

# H.M.S. SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION

A MAGAZINE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP

JUNE, 2018

Nº 19



OUR SWORDS WE BARE  
OUR SPIRITS DARE

CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION IS ROBIN SMITH

[www.hmssuperb.co.uk](http://www.hmssuperb.co.uk) and on Facebook

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**Superb - Defending Britain Since 1710**

# ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

Was captivated by S.M. Harmer's picture in last month's issue; glad Brian didn't choose a B & Q frame, cheap and cheerful, Allan would have refused to speak to me again.

Demise of the newsletter is a cause for discussion amongst the 'non-scribbling' fraternity.

Could only say, if you are always in the super market, don't moan when the village shop closes - use it or lose it.

Call from 'Hon. Chairperson' to see if Jo had any spare tomato plants; alas, it has been a very queer Spring. Normally one could get prime examples in half a dozen places between here and Rainham. We may be a pack of sinners and J. C. is getting his own back.

Talk of J. C. - I include a snap taken at Mark Church during recent Fox and Goose jaunt to Somerset in remembrance of our old friend Shipmate Len Sturdy. Mobility for Pete Tasker is a major trial now so he opted to stay in the hotel. I had the camera so do not figure in the photo.



A man, possibly the vicar, and lady unlocked the church. She had a pole about 15 foot long with a feather duster thing on one end; she assured us it was to de-cobweb the windows. On a suggestion it looked like a mega version of Ken Dodd's tickling stick banter became irreverent. That place does not often get such laughter and mirth; the Bish. Of Cant. would not be amused.

As we all turned up for dinner on Friday night, bottles of wine were on the table; landlady informed us the 'sturdy girls' had provided for our arrival. Saturday night they turned up en mass, two boys, three girls with their husbands and spouses. The gathering was jolly in the extreme as we had travelled to celebrate lives - appreciated by all in different degrees - this family make parts of my own family look a little fractured, don't know how else to put it.

Talk of J. C. and church may make you assume I am a religious sort - not exactly - but I feel any chap



Pete Tasker Jo Brierley Carol Hill Brian Hill Andy Brierley Jim Copus

attending a biblical wedding, that turns water into wine when the booze runs out has got to have a place on ones horizon.

Models and such mentioned, are a recurring duty that comes up as "art projects" for the girls at school. My youngest granddaughter informed me yesterday, 'we' must depict the universe this term! Where do the festering teachers get these ideas? They must realize 'Dad' or 'Grandy' are lumbered - maybe observing parent use of tools and tool boxes is the motive.



Last term's subject for the youngest was "London Eye". I cheated with a 2 foot bike wheel; she did my maths to get 32 people pods correctly distanced. Have tried to teach them both to weld but fear of harmless sparks are yet to be overcome.

Will eventually put a picture in, 'barge and tug' on riverside are meant to give scale.

My contemporaries are 'princes of exact scale'; I'm in the primitive category.

Shipmate Turner's output of museum quality models, apart from his paintings, I find staggering. A recent model of *Attray*, the submarine, is a particular gem.

I know it's only domestic stuff, but a blessed relief from Markel Fatigue.

I had stopped awhile and wondered why I burden you with mundane stuff of this nature; call it wedding escape therapy. The event was a splendid spectacle & I wish they live 'happily ever after'. Various media drives it well into the ground with interminable analysis, plus large dollops of conjecture, day on day, to the point of brain fatigue.

It interested me to see, in Brian's last news letter, disquiet over an order for three new fleet auxiliaries, at a cost of £1 billion, going out to international tender. Much hand-wringing from G.M.B. and other unions, the very organisations that oversaw the slow strangulation of U.K. shipbuilding with up to eight different unions being involved in negotiations to fit a porthole.

They claimed the recent two replenishment ships built in South Korea were 'sub-standard' in some way, needing immediate docking on arrival in the U.K.; a crude attempt to muddy the waters. Vessels docked for fitting of U.K. supplied 'radio and comms.' plus 'close in' weapon system. This is normal practice The two 'Heli-Carriers' built in Spain for Australia did exactly the same on reaching Sydney, Oz.; normal conduct! Our pair of vessels from Korea was **on time, on budget.**

Mention of Oz., would you wager on the U.K. getting the £20 billion order for her nine new A/S frigates? Our own order for new frigates will, according to the M.O.D. release, take 18 years to complete.

My last missive reported French/Italian FREMM frigate class were being launched, 'keel to truck' by both nations at one per year, ready for fitting out with national 'radio comms.', armaments etc.

The one U.K. yard building on time and budget, Appledore in North Devon just launched their fourth O.P.V of the '*Samuel Becket*' class for the Irish Navy; it tickled me to see it named *Le George Bernard Shaw* - he who wrote *Pygmalion* - *My Fair Lady*. These vessels of 2,250 tons, 23 knots, 6000 mile range, 76mm main gun, are, indeed, 'fair ladies'.

A published picture of her on a mud berth after launch show a 'large bow thruster', 'large bilge keel', stabilizers and twin screws.

Should Eire purchase a second hand 'bulker', paint it grey and call it a 'Super Carrier', their navy will have a surface fleet on par with ours.

It is a sad reflection on U.K. performance to know the 'Mighty Hood' (Admiralty P.R.) was laid down 1<sup>st</sup> September 1916, launched by Lady Hood on 22nd August, 1918, not a quick 'wire welding' job but 'riveted manually'. Much repeated views about it being a flawed design misses the point a bit. In that era, Battle Cruisers, by design, sacrificed 'armour for speed'.

Alas we know her fate, vanished from the surface after 30 minutes with only three survivors, thanks to the legendary 'optical range finding' of the *Kriegsmarine*.

Now, Mr. Putin is scaring the pants off the west. There is much clamour for the foreign aid allocation to be spent on the national defence (depending on one's peccadilloes). That is 0.7% of our G.D.P. or approx. £13.3 billion. Put another way it's £36 million per day, every day for about the last ten years. That figure is a third (1/3) of the nation's defence spend - or half (1/2) our spend on 'public order and safety', or half (1/2) that spent in support of 'industry, employment, agriculture'. The aforementioned aid is 'enshrined in law', by such political pygmies as Clegg - recently knighted for abject failure in all he touched, and Cameron.

Bite in the arse for our successors is the national debt interest payments, now at £39 billion a year. Some things do not seem properly joined up.

Am I down-hearted? - NAW - a brilliant spot in the 'seas and oceans' that surround the 'sceptered isle' is the pronouncement by a self-confessed non-politician; a confession verified by the world's 'proper politicians' - that he has decided to resurrect, re-activate the US Second Fleet.

This was reported also agreed to by a meeting of N.A.T.O. defence ministers; why they should be considered is a mystery. Not one of them meets the agreed commitment of 2% of their G.D.P. to N.A.T.O. defence; I include the U.K. who achieve their figure by liberal use of smoke and mirrors creative accounting.

The 'second fleet' was disbanded seven years ago to save costs, fallout from the, so called, peace dividend. Our well being now rests, squarely, in Norfolk -Virginia

HURRAH! M.O.D. joint services officers and their political masters in Whitehall, should have 'enshrined in law' that they perambulate around central London, and in their respective constituencies, with hands up in the air (surrender mode), allowed to lower them only when night falls and be back up at cock's crow on the morrow.

Relief is at hand comrades, I am about to cease!



And good day from him.



# NAVY NEWS

## HMS Montrose commemorates WW1 tragedies off Islay

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04/05/2018

HMS Montrose has taken part in a remembrance ceremony alongside US, French and German warships off the Western Coast of Scotland to commemorate the loss of the American troopship *SS Tuscania* and British troopship *HMS Otranto* in 1918.



HMS Montrose (F236)

The *Tuscania* was carrying US Army personnel to France in early 1918, with a total of 2,397 personnel on board when it was torpedoed on the evening of 5 Feb.

In total, 210 lives were lost in the incident and the death toll would have been larger if not for the efforts of *HMS Mosquito* and *HMS*

*Pigeon* who rescued the majority of those saved.

*HMS Otranto* was a converted UK liner taken up from trade by the Royal Navy, which sunk on the evening of the 6 Oct 1918 after a collision in the same area that *SS Tuscania* was lost, resulting in the loss of 470 British sailors and American troops, which they were transporting to fight in France.

100 years later and a major multinational exercise offered the opportunity for the sailors of *HMS Montrose* (UK), *USS Ross* (USA), *FGS Luebeck* (Germany) and *FS Andromede* (France) to gather together and pay their respects to those that lost their lives.

**It's important to remember those that have gone before us and for those that lost their lives. I felt proud to be a part of the occasion**

*Able Seaman Tanya Moore, Steward on HMS Montrose*

The event saw the vessels sail over the wreck of the *Tuscania* on Thursday 3 May with *HMS Raider* laying a wreath at the head of the formation of ships.

During the laying of the wreath, the Ship's Company of all the vessels manned the upper deck and a short service was broadcast from *HMS Raider* over VHF radio.

On completion of the remembrance service, the flotilla proceeded to the Oa Peninsular, the site of the wreck of *HMS Otranto* and where a monument dedicated to the tragedies was constructed by the US Red Cross in 1920, for a sail past in formation at 8am on Friday 4 May.

Able Seaman Tanya Moore a Steward on *HMS Montrose* said, "It was a cold afternoon and very quiet with just the wind in my ears. The sound of the saluting gun was eerie in the mist as the ship's Company manned the upper deck. It's important to remember those that have gone before us and for those that lost their lives. I felt proud to be a part of the occasion."

*HMS Montrose* and the other vessels have recently taken part in Exercise Joint Warrior, a UK led multinational exercise with over 11,000 sailors, soldiers and airmen from across NATO countries taking part.

The UK remains a committed NATO partner and Joint Warrior is the prelude to the much larger Exercise Trident Juncture scheduled to take part later in the year in the waters around Norway.

*HMS Montrose* will be one of a number of UK assets scheduled to take part in what promises to be the largest NATO exercise in 3 years.





# Sailor arrested for supplying drugs onboard HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH

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May 1, 2018



One of the most junior sailors on board HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH has been arrested by the Royal Navy Police after it was brought to light of his involvement in supplying MDMA (ecstasy) to other members of the crew.

Sunday night, 29 April, saw the final episode of '*Britain's Biggest Warship*' the documentary filmed on the Royal Navy's newest and largest ship-to-date during her sea trials last year where floods and problems with her propulsion system were the main area of focus.

However it has since emerged after a number of sailors started to circulate it on *Facebook* that the £3billion aircraft carrier is currently facing an issue related more to boredom as one sailor has been arrested on suspicion of supplying drugs onboard.

Callum Hui, who as the youngest member of the ships company was chosen to cut the commissioning cake with the Captain's wife in December - admitted to taking ecstasy on a night out in Portsmouth after failing a drugs test last month.





AB Callum Hui with the Captain's wife Karen Kyd cut the cake at the ship's commissioning service in Portsmouth last December.

But when other members of the crew who also failed the compulsory test were quizzed as to where they had obtained the drugs from, they pointed the finger at Callum who was subsequently arrested by the Royal Navy Police on grounds to supply a Class A drug.

Callum who works as a Steward on the super-carrier (that is currently undergoing repairs in Portsmouth) is thought to be getting kicked out the Navy in relation to taking drugs himself but could now also face criminal proceedings in relation to supplying.

He allegedly put his actions down to realising the Navy is not what he thought it would be. A growing concern amongst younger sailors who spend months away from home without access to their phones, Wi-Fi or social media.

HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH will deploy to America later this year to continue her sea trials and take delivery of the new F35B Joint Strike Fighter jet.

**(ACTUALLY I THOUGHT THAT THE SHIP IS NOT BEING REPAIRED, AS REPORTED, BUT IS HAVING MODIFICATIONS FOR JET TRIALS – BRIAN)**



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Tony Hackett

Brian regarding Andy's Blog last month (April), re his mention of lockers at "The Navy House" in Chatham, I dug out this letter I received from The Secretary in 1954 regarding a suggestion I made that the lockers be extended in size to accommodate hanging a suit - the existing size was just a square box type. Note the rent was 2/- a month!

Telephone : Chatham 2526

Rochester Diocesan Naval Church Institute  
"NAVY HOUSE," CHATHAM, KENT

22<sup>nd</sup> May 1954.

EM<sup>I</sup> C.A. Hackett.

Dear Sir,

I am pleased to inform you that we have now converted a few lockers as suggested by you.

I am reserving the first two for yourself & LEM Bailey & we shall be pleased to change you over on your next visit to us.

The rent becomes 2/- per month.

Yours faithfully,  
H. J. Jervis.



**From Joe Heaton**

Hi Brian, I had an email from Melissa, the granddaughter of John Eccleston to say that John Crossed the Bar on 23rd April. Another good magazine Brian. Best Wishes - Joe.



# REUNION REMINDER

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The Hotel goes out of its way to make us comfortable - the cost of 2 nights includes Dinner, Bed & Breakfast on the Friday and Saturday & Breakfast on Sunday morning. There's plenty of good humour and loads of raffle prizes. Why not give it a whirl?



The main event i.e. The Dinner is held on the Saturday but it's also important to attend the AGM (which is informal & of short duration !) on the Friday evening if you can make it

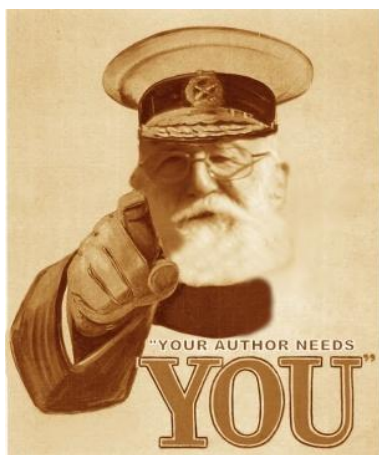
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# SCRAN BAG (FREE ADVERTISING)

This section contains adverts from members. If you decide to purchase an item from them please note you deal directly with the member selling.

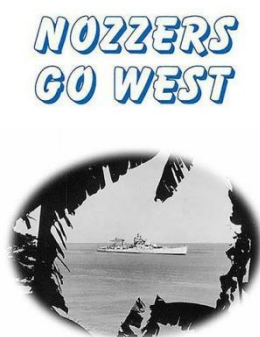
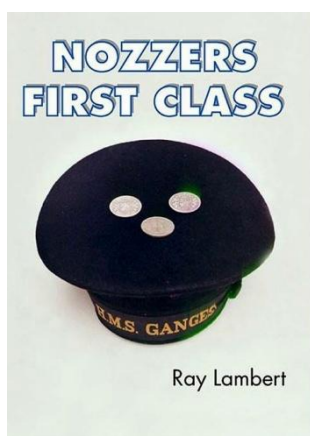
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OUR IN-HOUSE **BEST SELLING AUTHOR** IS OFFERING THE FOLLOWING BOOKS AT A SPECIAL PRICE FOR MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION. BUY NOW AS HE'S JUST HAD HIS 81ST BIRTHDAY AND NEEDS THE MONEY TO KEEP HIMSELF IN THE LUXURY TO WHICH HE'S BECOME ACCUSTOMED AS A **RETIRED ROYAL NAVY VETERAN** !

### Ray Lambert



Follow the author when he was a handsome young man in Ganges and as he joins HMS Superb at Chatham. Go with him as he begins the "Luxury Cruise" of 1954-55. Join him from Punta Arenas to Vancouver and much in between. Learn of Guantanamo Bay and the Falklands before they became headline news.

Each book costs £7.99 including UK postage. For more information contact Ray by email

Click [here to contact Ray](#) by email



**YOU TOO CAN ADVERTISE HERE FOR FREE  
- CONTACT BRIAN BY EMAIL**

# SOMETHING FOR THE YOUNGSTERS!

## **DOGBREATH the Dragon**



Shipmate Phil Grimson offers his latest book for sale targeted at children from 8 years upward. It is a magical tale of chivalry which should enchant most youngsters and lead them into a make-believe world where there's fierce and fiery combat when a princess is captured by a dragon.

There are bold knights charging to her rescue one of who wins her hand in marriage.

There are bold knights charging to her rescue one of who wins her hand in marriage.

**KINDLE DOWNLOAD £5.59**

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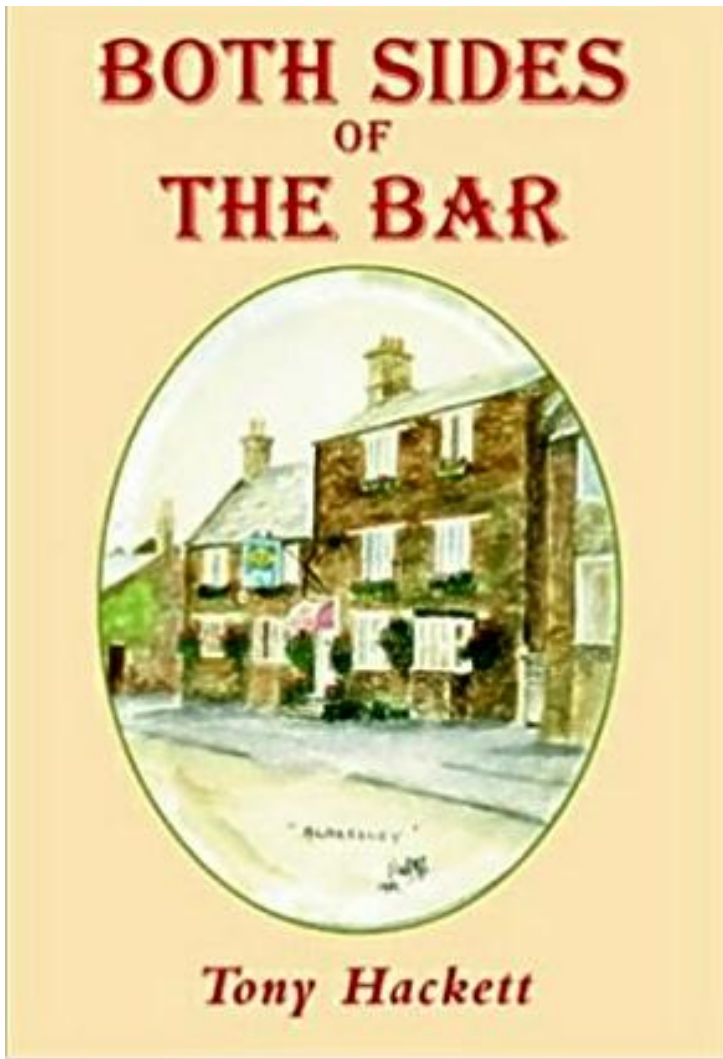
Phil can be contacted by email by clicking on this [LINK](#)

**\* IF YOU CONTACT PHIL DIRECTLY YOU CAN BUY THE PAPERBACK BOOK FOR ONLY £12.50 + P&P AND PHIL WILL DONATE £1 TO THE HMS SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION FUNDS**

**YOU TOO CAN ADVERTISE HERE FOR FREE  
- CONTACT BRIAN BY EMAIL**



# LIFE AFTER THE NAVY



Tony, the son of a police officer, joined the Royal Navy aged 15 and spent the next 10 years travelling the world. He entered civvy street in 1959 and went into the pub trade. This book relates Tony's endeavours in balancing his life between his love of rugby, managing often run-down pubs and his love of the sea and finally his successful ownership of his own free-house.

An interesting insight into the trials and tribulations of being self employed.

Available as a hard back book from Amazon at £12.99

## HAVE YOU A STORY TO TELL ?

We'd love to print your story so why not put pen to paper

It doesn't need to be a novel - just some of your memories which will eventually be lost forever unless told now

Several members have sent in their own & they are available to read on our website



# JOTTINGS OF A VERY ORDINARY SEAMAN

By Ray Lambert

**M**y head has started to play tricks with me to such an extent that I can't remember anything. Incidents are fine but where and when and mostly even why elude me, so bearing that in mind I shall attempt to regale my readers with yet another tale from my heroic past.....stay with me.

There I was on my own in an army barracks somewhere, where exactly God only knows. I was met by a pongo officer who gave me a friendly welcome and told me to enter a particular shed that he pointed out, early the following morning. He then called over a corporal to find me a bed, which he did - odd bods on their own were usually accorded corporals privileges.

Next morning at the appointed hour I knocked on the door as instructed and a voice from within said: 'Come in'. I walked in and took my hat off: 'Good morning sir'

'Yes morning, find a seat' That was well within my capabilities because the place was empty apart from two pongos both of whom gave me a suspicious look but said nothing. I was soon to learn the significance of those funny looks as the remainder of the squad made their entrance.

Unlike my meek and pretty silent entrance these made themselves known in typical army fashion: bang on the door - enter - stamp feet -salute - shout; after the first half a dozen or so the place was thick with swirling dust as muck was disturbed from the rafters due to their banging feet.

Then someone realised I was in the wrong place and pointed out another shack just across the way. As I made my way over I was thinking about going through all that banging about again but no - this time the place was full of Ghurkhas with an English officer out front with a Bren gun on the desk in front of him.

The door was at the corner of the building so as I entered I was alongside him. He waved me in 'Find a seat' which I duly did. He was about to start a lecture on stripping and assembling the Bren gun but before he got into his stride someone came in and called him away. Me, sticking out like the proverbial sore thumb got the nod, 'come out and continue until I return'.

That Bren was relegated to the floor and out came the knife and I started into a spiel based loosely on the comedy gun's crew routine; the two little handles became salt and pepper and away I went.



Ghurkhas are a bit solemn until you get to know them but they soon warmed and were

enjoying the show until, suddenly I lost them and they all became still and quiet - that officer had come back and was standing behind me!

'Yes' he conceded , 'it is a bit much taking seasoned troops back to basic training. I think we'll leave it there.'



# THE LANGUAGE OF SAILORS

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By Geraldus

**T**he Language of Sailors is as mysterious as the Language of Flowers and is just as hard to understand.

In my early days I remember four bluejackets racing like demons to catch a train. When they reached the station the train steamed out. Then I heard for the first time the Language of Sailors.

Three days after I joined the Navy I had an argument with a shipmate about a tin of jam. He told me not to come on the "Tin Man" and that it was his jam. From that day I have wondered what this "Tin Man" is. If there was such a thing as a tin man I don't suppose he would charm me any more than a tin of salmon.

Many of the naval terms were coined by sailors and handed down from generation to generation. As an example of how they originate, take a case in point.

Admiral Arthur Knyvet Wilson, signalled to a battleship the order to proceed outside the breakwater again and return to anchorage in a more creditable manner. The repetition failed to satisfy him, so he sent out another signal to the Captain of the ship this time with an ultimatum - to go out and return again and if the evolution was not performed satisfactorily, he (the Admiral) would have his flagship take the ship in tow - a derisive spectacle for every ship in the Fleet.

For this threat to take the ship in tow, the Admiral received the nickname of "Tug" and every Wilson in the Navy has been called Tug ever since. He was also known as 'Old 'Ard 'Art' for his refusal to consider the cares and comforts of officers and men.

Apparently seven out of every ten Servicemen have nicknames. In many cases the cognomen is the Christian name of a celebrity, but very often the history of the more stereotyped sobriquet is not easy to explain.

Every Chaplin or Donoghue who joined the navy in my time whatever his Christian name (perhaps first name these days) may be, - must have been prepared to answer to *Charlie* or *Steve* respectively.



It was certainly strange to hear some giant of a man being addressed as *Dolly* but it would be taken for granted that his surname was *Grey*. Again you could observe that some jaundiced-looking beefeater answering to *Gladys* and be assured that his surname was *Cooper*.

Every Brooke was *Rajah*, White a *knocker*, and Moore a *Pony*, Jerry was the appellation of every Driscoll, Lake, Lane and Knowles. Then there were *Jumper* Collins, *Pincher* Martin, *Bungy* Edwards, *Billy* Williams, *Dodger* Long, *Spike* Sullivan, *Jimmy* Greene, *Nobby* Clarke, *Splash* Brady, *Shiner* Wright, *Rattler* Morgan, *Bagsey* Baker, *Darby* Allan and Kelly, *Hookey* Walker, *Bobbie* Burns, *Bogie* Knight, *Florrie* Ford, *Daisy* Bell, *Whacker* Payne, *Sharky* Ward and *Teddy* Weekes.

I wonder how much they've changed now always assuming that the use of them wouldn't be classed as racist, sexist or bullying.



# RNAS Yeovilton Air Day 2018

**THE ANNUAL ROYAL NAVAL AIR STATION (RNAS) YEOVILTON INTERNATIONAL AIR DAY IN SOMERSET WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY 7 JULY.**



This popular 'Fly Navy' air show will showcase the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm; its current and future capabilities and historic accomplishments.

The Air Station's gates will be open to 40,000 visitors, just as they were 70 years ago, in 1947 at the first ever air show at RNAS Yeovilton, providing the perfect opportunity to see our equipment and meet our personnel first hand.

Over five hours of amazing flying displays and an extensive static display will feature historic naval aircraft and their modern-day counterparts in spectacular role demonstrations. UK and foreign military formation and solo display teams have also been invited to participate at the air show.

**An action-packed day out for all the family with thrilling flying displays and plenty to see and do on the ground**

*RNAS Yeovilton International Air Day*

Alongside the magnificent flying display there will also be a huge array of ground attractions, from engineering fairs to the latest defence technology exhibitions, Service displays, trade stalls and arena displays.

For the thrill seekers, there will be simulators, fairground rides and helicopter pleasure flights to enjoy.

Find out how to get your tickets at [www.royalnavy.mod.uk/yeovilton-airday](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/yeovilton-airday).

## Silent and Secret: Exhibition and conference

**WHEN:** From 15 June 2018 until 16 June 2018, 10:00 - 16:00

**LOCATION:** Royal Navy Submarine Museum, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

**CATEGORIES:** [Special Events](#) , [Exhibitions](#) , [Conferences and Talks](#)

A permanent exhibition and conference marking the 50th Anniversary of the Royal Navy's continuous at sea deterrent, Polaris, first patrol.

15 June 2018 marks the 50th Anniversary of HMS Resolution, the Royal Navy's first Polaris SSBN (Submersible Ship Ballistic Nuclear), commencing her first operational patrol. The National Museum's response is an exhibition focussing on personal accounts and key objects and a conference at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum and Explosion Museum of Naval Firepower, which will explore the history of the British nuclear deterrent.

The exhibition will be a timely opportunity to reveal the challenging nature of working in submarines, highlighting the experiences of those who serve and raising awareness about why there is a nuclear deterrent and the role of the modern Royal Navy Submarine Service. It will also celebrate the mostly unknown achievements of nuclear submarines and encourage a wider debate. The exhibition is included in the Annual All Attraction ticket.

Alongside the exhibition lies HMS Alliance, a Cold War submarine commissioned in 1947. Tours of the boat are often led by former submariners who share their real personal experiences of serving under the waves.



Register your interest to attend the Silent and Secret conference by mailing [george.malcolmson@nmrn.org.uk](mailto:george.malcolmson@nmrn.org.uk).



# PRIDE AND FALL

---

By Brian Saunders

The ship was in San Francisco and had been for a couple of days and it was my second run ashore with a couple of oppos. We were strolling along marvelling at the sites when we saw a small group of smartly dressed and very attractive young ladies all about our age standing on the sidewalk.

This was about the middle of July, 1955; I was 19½, dressed in my tiddley suit, eager and bright eyed as indeed were we all.

Seeing these members of the opposite sex obvious interest in us we automatically adopted the exaggerated rolling gait of seasoned mariners who'd been at sea forever and heaved to alongside them whilst they dispersed slightly to engage us separately in conversation.

It turned out that they were members of a church who were organising a social evening for servicemen for the coming weekend. Each girl held a dance card and their job was to fill it out as soon as possible in order that the evening would go well.

One of my oppos, Neil, was rugby mad (I think league rather than the proper game) prior to being conscripted and thus, at his club's bar in Sheffield and on many a coach trip had been brought up on beer and skittles and learned many amusing and very rude songs all of which were parodies to well known tunes.

A thoroughly nice guy, he was so obviously proud of the fact that he knew the alternate words of countless ditties. He was also the most garrulous of us and was well known on board for entertaining us with tunes about the intimate exploits of camels, his family in Piccadilly and many other improbable delights. It was said on the mess deck that Noel Coward was the author of many of these shanties but somehow I doubt that.

The leader of this social gathering was an older gentleman who wore a dog collar and his wife who were very eager to be introduced to this bunch of English matelots. We were welcomed with open arms and became engrossed in the usual admiration of our very strange English accents. Dates were made, names were taken and it was agreed that we would, if we could, come along to the forthcoming social evening.

The day arrived and an hour or two prior to the due time had seen us fortifying ourselves in a bar somewhere in Market Street; the four of us turned up and sure enough there were our young ladies (some of whom we'd met in-between times) together with US servicemen, mothers, fathers, aunts and uncles and presumably other members of the congregation.





Altogether a very conservative assembly.

The hall was packed and the small trio of musicians on the stage had us twirling our partners around the dance floor, quite the dance floor Romeos - or so we believed!

There was a pause in the dancing when it was time for the raffle prizes to be drawn and the Padre asked if one of the *Superb's* crew would be kind enough to conduct the draw. Neil was proposed and he agreed. The concoction of several beers earlier and the sarsaparilla (which was reminiscent of *Germolene*) served in copious quantities at the gathering must have been taking its destined path.



...And now ladies and gentlemen, our naval friend will render a stirring saga of the frozen north entitled: 'Eskimo Nell'."

Unknown to some of us someone had mischievously mentioned to the Padre that Neil could also knock out a song and when there was a lull in the proceedings the Padre, who had inveigled Neil on to the stage to draw the raffle, called for silence and began to introduce our fellow shipmate to the audience with words to the effect that we were all about to be entertained by a talented British singer.

As the applause boomeranged around the hall and eager faces focused on the stage, Neil who knew not one correct word to any song, did the only thing he could.

He blushed furiously and with superb presence of mind fell to the floor in a faint !

I'll leave you to decide whether the collapse was genuine or not.



# NATIONAL SERVICE Part 3 of 4

By Peter Wells,

May 1955-May 1957

**Last month Peter spoke of his induction into the Navy from Civvy Street. He continues his story.**

**I** don't remember in any detail my basic training. The book learning - flags, ship recognition, rank recognition, (most important), the difference between knots and bends, (vital - bends don't lock up, knots do), and suchlike. And cleanliness. I hadn't been used to washing at home below my collar.

We only had access at home to one lead pipe carrying cold water to the butler sink in the scullery. My mother's morning ritual wash consisted of putting a small amount of hot water either from the kettle or from last night's hot water bottle, if it was still hot enough, into a small enamel bowl. Tucking her collar into her neck she would carefully wash her face. Uncle Bob, Dad's young brother, had the flat on the first floor, and my mother considered the iron bath, (with the very pitted bottom), his exclusive property. We were discouraged from using it except for very special occasions. When I was eleven and at Grammar School, I was having my hair cut at Mr. Keightley's barber shop and he said to me, "Do you ever wash your neck?" I thought it an odd question, and said, "no". He said that perhaps I should.

Basic training, as I said, included washing. I learned to shower, and to be clean. One lad in our mess, didn't learn this lesson, and only washed occasionally.

Our Petty Officer found out, and the trainee was lashed tightly in a hammock, and hung feet first from the shower. The shower was turned on and the water allowed to run through the hammock and over his face. He was released in time to stop him drowning, of course, and thereafter was clean.

Towards the end of basic training the opportunity came to join the Young Seaman's crew for the Whale Island Field Gun competition. The promise of double rations immediately, and a promise that competing teams would have the opportunity to choose which ship they joined at the end of the competition. I must have misheard the latter inducement, because it didn't happen.

I enjoyed the training, but we were drawn against the Royal Marines, so of course were knocked out. There were a spate of injuries, both during the training and in the competition, but I was on one of the wheels, and managed to avoid trouble. I couldn't believe how keen some of the other

members of the team were, hurling themselves under massive parts of the gun and limber when things went awry. This kind of common sense caution stayed with me for the rest of my life.



I did enjoy the whole bit of the *Field Gun* episode, and in the athletics competition which took place after the final. I won the mile race, and the magnificent prize of a vacuum flask and two cups and saucers.

Almost before the ink had dried on the results we all received notices detailing the ships that had been selected for us. Mine was *HMS Barbican* - a boom defence vessel stationed at North Queensferry, Rosyth, on the Firth of Forth. I was gleefully informed by those more 'anchor faced' than I was that this was about the last coal burner left in the Queen's Navee. (Being 'anchor faced' means that you have a vast and intimate knowledge and love of the Royal Navy, her traditions and customs, and were probably long serving. And were contemptuous of National Servicemen).

The usual couple of days leave were granted, and I was issued with a travel docket to make my way to the ship, complete with kit bag full of uniform. At this point I will admit to a complete muddle in my mind. I do know that at some point I served on a short 'shake down' cruise on *HMS Ocean*, an adapted aircraft carrier, on which the hangar deck had been stripped out and was used as several mess decks.

The idea was to acclimatise new ratings to at sea routines. I don't think the experiment lasted very long, as the ship was fitted out in 1956 to carry troops and to support engagements overseas. My most enduring memory was of one of our mess, a member of the old Hungarian royal family, who had no intention of joining in with this idea of National Service. He spent his whole time sitting in a corner of the mess, ignoring the threats and abuse of the training staff. Somebody sent him large cheques at frequent intervals, so that he never had to dhobi his kit, but just bought new from slops. His messmates circled round him like gannets, ready to pick up his discarded kit wherever it fell. One day he disappeared. I hope he was discharged. At all events, somewhere in this muddled history I was packed off to Rosyth.

### ***HMS Barbican***

I arrived on a Saturday, and was disappointed to see a stubby ship tied to the quay by four wire ropes, with no-one apparently aboard her, and not a sound from anywhere. The tide was such that I could clamber aboard without any difficulty, and walk round a small superstructure to a door on the port side.

I knocked on this door, and after a few minutes the head of someone wearing a white shirt, which indicated that he was at least a Petty Officer, appeared in the opened door. "What do you want, lad?" the man asked. I told him that I was posted to this ship, and he came out of the cabin to talk to me. I saw a woman in the cabin, which surprised me a little. (I subsequently learned that this man was the Captain of the ship, a three badge (over fifteen years service) non-commissioned Chief Petty Officer.



And I also learned that the lady was a nurse from a hospital in Edinburgh, who, when the rest of the crew of eight seamen, six stokers and a coxswain, who was a Petty Officer, were ashore or absent on weekend leave, would visit the ship and entertain our leader.



More of them later. The Chief, having composed himself took me to the forward mess through a small hatchway, down a ladder. The low-ceilinged mess room bulkheads were lined with sturdy steel bunk beds in two tiers, complete with horse hair mattresses, and made up with sheets and blankets. Two were unmade, one in the darkest corner, and one upper bunk just under the port hole on the port side. I was offered a choice, and chose the one under the port hole. I was asked,

"Are you sure?", slightly ominously, but I confirmed my choice. I was handed two sheets and a blanket, and made up the bunk. I was left to make myself familiar with the ship. I found two stokers in the after mess, playing cards, one of whom told that he was duty watchkeeper for the weekend.

He pointed out some features of the ship, and told me that supper was at 1830 and would probably be fish and chips. He pointed out 'the heads' (toilets), and Dunfs (Dunfermline), which was 'that way', and 'the best run ashore'. I made an examination of the small ship, carefully avoiding the Chiefs cabin door, noting the loose coils of heavy cable hanging from the superstructure, and the huge 'horns' protruding from the port and starb'd sides of the ship, carrying cable drums.

Heaving lines, with their beautifully crafted 'monkey's fists' weights on their ends, were suspended from hooks along each side of the superstructure. At the after end of the ship was an angled ramp of steel, leading down to the water. At the top of the ramp were two huge drums, one painted green on the starb'd side, and the other painted red on the port side.

The cable from the drum next to the quay became the forw'd spring, which meant that it ran from the drum, forward to a bollard at the bow end of the ship. I'm being a bit fussy about this because I'm going to confess to something very silly soon, and that won't make sense to you if this doesn't. Another 'spring' was secured to a bollard on the foc'sle of the ship, running aft, to a bollard on the quay. The springs thus crossed, allowing the ship to have some leeway as the tide ebbed and flowed, but remained secured.



Two more wire ropes went from bollards on the ship, fore and aft, directly to bollards on the quay. Thus the ship was quite secure. I was surprised when, an hour or two later, the pleasant lady visitor emerged from the skipper's cabin to ask me if I would like eggs and bacon for supper. I thanked her, and said yes. Very soon a knock on the seaman's hatch indicated that the meal was ready, and I came to the hatch to find two fried eggs and rashers of bacon.

This seemed very civilised. That night, being Saturday, meant that no-one else was expected back on the ship. By Sunday night, however, the rest of the ship's crew would be back, and as a means of helping me to get into the ship's routine, I was delegated to keep the night watch by sitting on the tiny bridge and whiling away the time by peeling a large tin bath of potatoes, sufficient for the ship's company's fish and chips. I was engrossed in this task when I became aware of a peculiar singing noise. I looked ashore along the quay, and saw nothing. I carried on peeling, and the singing grew higher in pitch. I then noticed the water in the tin bath was deeper at one end than the other, and that the ship had a list on. The tide had quietly receded, beginning to suspend the ship on the four wires, I rushed down on to the deck, and saw to my horror that the wires were taut and singing.

The cable drums were braked by long handles, which had to be turned vigorously anti-clockwise to release the brake and free the cable. I swung the handle of the nearest drum, only to realise too late that it was the starb'd drum, which held the large anchor steady on the angled ramp. The anchor took off at a rate of knots, as it was designed to do, into the quiet waters of the estuary, making a terrific din on the ridged steel plate at about two a.m..

Everyone on board, apart from the blonde lady nurse, appeared on deck as if by magic. The coxswain, bless his three badges, calmly took charge, and within minutes had the situation under control, and *Barbican* was settled evenly on the water. The skipper sent everyone below, and hissed at me, "I think we will completely forget this little incident, you \*\*\*\*\* idiot, because if this got out, unfair as it seems, I shall be more in the shit than you will. Now get back on those spuds. It looks as if that's all you're good for!"

It wasn't an auspicious beginning. Amazing as it seems, it did appear that all the witnesses to that act of absolute stupidity did keep it to themselves, and I gradually worked myself back into a position of - no, not respect, but to a position of, "what can you expect, he's National Service". The saving grace for me was that my fellow National Serviceman, the only other one



on board, Terry Rossiter, who had worked nights as a machine minder for the Sunday Times before his call up, was on weekend leave. Terry was quite a wide boy, a bit of a know all, but very competent and full of common sense. He would have walked all over me for the rest of

my life over that incident. Where I was a dreamer he was a doer. Years later he came from his home in East London in a huge Range Rover towing a fast rib, (that's a rubber sea boat), full of diving gear, on his way to Swanage. He just had the time to stop for a cup of tea with my wife, and to tell her that she was much too good for me, and would be better off with him. He was right, of course, and as it turns out it was a pity he didn't convince her.

**Next month Peter continues his tale and tells us of the Scotland's bonny night life and of joining *HMS Superb***





## **The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB)** has

noticed an increase in Action Fraud reports where fraudsters are offering a discount on Television service provider subscriptions. Fraudsters are cold-calling victims, purporting to be from a Television (TV) provider offering a discount on their monthly subscription.

Victims have been told the following: their subscription needs to be renewed; that part or all, of the TV equipment has expired and they are due an upgrade on the equipment/subscription. In order to falsely process the discount, the fraudster asks victims to confirm or provide their bank account details. The scammers may also request the victim's identification documents, such as scanned copies of passports.

The fraudsters are using the following telephone numbers: "08447111444", "02035190197" and "08001514141". The fraudster's voices are reported to sound feminine and have an Asian accent.

Later victims make enquiries and then discover that their TV service provider did not call them and that the fraudster has made transactions using the victim's bank account details.

This type of fraud is nationwide. Since the beginning of this year (2018), there have been 300 Action Fraud Reports relating to this fraud. From the reports received, victims aged over 66 seem to be the most targeted.

What you need to do

**Don't assume a phone call or email is authentic:** Just because someone knows your basic details (such as your name and address or even your mother's maiden name), it doesn't mean they are genuine. Criminals can exploit the names of well-known companies in order to make their scams appear genuine.

**Don't be rushed or pressured** into making a decision: a genuine company won't force you to make a financial decisions on the spot. Always be wary if you're pressured to purchase a product or service quickly, and don't hesitate to question uninvited approaches in case it's a scam.

**Stay in control:** Have the confidence to refuse unusual requests for personal or financial information. Always contact the company yourself using a known email or phone number, such as the one written on a bank statement or bill.

**Visit Take Five** ([takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/advice/](http://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/advice/)) and Cyber Aware ([cyberaware.gov.uk](http://cyberaware.gov.uk)) for more information about how to protect yourself online.

# REUNION REMINDER

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The Hotel goes out of its way to make us comfortable - the cost of 2 nights includes Dinner, Bed & Breakfast on the Friday and Saturday & Breakfast on Sunday morning. There's plenty of good humour and loads of raffle prizes. Why not give it a whirl?



The main event i.e. The Dinner is held on the Saturday but it's also important to attend the AGM (which is informal & of short duration !) on the Friday evening if you can make it

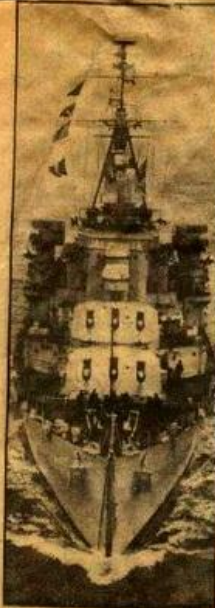
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# PHOTO ALBUM

No. 16,623 SATURDAY OCTOBER 3 1953

**SOCIALISTS** O'Brien in  
new row



## CRUISE Admiral s Navy chiefs are silent

Express Staff Reporter

**T**HE 8,000-ton British cruiser Superb is speeding through the Atlantic this morning on a secret mission. Late last night the Admiralty would not disclose her destination.

On board when Superb hurriedly left Bermuda yesterday morning was Vice-Admiral Sir William Gerard Andrewes, Commander-in-Chief of the America-West Indies squadron.

It was only on Thursday that Superb reached Bermuda from a courtesy visit to the United States. She had apparently been ordered to do the trip in a hurry. She reached Bermuda 18 hours ahead of schedule.


### SECURITY SILENCE

When Superb sailed yesterday a security silence was imposed in Bermuda. A naval spokesman refused to give her destination.

But, cables the Daily Express correspondent in Bermuda, there are reports that she is going south to British Guiana, where the Governor, Sir Alfred Savage, has been having trouble with Ministers of the new Left-wing Government over sugar strikes. She may be joining the 4,600-ton frigate Bigbury Bay, which left Bermuda unexpectedly earlier in the week.

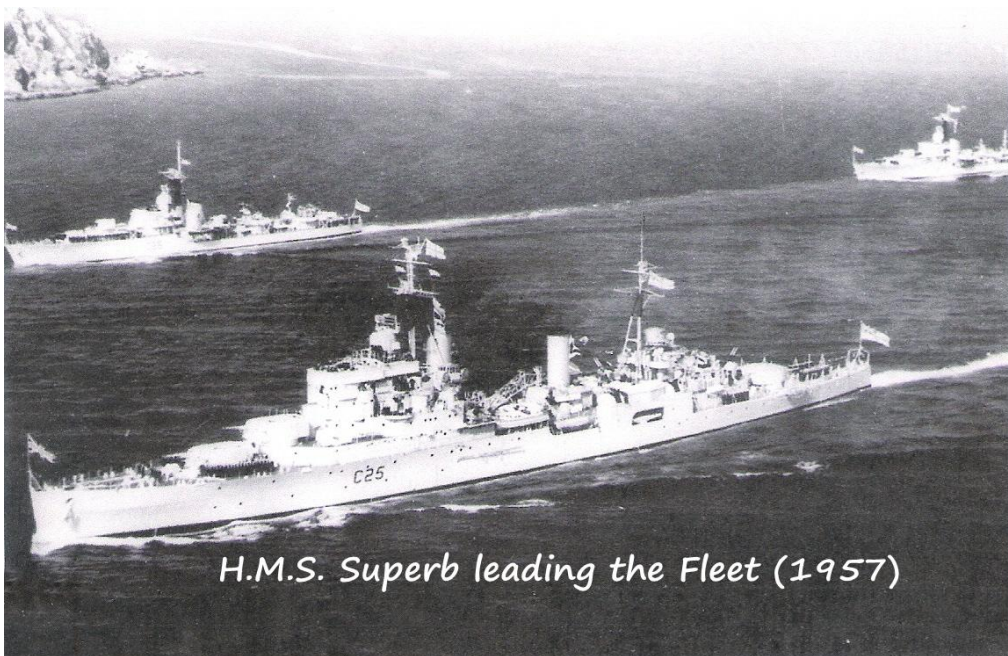
Superb, completed in 1945, has a peacetime complement of 867. She is equipped with an aircraft hangar.

**THE CRUISE SUPERB**  
Ahead of schedule  
**C-in-C ON BOARD**



**VICE-ADMIRAL ANDREWES**  
Made courtesy visit

Don't remember that  
in 1954!



H.M.S. Superb leading the Fleet (1957)

# CROSSED THE BAR



Further details of ex shipmates (but not necessarily members of the Association) who have crossed the bar can be found on the appropriate page our website.

To go there please click [HERE](#)

## Crossed the Bar (Recently Notified)

**John Eccleston (ME 1) on 23rd April. Notified by Joe Heaton  
On board from December, 1955 until October, 1957**



# PEOPLE SEARCHING FOR PEOPLE

If you can assist with any of these appeals please contact Brian Saunders in the first instance. No details will be passed on to third parties without express permission. These appeals will be left in the magazine for a few

## From previous issues

Derek Baldry (Killick Sparker) would like to contact Ginger Dunne from 1956

Stoker Clive Godley would like to get in touch with old shipmates - I have his telephone number and email address so if you'd like it get back to me. (BS)

Larry Boudier who was in the Chatham field gun's crew in 1955 would like to know if anyone e knows of others in that crew

Eleanor Ingalls Fochesato from New Jersey, USA would like to contact John Stevens, from the 1953 cruise to Maine, USA.

Bob Butcher known to many as "Butch" & who served on Superb between Nov 1950 to July 1951 wonders if Curly Watson is still around. He would like to make contact.

Laura Kardo researching her grandfather, Charles Harris, who served around 1951 & 1952. would like to know more about him.

Jeff , the son of Jim Stewart who was on board as a Telegraphist between 1947 & 1951, would be happy to receive any information re his dad. Jim was also on HMS Vidal in 1955



# PERSONS WHO RECEIVE THIS MAGAZINE

Andy **Brierley** (1954) - Derek **Baldry** (1956) - Alf **Brown** (1954) - Bob **Butcher** (1951) - Ron **Clay** (1956-57) - Bill **Cook** (1956) - Jim **Copus** (1954) - Nick **Crump** (USN 1954 - USA) - Ted **Davy** (1945 Canada) - John **Eccleston** (1956) - Mark **Field** (Son of Charlie **Field** 1946) - Clive **Godley** (1954) - Maureen Taylor (Daughter of Ron **Gray** 1946) - Phil **Grimson** (1953 & 1954) - Tony **Hacket** (1953) - Terry Hall (son of Bert **Hall** 1946) - Alan **Harmer** (1955 - 56) - Joe **Heaton** (1956) - Brian **Hill** (1954) - Emile [Coder] **Keane** (1954 - 55) - Rita Keeler (Wife of Brian **Keeler** 1954) - Charlie **Kingston** (1956) - Sharon Goodall (Daughter of Fred **Kinsey** Co-Founder 1950-52) - Ray **Lambert** (1955) - Don **Lawrence** (1954) - Peter **MacDonald** (1949-51) - Arthur **Maxted** (1951) - George **Messmer** (USN 1954 - USA) - Malcolm **Milham** (1953) - Wendy **Norman** (Wife of David Norman 1956) - Margaret Norgan (Wife of Jim **Norgan** 1946) - Frank **Nunn** (1954) - Dave **Perrin** (1954) - Debbie Richardson (Daughter of Bill **Potticary** (1952) - Brian **Saunders** (1954 - 55 France) - Will Sherwood (Son of Bill **Sherwood** 1954) - Rob **Smith** (1956) - Jeff Stewart (Son of Jim **Stewart** 1947 Australia) - Pete **Tasker** (1954) - Paul Taylor (Son of Ken **Taylor** 1954) - Brian **Turner** (Associate) - John **Voak** - John **Ward** (1953) - Norman **Webber** (1956) - Jon **Willshir** (1953 Thailand)

[Click here to contact Brian Saunders](#) by email

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# MEMBERSHIP

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION ?**

THE ANNUAL FEE IS £10 & YOU WILL RECEIVE 4 NEWSLETTERS PER YEAR &  
ELIGABLE TO ATTEND REUNIONS

TELEPHONE ROBIN SMITH AT 01634 362 379

OR EMAIL HIM AT [robinsmith173@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:robinsmith173@yahoo.co.uk)

An **Application Form** can be downloaded [HERE](#)



**Our Chairman**

## ARCHIVED CONTENT

Past Copies of the Magazine can be accessed on-line by clicking on the appropriate month

### 2017 EDITIONS

January 2018

February, 2018

March, 2018

April, 2018

May, 2018



**THE END**

