



# PERISCOPE VIEW

The Newsletter of the Barrow-in Furness Branch  
of

The Submariners Association

Patron: Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce KG GCB OBE DL

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Cover Picture: Barrow Branch Remembrance Ceremony and Wreath Laying at the AE1/AE2 Memorial on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November – note the Observation of Social Distancing!

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*'Nothing in the world, nothing that you may think or dream of, or anyone may tell you, no arguments however specious, no appeals however seductive, must lead you to abandon that naval supremacy on which the life of our country depends.'*

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WINSTON SPENCER CHURCHILL

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## EDITORIAL

### Hello Everybody,

Well, here we are again. With not a lot happening on the Branch or Social front it is not easy to find a lot to say this month. We do have some sad news to report in that long-time Branch Member Alan West very sadly 'Crossed the Bar' on 20th November at the grand age of 89. Alan had been a Member of the Branch since 1972. One of the Boats he served on was the 'HTP boat' HMS EXPLORER. Some time ago I asked Alan to write down his memories of serving in EXPLORER and his recollections are included in this Newsletter. Hopefully, we will be able to provide a Guard of Honour for Alan at Thorncliffe on 3<sup>rd</sup> December – as we did for Dave Craven recently, even if the numbers allowed inside the Crematorium are limited.

Despite all the restrictions we were able to mark the November Remembrance dates. Nationally the Association managed a very much reduced Submariners Remembrance at the Embankment Memorial. Only six of us, socially distanced, with our new Association Chaplain (Stephen Dray) leading the Service, COSM (Jim Perks) reading the Scriptures, Vice Chairman (Iain Mackenzie) as Parade Marshall with Standard Bearer (Trevor Thomas). I had the honour of reading the Act of Remembrance and the names of the Submarines Lost

whilst Jim Perks, Ian Mackenzie and a newly qualified JR laid Wreaths on behalf of the Submarine Service, the Association and the Branches.

Locally, Dave Smith laid the Branch Wreath at the Centotaph on Remembrance Sunday and a small group of us attended the AE1/AE1 Memorial to lay a Wreath there. It was intended to be just me and Margaret, but it was a nice surprise that that Alex was there with the Standard and a number of other Members and partners just happened to be 'Passing By' – all socially distanced of course, as you will see from the front page photo.

As it is unlikely that we will all be able to get together before the New Year at the earliest can I take the opportunity to wish all Branch Members, their Families and Friends a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and the hope that things will return to normal very soon!

Best Regards,

**Barrie**

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## SECRETARY'S REPORT

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As the whole of Cumbria is classed as Tier 2 it means that under the rules for that Tier, see below, we will not be able to hold our next meeting on the 8th December. The adult Christmas Part is due on the 18th. Dec which is 2 days after the next Tier review so, keep your finger crossed that Cumbria drops a Tier. I will keep you all posted with regards to the January meeting.

Under the new restriction level groups of up to six people will be permitted to meet outdoors, but there must be no mixing of households indoors. Education settings remain open and pubs and bars must close unless operating as restaurants.

Alan West's funeral will take place at the Thorncliffe Crematorium, 1130, Thursday 3rd. December. At the moment, I have the names of six branch members who wish to attend and there are more spaces available should anyone else wish to attend. Below are the COSM and RNRMC newsletters for your information:

Dave Smith

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### COMMODORE SUBMARINE SERVICE UPDATE

Friends and Colleagues

25 Nov 2020

#### Introduction

As the head of the Submarine Service and Commander of the Submarine Flotilla, I wanted to reach out to colleagues, friends and supporters of our organisation to provide an update on the good work and activity that has been initiated following a change in the organisational structure of the Submarine Service.

In line with the overall Royal Navy transformation process, the Submarine Service has continued to evolve. When Rear Admiral John Weale retired from his position as Rear Admiral Submarines (RASM), the position of Head of the Fighting Arm was reassigned under my organisation. Thus, we have now instituted a revised command structure for the Submarine Service headed up by me as Commodore of the Submarine Service (COSM).

During these unprecedented times, we are working within the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and we have continued to maintain submarine operational output despite these challenges. We have had all 3 operational SSBNs at sea, 2 T-boats at very high readiness and HMS AUDACIOUS powering through her sea trial programme. Against this backdrop much has also been achieved in our supporting activity, the main aim of which is to provide further support to our submarine community and I provide a brief run through of the exciting initiatives that have been put in place below.

#### Commodore of the Submarine Service (COSM)

COSM, through the organisation's Chief of Staff has re-invigorated a more inclusive and wider management structure representing not only the serving community, but also various veteran and charity organisations, families and associated support organisations. Much already exists to support the submariner in their job, however we are now concentrating on building 'home resilience'. To enable a modern submariner to be effective at work, they need a firm base. This 'home resilience tool' is supported by three legs, 'reactive support' such as welfare, medical or mental health; 'ongoing support' such as facilities, events and challenges, and 'esprit de corps' which includes a collective identity, uniform, heritage and commemoration. In support of this, much specific work is now underway.

#### Submarine Fund (SMF)

This fund has been established under the umbrella of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC). The objective is to promote the well-being of submariners, the ethos of the service and submarine heritage. Following its inauguration and soft launch in April under the chairmanship of Rear Admiral John Weale, a hard launch is planned for early next year. As it establishes itself and RNRMC develop its web presence under their updated IT system, it is aiming to be fully functional by spring 2021. A major aspiration is to have a streamlined giving system that will automatically provide contributors with membership to all the key submarine veterans and heritage organisations, which will be of benefit to all members of our submarine family. In the meantime, we are encouraging our people to support the charity through initiatives such as setting RNRMC as the selected charity on Amazon prime.

The launch of the SMF and our organisation's revised management process has brought with it the opportunity to bring together the organisations that currently exist to support submariners. COSM and executive boards have been created to coordinate the exchanging of ideas and information, aiming to improve our digital footprint and communications.

#### The Submarine Flotilla Secretary

With this restructure, the role of Regimental Secretary was formalised and rebadged as Submarine Flotilla Secretary (SUBSEC). This role will act as a focal point for the submarine community, supporting serving and retired submariners in coordination with submarine charities and organisations in order to foster the submarine spirit and ethos. SUBSEC currently runs the submarine community mailing list, is the Project Officer for the Submariner Memorial Appeal and is assisting COSM in the development of the SMF.

#### Submarine Family Resilience Initiative (SFRI) and Mental Health Champions

This is the most recent initiative launched by COSM. It aims to build on the work of the 'HMS OARDACIOUS' team, four Royal Navy submariners who became the fastest serving military team to row unsupported across the Atlantic Ocean, from the Canary Islands to Nelson's Dockyard in Antigua. This momentous effort, which took 37 days, 6 hours and 40 minutes, raised over £100k to provide mental health and wellbeing support to the submarine community. The SFRI aims to continue to raise the profile of mental health in addition to raising the profile of the Submarine Service and develop partnerships that add value to our community.

Further to this, the COSM organisation and SFRI has established a mental health champions team, looking to harness and coherently work with a range of organisations to promote positive mental health to the submarine community. The team has been working hard on pushing the Headfit initiative ([www.headfit.org](http://www.headfit.org)) and is pioneering an offline platform of the tool that can be Using the SFRI and 'Oardacious' experience we have conducted many webinar engagements over the last few months, pushing out a very positive image of the Submarine Service to important industrial partners. Similarly, through our engagement activity at COSM executive board level, we have shared military associated activity that previously didn't involve the submarine world with our families. One of these organisations is the Never Such Innocence Project ([www.neversuchinnocence.com](http://www.neversuchinnocence.com)) which runs an international poetry, art, speech and song

### **The Submariner Memorial Appeal**

Although launched at a difficult time for charities, this appeal aims to establish a fitting memorial at the National Arboretum. Following a highly successful design competition, the winning designs have now been selected and will inspire three professional designers competing for the final commission. We are now putting a major effort into supporting the appeal's main fundraising effort which will require over £300,000 to be raised to build and endow the memorial.

### **Proposed Cold War and Maritime Heritage Museum Plymouth**

The National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN) are currently further developing the Devonport Heritage Centre with the aim of raising the profile of the Royal Navy in Devonport. They are currently putting together a proposal for a museum that tells the Cold War story of Submarines and Plymouth based ships, based around HMS Courageous. We are watching with interest and standing by to provide support.

### **Family Support and Events**

In order to raise awareness of the support available to all members of the submarine family, a comprehensive and up to date Families Guide is in the final stages of production. This will reference the services and organisations which are there to assist our community in one family friendly guide. This will initially be released in a printed format, with an electronic version following in the new year. In addition to other improvements in digital communications, this should aid our submarine family cohesiveness and improve universal access to beneficial information.

Further to the existing support provided to families, plans are underfoot to bring our families and communities together with workplace-based Families Days and BBQs. Unfortunately, these are currently on hold due to pandemic restrictions, but will move forward as soon as it is safe, and we look forward to bringing our community together in social setting. The submarine birthday event, known as the 'Gambit' dinner, is usually an extremely popular event in the submarine calendar but was unfortunately cancelled at the last minute. Likewise, the annual submarine 'Oscars' award ceremony has been postponed until it can be rearranged, hopefully in early 2021. Future plans include establishing an annual submarine charity dinner, details of which will be promulgated soon.

### **Submarine Ethos**

To establish and maintain our unique 'esprit de corps', those entering the Royal Navy who have been selected and streamed as future submariners have been issued with training dolphins. These will allow them to stand out in the early stages of training as being a part of our exclusive club. These dolphins will then be exchanged for gold dolphins when they complete their formal submarine training.

### **Submarine Family**

My vision is primarily aimed at making the submarine family a more cohesive, recognisable group with a strong community identity. From the first day a submariner enters their initial training establishment, through each life event they and their families encounter both in and outside of the service, they should be looked after by our community. I am determined to promote and help drive the initiatives referred to in this update through to completion and I am excited to see the benefits derived from them across the Submarine Service.

Commodore J Le S Perks CBE Royal Navy

Commodore of the Submarine Service

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## **ROYAL NAVY & ROYAL MARINES CHARITY - SUBMARINE FUND (RNRMC SMF)**

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) joined forces with the Royal Navy Submarine Service and existing Submarine Service Family Member organisations to establish the RNRMC Submarine Fund (SMF) in April 2020, drawing on expertise from across the Submarine Community.

With wide SMF Board representation from across the submarine family - Submariners Association, We Remember Submariners (WRS), the Perisher Club, Friends of the Submariner Museum and Team Oardacious - the fund will deliver help and support to serving and veteran members of the Submarine Community and includes dependent family members.

The Board has held 3 virtual Board meeting by Zoom since lockdown in March, has a number of workstreams and requests for support underway and, with the RNRMC and WRS, supported a request for funds from the Submarine Memorial Appeal. The RNRMC SMF has funds, some specifically for the mental health and well-being of the Submarine Community; we are keen to support any and all requests. When a request is received it is discussed and shared between Board members to ensure all Submarine Family members (e.g. SA, WRS, Friends etc) understand the request and decided how both the SMF and individual Family members can support to optimise contributions, efficiency and effect. With the ongoing support of the RNRMC, a workshop was recently held with the members from the Submarine Community to simplify the grants application process. While requests and donations can currently be made direct via the RNRMC website, citing Submarine Request/Donation, the RNRMC is working to provide an option to specifically enable selection of SMF Requests or Donations, the intent is for this revised site to go live by the end of October. The broad Submarine Community is, perhaps for the first time, more aware and coordinated than ever before, the challenge now is to ensure our communications are effective, that good news is shared, requests for grants are supported and that donations are to the SMF. Current pressures of families and crews are recognised, with commitments at sea unprecedented, it is why the SMF has opened links with Clyde Naval links with Clyde Naval Family Services such that we can help our own people. Please think about donating to the SMF, it is there to help our community. In separate news and working with the RNRMC, a small volunteer project team has been established to work with Plymouth City Council, the National Maritime Museum, MoD and the HMS COURAGEOUS Management Group to develop a concept study for the introduction of a Cold War Maritime Museum in Plymouth, focused around the preservation of HMS COURAGEOUS and development of an iconic Cold War Maritime Heritage site. A newsletter and Crowd Funding page will be released in early September to inform and ask for help to complete the initial study. Many thanks your interest, support and help to the Submarine Community; please share this information and donate to help our own.

**DIG DEEP TO HELP SUBMARINERS**

Dig Deep to help Submariners, past and present and get the RNRMC Submarine Fund off to the best possible start Visit [nrnmc.org.uk/donate](http://nrnmc.org.uk/donate)

**SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT**

**Hi Shipmates**

hope that you are continuing to keep safe & well, whilst looking out for others who may need it. November was once again another quiet and uneventful month; we did manage to meet up and give the Standard an airing for remembrance Sunday at the AE1 & 2 Memorial.

It is my intention to bring along a little snack at the December meeting for those attending; little and festive – have you guessed yet????

Due to the lockdown and being in tier two for the foreseeable future the finalevent of the year; the Christmas party has to be postponed – for just the 12 months.

Sadly, our coach company has decided to hang their steering wheels up and won't be able to look after us from now on. I did get our deposits back and I want to publicly thank Elaine, Geoff and Dan for all they have done for us over the last 4 or 5 years. I will of course be looking to get another coach company for our needs next year.

I have talked to Jim Halliwell (Chairman of the Morecambe Branch) and due to the fact, they haven't had a meeting since February and not looking to have another one until at least February 2021 he has asked that we first foot them in March (and not February) if all is ok by then.

There is no point in giving you a diary check at the moment because it is really empty, hopefully, normal service will be resumed in the not-too-distant future.

However, I will say it is my firm intention to try and get a little get together going between the 23rd & 27th Dec for an impromptu beer or two; so please read your emails when they come in because you won't get much notice.

Anyway, that is it for me for 2020, I hope to see you at the meeting on the 8th, however, if you can't make it then or if the Meeting doesn't happen) please let me be one of the first to wish you a merry and very safe Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Alex**

**DECEMBER 2020 BRANCH CALENDAR**

December Branch Meeting	Tues 8 <sup>th</sup> Dec
Adults Xmas Party	Sat 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec

**JANUARY 2021 BRANCH CALENDAR**

January Branch Meeting	Tues 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan
Committee Meeting	As Required

**FEBRUARY 2021 BRANCH CALENDAR**

January Branch Meeting	Tues 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan
Committee Meeting	As Required

NOTE: All December/January/February Meetings and Events are subject to cancellation at very short notice and are dependent on further Government advice!

## **DECEMBER BRANCH BIRTHDAYS**

J L.W. (Lindsey) Thwaites	02/12/1965
P.G. (Paul) Douglas	03/12/1965
G.S. (Stan) Livingstone	06/12/1947
A.B. (Tony) Handley	10/12/1954
I. (Ian) MacIntyre	11/12/1964
P. (Phillip) Webb	11/12/1950
M. (Mick) Bown	15/12/1945
A. (Andrew) Waller	17/12/1972
M (Martyn) Hillier	18/12/1942
N. (Nigel) Hutchinson	26/12/1975
D. (Dave) Cattroll	28/12/1957
S. (Stephen) Doughty	28/12/1964
T.D. (Terence) Pyne	31/12/1934

**Happy Birthday All!**

## **REMEMBERING FORMER BRANCH MEMBERS**

### **'CROSSED THE BAR' - DECEMBER**

George Cubiss	1966
Harold McMillan	1972
Laurence Pattison	1967
Norman Tubb	2003
John Streets	2005
Mick Hulbert	2006
Tim Coop	2008
Keith Myers	2011
Sir Tim Kimber	2012
Tom Kennedy-Wilson	2012
Jan Mead	2014
Brian Wilkie	2014
Ginge Cundell	2015
Carl Moody	2016
David Birkhead	2016
John Houlding	2018

### **RESURGAM**

### **DISCLAIMER**

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Nothing printed may be construed as policy or an official announcement unless so stated. Otherwise the Association accepts no liability on any issue in this Newsletter.

### **NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFORMATION**

Do you have a story to tell or have information you feel should appear in the Newsletter then ring Barrie Downer on 01229 820963 or, if you wish to send me an article, my postal address is The Firs, Dundalk Street, Barrow Island, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2RZ. You may also send your contribution by e-mail to me on [frozensnorth55@gmail.com](mailto:frozensnorth55@gmail.com). Come on – every

Submariner has a story to tell – some more than one! Let's see yours in print!

Constructive suggestions about the Newsletter are also very welcome. The Newsletter will be published in the last week of each month i.e. the last week in December for the January 2020 Issue. Please ensure you have any information with me by the 15th of the month to ensure its inclusion in the next issue. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition – keep them stories coming!

## **HMS EXPLORER 2nd COMMISSION MEMORIES**

By Alan West O/N P/MX 833465 (Po)

Alan West served in Submarines as an Engine Room Artificer - rising to Chief Engine Room Artificer - from May 1954 to August 1971 in HMS STURDY (November 1954 to August 1956), HMS SPRINGER (April 1957 to October 1958), HMS EXPLORER (January 1959 to April 1963), HMS ALCIDE (April 1963 to August 1965), HMS WARSPITE (January 1970 to April 1971) & HMS SWIFTSURE (April 1971 to July 1971). Alan was a member of the Barrow in Furness Branch from September 1972.

Alan joined HMS EXPLORER in 'Refit' at Barrow in Furness shortly before the Submarine moved from the Graving Dock to a berth at the Admiralty Development Establishment, Barrow (ADEB) in Buccleuch Dock in the Barrow Dock System. He recalled that the 'refit' completed in August 1959 after a slight delay owing to a fire in the Turbine Room - caused by a VSEL Coppersmith working with a blow lamp in a cramped bilge space. Alan's comment 'Nasty.'

Alan also recalled that he joined the boat with another ERA and they were allocated the Engine Room (one 'U' Class Submarine Diesel Generator sited in the Fore-ends) and the Outside ERA's duties whilst the 'Experts' got on with the High Test Peroxide (H.T.P.) 'bits'. All crew members joining the boat were given a laboratory demonstration of the volatility of H.T.P. under various conditions – which was not very comforting.

### **The Plant Layout**

The Turbine Room was isolated from the rest of the Boat at its Forward Bulkhead during Plant operation. Small observation windows were fitted in the bulkhead but they 'fogged up' progressively during plant operation. It was possible to see red glows in the combustion chamber area – proven! The Main Motor operational controls were forward of the Turbine Control Platform.

The H.T.P. was stored in 'kidney shaped' bags to suit the contours of the Ballast Tanks. No H.T.P. was stored within the Boat when the Plant was 'Shut Down.'

The H.T.P. Equipment consisted of the Triple Pump which was used to pump the H.T.P., water and fuel, the Proportioning Device which was used to control the required quantities of H.T.P., water and fuel, the Catalyst Chambers which was used to activate the H.T.P., the Combustion Chambers which burnt off the excess Oxygen by injecting and igniting fossil fuel entering the

chamber and 'de-superheating' with water in the lower regions of the chamber.

A CO2 Compressor removed CO2 from the Condenser but was prone to water 'carry over'. Shear keys were fitted to prevent damage if the 'carry over' was excessive and the plant shut down. Propulsion was via a Single Stage Steam Turbine. An Excess Water Pump was fitted to remove water from the system - water was re-formed during H.T.P. operations. The Triple Pumps operated in their own bilge spaces which were maintained at a suitable level to dilute any H.T.P. leakage or draining after shutting down.

After 'Commissioning' in August 1959 HMS EXPLORER went to Faslane for the usual 'Work Up' during which there were no H.T.P. operations and the post 'Work Up' Divisions ended with Captain SM saying it was nice to see us before we went to Campbeltown to run our own private little Navy!

It was around this time when the Chief Engine Room Artificer - Charlie Aldridge - went 'Nuclear' and, as Alan had passed for CERA, he was offered the job. After a bit of roster skulduggery it came to pass - end of quiet number!!

EXPLORER and EXCALIBUR each had their own little Depot Ship - MINER 8 for EXPLORER and MINER 1 for EXCALIBUR but 'they' decided that both should be given names. EXCALIBUR's Depot Ship became HMS MINSTREL and the crew devised a musical motif for its funnel as a bar of music consisting of the first six notes of that 'sod's opera' masterpiece 'We're a Shower of Bastards'.

I wasn't aware of any change in the crew up until the time that we all locked up the boat and left it at Barrow in Furness, but Mike Kirk reckoned that EXPLORER should have become HMS MINDFUL. MINER 8 had its own basic crew of half a dozen personnel or so and had the only radar between the two of us.

#### Operations

The EXPLORER & EXCALIBUR were not designed for being anything other than fast underwater targets and, due to the limited provision of bunks, fresh water and domestic facilities it was basically 'day running' only. Further, if the plant was running, it was virtually 'watch on, stop on' for the operators. Running from Campbeltown consisted of leaving early a.m. to get to the exercise area at reasonable time at our 6 knots surface speed followed by rendezvous with our playmate(s) and exercise until:-

- (a) The playmate had had enough or had other plans
- (b) We ran out of H.T.P.
- (c) We had plant problems

If we were due back out again the 'turn-round' time was a minimum of 24 hours due to the refuelling process taking a very considerable time in the capable hands of the Chief Stoker. Refuelling was from the RFA SPABECK who topped up from the bulk H.T.P. storage at Faslane.

Two annual 'Jollies' were granted during the Second Commission. The first was to Ghent in Belgium and the

second was to Copenhagen. The first was enjoyable - but uneventful with the submarine leading the way and MINSTREL a respectful distance behind and in radio contact. Copenhagen was a different kettle of fish. No problems going apart from the requirement to hit the Pentland Firth at the right time to avoid going against the 6-knot current.

The return was different - first night out our little 'U' Class main propulsion generator had a camshaft problem. Fortunately, Gothenberg was quite handy so we dropped in. We arranged for a spare which was delivered about four days later. There was a slight problem - 'U' class engines are P & S and guess what!!! We turned our attention to the old camshaft, and with a few bits off the new one, effected a repair which actually lasted for the rest of the commission.

Towards the end of the Commission the Combustion Chamber steam outlet had to be replaced as the pipe wall had corroded through however, a quick visit to Scott's shipyard across the river fixed that for us.

At the end of the Commission HMS EXPLORER returned to Barrow in Furness in March 1962 and 'Paid Off.' In April 1963, after a gradual reduction in the number of 'refit' crew personnel, it was decided that another 'refit' was not practicable - now the 'Nuclear' programme was in full swing. Locking devices were fashioned and fitted to the hatches and the last five 'refit' crew members went their separate ways after handing over the keys to the Reserve Fleet, Barrow.

All in all, EXPLORER had a reasonably successful Second Commission but H.T.P. was pretty obviously, not the way ahead.

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### HMS TRENCHANT home after hectic four-month deployment

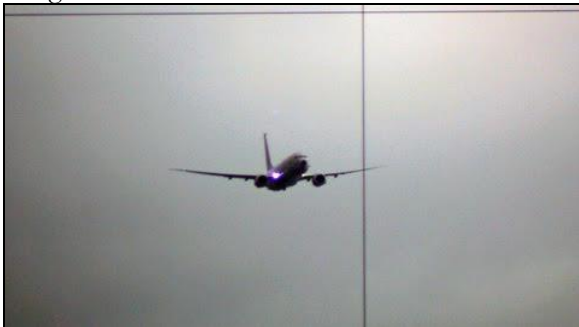
10 November 2020

Submarine HMS TRENCHANT has returned home to Devonport after 140 days away on deployment - during which the T-boat honed her war-fighting skills with NATO allies.



The boat worked with vessels from 13 nations and covered 18,000 nautical miles - the equivalent of sailing down the west coast of Africa, onto Australia, New Zealand and Japan. The boat initially headed north to take part in Exercise Dynamic Mongoose, along with Royal Navy ships and those from the USA, Canada, France, Norway and Germany.

For the first time, an RAF Poseidon P8 maritime patrol aircraft was also involved in the exercise, which tests the ability of NATO's anti-submarine forces to collectively deal with the latest underwater threats – and tests the ability of submarine crews to evade the sonars and sonobuoys dropped, lowered and dipped in the ocean, listening for the tell-tale sound of a submarine.



TRENCHANT's Commanding Officer, Commander Stephen Brian, said: "This was a great opportunity to train and refine our war-fighting skills with our NATO allies and demonstrate the potency of HMS TRENCHANT."

Following the exercise, the boat sailed south to take part in a number of exercises, involving Type 23 frigates, Merlin helicopters and the P8. In total, TRENCHANT trained and interacted with 25 surface and sub-surface assets, comprised of nine submarines and 16 surface ships, drawn from 13 nations across the globe, including France, Canada and Portugal.



The biggest exercise was Joint Warrior, Europe's largest bi-annual collaborative training exercise in which a number of NATO allies simulate escalating tensions off the coast of Scotland. Joint Warrior coincided with TRENCHANT welcoming aboard the Submarine Command Course, known colloquially as Perisher.

The students who embarked had already participated in months of training in the run up to the final three weeks onboard an operational unit. The arduous and mentally-taxing course is renowned as being one of the most difficult of its guise in the world. Those who pass will go on to be the future commanders of Royal Navy submarines, but first they had to prove they have what it takes, demonstrating their abilities to the course leader.

The students who successfully completed the course celebrated onboard with a Perisher's breakfast prior to departing and joining their respective submarines as newly qualified Executive Officers.

The crew remained in sea watches, six hours on, six hours off, throughout their deployment. Despite the relentless pace of exercises and operations the crew found the time to raise money for Plymouth charity Plymouth Basket Brigade.

CPO(SSM) Drake became the ship's barber, snipping the flowing locks of the crew for a small donation and raising an impressive £1,300. The proceeds will be used to provide hampers to those in a less fortunate position over the festive period. The crew also enjoyed two takeaway pizza nights, courtesy of the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity.

### Portsmouth Dockyard Plaque DOCKYARD WORKERS' EFFORTS IN 1982 IMMORTALISED



A plaque commemorating the efforts of HM Naval Base Portsmouth workers in readying 39 ships to join the task force deployed to the Falkland Islands in 1982 has been unveiled today - 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, Councillor Rob Wood, had the honour and it will remain on display in the Historic Dockyard at Boathouse No 7.

It was made by Rohann Pearce, a machinist apprentice with BAE Systems, and was conceived by Andrew Cave, a former member of the Royal Navy who has suggested all the dockyards involved in preparing ships for the conflict are recognised in a similar way.



Among the guests were Michael Betts, Deputy Representative of the Falkland Islands Government to the UK, city MPs Stephen Morgan and Penny Mordaunt, and Dennis Miles and Nigel Linger of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust who worked on the wording and provided a suitable location for the plaque.



“It is testament to the immense professional pride, patriotism and passion that the dockyard workers possessed, that despite the news of imminent closure of the dockyard in 1982, and being issued with their redundancy notices at lunchtime on 2 April, that even faced with the loss of their jobs and livelihoods, they returned to their workplaces and remained dedicated to the task of getting the Fleet deployed and ready for operations on 5 April 1982.”

Mr Cave joined the Royal Navy in 1981 and sailed in HMS Hermes as a 17-year-old; his action station was the chaff rockets. Now living in Shrewsbury and sadly unable to attend today’s unveiling, it was his initial suggestion that prompted the plaque’s creation in honour of the workers who carried on with little or no rest through those hectic days. “I am extremely grateful to everybody who has helped me to achieve their rightful recognition,” he said.

“The fact remains that our country was only able to respond as quickly as it did because of the dockyard workforce. There is no doubt whatsoever that they played a massive part in the success of the operation and the country owes them a great debt.”

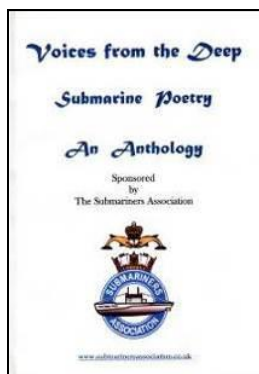


**Rohann Pearce reflected in his handiwork**

### **VOICES FROM THE DEEP**

A while ago the Submariners Association sponsored a book - 'Voices from The Deep - Submarine Poetry - An Anthology' (see front cover below) as a way of raising funds for the Association. Orders for the Book (14 copies still available) should be sent to me:

Barrie Downer, The Firs, Dundalk Street, Barrow Island, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2RZ. Or you can always ask me at a Branch Meeting – whenever we have the next one!



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

### **SUBMARINE COMMISSIONING CREW LISTS**

Commissioning Crew Lists are still coming in however, things have slowed down a bit of late. I am still looking for 'First Commission' Submarine Crew Lists/Brochures as follows:

PORPOISE (1958), GRAMPUS (1958), NARWHAL (1959), CACHALOT (1959), WALRUS (1961), OBERON (1961), ORPHEUS (1960), ODIN (1962), OTUS (1963), ONYX (1967) & UNICORN (1993)

Also, any Crew Lists for any Re-Commissioning and Re-Dedications of any Conventional 'A', 'S', 'T', 'O' & 'P' Class, and any refitting Nuclear Boat - SSN & SSBN. Have a look through your records and 'Ditty Boxes' and see what you can find. You can contact me by E Mail, Snail Mail or Telephone – see Page 2. Thanks, Barrie

### **SUBMARINE LOSSES OF WWII** **DECEMBER 1940**

One Submarine was lost in December 1940. Submarine HMS TRITON was lost with all hands on 6th December 1940 and is believed to have been mined in the Straits of Otranto in the Mediterranean. The crew member were as follows:

#### **Officers:**

Lt Guy Claude Ian St Barbe Sladen Watkins, MiD, RN  
Lt Charles Joseph Reginald Cave, MiD, RN  
Lt Michael John Royston Smith MiD, RN  
Lt Reginald Edward Dean, MiD, RNR  
Wt. Eng. Ronald George Milne, DSC, RN

#### **Ratings:**

CPO Coxswain Horatio John Hinde, DSM J111862  
CPO(TGM) Edward Percival Saunderson, DSM J111250  
CPO Herbert Cyril Percival Codman, MiD J95711  
PO Arthur Keith Bennett J109679  
PO William Frank Thorne P/JX 129823  
L/Sea James Shimmin D/JX 126301  
L/Sea Ivor Leslie Roy Pook D/JX 144306  
AB William George Thomas Waters J93606  
AB John Francis Risby J78393  
AB Thomas Reuben Saxby J84410  
AB Frederick Thomas Stafford, MiD J70907  
AB Kenneth Frederick Spite, MiD RNR/X/20796/A  
AB James Morgan, MiD J112487  
AB John Robert Day C/JX 126830  
AB Harold George Down D/JX 146815  
AB David Allen J73230  
Ord Sea Frederick William Matthews D/JX 173955  
Ord Sea Christopher J F Stride D/JX 167556  
PO Tel Charles Alfred Butcher D/JX 133701  
L/Tel Clinton Machomb East D/JX 132670  
L/Tel John Francis Jones D/JX 150716  
L/Tel Cyril Thomas Jackson P/SSX 14946  
Ord Tel Arthur Temporal P/SSX 29474  
Yeo of Sigs Harry Robert Coleman J111095

EA Albert George Beard, DSM M34733  
 PO Std Thomas Smyth D/LX 20229  
 L/Cook George Roland Gardner P/MX 53031  
 CERA Donald Charles Watson, DSM M34332  
 ERA 2 Wilfred Henry Dean M38747  
 ERA 2 Alfred Henry Early, DSM D/MX 46013  
 ERA 3 Edgar James Lavers, MiD P/MX 48545  
 ERA Herbert Wyatt P/MX 52150  
 SPO Edward Charles Clark, MiD K60084  
 SPO James Riley D/KX 80160  
 L/Sto Frederick Liddle C/KX 85208  
 L/Sto Norman Beattie C/KX 88650  
 L/Sto Cyril Henry Moore C/KX 84159  
 L/Sto William Angus Parramoore C/KX 83734  
 L/Sto James Trench D/KX 80844  
 Sto1 Samuel Orme P/KX 79732  
 Sto1 George Robert Pettitt P/KX 88290  
 Sto1 Jack Westbury P/KX 84545  
 Sto1 Albert James Burton C/KX 90533  
 Sto1 William Cain P/KX 74585  
 Sto1 James Thomas King P/KX 78914  
 Sto1 John Thomas Wilkinson P/KX 77133  
 Sto1 Alexander Lang P/KX 91486  
 Sto1 Francis Shears P/KX 82888  
 Sto1 Gilbert Quick K63664

### **The Submariners Embankment Ceremony 2020**

1 November 2020

The sacrifice of members of the Royal Navy Submarine Service has been marked during this year's Submariner Memorial weekend.

Serving personnel from the Submarine Service, and veterans' organisation the Submariners Association, sent representatives to Westminster Abbey and to the National Submarine War Memorial on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, and Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup>.

On the Saturday, the Submariners Association's Andy Jeffrey visited the Poppy Gardens at Westminster Abbey where he set out crosses on behalf of the Submarine Service. Later there was a short service and wreath laying at the Abbey's Combined Service Memorial, led by Canon Anthony Ball.

The next day activity moved to the Memorial Embankment where there was a Service of Remembrance. Reverend Professor Stephen Dray officiated during the service which included two minutes silence, wreath laying and the reading of the roll call of submarines lost.

Commodore Jim Perks, Head of the Royal Navy Submarine Service, said: "Over 5,000 Royal Navy submariners have perished serving their country since the Submarine Service was formed 119 years ago.

"These events are extremely important for those serving, our veterans, and their families, enabling us to give thanks and remember those that have paid the ultimate sacrifice in Protecting our Nations Interests."

During previous years hundreds of serving and veteran Submariners have attended the event, but this year, due

to COVID restrictions, attendance at the memorial weekend has been strictly pared down.



### **Reading the Roll Call of Lost Submarines**

Present at the National Submarine Memorial were Commodore Jim Perks CBE, Barrie Downer, Iain Mackenzie, Trevor Thomas and a serving Submariner Junior Rate.



**Commodore Perks lays a Wreath at the Embankment Memorial**



The ceremony was first instituted in 1923, following the unveiling of the National Submarine War Memorial in 1922, and is held on the Sunday before the national Remembrance Day Parade to enable submariners to attend both events.

## THE DESMOND GERRISH AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(Continued from the November issue of Periscope View)

I'd had one night's sleep in Terror, when my First Lieutenant, temporarily in Command of H.M.S. WILKIE, appeared, at my breakfast table, in his best uniform, to welcome me to Singapore and my new Command, H.M.S. WILKIE. Very nice and very sensible of him, because I was going to use my 3 day Rest period to acquaint myself rapidly with local knowledge of the Far East Station, the 104th Minesweeping Squadron, and the names and abilities of the Officers and Men in H.M.S. WILKIE, before I took formal Command in 3 days' time. It turned out that he was just about to complete his 18 month tour of duty as 1st Lt. of 'WILKIE' and would be relieved once I had grasp of my own duties, so was keen for me to let him return to England as soon as I was reasonably happy in Command. Fair enough. Him now being an 'Old Hand' on the Station, meant he was well versed on how best to live amongst the literally thousands of orders and regulations which governed the British Forces in Singapore and Hong Kong. For starters. He told me we had a chauffeur driven R.N. car at our disposal all day, since this was the right of any Commanding Officer on the Station.

We spent the day, touring the Dockyard; him introducing me to those Dockyard Officers whose Departments were important to H.M.S. WILKIE and where they were situated in a dockyard as big as a city.

We looked at WILKIE from the dockside – I wasn't going aboard until I took Command in 2 days' time – and then spent the afternoon at the Club Pool – gathering place for most Officers and families at that time of day – and met quite a few people in the Minesweeper circuit.

The Station worked Tropical Routine. Work started at 6.30 a.m. and finished for the day at 1 o'clock. It was the most popular routine worked anywhere in the R.N. – you had long daylight hours for your own leisure, and you did your work before the tropical heat of the day got to its hottest.

### **Singapore's climate**

Among the worst in the world for Europeans on short tours – 18 months to 2½ years – but European Planters who lived there from 10 to 40 years got more used to it. Since you are on the Equator there are no seasons. Every day of the year is exactly the same – brilliant sunshine at 6.30 a.m. and instant darkness at 6.30 p.m. That's bad enough for Europeans but far worse is the humidity which prevails unabated day and night. You pour sweat all day and all night. And you breathe air saturated like steam all the time. The human condition of lethargy strikes every European in varying degrees – even the strongest, best-motivated people succumb to lethargy. It's the best place to send wild, unruly, over energetic children – they succumb, like the adults, to a life-style akin to our quietest Monasteries or Convents. How to exist as a European? You laze around and reduce those times in life, when frantic energy is needed, to the absolute minimum and spend hours in and out of the Club Pool. As Minesweepers, we were pleasantly cool once at sea, though we baked in Singapore Dockyard.

Three days after landing in Singapore, I took Command of H.M.S. WILKIE. I met the other 2 Officers and met the Crew - 4 Petty Officers, 8 Leading Hands and 24 Men. WILKIE had just finished an annual dockyard overhaul, which left us 2 days to paint the ship, before sailing for a 3-day 'shake-down' session at sea, to test all our equipment.

### **The 104th Minesweeping Squadron**

Consisted of 8 Minesweepers and a Frigate as Mother/Factory Ship. There was also an R.F.A. Oil Tanker – R.F.A. Gold Ranger – permanently attached to the Squadron, to keep us fuelled on our long treks around the Far East. Mother ship was H.M.S. WOODBRIDGE HAVEN – yes; the same ship I had served in years ago when we were involved in the PRINCESS VICTORIA foundering – since then extensively modified for her present role as Flagship for Captain Minesweepers and his Staff and as Repair Ship for the Minesweepers.

The Minesweepers were: H.M.S. HOUGHTON- a Commander-in-Command as Squadron Command and H.M.S.s WOOLASTON, DARTINGTON, FISKERTON, CHAWTON, PUNCHESTON, MARYTON and WILKIE.

I was the first Specialist Officer to get a Command in this Squadron. Hitherto, all C.O.s were 'Salt horses' – Officers who had chosen not to specialise or had been turned down – about half the Navy was made up of specialists.

When the other 7 C.O.s heard I was coming they worried, since the complicated technology of Mines and Minesweeping was a T.A.S. Department job. They already had the Staff T.A.S. Officer in WOODBRIDGE HAVEN and another member of my own T.A.S. year – Bruce Nicholls – as 1st. Lieutenant in H.M.S. HOUGHTON – to guide them. But this was a different kettle of fish. As C.O.s, we took advice from Specialist Staff Officers, but how we drove and what we did with our ships was entirely the absolute, unquestionable responsibility of the C.O. Only another C.O. or C.O.s up the ladder, like Captain M/S or the Commander-in-Chief himself, could question the decisions of other Commanding Officers. They knew the Commander-in-Chief would ask me to pass on my specialist knowledge to my fellow C.O.s – "They will listen to you more than the advice they get from the T.A.S. Staff Officers!

The 'Seven' had one trump card – they were all senior to me – 2 of them were already Lt. Cdrs. When we all finally met up – drinks aboard H.M.S. WOOLASTON in Singapore – I was able to blow away their suspicions with the simple statement that I expected all of them to help teach me how to command 'WILKIE' safely and well, since they were all accomplished C.O.s, running taut, but happy ships! We never looked back – I was now a full member of that elite club of 8 Commanding Officers.

My immediate boss was Commander Gus Halliday, a Fleet Air Arm Pilot, C.O. of H.M.S. HOUGHTON and, of course, his First Lieutenant was my chum, Bruce. No problems there. My overall boss was Captain Dudley Davenport (Cuddly Dudley), Captain M/S in H.M.S. WOODBRIDGE HAVEN. A much-decorated Officer having served with distinction throughout the entire war, chiefly in Command of destroyers. He had a lovely personality and made no bones that his chief responsibility was to us 8 C.O.s. He befriended us totally, guided us greatly and defended us from interference from higher echelons right up to Admiralty. In return, we Commanding Officers gave him our total loyalty. One of his many pleasant courtesies was that as soon as you berthed your Minesweeper alongside the 'WOODHA', his First Lieutenant would escort you straight to the Captain's Cabin, where Dudley's Steward would have your favourite drink on a silver salver as you stepped into the Day-room – at any time of the day or night! And he had no favourites. Any C.O. in his Squadron was treated on an equal footing – warts and all!

Before I met all the others – the Squadron was away in Hong Kong waters – I had to sail 'WILKIE' out of Singapore up to the uninhabited island of Pulau Tioman – up the Malayan coast – and put the ship and Crew through the shake-down period.

### **'Ton' Class Minesweepers**

Designed in the 1950s to meet the escalating Mine Warfare race which erupted during the Cold War between Russia and the West. Russia was pushing design of mines towards inventing an unsweepable mine. Russia had already invented mines which would fire from the Magnetic Acoustic or Pressure effect of a target ship passing overhead. Some of the mines needed a combination of all 3 effects at the same time to make them fire, so the Minesweeper had to simulate the 3 effects at the same time to fire them, hopefully safely astern of the Minesweeper. The mine scientists on both sides had a Ball building Anti-Minesweeper booby-traps into their devilishly lethal mines and Minesweeping became a very dangerous business. All these mines lay on the sea bed, but they still threw in the old-fashioned mine anchored to the sea bed but floating out of sight just below the sea surface, which would fire when ships bumped into them.

So, Admiralty threw in its top resources when faced with the expense of building a new fleet of post-war Minesweepers, which would have to defend British sea lanes for the next 20 years at least. They went to town and built 40 Ton-class. There are still Ton-class Minesweepers from the first mammoth build alive and purposeful in the Navy today (1997 – 40 years old!). They were built entirely of wood, strengthened with aluminium ribbing and fittings – both materials non-magnetic. And the wood was the best Teak available in the world in great thickness – no wonder there are still some serving as good as the day they were built. The first of the Class had open Bridges (no roof) but later ones like 'WILKIE' and all the 104th had aluminium and glass enclosed Bridges. The engines were twin Deltic Diesels, with a massive H.P. equivalent to ocean-going Tugs – we had to tow very heavy electric cables astern as part of our Magnetic Sweep. Twin propellers for tight manoeuvring when sweeping narrow lanes. Top speed was 16 knots with both engines running and 13 knots with one engine running, which was our normal way of traveling to conserve fuel. The main sweep was the Electric Loop – a heavily insulated and armoured cable, 4 inches thick, which floated 1/8th of a mile at its furthest point from your stern – and, through this loop, you pulsed belts of extremely high voltage electricity. It was the magnetic effect of this huge electric current that fired magnetic mines. The ship had a Generator as big as one of the engines whose sole use was to "Pulse the Loop".

Acoustic mines were fired by a crude 2-ton device, hung over the ship's side into the sea, fitted with an electrically driven hammer which banged away inside this metal drum – rather like a pneumatic drill. Pressure mines were fired by a similar device which was hung out on the other side of the ship, this one oscillating like a piston to send pressure waves down to the sea bed.

Lastly, the simplest sweep of all – a wire hawser, which you passed one end to your other Minesweeper and the 2 of you towed this wire loop to snag and cut the mooring cables of contact mines. Once out, they bobbed up to the surface and you exploded them with rifle fire.

When sweeping very narrow channels through Minefields laid around the approaches to major ports – just wide enough to allow the biggest of ships through – the Minesweeper's navigation has to be of pinpoint accuracy so we were fitted with the best equipment available in those days – a High Definition Radar, Gyro Compass and High Definition Echo Sounder. We marked the sides of these narrow, swept lanes with our own spar buoys.

During 'WILKIE's' 3-day shake down we streamed, rested and recovered all these sweeps and, on Day 3, H.M.S. CHAWTON (Brian McCormack) joined me to practice and test the Wire Loop Sweep. The Squadron were on their way back from Hong Kong and H.M.S. CHAWTON had been sent on ahead to have Day 3 with me and, on Day 4, WILKIE and CHAWTON re-joined the Squadron, which steamed into Singapore in Close Formation Line ahead – WOOHA, followed by all 8 Minesweepers – me, Tail-end Charlie, since the Line Ahead Formation went in strict order of seniority of the Captains. There was a benefit in this, since WILKIE was always last to berth alongside and had the fresh air by being outboard of Trots of 4 Minesweepers berthed alongside each other – quite an advantage in the steam-heat of Singapore Dockyard.

On arrival, I met, for the first time, Captain M/S Squadron Commander and the other 7 C.O.s. I was, now, really part of the Squadron.

A few days later, WILKIE and DARTINGTON were on the way to Borneo for a Piracy Patrol when I got the signal from Admiralty telling me that Billy had been born. Beer all round for the Crew and great relief for me.

**SUBMARINERS 'CROSSED THE BAR' REPORTED UP TO 30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank/Rate</b>	<b>O/N</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Submarine Service</b>
Dolphin Branch	February 2020	Ian C Norton	LME	P/K 981931	78	Submarine Service from November 1964 to March 1969 in FINWHALE
Submarine Officers Association	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	Michael Leyton John	Commander (E) (WESM)	TBA	71	Submarine Service as CEA from 1970 to 1980 in DOLPHIN, RESOLUTION, OSPREY, SOVEREIGN, OSPREY & as Sub Lieutenant to Commander from 1980 to 2002 in RNC Greenwich, RNEC MANADON, SWIFTSURE), SPARTAN, NEPTUNE, REVENGE, SM10, FOSM Northwood, MOD London & JSCSC
Submarine Officers Association	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2020	Martin Nicholas Moore, MBE	Commander (E) (WESM)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service from 1989 to 2008 in RNEC MANADON, DOLPHIN, TRAFALGAR, DOLPHIN, CWTA, DOLPHIN, SPARTAN, CWTA, MOD London & MOD Main Building
Non-member	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2020	Paul 'Spike' Adshead	TBA	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service including OSIRIS & OCELOT
Non-member	3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Ian Dudley	LMEM(L)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service from 1973 to 1980 in OLYMPUS
Non-member	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Gordon W Anderson	Petty Officer MT (E)	RAN	TBA	Submarine Service in RAN 'O' class (including OTAMA decommissioning crew)
Leicestershire & Rutland	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	John Deeth	Warrant Officer Marine Engineering Artificer (EL)	D057532H	77	Submarine Service from 1966 to 1988 in WALRUS, REVENGE (S), CONQUEROR, COURAGEOUS, WALRUS & SUPERB
	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Farquhar McLennon	Petty Officer Marine Engineering Mechanic	TBA	TBA	Not Given
Dolphin Branch	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Alfie Miller	Able Seaman (SD)	D/JX 564059	95	Submarine Service from August 1943 to September 1946 in H50, SAFARI, STUBBORN & TRINCHEON
Barrow in Furness Branch	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Alan West	Chief Engine Room Artificer	P/MX 833465	89	Submarine Service from May 1954 to August 1971 in STURDY, SPRINGER, EXPLORER, ALCIDE, WARSPITE & SWIFTSURE
Non-member	21 <sup>st</sup> November 2020	David 'Taff' Sillman	TBA	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service in OLYMPUS & OPOSSUM
Derby Branch	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2020	Michael W Sharratt	Chief Control Electrical Mechanician	P/M 982382X	78	Submarine Service from October 1964 to February 1982 in TOTEM (1965), RENOWN (P), DREADNOUGHT, RESOLUTION (P) & DREADNOUGHT
Plymouth Branch	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Brian Lewis	CEM1	D/M 947025	83	Submarine Service from November 1956 to December 1982 in TURPIN, THERMOPYLAE, RORQUAL, FINWHALE, NARWHAL, CACHALOT, ANDREW & OSIRIS

Gosport Branch	November 2020	Derek J Tranter	Petty Officer ME	C/KX 855250	90	Submarine Service from 1949 to 1955 in ARTFUL, ANDREW, SCOTSMAN, TUDOR, TRENCHANT & SENESCHAL
Non-member	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	George S E Kimmett	Radio Operator (SM)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service in TURBULENT & UPHOLDER
Non-member	November 2020	Colin Dalman	TBA	ME	TBA	Submarine Service from 1956 to 1967 in ORPHEUS & DREADNOUGHT