



# 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: Construction of the new Wet Dock Quay underway

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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.'*

**WINSTON SPENCER CHURCHILL**

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### EDITORIAL

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#### Hello Everybody,

Last month the front-page picture was of the 'Roll Out' of HMS ANSON – now in the water alongside at the 'old' Wet Dock Quay. This month it is of the pile driving work in the Devonshire Dock – the preliminary works for the construction of the new Wet Dock Quay which needs to be ready for the first of the new 'Dreadnought' Class in a few years' time. This is one of the last of the major projects in the redevelopment of the Barrow Ship Yard although there are still a few other projects underway with the Devonshire Dock Hall extension and with the recladding of the DDH still to come.

Ben Britten has sent me news of our former Branch Chairman and Padre Alan Jones! Many of you will remember that Alan has been a resident in Risedale Care Home for some time now. Ben says "my daughter was recently working in Risedale Care home and yesterday (24<sup>th</sup> May) was able to see Alan Jones. She tells me he is in good spirits and his health is as good as can be expected. He is being very well looked after". Alan receives his copy of the Branch Newsletter by post every month so we are keeping him in touch with what everyone is doing. Take care Alan – we are thinking of you.

Talking about former Branch Members many of you will also remember Graham (Andy) Anderson.

Unfortunately, Andy died in a tragic cycling accident in Taiwan on 4<sup>th</sup> April. It seems he was taking part in a charity bike ride with friends when he failed to negotiate a bend in a hilly section and came off his bike and was found unresponsive when reached. Rest in peace Andy! Following the recent tragic accident to the Indonesian Submarine KRI NANGGALA many fundraising initiatives were set up to support the families. Your NMC recommended a donation of £1,000 from National Funds to the collection of which £500 was paid over immediately. The support of the majority of the Association Branches (in accordance with the new rules) was then forthcoming for the second £500 donation and that was paid over on 25<sup>th</sup> May. Full details of the transfer of the funds to the families will be advised in due course. It is to be hoped that, with the previous experience with the families of the ARA SAN JUAN, the transfer of the funds will be much quicker.

Have you heard of the Extra-Large Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (XLUUV)? Much work is going on with these Vehicles which it is suggested may in future fulfil many of the tasks currently undertaken by manned submarines. They are the subject of an article on the BBC Website - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-56993035> by Michael Dempsey. Ryan Ramsey – formerly Perisher Teacher - contributed to the article to give the Submarine Commanders perspective. I have

been given permission to use the article in Association Newsletters and I have included it at Pages \*\* - subject to use of the various attributions.

There is also an article this month about the identification of the wreck of HMS URGE on the seabed off Grand Harbour, Malta - divers have gone down to the remarkable depth of 112 metres to get the photographic proof of identity. After two years (and almost 80 years after the loss) the families have the confirmation they wanted for so long and know where their family members are resting.

So what have you all been up to? I asked the same question last month! Probably not too much this time with all the heavy rain and high winds over the last couple of weeks – such a change after all the good weather in April and now so cold!

Take care everyone. See you all at the June Branch Meeting!

Best Regards,  
**Barrie**

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## SECRETARY'S DIT

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**Hello All**

The correspondence this month has focused on the Family Reunion Weekend, the fundraising for the Indonesian SM NANGGALA 402 and COSM, Jim Perks, proposal for the Submarine Family organisation.

### **A Family Reunion Weekend**

This will take place the weekend 20 to 22 August in the Yew Lodge Hotel, Packington, Kegworth ([www.yewlodgehotel.co.uk](http://www.yewlodgehotel.co.uk)). Details and application forms have been distributed previously. However, if you have not received them and would like to go, please contact me.

### **Indonesian Submarine NANGGALA.**

We Remember Submariners coordinated the effort with the Royal Navy and industry are raising funds to support the families of the submariners who sadly perished in the accident. Already, due to the generosity of the community, we have over £20000 in the fund, and although fantastic, doesn't go far when shared equally between the 53 families. They commissioned a special memorial pin, which went on sale in their shop on Tuesday 4th May 2021, priced at £6 each. To purchase please follow the link, Shop - We Remember Submariners ([we-remember-submariners.com](http://we-remember-submariners.com))

If you would simply like to make a donation, they have set up a dedicated donation page at Fundraising Campaigns ([we-remember-submariners.com](http://we-remember-submariners.com)). Whatever you can afford will be gratefully received and please be assured that 100% of all proceeds will go to the families of the 53 crew members. The just giving link is <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/nanggalafamilyfund>

The National Management Committee (NMC) recommended a donation of £1,000 from Submariners Association funds but, under the new Rules introduced by Recommendation 4 at the 2021 NCC, the NMC can only approve up to £500 without consulting the Branches. An initial Payment of £500 was authorised and the Treasurer transferred the funds immediately. The approval of all SA Branches was sought to allow a second donation of £500 to be made to bring the total up to £1,000 - the agreement of the majority of Branches being required for this to happen. I can confirm the Barrow Branch agreed with the additional donation.

### **COSM Jim Perks proposal for the Submarine Family.**

A number of responses and comments have been forwarded on this subject and they raised a number of questions but the main concern is how does the SA maintain its independence and self-regulation when the main source of funds will be from outside the organisation? The NMC has set up a working group to look at all the pros and cons of the proposal and the branch responses have been forwarded for consideration. I have proposed that this is added to the July meeting agenda, as it should be the first full meeting without COVID restrictions.

### **Trafalgar Night 23 October 2021**

Jim Haliwell and the Morecambe Bay Branch have kindly invited 6 members of the Barrow Branch to attend their Trafalgar Night Dinner on Saturday 23 October at the County Hotel, Carnforth. Two places have already been booked but if you are interested please contact me. Some accommodation has been reserved at the hotel but do not ring the hotel, to book the rooms, call Jackie on 07747 602970. (Ex Clarendon manager). This is a stag event and SA Full Members only.

### **Armed Forces Day 26 June 2011**

There has been some correspondence on what activities could or could not take place on Armed Forces Day. Due to the COVID restrictions and the lateness of the government planned release from lockdown means that it is unlikely that there will be any formal event arranged.

Regards

**David A J Smith**

**SA Barrow Branch Secretary**

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## SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

### Hi Shipmates

It is nearly time for us all to dust off our submariners association jackets, polo shirts etc in readiness for returning to normal, albeit, that the first meeting will still be under covid restrictions. Still a step in the right direction.

First on the books is the (group title of) First Footing, Pub Crawl, Gallon Club, American Independence Day and great run ashore happening on Saturday 3rd July, intention is to leave via normal routes and stop at the Anglers Arms; Haverthwaite to pick up a couple bods, then proceed to Morecambe to a pub called the Cross Bay Brewery where we will meet up with the Morecambe branch for a couple then go to Lancaster to the 3 mariners and a couple others for food and keep the fluid levels high. Depart the Ferry at 11 and depart Lancaster 6pm. Cost is £15 per person (transport only) and is limited to 22 at the moment (looking to increase the size of the bus if demands deems it fit). At the meeting I will need a commitment to attend and payment on the coach or at the meeting.

Saturday 17th July is our annual trip to Cartmel, (also Dickie Cambridge's birthday run) £15 per person transport only and is subject to the race course resuming normal service with the ability to buy tickets at the gate. At present they are still operating the buy tickets in advance routine, but I do hope that this will change soon but if not then after the restrictions are lifted on June 21st. There is sufficient support for this so I will need names and payment no later than the meeting in July.

Saturday September 11th is the Canal trip, loads of fun, alcohol, food, transport, great company, scenic views £40 per person limited to 46 persons only – if you haven't done this yet it is a definite bucket list item. This is a fantastic run ashore and I am taking names, but will need payment no later than the September meeting.

Friday 12th November will be our annual dinner dance – don't know where or how at the moment – watch this space. I am very keen to get our pie and pint trip which normally takes place at the Prince of Wales Foxfield to occur and will keep you informed of progress.

Well, that is enough in the pipeline for now, with regards to the Branch meeting I will start slow and just have a raffle or similar event to start raising some funds for the social programme, but looking to get back to normal with birthday beer, members draw, smally eats in the not too distant future.

I have missed you all and am really looking forward to seeing you in June.

Yours Aye

Alex

### JUNE 2021 BRANCH CALENDAR

June Branch Meeting	Tues 1 <sup>st</sup> Jun
Armed Forces Day Flag Raising	Mon 24 <sup>th</sup> Jun?
Committee Meeting	As Required

### JULY 2021 BRANCH CALENDAR

Alex's Bus Trip Extravaganza	Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup> Jul
July Branch Meeting	Tues 6 <sup>th</sup> Jul
Cartmel Races	Sat 17 <sup>th</sup> Jul
Committee Meeting	As Required

### AUGUST 2021 BRANCH CALENDAR

August Branch Meeting	Tues 3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug
Dunoon Memorial	W/E 6 <sup>th</sup> 8 <sup>th</sup> Aug
SA Reunion	W/E 20 <sup>th</sup> to 22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug
Committee Meeting	As Required

**NOTE: June, July & August Meetings and Events are still subject to cancellation at very short notice and are dependent on further Government advice!**

### JUNE BRANCH BIRTHDAYS

G.A. (George) Plater	03/06/1944
B.R. (Slosh) Riley	03/06/1934
P. (Patricia) Bell	05/06/1938
R. (Richard) Usher	08/06/1990
S (Sue) Smith	08/06/1955
A.I. (Carl) Haythornthwaite	09/06/1937
A. (Tony) Nolan	12/06/1965

C. (Chris) Brown	17/06/1947
R. (Bob) Palmer	17/06/1939
M. (Martin) Law	21/06/1978
B.K. (Barrie) Downer	23/06/1945
D. (Derek) Pallister	29/06/1954
A. (Tony) Griffiths	29/06/1950

**Happy Birthday All!**

### REMEMBERING FORMER BRANCH

#### MEMBERS

#### 'CROSSED THE BAR' - JUNE

Frank Arthur Rewell	1969
George Chantrell	1981
Thomas Herriot	1986
George Hughes	1986
Peter Weeks	2007
Claude Roberts	2011
Alfie Hines	2016
Eric Hamer	2018
Colin Hutchinson	2019

#### RESURGAM

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opinion of the Editor, The Submariners Association, the MoD or the Submarine Service unless otherwise stated. The Submariners Association may not agree with the opinions expressed in this Newsletter but encourages publication as a matter of interest.

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

### **NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFORMATION**

Do you have a story to tell or have information you feel should appear in the Newsletter - then ring Barrie Downer on 01229 820963 or, if you wish to send me an article, my postal address is The Firs, Dundalk Street, Barrow Island, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2RZ. You may also send your contribution by e-mail to me on [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 June for the July 2021 Issue. Please ensure you have any information with me by the 15th of the month to ensure its inclusion in the next issue. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition - keep them stories coming!

### **SUBMARINE LOSSES OF WWII JUNE 1941**

No Submarines were 'lost' in June 1941 and no Submariners are reported to have died.

### **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

### **ROYAL NAVY'S NORTHERN DIVING GROUP SET TO RECEIVE FREEDOM OF ORKNEY**

ROYAL NAVY MEDIA RELEASE - Thursday, 6 May 2021

The Royal Navy's team of bomb disposal experts based at HM Naval Base Clyde are to receive the Freedom of Orkney in recognition of their outstanding work.

Members of Orkney Island Council met on Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss the proposal to grant the Royal Navy divers the Freedom of the Island, a proposal put forward by Councillor Harvey Johnston and endorsed by six

elected members. The proposal was passed unanimously by the 20 elected members present at the meeting.

"Northern Diving Group are hugely honoured that the nomination for the Freedom of Orkney has been approved by the Council," said Lieutenant Commander Mark Shaw, the Commanding Officer of Northern Diving Group.

"I am very aware that this type of award is not often issued and reserved for individuals or organisations with particularly close links with Orkney. To be only the twelfth recipient of the Freedom of Orkney is a distinct privilege and both myself and the team at NDG are very much looking forward to receiving the Freedom."

Royal Navy Clearance Divers have long established links with Orkney going back at least 40 years. Not only has Northern Diving Group and their predecessors helped keep the population safe by providing expert help in disposing of historic ordnance washed up on the island's extensive coastline, but they have also been involved in commemorating those lost during the sinking of HMS Royal Oak at Scapa Flow, helping to maintain Orkney's history and heritage.

Captain Chris Smith, the Naval Regional Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland, said: "I am absolutely delighted that Orkney Islands Council has honoured the Northern Diving Group in this way.

"The Royal Navy's association with Orkney is a very special one and transcends both the many historical events that have happened in these waters, but also through our contemporary operations around Orkney, including the safe disposal of old ordnance.

"We are indebted for the friendship and support shown by the community over many years."

The 39-strong team of divers, stationed at the Royal Navy's Base in Scotland, HM Naval Base, Clyde, also provide bomb disposal expertise to other communities across the length and breadth of Scotland, as well as Northern England and Northern Ireland.

The team covers a coastline of over 12,000 miles and in 2020 they attended some 140 call outs across their area of responsibility, maintaining military aid to civil authorities even during the height of the coronavirus pandemic.



**Royal Navy Clearance Divers from Northern Diving Group who will receive the Freedom of Orkney**

When not on task, members of the Northern Diving Group are also involved in commemorating the lives lost during the sinking of HMS ROYAL OAK. The battleship was torpedoed by a German U-Boat at Scapa

Flow on October 14, 1939. Tragically 833 sailors lost their lives in the attack with the wreck of the ship now a designated war grave.



**Northern Diving Group dive to the wreck of HMS Royal Oak at Scapa Flow to change the White Ensign**

The Northern Diving Group's predecessor unit dived down to recover the ship's bell in 1982 and since then have annually dived to the wreck to replace the White Ensign in commemoration of the dead. There is also a memorial service each year where the ship's bell is rung to remember those who gave their lives, with this year's service held at Faslane, rather than on Orkney, due to Covid restrictions.

Sent by: Gavin Carr, Royal Navy Media & Comms, HM Naval Base Clyde, T: 01436 677205.

**NANGGALA CHALLENGE COIN**

Swochallenge-Coins  
 <swochallenge.coins@baesystems.com>  
 Sent: 24 May 2021 11:16  
 Subject: KRI Nanggala Coin



With kind permission of the original artist for the KRI Nanggala pin I have created a challenge coin of a similar design.

The centre diameter of the coin is 2" with a 3" long boat profile protruding each end. The front of the coin has the Indonesian 'dolphins' in 3D.

The rear of the coin has 53 poppies along with the RN dolphins in 3D above We Remember Submariners.

The coin is £13+P&P with all proceeds going to WRS to add to the fund for the families.

They will be available for pre-order until 1st June and then placed into production for delivery ~7 weeks later. [www.swocoins.co.uk](http://www.swocoins.co.uk) to place orders

James Bird  
 Principal Navigation Commissioning Engineer – SWTO,  
 BAE Systems Submarines

**Teaching artificial intelligence to control navy submarines**

By Michael Dempsey  
 Technology of Business reporter 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021



COPYRIGHTBAE SYSTEMS

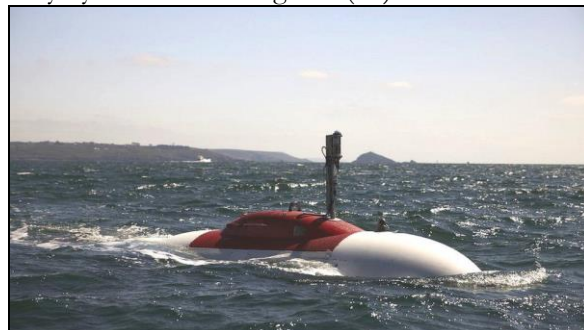
**The naming ceremony of HMS Anson in Barrow-in-Furness**

On 20 April, the Royal Navy's latest nuclear-powered hunter-killer submarine, HMS ANSON, emerged from a vast construction hall at Barrow-in-Furness, travelled down a slipway and entered the water. All 7,400 tonnes of it.

Around 260 miles away in Plymouth, another submarine made its debut that same day. A minnow compared to HMS ANSON; this secretive nine-tonne craft may have greater implications for the future of the navy than the £1.3bn nuclear boat.

MSubs of Plymouth, a specialist in autonomous underwater vehicles, won a £2.5m Ministry of Defence contract to build and test an Extra-Large Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (XLUUV) that should be able to operate up to 3,000 miles from home for three months.

The big innovation here is the autonomy. The submarine's movements and actions will be governed entirely by Artificial Intelligence (AI).



COPYRIGHTMSUBS

**MSubs of Plymouth won a £2.5m contract to build and test an Extra-Large Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (XLUUV)**

Ollie Thompson is a recent graduate who is studying for a master's degree in robotics at Plymouth University. He

also works for MarineAI, the MSubs arm that is fitting out the XLUV's brain.

Mr Thompson has no doubts about the challenge he and his colleagues face: "We know a lot of people don't have confidence in AI. So we work with elements we can test, we separate things into boxes."

He divides the AI problem into components - and mission management is the toughest. This attempts to simulate the presence of a trained captain in the little submarine's programming.

This is AI working in total isolation from human contact, not least because maintaining strict radio silence is critical to a submarine's covert role. The technical principle here is machine learning, showing an AI program examples of how a task should be performed until it has embedded the right actions in its own repertoire.

To do this, MarineAI is using a huge IBM AC922 supercomputer, "a monster, one of the biggest in the South-West of England" Mr Thompson boasts. In contrast the on-board brain of the submarine resides in a 15cm square box and relies on an Nvidia chip often found driving computer games.

"We built it off the back of the Nvidia chip because it's highly energy efficient," says Mr Thompson. Just like a tiny but powerful Raspberry Pi device used to teach schoolchildren basic programming tasks this approach takes up very little power. And keeping power consumption to the bare minimum is critical to making the submarine's battery last.



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**HMS ANSON and others under construction. In future, submarines will launch their own autonomous vessels**

It's clear that the Ministry of Defence is paying very close attention to battery technology for this project. So far MarineAI is relying on existing technology derived from car batteries. But it notes that research in this field is leaping forward.

The AI content of the computer should prioritise tasks. The project envisages a boat that can travel to an area of the seabed to search for mines or plant a sophisticated electronic intelligence-gathering package or stay in place and scour its environment for information on a hostile navy.

So MarineAI is creating a decision-making capacity for the submarine's brain. It will know how much battery life is left and how to weigh that against prevailing weather conditions and sea states, reaching a logical decision on whether to sail on or return home in the face of strong tides.

The project has oceans left to cross. For instance, how can the submarine detect small objects on the surface such as jet-skis?

All of these dilemmas are small beer for human submarine captains. Commander Ryan Ramsey captained the hunter-killer HMS Turbulent and taught on the Perisher, a five-month-long course the navy uses to push prospective submarine skippers to the limit.



COPYRIGHTRYAN RAMSEY

**Ryan Ramsey captained the hunter-killer submarine HMS Turbulent**

This decides if they are fit to command 100 or more submariners working punishing watches consisting of six hours on, six hours off for the duration of a long patrol. Cdr Ramsey worked in AI after leaving the navy and can see where smart software and human instinct might not produce the same response.

"AI will struggle to match human decision-making skills. There are lots of submariners skills you can transfer to it, but you have to accept that the first generation will not be perfect."

He cites how he would study opposing Nato submarine commanders he went up against in exercises, learning how far each individual was prepared to push a vessel. "The reality is that if you don't know how a guy operates he will find your submarine before you find him. You can't replicate that emotional input in AI."

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### HMS TALLY HO & Pubs

Mike Dillon sent me the following Message:-

My father, Patrick W Dillon, was a Telegraphist/submariner from about 1949 to 1953, after being a St VINCENT boy.

His main fighting submarine was the TALLY HO. I was aware that Sir Winston Churchill himself named the sub. In recent years I have taken to country walking and I often walk quite near to Churchill's house at Chartwell.

To the rear of Chartwell at a place called Toy's Hill there is a long - defunct pub which was called the TALLY HO. I often wondered whether Churchill named the boat after the general hunting term, or more for his affection of what could have been his 'local'.

Very recently I was walking through Toy's Hill and someone came out of the house which used to be the TALLY HO pub.

He knew a lot of history of the area and he told me that Churchill did indeed drink in the TALLY HO. I can't say for certain whether he named the boat after the pub, but at least now I know there was a connection.

All the best, Mick Dillon



This is a picture of the wall of the old TALLY HO pub at Toy's Hill. If you look closely you can see the name TALLY HO spelt out in the brickwork.

It was to my great sorrow that I never got my dad to write his memoirs of that historic period, and also that I never got to chat to a WW2 submariner who had served out of Trincomalee. They must all sadly be on eternal patrol.

By Editor

I replied to Mike Dillon about HMS TALLY HO being a Barrow Built boat and told him that we also had a TALLY HO pub here in Barrow. Unlike the one he has found ours is still in business – well hopefully after all the restrictions imposed by Covid!



## HMS URGE IDENTIFIED

Two years ago, the wreck of a submarine was located off Malta which was tentatively identified as being that of HMS URGE



Now, two years since the submerged submarine was found outside the Grand Harbour, there is more evidence to show that this is in fact HMS URGE, which disappeared in 1942.

TVM has broadcast recently shot exclusive footage, eliminating any doubt about the whereabouts of HMS Urge 79 years ago:

The extraordinary find, two years ago, was not immediately acknowledged and some questioned it, as some thought that this submarine sank near Libya.

A joint team from the University of Malta and Heritage Malta plunged to at a depth of 112 meters, to not only confirm that the submarine in question is in fact the HMS URGE, but also to assess its state of preservation as a war grave.



## THE DESMOND GERRISH AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(Continued from the May 2021 Issue of Periscope View)

### Back to Naval Matters

The reason that Minesweeping in the Far East became top priority stemmed from the Russian and Communist China threat of expansion in the Far East. Russia had the biggest stockpile of mines in the world and the mines were both diverse and advanced. The Western Allies had worked out that Russia could immobilise all our Fleets by mining the approaches to all Naval Bases in the Far East. Warships would either be imprisoned inside the Base Ports or cut off at sea without access to fuel, food, and ammo. Similarly, if Russia or China overran any neutral country by invasion, they would plaster that country's coastline with mines to stop an Allied Counter-Invasion.

The U.S. Navy – by far and away the biggest and most powerful Naval Force in the Far East – had never got on top of this complicated task of sweeping enemy minefields. They welcomed us British Minesweepers as their chief ally and they fixed for us to exercise regularly with their own Minesweeping Squadrons to help teach them to destroy enemy mines laid in channels through which their Aircraft Carriers and Strike Fleets had to pass. In effect, the American Minesweeper Squadrons were integrated with the R.N. Squadron (the 104th M.S.) and placed under our command. Every 6 months there would be a combined U.S., British, Australian and New Zealand major Fleet Exercise in Far East waters, lasting about 3 weeks and we Minesweepers would inevitably end up leading these massive Fleets, through very narrow mine-swept channels, to their anchorage, needed to launch the invasion landing against pretend Russian or Chinese-held territory. We enjoyed the temporary glory of nuclear-powered Aircraft Carriers following very closely in our wake and instantly obeying every compass heading we gave them! One false step and they were goners – and they knew it.

We made some good friends with the American Minesweepers – they had a Commodore as boss man flying his flag in a huge Mother Ship – and until we came to join them, they had been the Cinderella's of the U.S. Fleet – no longer now; they were with us and moved up to top dogs!

One of the many Minesweeping Exercises we did was in the approaches to Hong Kong harbour. And on this occasion, we tested out a new plan of moving 8 or more Minesweepers around the patch of sea to be cleared of mines, which was circular, rather than the conventional up and down lanes which wasted time doing cumbersome turns towing the lengthy sweeps at each end of the straight lanes. It takes 3 to 5 days to sweep a lane, because of the infernal mine device called a Ship-Counter. The Ship-Counter in a Mine can be set from 1 to 4 "counts". Set to one, means one ship or Mine sweep can go over it without exploding. The second ship or 'sweep' to go over it will blow it up. And so on. We had to sweep each lane 14 times to make sure we had swept all mines, including those set to Ship-Count 14! Devilishly cunning!

So, on Day One of this Exercise, we got this circular Racecourse of 8 Minesweepers with lengthy sweeps towed astern, going all very well in daylight, when ordinary merchant ship traffic could navigate safely through this ring of moving Minesweepers. But at night, ships approaching our 'ring' could only see the complicated Navigation Lights indicating 'Minesweepers – towing – long – Sweeps'.

At about midnight, the Liner, *ORIANA*, sailed out of Hong Kong and ended up in the middle of our 'ring'. By now, she was thoroughly confused and sensibly stopped engines to sort out how she could steer out of the 'ring'. After a while, she could see the pattern of things and made a dash to pass between 'WILKIE' and the Minesweeper following me. Unfortunately, she steered too close to pass astern of 'WILIKE' and would cut across my sweeps, so I flashed the International Signal "You are heading into danger" at her. She came to an abrupt halt and did not leave the 'ring' until daylight when she could actually see our sweeps and steer clear of them.

One of the few shore lines the R.N. in the Far East had, to practice live gunfire, was Ninepins Island, just outside Hong Kong's harbour, uninhabited of course and rising to a height of approximately 1500 feet. So, any time R.N. warships visited Hong Kong, the opportunity was taken to practice and test the ship's guns against targets painted up Ninepins' steep, rocky slopes.

Just before we Minesweepers left Hong Kong on this occasion, on our way back to Singapore, Captain M/S ordered all Minesweepers to do a Target-shoot with our Bofors guns. I was doing my run past Ninepins and once abreast the Target Area, ordered the Bofor's Crew to commence firing. The first clips of shell were nicely exploding in the Target Area, when suddenly, the fiery tracers of the shells were rising right up the Island towards the top at an alarming rate. We all hit buzzers to tell the Guns Crew 'CEASE FIRING', but the buzzers didn't get through until at least 2 shells zipped over the top of Ninepins Island. The problem was that the hydraulics which raise the gun-barrel up and down and left and right had jammed to 'Rise' and, with the gun firing automatically, it took barely a couple of seconds for those two shells to go over the top of the Island before the Crew could stop it firing. We all knew, that on the other side of the Island, the sea was full of fishing boats and junks. We all dashed to the other side of Ninepins and we were relieved to find we hadn't hit a fishing boat or junk with those two live rogue shells. When we shouted over to a group of Sampans, asking, "Did you see 2 shells exploding?" They answered, "No-see shells, but velly-good fireworks chase Devils away!"

Towards the end of my 18 months in Command of *WILKIESTON* arose the task of towing the six Inshore Minesweepers (about the same size as M.T.B.s or the largest variety of M.L.s or Gunboats) of the Hong Kong Squadron, back to Singapore. Admiralty were upgrading the Hong Kong Squadron to the same much bigger 'Ton' Class of Minesweepers as we had in our Squadron. The six Inshores were to be shipped back to the U.K. as deck cargo in one of the Navy's biggest

Transport Ships. The only crane big enough to lift them onto the Transport Ship was in Singapore. How to get the 6 Inshores from Hong Kong to Singapore? It was too risky for them to undertake the voyage themselves – 1,500 miles across the typhoon-ridden South China Sea – and they would have to re-fuel several times in the rough Monsoon season, never mind the typhoons! Solution – let the Singapore Squadron tow them! So, six of us were detailed off as ‘Tugs’, while the other two would act as ‘Tankers’ – constantly filling up from the tanker, GOLD RANGER, and pumping into the ‘Tugs’ as they plodded on towing their Inshores. Fortunately, ‘WILKIE’ was nominated as one of the two tankers so I was free to roam around this Convoy, ‘selling’ fuel to my mates! We hit a few patches of very rough Monsoon weather, but regardless, got those six Inshores quite safely to Singapore in seven days. Quite a successful feat of seamanship. A bloke, named Jeremy Black, took Command of H.M.S. FISKERTON a couple of months after I had taken Command of ‘WILKIE’. He was the second Specialist Officer, following me, to become a C.O. in the Squadron. His specialisation was in Gunnery, so all our First Lieutenants, who were automatically designated the Gunnery Officers in our Minesweepers, shuddered. They needn’t have worried. Like the rest of us C.O.s, Jeremy gave all his time and concentration to running his ship safely and mastering the somewhat frightening art of streaming, towing, and recovering Mine Sweeps. Just the speed of the ship alone was critical when working the sweeps. A precise speed through the sea was mandatory for each phase of streaming, towing, and recovering the sweeps – carried out by the First Lieutenant and his Sweep deck Gang (about a dozen well trained Seamen) – on a Sweep deck at the stern cluttered with huge reels and mini cranes, all powered by fast electric motors. So, the Captain was like the Conductor of an orchestra. Get one move or sequence wrong and everything collapsed into an almighty shambles. Dangerous too. If, for instance, the Captain ordered the wrong speed at the time of ordering the kites to be lowered into the sea, these ½ ton brutes would fly back out of the water and crash down on the crowded Sweep deck like a murderous missile. Operating Mine sweeps concentrated the Captain’s mind as much as that met by Submarine Captains carrying out a torpedo attack. You had to be on the ball with a capital ‘B’.

A couple of amusing incidents with Jeremy – he was a top-notch charmer with a huge sense of humour. He and I struck up an immediate partnership, coupled with a fun rivalry between us – his ship against mine, in all sports and Minesweeping races.

His ship – FISKERTON – was selected by Admiralty to be the ‘Tester’ of fitting Air-Conditioning into all Minesweepers. The Admiralty Engineers soon had a prototype Air-conditioning system fitted to ‘FISK’ for trial. The Officers and Crew of ‘FISK’ were basking in the refreshing seventh heaven of coolness without pouring rivers of sweat. Jeremy, of course, flaunted his new-found miracle right into the faces of us other seven C.O.s – “Can’t understand how you chaps exist without Air-Con. Admiralty knew the only reliable ship in the Squadron to fit Air-Con” – and so on.

The C.O.s’ ‘Club’ stood Black’s gloating for two whole days – then we counter attacked. His core gloat referred to sitting on his Air-Conditioned loo after breakfast each day, reading the tissue-thin edition of The London Times, which Admiralty posted to us all and which disintegrated rapidly from our dripping sweat in our boiler house loos. We made a roster for ourselves, using 10-minute intervals, to occupy Jeremy’s loo, before he finished breakfast. A couple of days of this routine, with him last in line at No.8, soon got the desired compromise from him. No more gloating and we could all use his Air-Conditioned facilities after him!

A more refined activity of the C.O.s’ ‘Club’ was to gather together with Captain M/S and his Staff Officers, once a month, for Sunday lunch at Raffles Hotel. On these occasions, we behaved ourselves and simply enjoyed the great food, service, and décor, of this, the best of Britain’s excellent show of standards in the Far East.

To be continued in the July Issue of Periscope View.

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### **SUBMARINE GYROCOMPASSES IN THE EARLY YEARS**

Extracts from various Websites and BR3043

In these days of Inertial Navigation Systems and Global Positioning Systems it is very easy to forget how limited the navigation arrangements in the early days of Submarines really were. Originally, all that was available was a magnetic compass which was useless within the confines of the submarine hull – it had to be mounted externally and viewed through a glass ‘bullseye’ window or via a periscope arrangement. Safe navigation relied on a ‘good fix’ before diving and ‘dead reckoning’. Also, originally there were no gyrocompasses!

The first seaworthy gyrocompass was produced in 1908 by the firm of Hermann Anschütz in Germany. It was largely made possible through the efforts of a Max Schuler, who developed the principles on which a practical shipborne gyrocompass depends. This compass was a marvel of mechanical ingenuity.

In 1911 Elmer Sperry in the United States produced a gyrocompass that was easier to manufacture.

In England, Sidney George Brown, working with John Perry along similar lines as Sperry, produced a gyrocompass in 1916.

Sperry in Britain started with a factory in Pimlico, London, in 1913, manufacturing gyroscopic compasses for the Royal Navy. It became the Sperry Gyroscope Co Ltd in 1915. Later the Arma Corporation in the U.S. produced a unit that was a modification of the Anschütz.

All gyrocompasses operate on the same basic principle. They differ in their methods of supporting the gyroscopic element (the spinning wheel) and of applying the pendulosity which is required for the north-seeking property and in the means used to damp out oscillations and thus cause the unit to settle on north.

BR 3043 Chapter 22 Para. 22. 2 describes Compasses in the early Classes of Submarine Boats as follows:

In the 'HOLLAND' boats a magnetic compass was sited outboard on the hull abaft the bridge and a 'compass periscope tube' went from this compass through at least two right-angled bends to a position in the control room near the periscope training gear and periscope steering gear handwheels. This arrangement continued in the 'A' Class, 'B' Class and 'C' Class and in the 'D' Class - except that the magnetic compass was sited on the pressure hull inside the casing.

It is also stated that *'a duplicate compass was fitted inside the hull and that the compass on the casing was fitted with a reflecting tube for observation from within the conning tower'*. The latter arrangement undoubtedly started when the periscope position was in the conning tower. The duplicate compass would have been a portable binnacle to be used on the bridge.

These magnetic compasses were a great trouble owing to the difficulty of screening from electric motors. The Submarine Committee in 1912 stated that *'the need was felt for more accurate navigation submerged for safety in exercises'* and put up the gyrocompass as a solution. It considered the provision of such a compass in all future submarines of the overseas type absolutely necessary. Two types - the Anschütz and the Sperry were tried, and the latter preferred. It is not known for certain which Class first got a gyrocompass but a Reference in 1914 mentions the Scotts Built Submarine HMS SWORDFISH. They were undoubtedly fitted in most boats from 1914 onwards, the 'E' Class being the first boats in service with a gyro.

NOTE. There is no mention of Gyrocompasses being fitted in HMS SWORDFISH in 'Two Hundred and Fifty Years of Shipbuilding by the Scotts at Greenock' 4th Edition 1961 – Section II 'Work for the Navy'.

The Gyrocompasses in the 'E' Submarines – including the two E Class Submarines for Australia (AE1 & AE2) - were not fitted by the Ship Builder (Vickers) but were installed after the Submarines arrived in Portsmouth - probably by Officers from the Compass Department of the Admiralty (later the Admiralty Compass Observatory, Slough)

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**SUBMARINERS 'CROSSED THE BAR' REPORTED May 2021**

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank/Rating</b>	<b>O/N</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Submarine Service</b>
Non-member	14 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Graham Pearson	Chief Petty Officer	TBA	79	Submarine Service in WALRUS & ALLIANCE
Non-member	20 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Ronald Parker	Ordnance Electrical Artificer	TBA	86	Submarine Service in COURAGEOUS on Commissioning on 16 <sup>th</sup> October 1971
Merseyside Branch	7th May 2021	Charles D Fisher, MBE	Able Seaman (SD/R)	P/JX 730495	94	Submarine Service from March 1946 to August 1947 in VIRULENT & ALCIDE
Ex Dolphin Branch	11th May 2021	John Conrad Sydney Lea	Lieutenant Commander	N/A	89	Submarine Service from October 1954 to May 1965 in TIRELESS (5th Hand 6th March 1955 to January 1957), SUBTLE (August 1957 to April 1958), TRESPASSER (1958), RORQUAL (September 1959 to November 1960), NARWHAL (IL November 1960 to November 1961), TACITURN (CO May 1962 to December 1962), RAN ASW School (January 1963 to May 1965),
Non-member	14th May 2021	Martin Carney	UC	N/A	N/A	Submarine Service as UC for 10 years in "T" Class
Colchester Branch	May 2021	John Lewis Round-Turner	Captain	TBA	87	Submarine Service as Sub Lieutenant to Captain from 1956 in SUBTLE, TAPIR, AENEAS, TACTICIAN (IL 1961), ANDREW (IL 3rd July 1961), OTUS, AURIGA (CO on commissioning on 7th October 1965 to 1967 NL), BRNC Dartmouth (1968 to 1969 NL), NEPTUNE (1970 to 1971 NL), RENOWN (1972 NL), DRYAD (1973 NL), CONQUEROR (CO 1974 to 1975 NL), NEPTUNE (1976 to 1977 NL) & SM2 (1985)
Non-member	April 2021	Paul William Heath	Leading Radio Operator	TBA	81	Submarine Service in RESOLUTION (S) (1st Commission Crew) on 3rd October 1967