, they managed to climb a wall at dusk and get away. Two soldiers escaped with them but the pairs split and the soldiers were soon captured. But using their forged paperwork and German money and the knowledge they had gained from Colditz, they used trams and trains, undertaking several short trips to avoid suspicion and with luggage with German materials only in. They even stayed in a hotel enroute. They got close to Switzerland and then walked across the border. Here they joined up with a group of four officers who had escaped from Colditz. The group of Captain Pat Reid, Major Ronald Littledale, Lieutenant Commander Billie Stephens, and Flight Lieutenant Howard Wardle who had cut through the bars on a window, climbed onto a flat roof, crossed a brightly lit outer yard to enter a cellar and crawled out through a narrow air shaft leading to the dry moat.

It took them five days to get to Switzerland but then a further 14 months to reach Gibraltar through the resistance escape lines. While in Switzerland, the escapees and a local team at Saanenmoser held a curling competition in February 1943. Hammond and Lister made a trophy for this which remained in use for some time after the war and is now at the Imperial War Museum.

The full book contains many other stories of members of the Branch in all sorts of escapades. Copies of the book are available for order through Waterstones, Hatchards, Foyles and eBay but also by contacting the author directly through [markbartonRN@gmail.com](mailto:markbartonRN@gmail.com).

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By Editor: I collected my copy of the book *Fanning the Coals and Forging the Weapons - A History of the Engineering Branch of the Royal Navy* from Waterstones at the end of last week – 30<sup>th</sup> September. I hope to include a review of the Book in my next Newsletters but, from a very quick skim through, it looks pretty comprehensive

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### **Hellespont – Through the Jaws of Death**

Malcolm (aka Byrne) Avery writes:

I was intrigued. What could possibly have inspired Winston Churchill to write: “The Naval History of Britain contains no page more



wonderful than that which records the prowess of her submarines at the Dardanelles”

My research uncovered unimaginable feats of courage and audacity. Even as a submariner, I was unaware of these extraordinary escapades. I wanted to bring these stories to life. Not with a dry non-fiction tome destined for academic shelves, but through a gripping novel rooted in history. That’s

how ‘Hellespont – Through the Jaws of Death’ was born.

My first novel is available now in paperback and e-book formats. In addition to the fictional story, and I expect of particular interest to the submarine fraternity, the book includes a chronography of real incidents and a bibliography should anyone wish to investigate further

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### HELLESPONT - ENDPIECE

Of the fourteen submarines that took part in the Dardanelles campaign (including B11), eight were sunk – three British, four French and one Australian (not including E14 in 1918). Nine submarines undertook fifteen patrols in the Sea of Marmara and, between them, they accounted for the following Turkish losses:

- One battleship – Barbaros Heyreddin.
- One coastal defence ship – Mesûdiye.
- One destroyer.
- Five Gunboats.
- Eleven transports.
- Forty-four steamers.
- One hundred & forty-eight sailing craft.

In addition to this dramatic disruption to the sea lines of communication and seaborne support, significant damage was also inflicted upon railways and overland reinforcement routes. With some justification, Vice-Admiral de Robeck told Vice-Admiral Limpus in a letter dated 16th May 1915, “*a submarine in the Marmara now is worth an Army Corps.*”

On 3rd June he wrote to him again,

“*Our submarines in the Marmora (sic) are the most valuable weapon that the Navy has at present.*”

The Admiralty was also aware. On 9th June, the First Sea Lord, Admiral Jackson, wrote to de Robeck, “*Your submarines have done wonders*”

As far as my research has revealed, all merchant vessels were stopped, or ordered to heave to, prior to search, with only those found to be carrying war materiel being destroyed. In this case, the crew and passengers were disembarked, either into their own tenders or by taking them aboard the submarines, despite the cramped space available. Such conduct is in marked contrast to the unrestricted submarine warfare sanctioned by the Kaiser, announced by Admiral von Pohl on 4th February 1915. This is intimated by Winston Churchill in the continuation of the quotation on the front cover “*Their exploits constitute in daring, in skill, in endurance, in risk, the finest examples of submarine action in the whole of the Great War, and were, moreover, marked by a strict observance of the recognised rules of warfare.*”

Four Victoria Crosses were won by submariners in this theatre and it is these and the other COs’ names that are remembered – Holbrook (B11), Brodie T S (E15), Stoker (AE2), Boyle (E14), Nasmith (E11), Cochrane (E7), Bruce (E12), White (E14) amongst others. However, in ‘Seven Pillars of Wisdom’, T E Lawrence writes, “*It is still less fair, of course, like all war-stories, to the un-named rank and file: who miss their share of the credit, as they must do, until they can write the despatches.*”

Glorious stories of derring-do are mostly credited to the leaders, whereas anyone with any military nous knows that it is usually only truly cohesive teams that earn success. Nowhere is this truer than in submarines where the actions of just one man – officer or rating – could bring glory. But the same individual could equally court disaster. Perhaps it is most appropriate, therefore, that this story is told as fiction with an unknown submarine and her crew representing all those courageous men who achieved the most remarkable results. Accordingly, the reader is invited to consider the lowliest crew member. His actions remain unrecorded but were no less vital to his boat’s survival and achievements.

Furthermore, in the Dardanelles submarine campaign, it was the entire cadre of boats working as a team that brought eventual success. Individual fortitude was necessary, of course, but together they encouraged one another to overcome the hazards they faced: navigation in poorly-charted waters, with ever-changing salinity, whorls and currents; the incalculable menace of a host of mines (three thousand were swept at the end of the war); the unavoidable, heavy nets strung across their paths; and not forgetting the stout-hearted Turks whose forces always put up a fight when possible.

In his book, “Forlorn Hope 1915: The Submarine Passage of the Dardanelles”, C G Brodie – Keyes’ staff officer – identifies the team up to the initial defeat of Hellespont. “*Nasmith, the captain, whose mastery of the game made him,*

*though off the field, an example and a spur to the side. Stoker rather as a brilliant amateur, who stole the show from the professionals, but missed the limelight. Boyle the centre forward who scored the winning goal and got well-earned applause from the public and the team. T.S. [Brodie, his twin brother killed in E15] I like to think of as "the little cherub, sitting aloft," doing his best to look after the side. I can fancy him gently plucking the sleeve of the helmsman as E14 skirted shoals and mine moorings on her passage, less gently jogging the elbows of the Turkish gunners firing at AE2, aground. Yes, a team, and a good one."*

Kipling finishes his poem 'The Trade' with this final verse:

Their feats, their fortunes and their fames  
Are hidden from their nearest kin;  
No eager public backs or blames,  
No journal prints the yarn they spin  
(The Censor would not let it in!)  
When they return from run or raid.  
Unheard they work, unseen they win.  
That is the custom of "The Trade."

The rest of the Royal Navy and families at home were left significantly uninformed of the remarkable achievements of the Submarine Service in the Dardanelles, in the Baltic, in the Heligoland Bight, in the Skaw and elsewhere because, as Kipling implies, their operations were considered too secret. Arthur Balfour who had been Prime Minister (1901-1905) and was First Lord of the Admiralty from May 1915 until November 1916, having read E11's patrol reports, minuted, "*It is worth considering whether some episodes of this remarkable story might not be published verbatim.*" It never happened. But perhaps the most incredulous example of such unawareness is when Admiral David Beatty, in the command of the Grand Fleet since November 1916, wrote to the Admiralty on 18th January 1917 concerning the disposition of submarines around the coast. He opined, "*It would appear that nine-tenths of these valuable craft have been used entirely for defensive purposes and consequently have not been in a position to enable them to do anything during the 2½ years we have been at war.*"

In their response, the Lords of the Admiralty – rather graciously interpreting his comments to refer only to the D- and C-Classes – pointed out that the former were employed in overseas work. In addition and despite the small C-Class boats being unsuitable for off-shore employment, they had nonetheless been so tasked when appropriate. They felt the need to explain to the Commander-in-Chief that units of his own Grand Fleet in Scapa were unable to respond with sufficient rapidity, their response of 30th January stated, "*Submarines constitute our principal defence against raids of all kinds*"

In August 1916, Commodore (S) had previously reported, "*The percentage of losses of our overseas submarines has been 33%, probably heavier than in any other of H.M. Forces.*" Twenty-two boats had already been lost at this early stage in the war – fifteen of these with all hands – and Commodore Hall concludes, "*These losses bear out my contention that the overseas submarines are always in action when in enemy waters, though actions have not been made the subject of despatches and the losses have not been announced.*"

By November 1918, fifty-eight submarines and 1,174 officers and men had been lost, but with little celebration of their strategic contribution to the winning of the war, which was out of all proportion to the numbers deployed.

It is hard for us in the 21st Century ever to conceive what life was like in WW1 submarines: no sonar; no radar; unreliable gyro compasses; inaccurate distance measurement; no echo sounder; poor periscope optics; radio of pathetically short range; no air purification or resupply; and certainly no ability to charge batteries whilst dived. All these elements rendered the fragile craft truly vulnerable both to enemy action and to the exceptionally hostile natural environment. Perhaps the best analogy available today is to consider the astronauts in those space probes bound for the moon in the late 1960s: cramped; trapped within their vehicle in an unforgiving environment; subject to system failures; and with less computing capacity aboard than a modern 'smart' phone. We look back speechless with wonder at, and with huge admiration for, the courage of those pioneers. Now take those thoughts back to the technology of fifty years before that. We should hold early submariners in no less regard, even before pitching them against a determined enemy.

Again, it is Churchill who sums it up best, completing his previous quote:

*"When one thinks of these officers and men, penned together amid the intricate machinery which crammed their steel, cigar shaped vessels; groping, butting, charging far below the surface at unmeasured, unknown obstructions; surrounded by explosive engines [mines], any one of which might destroy them at a touch; the target of guns and torpedoes if they rose for an instant to the light of day; harried by depth charges, hunted by gunboats and destroyers, stalked by the German U-boat; expecting every moment to be shattered, stifled, or hopelessly starved at the bottom of the sea; and yet in spite of all, enduring cheerfully such ordeals for weeks at a time; returning unflinchingly again and again through the Jaws of Death". !*

## **The DIDO Papers** **The Letters of A Victorian Midshipman**

by John Johnson-Allen

Foreword by Rear Admiral John Lang

After two years at the Britannia Naval College at Dartmouth, Bryan Godfrey Faussett joined his first ship, in June 1879. From the day he joined HMS DIDO he wrote long letters home to his family and friends. The DIDO went to West Africa, South and East Africa and the letters recount his experiences as a young man of 15 from when he first joined. Remarkably, he made copies of all the letters that he wrote home and these copies provide a very rare glimpse of the life of a young midshipman in the Royal Navy of the mid-Victorian era.

The letters cover the period from June 1879 until April 1881. He experiences not only the life of a young midshipman, learning the ways of a naval warship, but also visiting many places in West Africa which very few, if any, of his contemporaries at home would have any knowledge of whatsoever. His letters are fluent and well-written and it is easy to forget that they are written by a 15-year-old boy. His descriptions of West Africa, his visits ashore and the death of the DIDO's captain and his funeral in a west African graveyard only a few hours later, remarkable experiences that occur, including the death of the hours later and a meeting of local kings and chieftains in a conference on board DIDO in order to resolve disputes, are but two of the remarkable experiences that he undergoes and records. DIDO also spends time on the East coast of Africa, anchored off Durban at the time of the first Boer war and his descriptions of that conflict, in which some of the crew of the DIDO were sent to fight, are fascinating.

In his Foreword, Rear Admiral John Lang says 'Even a casual glance at this collection of letters is a joy. It is an extraordinary record of a cadet and midshipman in the Victorian Navy and opens a window of life in an era when the passage of time is marked by the receipt and dispatch of periodic letters to and from home'. his fascinating story will be of great appeal to anyone with an interest in biographies

Readership: maritime history, ships and shipping, especially during Victorian times.

ISBN 978-184995-603-1 234 × 156mm c.192pp c. 65 illustrations (b & w photos, pages from scrapbook, letters, drawings and paintings some in colour) softback £18.99 August, 2025

**About the author:** John Johnson-Allen was a navigating officer in the Merchant Navy for nine years, joining his first ship as an apprentice at the age of 16. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, the Royal Institute of Navigation, and the has written articles Institute of Seamanship. He for various historical journals and is the author of six books including 'They Were Just Skulls' and 'Rosy' Wemyss, Admiral of the Fleet.' Both of which have been reviewed in previous editions of In Depth

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## **No Uncertain Sound** **The Life and Times of Admiral Sir Jock Slater**

By Peter Hore

The life and times of a famous admiral who helped to bring the Cold War to a close, told through his diaries and interviews with over one hundred politicians, senior and junior officers and colleagues who knew him well.

Peter Hore's biography of Admiral Sir Jock Slater illuminates pivotal moments in the evolution of British naval and air power during the late twentieth century.

Uses as primary sources the memories of those who took part in events, such as the making nuclear policy, the decision to send women to sea, the end of the gay ban, UK- Russia relations and the establishment of British Maritime Doctrine.

This book will appeal to anyone interested in naval history.

"...throws a bright light on critical developments of British naval and naval air power in the late 20th century." Professor Nicholas Rodger

"...a masterly slice of contemporary naval history." Professor Richard Harding

"... a vivid account of Admiral Sir Jock Slater's life that blossoms further into a synthesis of British naval and defence policy at the end of the Cold War." John B. Hattendorf, Editor-in-Chief, Oxford Encyclopaedia of Maritime History

Captain Peter Hore's naval career included exchange service in the US Navy, and two tours in NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic. During the Falklands War he was joint logistics commander on Ascension Island, he was military assistant to the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Systems), he helped direct the Royal Navy's applied research programme, and he was Head of Defence Studies, 1997-2000.

### **An Obituary - Commander Peter (John) McGregor OBE Royal Navy**

Commander John McGregor OBE Royal Navy 'Crossed the Bar on August 12th 2025 at the age of 88.

After a varied naval career, which included high pressure jobs in nuclear submarines, John McGregor was appointed as Engineer Commander of HMS FEARLESS in March 1982. At the time he may have thought that this would be a comparatively relaxing job, but all that changed when FEARLESS sailed with the Task Force for the Falklands War.

He served under an outstanding Captain, in Jeremy Larken DSO, who allowed him to use his initiative in all sorts of ways. On the passage south, FEARLESS stopped at Ascension Island for three weeks and John visited every naval and merchant ship arriving there as the amphibious forces gathered for the future invasion. He was co-opted as staff engineer officer to Commodore Michael Clapp, the Commodore Amphibious Warfare. Virtually every merchant ship needed engineering help, having been assembled at breakneck speed before sailing. He had a large engineering staff of about 150, all happy to be involved, and FEARLESS became a fleet support ship.

FEARLESS sailed from Ascension Island on 8 May and entered San Carlos Water at 0230 on 21 May 1982. By mid-day 2,500 troops (mainly Paratroopers and Royal Marines) had landed by landing craft and helicopters from FEARLESS, INTREPID, CANBERRA and other ships. Later that day, and for the following week, they were attacked by Argentine Mirages and Skyhawks flying very low and fast – [too low to get their bomb delay fuses sorted]. After the landings, John's team continued in their engineering support role of fighting fires (HMS PLYMOUTH, SIR GALAHAD, SIR TRISTRAM), and repairing ships hit by bombs which did not explode and helping to remove the bombs. John was awarded the OBE for his leadership in removing unexploded bombs from SIR LANCELOT and SIR GALAHAD. Regarding the unexploded bomb on SIR LANCELOT, it was discovered that the fuse had unwound its full eleven turns and so it could have exploded at any moment only prevented because the spindle had been bent when the bomb had bounced around as it slowed down.

Peter John McGregor (always known as John) was born in Midhurst, Sussex on 1 June 1937 to Paymaster Commander John Harvey McGregor (known as Jack) and Audrey Pamela Brooke (known as Pam). Jack's own father, Robert McGregor, was a Civil Servant in the Admiralty, who received an OBE himself. Pam's father, Wynyard Brooke, was an architect who worked for 40 years in Shanghai and was ultimately interned there during the Second World War. Jack and Pam met in Shanghai where Jack was serving in the Royal Navy.

Jack and Pam lived in Surrey in their early married years but when they found themselves under the flight path during the Battle of Britain, they decided in October 1940 to move down to Devon. Jack drove down in his Austin Seven with John (aged 3) which left John with his only clear memory of his father. (Pam came down by train with younger brother, Richard, who was born in 1939.) Jack was posted to HMS NEPTUNE, a cruiser, in 1941, and she sailed from Chatham in May on what proved to be her final voyage. The NEPTUNE sank on 19 December 1941 when she entered an uncharted minefield in the Mediterranean off Tripoli, and all members of the crew except one lost their lives. From that time John's life was inextricably bound up with the NEPTUNE tragedy, and a major part of his later life was concerned with trying to unlock the mysteries surrounding the sinking and eventually finding the wreck.

John was educated at the New Beacon School, Sevenoaks, Kent, and then at Christ's Hospital, Horsham, Sussex from the age of 12. He did well there, but at the age of 16 he followed his destiny by passing the exam to enter the Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth as a naval Cadet. After the requisite two years, there followed a three-month spell in HMS TRIUMPH, an aircraft carrier, during which they visited Leningrad (now St Petersburg).

After another year at Dartmouth as a Midshipman, he was posted to HMS BULWARK (another aircraft carrier) as a Sub-Lieutenant for a year which took him to the Far East and elsewhere. Then from September 1958 he spent three years at the Royal Naval Engineering College, Manadon, Plymouth. There he achieved the engineering qualification as a Member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. John was always active in the sporting field and at Manadon he was Captain of Cricket, [performing as a batsman and a leg-break bowler]. He was also an athlete (representing the Navy in long and triple jumping) and he enjoyed rugby, hockey, squash, golf, sailing and skiing over the years.

His next appointment, by then a Lieutenant, was to HMS BELFAST, a second world war cruiser known to many as she is now moored near Tower Bridge in the Thames. In Belfast he again visited the Far East.

His career then took a different turn in 1962 when he entered the Submarine Service. It started with a Submarine course at HMS DOLPHIN, Portsmouth. He then served in HMS TRUNCHEON for two years and HMS OLYMPUS for one year, based in Scotland and Portsmouth.

Then in 1966 he went on a Nuclear Reactor course at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, which was followed by nuclear training at Dounreay in Scotland. After being promoted to Lieutenant Commander in 1967 he was appointed to HMS DREADNOUGHT, based at Rosyth and Faslane. The following year he was appointed to HMS REVENGE, which was firstly based at Birkenhead and then at Faslane.

The final nuclear submarine in which John served was HMS REPULSE, to which he was appointed in 1970, being based in Faslane and Rosyth. He enjoyed his time as Senior Engineer Officer of HMS REPULSE where he spent 3 ½ years, which included three Polaris patrols and firing a missile down the range at Cape Canaveral. The refit in Rosyth Dockyard, including refuelling the nuclear reactor, took just 13 months which remains the fastest ever completed in a Dockyard. The engineering department worked in shifts day and night for the whole refit, which was crucial in driving the refit through to completion.

His three years in Chatham Dockyard from 1973 as Chairman of the Reactor Test Group taught him a lot about industrial relations, and he was instrumental in driving through the last six months of HMS CHURCHILL's refit, keeping her completion date on time. During this time he was promoted to Commander. He then spent a year on an advanced nuclear course at Greenwich gaining a Master's degree. Then followed his most enjoyable time in submarine support jobs, with two years from 1977 as Base Engineer Submarines in charge of about 100 engineering and electrical staff, supporting all submarines coming in for maintenance and repair at Devonport.

His next posting was as Submarine Flotilla Engineer Officer on Flag Officer Submarine staff at Northwood for two years. Following that he was on courses in the Portsmouth area prior to joining HMS FEARLESS in March 1982, where his experiences have been described above. After his time in FEARLESS he spent two years as Naval Assistant to the Port Admiral Devonport, followed by an Intelligence Course and a special study in London.

Then in June 1986 he became an Intelligence Officer on the staff of the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) based in Norfolk, Virginia. It is the world's largest naval station with many miles of waterways. John and his family enjoyed their time there and took the opportunity to enjoy water skiing. On returning to the UK in 1989 John was on the Naval Recruiting staff in London until retiring from the Navy in April 1991.

One occupation in retirement was the acquisition of a 40-foot yacht called Sea Biscuit in 1997. This was acquired together with a fellow retired Commander, Rob Walker, and John's brother, Richard. Sailing trips were originally around the Solent but soon extended to the Scilly Isles and then to various parts of Brittany and Normandy. The Scottish islands were also visited, sometimes returning via Ireland, and one year there was a trip to the Baltic. John carried out most of the maintenance from Sea Biscuit's mooring in Chatham. The boat was kept for about 20 years.

John's primary occupation during retirement was as Chairman of the Neptune Association, which was founded in 2002 to commemorate the loss of HMS NEPTUNE and her fellow ship, HMS KANDAHAR, and to try and unlock the secrets relating to the disaster from which 763 men from NEPTUNE had lost their lives, with just one survivor. The one survivor was Able Seaman Norman Walton. Richard had found a newspaper article about Norman in the Simonstown Naval Museum in South Africa, and from this John had established contact with him. Norman Walton attended the first meeting of the Neptune Association and recounted how he had endured five days on an open raft in the middle of December, seeing all his shipmates dying off one by one until he was picked up by an Italian ship. After Norman had died, the Association organised a memorial visit to Malta and Libya of which the highlight was a trip on a dredger out to the site off Tripoli where it was believed the ship had gone down. Norman Walton's daughter scattered his ashes there. There was dramatic news in 2016 when the wreck of HMS NEPTUNE was located by a Royal Navy survey ship, nearly 75 years after she had sunk. She was in almost exactly the place that John had predicted, and sonar images showed a clear correlation between the wreck and earlier photographs of HMS NEPTUNE. John and other members of the Neptune Association were responsible for the creation of a pyramid memorial at the National Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire which records the names of the 836 men who died in the two ships, NEPTUNE and KANDAHAR. These events, and many other discoveries along the way, would broadly bring closure to the major catastrophe that had been a part of John's memories for nearly all his life. He published his book recounting his research entitled "The Tragic Loss of HMS Neptune" in August 2025.

John McGregor was married twice, firstly to Margit Lauder and secondly to Patsy Clarke. Patsy survives him along with his daughter Lisa and his son Robert from his first marriage and five grandchildren, and also his stepson Jonathan Clarke. John and Patsy lived in Whitstable, Kent from 2001.



**SUBMARINERS 'CROSSED THE BAR'** (Reported 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 to 30th September 2025)  
Information on 'Submariners Crossed the Bar' compiled from CTBs reported by all available sources.

NAME	DATE/AGE	RANK/RATE	BRANCH	SM SERVICE	SUBMARINES
Reginald (Reg) Sweet BEM	4th June 2025 aged 89	Telegraphist	Daily Telegraph	SM Service 1950s	Served as Naval Padre from 1965 to 1969 & from 1975 to 1999
Anthony James Spoonner	6th June 2023 aged 62	Marine Engineering Mechanic	We Remember Submariners	1981 to 1990	including TRAFALGAR (1st Commission Crew) on 27th May 1983
Michael J King	24th June 2025	Warrant Officer Ordnance Electrical Mechanician	Frome RNA	January 1967 to May 1987	REPULSE (S) (1st Commission Crew) on 28th September 1968 & REPULSE (S) on commissioning at Rosyth to 1st October 1973, RENOWN, DOLPHIN (SM School) & NEPTUNE
Peter Wiggins	24th June 2025	ME	We Remember Submariners	between 1963 & 1968	DREADNOUGHT
Patrick Desmond Pogson	28th June 2025 aged 89	Lt Commander (E) (MESM)	Telegraph & We Remember Submariners	Not given	SEASCOUT (on commissioning on 28th July 1960), THERMOPYLAE (Spring 1962), OBERON (1966 to 1967), ATURM, Poole, TRIUMPH, SULTAN, PEMBROKE, NELSON, WARRIOR, NGTE West Drayton & AMTE Haslar
Timothy Richard Lee	2nd July 2025 aged 88	Captain (X) (N)	Friend of Submarine Museum	Not Given	VALIANT (1967 & 1968) & DOLPHIN (1970 & 1971)
Roland "Frenchy" Lanouette RCN 16128-H	3rd July 2025 aged 89	Leading Seaman (CR1)	SAOC	from January 1955)	TAPIR, TRESPASSER, AMPHION, AMBUSH, ARTEMIS, ONSLAUGHT, ALDERNEY, SCOTSMAN & SENTINEL
Michael Styles P/JX 925727	5th July 2025	Signalman (TCO2)	We Remember Submariners	1958 to December 1959	DOLPHIN, ADAMANT & TIPTOE
Kenneth Blight	8th July 2025 aged 86	Not Given	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	ASTUTE
John W G Bench CBE CO 00691B	9th July 2025 aged 90	Captain (E) (WESM)	We Remember Submariners & Dorset Branch	1961 to 1974	DOLPHIN, ARTFUL (1956 1961), TACITURN (Oct 1961 to Jan 1965), RENOWN (Oct 1971 to Sep 1974), AUWE Portland, NEPTUNE, FOSM
John David (George) Morton, MBE D116914Y	13th July 2025 aged 71	Warrant Officer 1st Class Coxswain	We Remember Submariners & West of Scotland	December 1974 to 20**	COURAGEOUS (1975 to 1977), RENOWN (P) (1977 to 1979), RENOWN (S) (1984 to 1986), REVENGE (1986 to 1991), VANGUARD (1991 to 1994) & VICTORIOUS (1996 to 1999)
Christopher (Chris) Lock	13th July 2025	Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	OPOSSUM, OBERON, OPPORTUNE, ONSLAUGHT & DOLPHIN.
John Myrie Holl	15th July 2025	Lt-Commander (MESM)	We Remember Submariners	1969 to 1979	WARSPITE, OSIRIS, COCHRANE, SCEPTRE & RESOLUTION
Ian (Sotty) Sutton P063688	16th July 2025 aged 79	Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic	Manchester Branch	1967 to 1973	DOLPHIN 1967), ALCIDE (1967 to 1969) & OCELOT (1971 to 1973)
Nicholas Pugh Morton	16th July 2025	Chief Petty Officer Marine Engineering Artificer	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	RESOLUTION (P) on recommissioning at Rosyth on 27th November 1976, RENOWN, REVENGE, REPULSE (S) on recommissioning at Rosyth on 1987 & TRIUMPH on Commissioning at Barrow on 12th October 1991 Also served in AGINCOURT & LLANDAFF
Derek Graham	18th July 2025	Electrical Mechanic	We Remember	Not Given	Not given

			Submariners		
Roger E Crafts	19th July 2025	Petty Officer (Sonar) (Submarines)	TURBULENT F/B & We Remember Submariners	Not Given	SEALION, PORPOISE, OCELOT, SPLENDID (1st Commission Crew) on 21st March 1981 & TURBULENT (1st Commission Crew) on 28th April 1986
Alan F Dickinson	21st July 2025	Chief Petty Officer Weapons Engineering Artificer	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	including REVENGE (S) (1st Commission Crew) on 4th December 1969
Andrew D Jackson D146088G	22nd July 2025 aged 67	Radio Operator 1 (SM)	East Kent Branch	12th March 1979 to 18th December 1984	ORPHEUS, ONSLAUGHT, ONYX, PORPOISE & WALRUS Previously served in ARK ROYAL
Frank R A Pas D117241S	26th July 2025 aged 70	Leading Seaman (RP)	Sheffield Branch	1974 to 1979	OTUS, OPPORTUNE, NARWHAL & CACHALOT
Mick Claridge	27th July 2025	TS (SM)	F/B & Buddies in Boats	Not Given	SOVEREIGN & SCEPTRE
Iain A 'Maddog' Mackenzie, MBE D109407B	31st July 2025 aged 72	Chief Petty Officer Coxswain	West of Scotland Branch	from 1971 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018	FINWHALE, ONSLAUGHT, OPOSSUM, ODIN, WARSPITE, TRENCHANT & SPLENDID Former SA Chairman
Richard M (Rick) Spiring D080245	20th July 2025 aged 78	Mechanician	Plymouth Branch	1966 to 1975	REPULSE (1967 to 1971 1st Commission Crew on 28th September 1968) & WARSPITE (1974 to 1975)
John David (Pusser) Hill	29th July 2025	Warrant Officer Coxswain	We Remember Submariners	to August 1989	DOLPHIN, WALRUS, OTUS, VALIANT recommissioning at Chatham on 12th May 1972), FINWHALE (Final Commission Crew) on 15th November 1974, DOLPHIN (SM School), SUPERB & DOLPHIN SMMU
Roland George Charles Steele P/KX 769566 & RAN Z88202	31st July 2025 aged 96	Chief Mechanician	Gosport Branch	1958 to 1968	TOKEN, FINWHALE on 'Commissioning' at Chatham on 27th January 1964 & RAN in OXLEY (on Commissioning at Greenock on 27th March 1967)
William J Arscott	July 2025	Leading Seaman (Radar Plotter 3	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	OPPORTUNE (on commissioning at Greenock on 29th December 1964), OTTER (on Commissioning at Devonport in June 1966) & ASTUTE
Alan Sutherland Clarke	6th August 2025	Commander RAN	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	RESOLUTION (P) 1979, RENOWN (1980s), T Boats, Northwood & RAN
Peter J Knights	7th August 2025	Control Electrical Artificer 1st Class & CPO ETSSM (RAN)	Submarines Association of Australia	Not Given	REVENGE (1972) & RESOLUTION (S) (1973 & on recommissioning at Rosyth on 27th November 1976 to 1977) & RAN in OVENS (1978 to 1981) & Navy Office, Canberra
Paul M Nelis D171865C	9th August 2025 aged 63	Marine Engineering Mechanic (M	Blackpool & Fylde Branch	1980 to 1994	ODIN, ONYX, ORPHEUS & OPOSSUM
Anthony (Tony) Keech P/MX 887822	9th August 2025 aged 90	Charge Chief Weapons Engineering Artificer (ex-Chief Ordnance Electrical Artificer (O	Buddies in Boats & We Remember Submariners	1959 to 1977	SM4 & TERROR (1959 to 1963), VERNON, EXCELLENT, MAIDSTONE, DOLPHIN, NEPTUNE & REPULSE (S) (1970 & on commissioning at Rosyth in 1972 to 1975) Also served in HMS SAINTES & LOCH KILLISPORT
Alvar L (Speedy) Unsworth	12th August 2025 aged 80	Petty Officer (UW1)	Blackpool and Fylde Branch	from July 1968	OLYMPUS, RESOLUTION, SUPERB, REVENGE, SWIFTSURE (1st Commission 17th October 1972), SUPERB (1st Commission 13th

D056450					November 1976) & SPARTAN (1st Commission 22nd September 1979)
Graeme Henderson	17th August 2025	Leading Medical Assistant	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	SUPERB
Michael Henry Rogers CO 22023G & P/J 949168	19th August 2025 aged 85	Lt Commander (SD) (X) (C)	Portsmouth Branch	1961 to 1990	RORQUAL (on recommissioning 22nd Nov 1961), TALENT, ARTFUL OBERON, DEFIANCE (1976), WARSPITE, VALIANT, FOSM (1982), FO Portsmouth (1989), ACE SRGN Italy (1991)
Paul Thomas Gunther	23rd August 2025	Lt Commander (SD) WESM	Indalo Spain Branch	1982 to 2008	TRAFALGAR (1984 to 1987), TIRELESS (1988 to 1989), RNEC Manadon (1989), TURBULENT (1990 to 1992), DEFIANCE (1992 to 1994), DOLPHIN (1995 to 1997), CWTA, Portsmouth (1998 to 2000), NMA Gosport (2001 to 2003), DG (HR)(Gosport) (2004), Nav Sec Office (2005 to 2006) & Portsmouth (Jago Road) (2007)
James Barry Mackay	26th August 2025	Lt (SD) WESM	Friend of SM Museum	from 3rd November 1980	ONYX (1981) & OSIRIS (1983)
Douglas M (Doug) Peak	31st August 2025	Chief Petty Officer (TS)	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	RESOLUTION (S), REVENGE (P) on recommissioning at Rosyth on 4th September 1982, REPULSE, SPLENDID, TRAFALGAR & SCTT
Bryan Jackson P067625D	August 2025 aged 81	Chief Marine Engineering Mechanic	Dolphin Branch	June 1963 to May 1983	TOTEM, THERMOPYLAE (on recommissioning at Portsmouth on 21st July 1965), OBERON, ODIN & OPOSSUM (on Commissioning' at DOLPHIN on 14th November 1981)
Eric Abery	August 2025	Chief Mechanician	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	Not Given
Robert Abery	August 2025	Leading Seaman (UW)	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	CACHALOT (on commissioning at Portsmouth on 22nd February 1963) & TACITURN 'on recommissioning for service with the 4th Submarine Division' at Sydney on 10th March 1964
John E Lear	September 2025	Chief Petty Officer Marine Engineering Artificer	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	including CHURCHILL on 'recommissioning' at Chatham on 7th May 1983
Ian Critchley D065161B	4th September 2025 aged 81	Chief Petty Officer Marine Engineering Artificer (P)	Gosport Branch	1975 to April 1984	Including OPOSSUM (on 'Commissioning' at DOLPHIN on 14th November 1981)
Richard Perry CO26158	5th September 2025 aged 61	Commander (WESM)	Bath Branch	1983 to 2012	DOLPHIN, CHURCHILL (1984 to 1986), TORBAY (1989 to 1991) & SPLENDID (1994 to 1997) Also served in INVINCIBLE (1982)
Graham J Rice	11th September 2025	Chief Petty Officer Marine Engineering Artificer (L)	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	SEALION, WALRUS, O Boats & UPHOLDER (1st Commission Crew) on 9th June 1990
Paul Abraham, CBE	11th September 2025 aged 64	Captain (X) (SM)	Friends of SM Museum	from 1984	BRILLIANT (1982 NL), OCELOT (1984 to 1985), TORBAY (1986 to 1988), TRAFALGAR (1989 to 1990), UPHOLDER (1991), TALENT (IL 1993 to 1995), CSST (1996 to 1997), VANGUARD (CO 1998 to 1999), CSST (2001 to 2002), PJHQ (2003 to 2004), FW/O Devonport (2005), Cdr Ops Northwood (2006 to 2007), Iraq (2008), NCHQ (2009), Cdr Ops (2010)

David Aspery	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2026	Radio Operator (S)	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	SWIFTSURE (1985)
Gafyn Darbyshire-Robert D206679K	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2025 aged 59	Petty Officer Marinee Engineering Artificer (EL)	We Remember Submariners	1986 to 1994	RALEIGH, SULTAN, DOLPHIN, TALENT, TORBAY, Captain SM2 & DRAKE.
Thomas Lee Davison D107055S	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2025 aged 75	Leading Seaman (RP) (SM)	Northeast Branch	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 1968 to 7 <sup>th</sup> December 1976	VALIANT (January 1969 to July 1970), DREADNOUGHT (July 1970 to June 1972) & SWIFTSURE (May 1974 to December 1976)
Lee Mitchell	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	Leading Seaman (TS)(SM)	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	RESOLUTION & VENGEANCE
Roger 'Taff' Morris D156146T	September 2025 aged 71	Warrant Officer (TS) (SM)	Wales Branch	August 1976 to 2008	ORACLE, DREADNOUGHT, COURAGEOUS, CONQUEROR (twice), NEPTUNE, CSST (1989) & SPLENDID
Steven Sinclair P064947	29 <sup>th</sup> September 2025 aged 83	Chief MEM (M)	Scottish Branch	From 1966	ANCHORITE, RORQUAL, ORPHEUS, OSIRIS & OBERON
David Malcolm Jeffreys	September 2025	Commodore (X) (SM)	Friends of SM Museum	1964 to 1991	TACITURN (Sonar Officer on commissioning on 10 <sup>th</sup> March 1964), SEALION (1967), RENOWN (S) (Sonar Officer - 1 <sup>st</sup> Commission Crew), ONSLAUGHT (CO 1971 to 1972), NEPTUNE (1974 to 1975) RENOWN (S) (CO 28 <sup>th</sup> November 1975 to 1977)
Peter M Crawley D223837X	September 2025	Petty Officer Medical Assistant (SM)	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	TRENCHANT & DOLPHIN (SETT) on 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998
Paul Crowson	September 2025	Able Seaman	We Remember Submariners	Not Given	including RENOWN (P) on re-commissioning at Rosyth in 198*
Malcolm Fuzzard D091939L	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2025	Charge Chief Weapons Electrical Artificer	Plymouth Branch	October 1970 to 199	REVENGE (1972 & on recommissioning at Rosyth in Aug/Sep 1975 to 1976), RENOWN (1978 to 1984) & TRAFALGAR (1986 to 1990) & (1990 to 1995).

