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VICE CHAIRMAN'S June Word



I have to open by saying this is the 120th edition of the Barrow in Furness Branch News Letter and what a credit it is to our branch, well read and respected by our readers both within the branch and elsewhere. Ten years continuous publications carried out by our editor Richard (Ben) Britten with a significant period of support by Barrie Downer. I am sure I speak for all our readers in congratulating Ben and all members and friends who have given inputs and articles to enable this. Please keep sending us your stories and pictures and anything you would like to share with the readers.

Next Meeting

Our social calendar tells us the next (1st June) meeting includes an invitation to the ladies and

friends to come along and join in a social evening and quiz and of course the Rum Barrel and a raffle. You will all be made very welcome.

Subscriptions

We really need to do something new to help us all to remember that we have subscriptions to pay every year. The Grand sum of £10 covers membership of the Submariners Association nationally (£5 sent to national treasurer for each member by the March conference to give us delegate voting rights) and membership of the Barrow branch (£5 pocketed {sorry banked} by the branch honorary treasurer. Unfortunately we have quite a number who year after year forget this and need to be chased and reminded frequently. If you think you may be one of the 44 who have not yet paid check with Mick Mailey and resolve your debt please.

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There is available a facility for any of us to arrange to pay by automatically giving the treasurer the money from your bank account if this suits your working arrangements or forgetfulness Mick will be only too pleased to advise how to go about this.

A big thank you, of course, to all of you smart guys who have now paid up. Let us all make a special effort to pay by the January meeting next year, if you are a little early Mick won't mind.

Ambush Crew

As many of you will know the crew of the Ambush, second in class of the Astute Class submarines have entered for the Field Gun competition to be held in HMS Collingwood in June. They have been training and practicing and are planning to excite the people of Barrow by performing public runs at the Town Hall Barrow on Wednesday 26th May. Why not go and support this great effort.

Festival of the Sea 2010

The Festival of the Sea will be held the weekend of 19th June with significant organisation by the committee supported by the Barrow Borough Council and BAe Systems Submarine Solutions. The event will be focussed around the Devonshire Dock with the expected visit of HMS Richmond and hopefully one of

the Tall Ships. We believe the Devonshire Dock Hall Doors will be open allowing the public to walk through and view the build status of Ambush and Artful. Support is requested for volunteers to help with a joint Submarine Heritage and Submariners Association stand showing the painting collection amongst other good advertising. Names to Barrie Downer as soon as possible please.

The Branch

As Jonesy may say that's the parish notices done, now a little about the branch.

The committee recently reminded themselves that we are now less than three years away from our 50th year as a branch of the Submariners Association, our inaugural meeting taking place in May 1963.

We suggest it would be good to do something special or different to mark the occasion and therefore ask for any suggestions and support to decide as a branch what we might do. One suggestion is that we arrange a banquet as near as possible to the date of the inaugural meeting in Barrow Town Hall and encourage all members and ladies to attend; travelling to Barrow from wherever they may currently live. But we certainly need to agree soon what we are aiming for and start planning then you can all keep it in your diaries. So please have a think and put your suggestions to the branch committee as soon as you can

It will probably then be a good idea to create an "anniversary committee", separate to the branch committee, who can concentrate on all the detailed arrangements that need to be made to make our event a memorably success for you all. Two and a bit years will soon fly past as old uns well know !! So thinking caps on and don't be shy, any suggestion will be considered and perhaps a number of events might fit the bill for our birthday year.

Well that's about it for this month.

Just a quick but sincere word to all members, ladies and friends of the branch who are not in the best of health at the moment all members of the Barrow branch wish you all the best for comfort and support in your time of need and if we can provide that in any small way please do not hesitate to let us know.

Chaplains Dit

If you had walked into the bookies two months ago with a hundred pounds to burn and had asked the odds of Nick Clegg becoming a Deputy Prime Minister in a coalition government, you would have been on a nice little earner. My initial thought for the month is one that very much brings to light the old adage "to beware of what you wish for as it may come true".

The election slogan to vote for change certainly came true but not in the way that the party who coined the sound bite envisaged. After my seventeen years experience at Parish Council where grass root politics and coalition thinking was the order of the day. Then I say its no a bad thing for the country to move away from totemic party political stances, in times of deep crisis.

I am now also aware of a second important thought for the month. In that the headlines are speaking of a new Ethical Storm in that scientists have created artificial life in a laboratory, leading to the accusations they are "Playing God" and tampering with the essence of life. Needless to say no matter what your beliefs are, it becomes an ethical debate that is going to run and run. So finding answers is rather like the words of an oriental proverb: Pearls do not lie on the seashore, if you desire one you must dive for it. A final Round Robin Notice!!!! Reminding everyone that our next branch meeting on the 1st of July will also be a Ladies Night and Quiz. Pass it ON.

Regards Jonsey



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Book Shelf



Barrow Submarine Series: issue number 14 **HMS AMBUSH**



AWAY SHE GOES: The Barrow launch day for *HMS Ambush*

THE submarine *HMS Ambush* was an Amphion-class submarine of the Royal Navy, built by Vickers Armstrong at Barrow and launched on September 24 in 1945.

In 1948 she took part in trials of the Schnorkel – a device that allows a submarine to operate submerged while still taking in air from above the surface.

It was invented by the Dutch shortly before the Second World War and was copied by the Germans during the war for use by U-Boats.

Its common name is snort.

In 1951 *HMS Ambush* heard and decoded a distress message from *HMS Affray*, which was sunk with the ultimate loss of all 75 hands on April 17 in 1951.

Affray was built by Cammell Laird yard in Birkenhead and set out on a simulated war mission called Exercise Spring Train with a reduced crew of 50 from 61.

They were joined by two corporals and a sergeant from the Royal Marines, a commander (engineer), a naval instructor, seven lieutenants in the engineering branch, and 13 sub-lieutenants.

The last two groups were undergoing essential submarine officer training.

This brought her complement to 75. Her captain's orders were unusually flexible, the Marines were to be dropped off somewhere along the south west coast of England – the captain chose an isolated beach in Cornwall.

They were to return under the cover of darkness.

The exercise was expected to continue until *Affray* was due to return to base on 23 April for essential defect repairs including a leak in a battery tank.

Affray left her homebase at about 4pm, and made normal contact to confirm position, course and speed at 9pm, and indicated she was preparing to dive.

When she missed her 8am report due the next day she was declared missing.

Shore stations called *Affray* all day and *HMS Agincourt* led a fleet of search vessels which eventually totalled 24 ships from four nations.

When found, she was 17 miles (27 km) northwest of Alderney, a lot closer to France than England.

Divers could find no evidence of collision or damage to the hull, casing or bridge and it was noted that the search periscope and ANF radar mast were extended, indicating she had been at periscope depth. The snort mast had

been broken and lay next to the sub attached by only a thin shred of metal.

AMBUSH STATS:

Ordered: Late in the Second World War

Builder: Vickers Armstrong, Barrow

Laid down: 17 May 1945

Launched: 24 September 1945

Commissioned: 22 July 1947

Decommissioned: November 1967

Fate: Sold to be broken up for scrap on 24 June 1971. Scrapped at Inverkeithing in July 1971

Displacement: 1,360/1,590 tons (surface/submerged)

Length: 293 ft 6 in (89.46 m)

Beam: 22 ft 4 in (6.81 m)

Draught: 18 ft 1 in (5.51 m)

Propulsion: two × 2,150 hp diesel engines, two × 625 hp electric motors.

Speed: 18.5/8 knots (surface/submerged)

Range: 10,500 nautical miles (19,400 km) at 11 knots (20 km/h) surfaced

16 nautical miles (30 km) at eight knots (15 km/h) submerged

Test depth: 350 ft (110 m)

Complement: Crew of 60, including five officers

Armament: 6 × 21 inch bow torpedo tube, 4 × 21 inch stern torpedo tube, containing a total of 20 torpedoes.



Barrie Downer Secretary



Ben Britten tells me that this is the 120th Issue of the Barrow Branch Newsletter.

This is some record with not one issue missed over the last ten years most of it has been Ben's work with only a small period of stand-down a few years ago when the Committee kept things going until Ben was ready to resume the task. It's a record to be proud of stretching from just before the 100th Anniversary of the Submarine Service to just before the 50th Anniversary of Nuclear Submarines. Regular minor changes to the layout and interesting articles have kept things up to the mark.

So what's happening in the immediate future? By the time that you have read this the HMS AMBUSH Field Gun Crew will have completed their Public Runs in front of the Barrow Town Hall on 26th May and will be on their way to compete in the Field Gun Competition at HMS COLLINGWOOD on 5th June. We wish them the best of luck in their effort.

As I understand it this will be the first time there will have been a full team of Submariners competing - although individual Submariners will have been in other Teams in the past. I know the purists will say that it's not like the 'real thing' which was run between Pompey, Guzz and the Fleet Air Arm Crew at the Royal Tournament but its certainly fast and furious - the Gun and Limber are still the same and there is still the risk of damaging yourself if you loose concentration.

The next Branch Meeting on Tuesday 1st June is to be followed by a Social Evening with the Ladies with a Quiz organised by Jeff Thomas and a Raffle. There will be an 'Up Spirits' as well and there should be a report in the July News Letter on how things went.

The Barrow 'Festival of The

Sea' will be on the weekend of the 19th and 20th June.

As we understand at the moment, it will be in the Ship Yard with the main Events being in the Devonshire Dock Hall end of the Yard with HMS RICHMOND in Devonshire Dock open to visitors as will be a Tall Ship.

The Devonshire Dock Hall will be open for visitors to walk through and they will be able to see HMS AMBUSH, HMS ARTFUL and nearly all the sections of HMS AUDACIOUS in various stages of construction and the one fifth scale Model (in Perspex) of HMS VANGUARD. This Model was used as a design and planning aid during the build of the VANGUARD Class boats and is helping out today in the design aspects of the Successor Class SSBNs. There will also be Marquees outside the DDH with various displays and various businesses and organisations exhibiting.

There is to be an exhibit/display of the Barrow in Furness 'Submarine Heritage - Paintings Collection' including all the Nuclear Submarine paintings from the Collection and various submarine models and artefacts - including HMS GRAPH and an 'X Craft' model and there will also be a Submariners Association stall to try and encourage more Members to join the Association.

We have some volunteers to man up the Stall over the Saturday and Sunday but more hands will always be welcome. However there is a reminder that no photography will be allowed in the Shipyard including use of Mobile Phone Cameras. Timings and other arrangements will be advised to Members as soon as they are available.

Also coming up in June is the 2010 Armed Forces Day. Full details are not yet available but, as with last year, it is expected that there will be a Ceremony outside the Town Hall prior to the hoisting of the Armed Forces Day Flag and, on the following Sunday, a Service in the Town

Hall after which there will be a presentation on Veterans Badges to qualifying personnel followed by a short reception. Full details will, of course, be made known as soon as available. By the way if you are entitled to the Veterans Badge and you don't yet have one please let the Committee know and you could be presented with your Badge following the Service.

By the June Branch Meeting our Branch Members Terry Spurling and Mike Kirk will have arrived back after a trip to Israel - they are out there to meet up with some of the Israeli Submariners who were in Barrow for the building of the 'GAL' Class Submarines. Whilst they are there they will be visiting the 'GAL' which is currently on public display in Haifa - along side which is part of the fin of the DAKAR (formerly HMS TOTEM) which was lost in the Mediterranean in the late 1960's.

Terry has promised to write an article about their visit for the July News Letter with a few photographs.

As you might have guessed we are having a bit of a drive at present to make sure all Members are up to date with their Branch and National Subs. John Houlding will be covering this in his Article but, for those who still haven't got your Membership Cards for 2010 they are available from Mick Mailey still at the price of only £10. Your Membership Cards will be available at the next Branch Meeting on 1st June. You can also send your Subs by post to me or Mick Mailey and we can then get your new Cards sent out. We need you to get your Subs paid up as soon as possible as the National Subs had to be paid by March in accordance with National Rules so we could vote at the National Council Conference.

As a Branch we are now paid up to the National so, if you haven't paid yet, then, by the Branch Rules we could lapse your Membership at the end of the current year. If you think about it you get a good deal for your



£10 - Monthly Minutes, Monthly Newsletters, Quarterly National Newsletters, Social events and don't forget, that being a fully 'Paid Up Member' of the Association is a pre-requisite for attendance at the Annual Reunion Dinner!

The updated Contact List for our 189 Members now includes all recent 'E' Mail changes and some updated addresses. If you have moved, changed your phone number or your E Mail provider please let us know as soon as possible so that we can keep in touch and make sure you get all your Branch information. I expect there are a few more changes I don't yet know about - so don't be shy - let me know! Can I also make yet another plea for those of you who have provided BAE 'E Mail' addresses up to now to let me know your home 'E Mail' address (if you have one) as soon as possible.

All of those Members who have stories to tell us please send them in (either directly to Ben Britten or to me) to consider them for publishing in the Branch News Letter and possibly in the 'In Depth' Newsletter. Thank you all and keep the stories coming! Don't forget that you can also send your dits and stories to Ron Hiseman for publishing on the Branch Website!

And now my usual monthly plea if you are unable to attend a Branch Meeting(s) remember to send us your apologies. If you are not keeping too well let us know and we will see if there is anything the Welfare team can help with. Remember to let us know if there are any Branch Members or former Members that you know (or their wives, girlfriends or partners) who are not too well - sometimes they may be too busy or pre-occupied with events to let us know themselves. If we don't know we can't help!

That's about it for now hopefully I haven't missed out any events or anybody's names I think all the dates are right as well! See you all at the June

Branch Meeting Tuesday 1st June usual time usual place and don't forget to bring the wife, girlfriend or partner so that they can have a good night out as well and catch up on all the gossip!

Regards

Barrie

The Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM) or Service Medal



Arriving at the Newcastle Falcons Stadium that morning on the 23rd March 2010 I recollected seeing the face of a Malaysian Colonel shaking hands with and presenting a medal to a Mr Malcolm Pearson in the Barrow Evening Mail back in June 2007. I wondered at that moment if the colonel would be at this presentation or had that appearance in the mail been a one off. I remembered looking at the Veterans web site in 2007 and finding and telephoning a Mr Fred Burden of the National Malay Borneo Veterans Association (NMBVA), who told me to send my application (downloadable) to him and that the whole process could take some time, with the many thousands of applicants to process.

But what is the PJM? During 2005 the Malaysian Government approached the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to seek approval to present their new medal, known as the Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM), to British veterans and others who served in operations in Malaya/Malaysia between August 1957 and August 1966. In January 2006 permission was granted for the medal to be awarded to eligible recipients. One eligible

criterion for the PJM was the issue of the Malay Peninsula or Borneo General Service Medals (GSM) by Her Majesties Government (HMG). I had personally qualified to receive the Malay Peninsula GSM while serving on HMS Victorious (the fix wing Aircraft Carrier). I had been drafted to her as a junior mechanic straight out of HMS Ganges so I was only sixteen when I flew out to join Victorious at Singapore in 1964. And so began my love affair of the Far East. For its friendly non judgemental people, delicious spicy food, Tiger Beer and fabulous locations, Sembawang, Fraser's Hill, Paula Lankawi, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia and the Philippines to name but a few of the places visited. When I left HMS Victorious in October 1967 (having returned from the Far East in late July 1967 after two tours) I was drafted to undergo submarine school, I was then nineteen. My first submarine draft was HMS Artful followed by HMS Astute leaving her in January 1970 for nuclear training school. In May 1970 I came to Barrow for the first time (have lived here ever since) to join HMS Courageous (under construction) which was where I was when awarded my Malay Peninsula GSM and I celebrated that night by going out for a Chinese meal in Duke Street.

Arriving at the stadium the first person I saw was a fellow Barrow Submarine Association member Mick Maily pulling up in his car. We were both to be presented that morning. Entering the auditorium I was given a pre-allocated seat number, and found there were to be over 240 recipients, and that the presentation was to be carried out by the Malaysian gentleman I had first seen in the evening mail who was now a Brigadier General Dato MD Tajri Alwi Malaysian Defence Attaché. I watched each recipient go forward to accept their medal, at times it became quite moving as a grandson collected his grandfathers medal posthumously and a number of widows picked up their husbands medals posthumously.



After each presentation there was clapping from the room as each recipient and the Brigadier General turned for a photo shoot. There was a sense of pride in the room that morning from everyone in attendance not only in their dress sense but in their posture. It wasn't long before my name was called out to approach the centre of the room and as I shook hands with the Brigadier General he smiled, greeted me and presented me with the PJM, I thanked him and we turned toward the camera. I felt a great honour to be recognised by this man in this way. I turned and went back to my seat, to watch the other presentations. After the ceremony I found out the Brigadier General had personally shook hands with and presented well over 11,000 medals in Britain alone. He is expecting to present another 8,000 more before his posting to Britain expires.

If there are any other qualifying veterans out there in the Furness area, who think they qualify to receive the PJM (in person or by post) it is not too late to submit an application but there will have to be a cut off date. Contact Mr Fred Burden 01245 495238 or Mr Harold Riley Tel. 0161-4315782, or go online to www.veterans-uk.info/medals/pingat.html

Brian Downie

Senior Moments

Incontinence Hotline... Can you hold please?
I intend to live forever So far so good



PORTRAITS OF 14 'SUB.' V.C.s ON SHOW

An exhibition was held in H.M.S. Dolphin, the home of the Submarine Service, to display portraits of the 14 officers and men of the service who have been awarded the Victoria Cross.

The portraits, drawn by Miss Jocelyn Galsworthy, were commissioned by the trustees of the Submarine Museum, where they are being hung.

In the picture are three of the surviving VCs and Miss Galsworthy. The VCs are, left to right, Rear-Admiral Sir Anthony Miers, Cdr. N. D. Holbrook and Mr. T. W. Gould.

Of the 14 VCs, seven are still living and these and the relatives of the remainder were invited to view the portraits at the exhibition.

Apart from those in the picture, the list of submarine VCs (and the rank in which they won their decoration) is: Lieut.-Cdr. E. C. Boyle,



Lieut.-Cdr. M. E. Dunbar-Nasmith, Lieut.-Cdr. G. S. White, Lieut. R. D. Sandford,

Lieut.-Cdr. M. D. Wanklyn, Lieut. P. S. W. Roberts, Cdr. J. W. Linton, Lieut. D.

Cameron, Lieut. B. C. G. Place, Lieut. I. E. Fraser and LS J. J. Magennis.

14 Sub V.C. Portraits

Jocelyn Galsworthy, great niece of the distinguished novelist and playwright, John Galsworthy OM, has been painting professionally for fifty years and is particularly known for her portraiture and highly acclaimed paintings of English and International cricket scenes. Her first major commission however was to produce drawings of the fourteen submarine VCs from both world wars.

The commission from the trustees of the Submarine Museum, where they are hung, came through the recommendation of the headmaster of her brother's prep school who knew the museum curator - Lt Commander Gervis Hugh Frere-Cook.

As a young artist this major commission was important to her career, and her father, an ex-RNVR officer who commanded a minesweeper during the Second World War was keen that everything turned out well. This was not an easy task as the pastel pencil portraits were produced from photographs of not the best quality, some of which were of stamp size. The work took an enormous amount of concentration as the artist was also working to a deadline; Jocelyn also pointed out that this was the only time in her life she had smoked! While having other works to finish, the fourteen portraits took over twelve months to complete.

The drawings attracted a great deal of publicity both nationally and locally and Jocelyn was rightly proud to have been chosen for the task.

The 1969 June edition of Navy News provides a photograph and short article with the title 'Portraits of 14 'Sub' VCs on Show'. The photograph shows three of the VCs; Rear Admiral Sir Anthony Miers; Commander N D Holbrook and Mr. T W Gould with the artist.

Subsequently the artist became a friend of Sir Anthony and Lady Miers and was later asked to do a portrait of Lady Miers. On the death of Sir Anthony, Jocelyn was asked to paint a full-length posthumous portrait of him in Naval uniform, a photograph of which appears in her book 'White Hats and Cricket Bats, My Painting Life'.

From this first important commission the artist has gained an enviable reputation as a portraitist and outstanding cricketer artist; the woman in the white hat, sitting on the boundary recording matches for posterity has now become a part of the cricket scene. In addition she paints a large range of landscapes and seascapes. Jocelyn lives and has her studio on the Isle of Wight where all commissions are completed; her work can be viewed on her website at www.jocelyngalsworthy.co.uk



WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Peter Frank Bassett Roe
 Non Member
 May 2010 Aged 87
 Lieutenant Commander
 Submarine service 1943-1960
 Untiring, Saga, Trump, Seadog
 Seanymph, Scotsman,
 Tradewind(co), Trenchant(co)
 & Ambush (co)

J (Joe) Irvine MiD
 Gosport Branch
 May 2010 aged 88
 Chief Radio Electrician
 Submarine service 1941-1953
 Tribune, United, Trident, Dzik,
 Black Panther, U1105,
 Tradewind, Spiteful,
 Tradewind

A D (Alan) Fitton
 Merseyside Branch
 8th May 2010 aged 61
 Warrant Officer (TS) (SM)
 Submarine service 1968-1998
 Otter, Revenge, Renown,
 Repulse, Courageous and
 Churchill

D L (Dave) Evans
 West of Scotland Branch
 May 2010 aged 72
 Chief Petty Officer WEA
 Submarine service in
 Resolution & Renown

A W (Alistair) Gillies
 West of Scotland Branch
 May 2010 aged 91
 Engine room artificer 3rd class
 Submarine service 1940-1943
 Trooper and Trident

Stuart Hammill
 Former Barrow Member
 May 2010 aged 81
 Submarine service in
 Artful, Telemachus, Porpoise,
 Auriga and Opossum

*Lord these departed shipmates
 with Dolphins on their chest
 are part of an outfit known as
 the best. Make them welcome
 and take them by the hand
 you'll find without they are the
 best in the land. So Heavenly
 father add their names to the
 roll of our departed shipmates
 still on patrol let them know
 that we who survive will always
 keep there memories alive.*



**Royal Navy Family History
 Research (Part 1)**

By Barrie Downer

For those who are getting interested in researching Family History where one of your or your wife, partner, girlfriend relatives is known to have served in the Royal Navy these are a few pointers on how to find out when and in which ships or submarines your relative served.

This is the first of three articles in the June, July and August Newsletter for those who are interested in this type of research.

Firstly it helps if you know a Christian Name(s) or Initials and, of course, the Surname, Date of Birth (DOB), Place of Birth (POB) of your relative, his Official Number and Year joined. It also helps to know whether he was an Officer or a Rating. The Date of Birth or Year of Birth is most important and the National Archives records for Naval Ratings are divided into distinct groups.

For Continuous Service Ratings joining between 1853 to 1923

Access the internet and go to www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/royal-navy-service.asp and click on 'Search' which takes you to a page where you can enter Surname, First Names or Initials (if known), Date of Birth (if known) or a range of dates, Place of Birth (if known) and press Enter. If he was a Continuous Service Rating (twelve years service from the age of eighteen) and some or all of the data you have entered is correct then a File should be identified confirming Full Name, Official Number, Place of Birth and Official Number. If a file does not show up try varying the spelling of the Surname to something similar which sounds the same or widen the range of dates or delete the place of birth in case the information is suspect.

Interpreting the Results:

Early Official Numbers had no Prefix but later ones have various Prefixes:

'J' usually means he was a Seaman or a Communications Rating

'K' usually means he was a Stoker

'M' usually means he was most likely an ERA or an EA (however in some cases he may have been a Cook or a Steward).

'L' means, generally, he was a Cook or a Steward.

Some times you will find the Prefix 'SS' which indicates he was a Short Service Rating.

Some times you will find the same Name, Place of Birth and Date of Birth with two different Official Numbers.

These are usually where someone joined as a Seaman and later re-categorised as a Stoker (or Vice Versa) or where someone joined as a Short Service 'SS' Rating and then 'Signed On' for Continuous Service 'CS' and then was given a new Official Number with the 'J', 'K', 'L' or 'M' prefix.

Should you be lucky enough to find your relative you can 'Download' the full 'Service Record' by adding the Record to the 'Shopping Basket' and then 'Checking Out'. Checking out can be done by 'Paying On Line' but it will cost you £3.50 for each 'Service Record' you 'Down Load' – so you need to be sure that the Record you find is the actual one you want!

The Service Record will show you where (Portsmouth, Chatham or Devonport Depots) and when he joined, Height, Weight and Chest size with details of hair colour, eye colour and complexion and details of scars and tattoos. The latter were very important for being able to identify casualties in the days before photographs. Ships and Submarines served in with dates are shown as are Advancement Dates and his Sub Ratings (or Specialisation) and Dates of Qualifying.



Early Submariners are not easy to identify as, before 1914, details of Submarines served in were not annotated. It is more likely that you will see the Submarine Depot Ships HMS HAZARD, LATONA, MERCURY, THAMES, BONAVENTURE, FORTH, ONYX, DOLPHIN, VULCAN, ROSARIO (Hong Kong), EGMONT (MALTA), CORMORANT (Gibraltar), ARROGANT, MAIDSTONE and ADAMANT between August 1901 and July 1914.

If he served for approximately five years in a selection of these ships only he is likely to have been a Submariner. If there is then a break of at least two years before he served in any more of these ships then it is more or less confirmed that he was a Submariner.

The early rules were no more than five years Submarine Service before returning to General Service for two years before returning to Submarines. After July 1914 things changed quite a lot with new Depot Ships – TITANIA, LUCIA, PANDORA, AMBROSE, PLATYPUS, FEARLESS, ROYALARTHUR, CRESCENT etc.

You may find out more than you wanted to know as the Service Record is also a Conduct Record and you may find that he was punished by 'Warrant' (sometimes with details of offences) and sent to Cells or was Disrated.

The Record may also be annotated 'Run' (Deserted), SNLR (Services no Longer Required) or 'DD' (Discharge Dead) - with date and sometimes the reason. The annotation 'DEE' indicates 'Discharged, Engagement Expired'.

Often Ratings leaving after 12 or 22 years joined the Royal Fleet Reserve (RFR) and would be given another Official Number similar to RFR. Po/B/12345. If your relative served after 1st January 1929 the Record will cease at that date as his Record was 'Transferred to Card'. His Record may also have ceased because he was promoted to Bosun, Mate, Gunner, Artificer

Engineer or Mechanician. It is quite surprising that, in earlier years there were many Promotions from the Lower Deck to Warrant Rank and also transfers to Officer Rank.

There is other information available but as the Service Records were hand written (sometimes in several different hands) it is not always clear what some data means.

Next Month (July) I will discuss how to find out about relatives who joined as Ratings between 1923 and 1938 and then those that joined after 1938. In the August Newsletter I will discuss how to find out about relatives who served as joined as Officers or were promoted from the Lower Deck and how to find out about Relatives who were 'Killed in Action' in WWI or WWII

UK 'doesn't need continuous deterrent'



Cutting the number of nuclear deterrent submarine patrols could save the UK more than £11bn and extend the life of the Vanguard class submarines, according to a study from the Royal United Services Institute.

The UK has maintained continuous nuclear patrols since 1968, but the study's authors say that this practice is based on assumptions that are "irrelevant" today, and that less frequent patrols would not necessarily compromise the deterrent's credibility.

Authors Nick Ritchie and Paul Ingram say that dropping the continuous deterrent could extend the operational life of the submarines beyond 2024 - their original out of service date - and mean that the UK does not need

to order as many boats to replace them. This would result in the estimated £11bn of savings.

"A direct military threat from a nuclear-armed state that puts the very survival of the UK at risk is extremely unlikely to emerge overnight," the study concludes. It suggests Britain could keep a nuclear-armed submarine on "enhanced alert" in port, ready to sail at short notice if intelligence suggested that a nuclear threat was imminent.

"Any decision to sail a Trident submarine would likely be part of a wider and observable mobilisation of the UK's armed forces rather than a singular event".

The study also says that the concept of 'minimum deterrence' "is not fixed and absolute" and that the UK could take "a major leadership role as the most progressive of the nuclear weapon states by reducing the operational readiness and size of the current and future nuclear force."

In the coalition government's formal agreement document, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats said the Trident programme would continue but would be scrutinised "to ensure value for money".

Before the election the Lib Dems had suggested including Trident in the strategic defence review, as lifetime costs had been estimated at around £100bn. The agreement document said that the Lib Dems would "continue to make the case for alternatives".





Golf

For all the golf fanatics out there the following championship details are now available:-

RN SUBMARINE COMMAND

OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP 2010

Held on the 21st July

Event organiser Lt Titch Evans
Faslane Ex 6384

Email
Subcommandgolf@hotmail.com

or you can contact Ron hiseman
for an application form.

RN ENGINEERS

OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP 2010

Tournament Director
WO1 ET(WE) J P Reha

E-mail
John.reha@ntlworld.com

Again you can contact Ron Hise-
man for an application form.


Failing than contact Ben Britten

The Editor

If anyone had suggested that I would still be doing the news letter 10 years after the 1st Edition I would have said it would never happen. Well 10 years on we have achieved 120 monthly editions. We have gone from 4 pages in text to 8 pages plus in glorious colour. I thank every one who has contribute over the years. I did take a small break from the newsletter a few years ago to which Barrie Downer took over until I returned to the fold a few months later.


It's a great achievement for the Branch to have a regular monthly Newsletter so as we continue on if you have anything that you feel is acceptable for publication please send it to me.

Regards
Ben Britten




June 2010

Members Birthdays



| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| T. Kimber | 03/06 |
| G. Plater | 03/06 |
| B. Riley | 03/06 |
| A. Haythornthwaite | 09/06 |
| S. Thorpe | 11/06 |
| A. Nolan | 12/06 |
| R. Palmer | 17/06 |
| C. Brown | 17/06 |
| R. Brailsford | 21/06 |
| K. Walker | 21/06 |
| A. Waterston | 22/06 |
| B. Downer | 23/06 |
| A. Pillifent | 25/06 |
| A. Griffiths | 29/06 |
| D. Pallister | 29/06 |
| R. McEwan | 29/06 |
| D. Johns | 30/06 |



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News Letter

Contact Information

Do you have a story to tell or have information you feel should appear in the news letter then ring Ben Britten on 01229 820265 (evenings) or if you wish to send me an article please ring for postal address. or send your contribution by e-mail to:

Rwbritten1@msn.com

Constructive suggestions about the news letter are very welcome. The news letter will be published in the last week of each month IE last week of June for the July 2010 issue please try and have any information with me by the **15th of each month**. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition.



SOCIAL CALENDAR 2010

June

Tuesday 1st Monthly Meeting
2000 RBL

Friday 18th Brewery run
TBC

Tuesday 22nd Committee
Meeting 1930 RBL

July

Tuesday 6th Monthly meeting
2000 RBL

Branch BBQ
Date to be confirmed

Tuesday 20th Committe
Meeting 1930 RBL



Solve the monthly submarine quiz

We hope you enjoyed last month's wordsquare.

If any of it proved tricky, the solution is at the foot of the page. This month we have clues based on important naval and commercial ports.

If you have any comments or suggestions on how our puzzles can be improved or developed, drop an email to Bill Myers at bill.myers@nwemail.co.uk

Find the naval and commercial ports

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. WHITBY | 7. FOLKESTONE |
| 2. PLYMOUTH | 8. DOVER |
| 3. SOUTHAMPTON | 9. RAMSGATE |
| 4. GOSPORT | 10. SWANSEA |
| 5. PORTSMOUTH | 11. ROSYTH |
| 6. COWES | 12. HULL |



Last month's wordsquare solution (below)

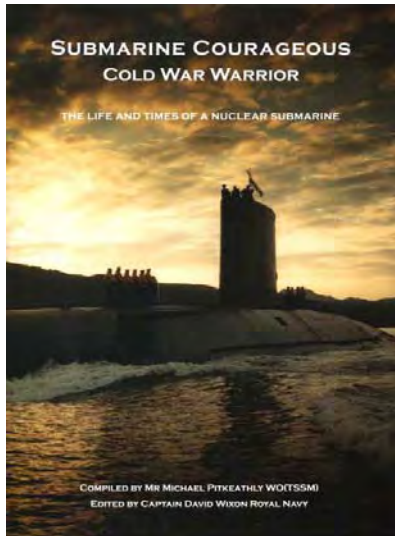


CHANGING TIMES: The modern face of Southampton with its acres of cargo containers



SUBMARINE COURAGEOUS COLD WAR WARRIOR

By Michael Pitkeathley and
David Wixon
(London Design Factory Ltd -
£30)
ISBN 978-0-9563472-0-6



The word unique is overused but I cannot remember seeing any book quite like this before. It is a formidable read - to compile and edit it, a work beyond the call of normal duty.

The narrative spans the life of one Fleet Submarine (SSN) from start of build in May 1968 to final paying off in April 1992.

There is also a postscript covering the efforts of a team of volunteers to help set up the ship as a museum or 'floating exhibit'. Contributions to the text and photographs come from over 80 named members of the ship's company of every specialisation who served for a time in one or more of the three sea-going commissions divided by long refits in Chatham and Devonport.

Their comments are held together by a chronological commentary which also includes details of working life on board both at sea and in harbour.

All this has been initiated and co-ordinated over a number of years by Michael Pitkeathley who joined the submarine as the Navigator's Yeoman during build at Barrow, and advanced to being a Warrant Officer on the staff of Captain Submarine Sea Training. After leaving the Navy he became the chronicler of the

ship's life when in commission, and leader of the restoration volunteer force in Devonport, as well as being an active member of the Courageous Society. In a financial climate where there is little enough money for the living, let alone the 'dead', there has been only limited official assistance for the restoration work on board.

I must declare an interest in that I served in the ship's first commission, and so contributed to the early collection of stories and narrative, as well as seeing some of the inputs both written and researched by the author. It was always going to be a difficult task to co-ordinate so many offerings of variable quality and relevance, as well as culling some inevitable duplication.

The substantial editing by David Wixon (first commission Senior Engineer) is not a job I would have taken on. Charles Nixon-Eckersall (second commission CO) was a willing sub-editor helping to reduce the text to manageable size and coherence. Both funding and production involved much goodwill by many other people.

The result is not the glorification of one submarine, nor is it too serious or, even worse, too frivolous. It is not a history of the deep Cold War, the Falklands campaign, liaising with the US submarine force or of flotilla weapon development, although all of these events serve as the essential backdrop. What it does do is to try and answer that perennial question "What is it like to be banged up in a metal cylinder under water for weeks on end"?

What is the interaction between the people on board (different from a surface warship) and how are the natural tensions created by living in such a hostile environment handled and dissipated? How do intelligent men, often doing repetitive and sometimes boring tasks, fill their time and maintain their equilibrium?

In the Foreword, a former submariner, the present First Sea Lord, concludes that "good

fellowship is as important as good leadership. Communication and feed-back takes place in all directions, downward and upward through the chain of command and sideways across branch and trade specialisation. When all this is accompanied by good humour and dedication to the overall task, then what you get is an effective Ship's Company".

This captures that spirit of interdependence where a failure of knowledge or concentration by any man at the wrong time can jeopardize the whole ship. In fact it is probably not possible to do full justice in words to the experience of a long submerged patrol. The key question is of course, who wants to read the book, which has been beautifully presented in hardback, but at £30 is not cheap?

The answer is that it will stir the memories of submariners of all generations and anyone else inquisitive enough to wonder what these people get up to in their underwater world. It is probably best dipped into a bit at a time. Any profits from sales will go to the Courageous Society and assist in the improvement of the submarine as a museum attraction. Michael Pitkeathley deserves an award.

Without him the book would not have been written, and this particular Cold War warrior might now be as derelict and forgotten as the other decommissioned nuclear-powered submarines of her era.

RICHARD SHARPE

