

H.M.S. SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION

A MAGAZINE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP

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CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION ROBIN SMITH

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Superb - Defending Britain Since 1710



ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

ME9 7LX

Greetings Shipmates,

The 'crossing of the bar' of Pete Tasker who, in sixty odd years of letters, I always called 'My right royal marine' will leave a void. Phone calls Sunday mornings, during the free period, were timed to avoid encroaching on his telegraph crossword, at which he was no slouch. He seemed not to have a malicious thought or deed in his body, such things being a waste of 'good life' time. If you know the last couple of lines of Sea Fever, Masefield's poem, they sum up his demeanour for me, I quote:

All I ask is a merry yarn from a fellow laughing rover,
And a quiet sleep, and a sweet dream, when the long tricks over.

In my haven of tranquillity (garden shed) is a constant reminder of a time he and I strolled down a seaside street, stopping to view a window of musical instruments, grand pianos to triangles. A non-descript little box of tin whistles gained our attention.

The upshot was that we left that shop with a 'Pied Piper' type tin whistle each. To the best of my knowledge neither ever managed to master the most simple tune, both being as musical as breeze blocks. Lack of hearing did get Pete frustrated, frayed at the edges and impatient at times. An extended period as 'small arms instructor' was the culprit, long before ear defenders were deemed an absolute essential.



Superb was his one and only ship, an acknowledged and cherished time for him. Prior to that, Cyprus during the unrest, then on to Borneo during the fall out with Indonesia. At its conclusion Blighty was to be next stop but Korea got very ugly. 42 Commando upped sticks to go further east. It's said 'we live life to build a memory bank' for when we grow old. I shall bore you no further with mine, but ask a small indulgence for a wee epitaph for Pete; no maudlin sentiment, on which he would choke:

Underneath the growing grass,
Underneath the living flowers,
Deeper than the sound of showers,
There you shall not count the hours
By the shadows as they pass.

Rest in peace my 'Right Royal Marine, life was richer for your presence

Nothing ever stays the same... Was intrigued to learn we W.W.2 schoolboys (children) enjoyed a nation whose field patterns, size and shape was no, or little different, from medieval times. To support this assertion the speaker had, at his disposal, millions of aerial photos taken by allied air forces during W.W. 2, most now lodged in Keel University.

Since that time thousands of miles of hedgerows, spinneys, woods, marshes and ponds have been eliminated. Prairie-like fields support a restricted crop culture like rape, as an example. I feel, when the current political debacle peters out, those 'common agricultural conglomerates' will need to relearn how to become multi-crop farmers. Exotics like potatoes from Poland, cabbages from Andalucía may be denied us.

A change that really disturbs is one that may have less immediate impact, but, as an Englishman, makes me cringe like a mangy cur; 3600 British Jews currently have applications to become German citizens ----- Yup, German! The Jewish Chronicle cites anti-Semitism and rampant lawlessness as a driving force; these families are not the extreme factions of that religion, more the entrepreneurs, small, law abiding business people that make an area buzz.

A minor Christmas fair at Hythe, in rural Kent, last weekend had 'two armed police officers' (nearly said 'men') on constant patrol. Had a drugged up beheader run amok and been rewarded with a well deserved bullet in the ear, our crazy litigation culture' would demand the officer be hung on a feast day at Tyburn.

That Miss Abbott, a shadow minister, is of that ilk, was amply demonstrated last month when deploring a police patrol car which had stopped a pair of fleeing scooter-mounted robbers - pillion rider wielding a machete, by ramming them!

Shortly I expect Miss Abbott to make up the robbers loss of 'no claim' from the public purse.. You may think my views extreme; I put my hand up to that.

In my filthy one horse steel town of Corby, all snot noses of my generation knew the Bobby at half a mile and perhaps his shift rota for the week. A crooked finger at you from over the road got a respectful approach.

Vast quantities of beer were consumed by the steel makers, to my knowledge it did not result in an orgy of smashing, kicking and destroying when 'time' was called. An occasional drunk prostrate would be propped right way up against a wall to prevent chocking on what he had consumed.

Note I used 'he'. Cannot ever recall seeing a drunken lady - much less a girl of twentyish-kicking and screaming in the gutter. Our Detective Sergeant, never in uniform, always the raincoat, long before Colombo made it fashionable, - held a unique status like Dick Tracy of radio fame of that time, and large enough not to be overlooked.

With three brothers my parents did not get off Scott Free. If the Bobby knocked he was asked in, doffed his tall hat, wiped his feet and offered a cuppa! Any 'problem' and its solution were analysed - his departure followed by swift, and painful, retribution if required.

Culture then allowed law be upheld at a fraction of the cost, in a fraction of the time. The so called 'zero tolerance policy' was practiced in Corby many years before New York, with just as dramatic proportional result. If the number of police is quadrupled today I feel results would be little different. Parliament has removed their powers for rapid radical response.

Yes! Every organisation breeds its power-drunk rotten apples, that is what experienced leadership, based on 'time served' is best able to root out. The current 'university bred' man manager? Shoehorned into his chauffeured limo, who never got tired feet circulating his pavements, evaluating, observing local Homo sapiens and their area of influence, is a beautifully polished round peg in a square hole.

As ever, lack of cash is part of the problem. Folks like me, with a smattering of fiscal training struggle to understand why our nation borrows billions, yearly, for onward transmission to unworthy causes and despots worldwide via the E.U. We have it enshrined in law.

I do have time for much to do with India, but am floored by their government order for 'two stealth frigate' of Krivak class from Russia: it must derive a useful boost from £98 million in cash aid from Britain - yet we cannot afford to purchase sufficient frigates of our own.

It is announced Canada has chosen Global Type 26 design of ours, but only design, just like Australia, all to be built in country. A reader's letter recently has interesting figures, said combined populations was approx. 62 million, will build 24 ships - Oz 9, Canada 15. The United Kingdom, population approaching 67 million will build 8, of a much lesser specification.

How we still posture as a 'front rank defence nation' is a myth in the rarefied atmosphere of Pugin's masterpiece north end of Westminster Bridge, and bit further on the road, at Ministry of Defence. A bit of hard luck for Russia, may be advantageous for N.A.T.O. Remember Kuznetsov in the news when returning up channel belching black smoke? The carrier had a cruise to the Med. On return entered their 80,000 ton floating dock in Kola Inlet for remodelling. Dock had a massive problem of some sort, shipped water beyond control and whole set up heeled and sank. A crane on the dock reported smashed a 250 foot hole in carrier's hull. I would like to spend a spring holiday up there with a copy of the 'salvage plan' and - as an afterthought, I wonder who is now 'bagging salt in Siberia'.

Following all that news that went from bad to badder, here, to uplift you is news of a birth taking place this very day in 1931. Little Evelyn, who never uttered a profanity, ex laundry maid of Ardross Castle, looked down and saw, ANOTHER son! I ponder if her silent thought was 'Oh bugger'. Consulting her chap - with biblical name Cephas (honest) - they decided to name it Andrew. Should you wish to contribute to child's wine bill, note post code in top right hand corner.

Thought for 2019 - Keep breathing!





The US Navy has reportedly been firing hypervelocity projectiles meant for electromagnetic railguns out of the 40-year-old deck guns that come standard on cruisers and destroyers in hopes of taking out hostile drones and cruise missiles for a lot less money.

During last year's Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises, 20 hypervelocity projectiles were fired from a standard Mk 45 5-inch deck gun aboard the USS Dewey, USNI News reported Tuesday, citing officials familiar with the test.

USNI's Sam LaGrone described the unusual test as "wildly successful."

BAE Systems, a hypervelocity projectile manufacturer, describes the round as a "next-generation, common, low drag, guided projectile capable of executing multiple missions for a number of gun systems, such as the Navy 5-Inch; Navy, Marine Corps, and Army 155-mm systems; and future electromagnetic (EM) railguns."

The US Navy has invested hundreds of millions of dollars and more than a decade into the development of railgun technology. But while these efforts have stalled, largely because of

problems and challenges fundamental to the technology, it seems the round might have real potential.

The hypervelocity projectiles can be fired from existing guns without barrel modification. The rounds fly faster and farther than traditional rounds, and they are relatively inexpensive.

While more expensive than initially promised, a hypervelocity projectile with an improved guidance system - a necessity in a GPS-contested or denied environment - costs only about \$100,000 at the most, Bryan Clark, a naval-affairs expert with the Centre for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, told USNI News. The Navy reportedly estimated that the high-speed rounds ought to cost somewhere around \$85,000.

The cost of a single hypervelocity projectile is a fraction of the cost of air-defence missiles like the Evolved Seasparrow Missile, Standard Missile-2, and Rolling Airframe Missile, all of which cost more than \$1 million each.

With the standard deck guns, which rely on proven powder propellants, rather than electromagnetic energy, the Navy achieves a high rate of fire for air defence. "You can get 15 rounds a minute for an air defence mission," Clark told USNI News.

"That adds significant missile defence capacity when you think that each of those might be replacing an ESSM or a RAM missile. They're a lot less expensive," he added. Furthermore, US warships can carry a lot more of the high-speed rounds than they can missile interceptors.

USNI News explained that the intercept of Houthi cruise missiles by the USS Mason in the Red Sea back in 2016 was a multimillion-dollar engagement. The hypervelocity rounds could cut costs drastically. The hypervelocity projectile offers the Navy, as well as other service branches, a mobile, cost-effective air-defence capability.

"Any place that you can take a 155 (howitzer), any place that you can take your navy DDG (destroyer), you have got an inexpensive, flexible air and missile defence capability," said Vincent Sabio, the Hypervelocity Projectile program manager at the Pentagon's Strategic Capabilities Office.



Royal Marines Special Forces have undergone intensive chemical warfare training to prepare for another repeat of the Salisbury Novichok attack.

Zulu Company from 45 Commando, based in Arbroath, Scotland, will be the first marines to respond should there be a chemical, biological,



radiological or nuclear incident at home or abroad.

Commandos in the unit have been given more specialist training following the heightened threat posed since the attack on Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia. A few months after the initial incident in Salisbury, Dawn Sturgess, 44, fell ill in nearby Amesbury and died in July after coming into contact with a perfume bottle thought to have been used in the attack on the Skripals.

Her partner, Charlie Rowley, 45, was exposed to the nerve agent and fell seriously ill but was later discharged.

The Skripals' property in Salisbury is due to be dismantled as decontamination work on the property continues.

The specialist marine training has been carried out at the Defence Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Centre at Westdown Camp near Salisbury.

Training involved a week of classroom learning before a week of practical training in a simulated attack on Imber. The uninhabited village near to Salisbury has been used by the military since the Second World War.

Sergeant Ben Fail said: 'The recent attack on British soil highlighted the importance of this capability and it is more important than ever for us to be able to operate effectively in this environment should the need arise.'

The final assault included pyrotechnic and electronic battle simulators to make the experience as real as possible.

Lieutenant Oliver Crow, of Zulu Company, said: 'The Royal Marines are high-readiness troops who need to be able to react to all threats at short notice anywhere in the world.'

'This is a very important skill for us to maintain in view of the current threat.'



A doctor that had been seeing an 80-year-old woman for most of her life finally retired. At her next checkup, the new doctor told her to bring a list of all the medicines that had been prescribed for her. As the doctor was looking through these his eyes grew wide as he realized Grandma had a prescription for birth control pills."Mrs. Smith, do you realize these are birth control pills?"

"Yes, they help me sleep at night."

"Mrs. Smith, I assure you there is absolutely nothing in these that could possibly help you sleep!"

She reached out and patted the young doctor's knee and said, "Yes, dear, I know that. But every morning, I grind one up and mix it in the glass of orange juice that my 16-year-old Granddaughter drinks. And believe me it definitely helps me sleep at night".

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Brian, Great News! I am delighted that you have renewed your editorship of the News Letter! and I am sure many old Matelot are too. Keeping our brotherhood together is the only reason I opened up the Banter Boat but your letter is more closely in contact with members. I have enjoyed the sparring on the Superb Banter Boat but owing to Laptop problem I haven't been able to keep pace with all the messages. Regards **Phil Grimson** (see Below) ↓

Hello Brian & Libby -Thank you for the Email & the E Magazine. May I wish you both all the best in 2019 Regards **Bill Cook**

Hello Brian....thanks for the latest E magazine I certainly DO wish to be on the distribution list. Regards **Robin**

Brian enjoyed the Newsletter, carry on the good work, **Tony Hackett**

Nice one Brian. Every three months eh? Get yourself sorted out and make it monthly instead of laying around in the Froggy sun. Having said that, a first class job you have done so far and, as you point out 'impressive'. So, nose to the grindstone and let's have no more of this 'hit -and-miss' claptrap. Cheers old matey; "Evening all" **Ray Lambert**

Hi Brian, - Thanks for your wishes, I can assure you the mag. will always interest me, I didn't spend enough time in the Andrew to log many exploits , compared to longer serving ship mates. Perhaps one day I might manage to put pen to paper and get something down? Still with this iPad I can start it, and add things as they come to mind. Cheers, **Norman Webber**

Hi Brian, - I've been keeping up to date with the Superb News and would still like to do so. Perhaps I will be able to attend the reunion next year if all goes well. **Alf Brown**

Hello Brian - I really look forward to hearing from you and reading all about the "goings on" with the Superb crew. It adds another dimension to my world of getting older. **George Messmer**



Phil Grimson runs a Facebook page called the **SUPERB BANTER BOAT** and several members plus a load of non-members feed into it from time to time. Have a look when you get the chance. It's a bit of fun.

The following 2 letters from the USA. The 1st one was received a while ago but managed to hide itself in cyber space. It is now printed with an apology. Nick was recommended by Ray Lambert.

Hi Brian - Thanks for your offer to include me in your mailing list for the Superb magazine. I would be very pleased to be included. I am glad to see that the Superb Society still has an active membership, and I am enjoying reading the blogs and reminiscences in the edition you sent.

I am not a Superber, but was influenced by her at one point in my life. The HMS Superb docked in San Diego in July 1955, on the day I had gone to San Diego to register for college. I was 17. The ship was receiving visitors, and I spent much of the afternoon aboard her. I was fascinated with the ship and the idea of a life at sea. And so instead of going off to college, I joined the U.S. Navy. I was in the Navy for three years, leaving with the rank of Petty Officer 2nd Class (YN2). I was stationed at the U.S. Navy Communication Station, at the foot of Broadway, across the street from where the Superb had docked. I finished my tour with Commander Naval Forces, Marianas, on Guam. Sadly, though, I never went to sea.

But the Superb had made a lasting impression on me, and in my later years I wondered what had become of her. Thanks to the miracle of Googling, I found your society and wrote to ask if anyone remembered their port of call in San Diego. Philip Grimson very kindly replied and sent pictures. Ray Lambert also replied and sent the books he had written telling his experiences as a lad in the Royal Navy, including his service aboard the Superb. My wife and I have since visited Ray in Chatham, and he treated us to a tour of the former naval base and the city. We have been in touch for some years now. I treasure his gift of a shirt with the Superb emblem.

So following the history of the HMS Superb has been an on-going pleasure, something of a hobby, but more. That cruise must have been a lasting, binding experience for you all; and for me a great pleasure to read what it was like to be a seaman on a good-will cruise on what Philip Grimson called "the happiest ship" that he and so many others had served on. Regards **Nick**

Crump

---- and a further email :-

Just a note to say how much I am enjoying the Superb newsletter. I enjoyed Ray's reminiscence about the Cyprus adventure—an addition to the Nozzer books, which I have read. A few years back, Ray gave us a great tour of Chatham, and, being a history buff, I enjoyed seeing where the Naval yards had been, and where the Superb was once docked. The HMS Superb, pulling into San Diego when I was 18, fired my imagination, and then my interest in naval history—British and American.. What a great time it was when a ship could take a good-will tour around the world, create such excitement, and give and receive such generous hospitality. Can you imagine that happening today? I am enjoying the films included in the newsletter of the Superb's stops along our West Coast.

By the way, it's interesting that British ships have a lineage. I stumbled across the fact that an "ancestor" of the HMS Superb was an HMS Superb (3rd rate 74-gun ship-of-the-line) commanded by Admiral Sir Richard Keats—a relative of the poet John Keats.

Thanks again for including me, and I will look forward to any future editions you might want to send me. **Nick Crump**

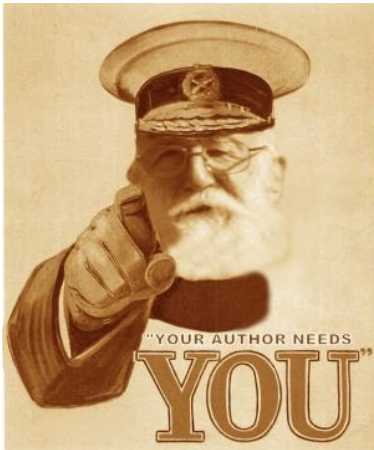


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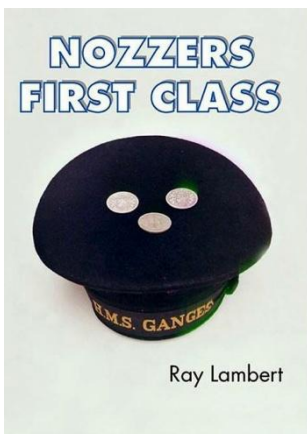
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Ray Lambert



NOZZERS GO WEST



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. Click [HERE](#) for more information & to contact Ray 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.

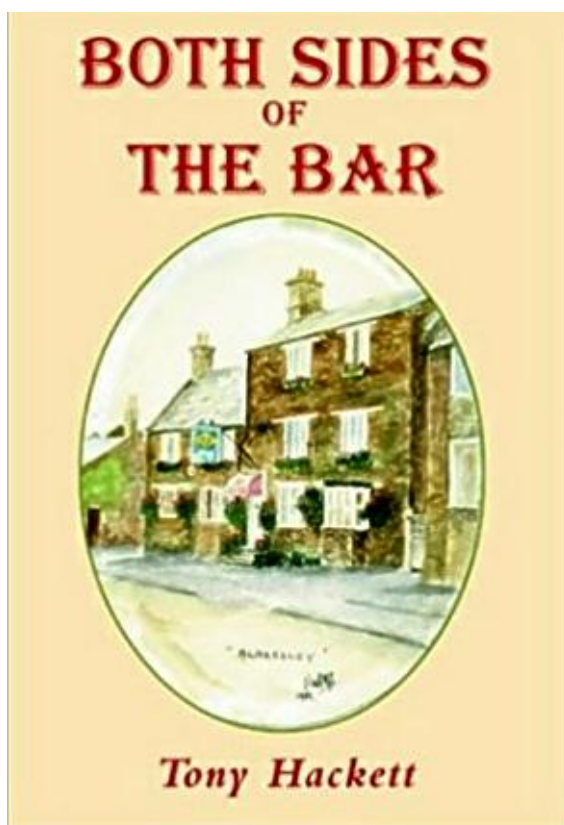
There are bold knights charging to her rescue one of who wins her hand in marriage.

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**



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

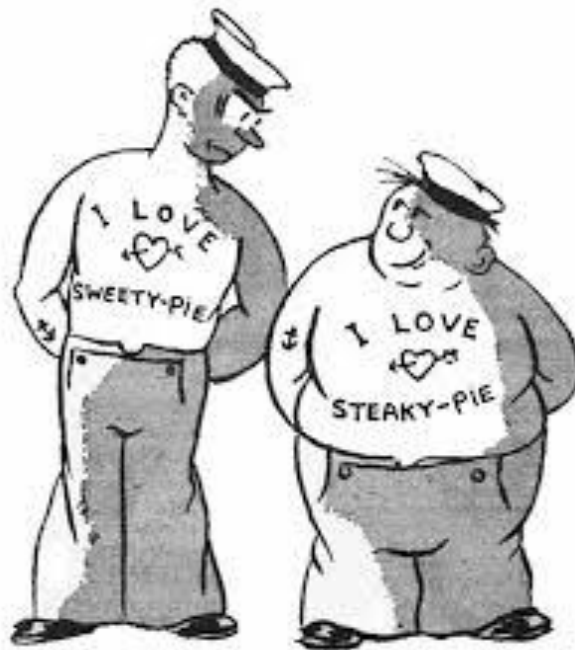


In 1771, HMS Endeavour, under the command of Lt. James Cook, visited the island of Tahiti, and a seaman named Robert Stainsby had himself tattooed by a native. The craze for tattoos soon caught on as sailors thought a tattoo could increase their luck. A crucifix was a popular tattoo, as it was supposed to increase the chances of a Christian burial if the sailor were somehow lost at sea and later found washed up on shore.

Also, a rooster and pig, each tattooed on one knee was popular. It ensured the seaman that he never went hungry as he would carry with him his own "bacon and eggs".

Sailors often got swallow tattoos on their chest. The most common explanation is that you had a swallow tattoo for crossing the Atlantic, and one for travelling over 5,000 nautical miles. Why swallows? Because they always find their way home.

In the 18th century it was common punishment for a sailor to be given 24 or more lashes for being drunk on duty. So sailors began to get a crucifix tattooed on their backs. Now only would the bosun's mate flinch from laying his whip on Christ, but it was believed that the lash itself would cringe away.





JOTTINGS OF A VERY ORDINARY SEAMAN

by Ray Lambert

I have been involved with speedway for many a long year - from the safe side of the fence or centre green of course; I may be daft but I'm not silly! Over the intervening years I have been offered a ride from the many friends I've made but the old 'unwritten rule' if-you-bend-it-you-mend-it, coupled with not being very brave in the first place, means I have always kept both feet on terra-firma.

That was until one day I was offered a free go at my old mate's training school where I managed to tootle round quite sedately. Several years later and on the strength of that one wobbly training day, I had been joking: "Yeah, not bad but I could do better than that" until the day came when I had the tables turned on me.....

They got me to don a racing suit, complete with boots, helmet and goggles, gloves etc for some publicity shots. From there it progressed to sitting on a bike and to sitting at the tapes, looking very professional. Suddenly I realised that three more riders had had rolled up to the tapes alongside me, "just for a bit of atmosphere," they said.

Three former world champions (five times, six times and six times) - and me. This was no joke, I had been had big time, and I was terrified. The tapes shot up, making me jump and drop the clutch really fast and I was away and first into the first bend - and in front.

The bike they had tricked me into riding was a real humdinger and I stayed in front; despite it trying to pull my arms off. I was scared witless but at the same time elated to be not only in a race with three of my all-time hero's but leading them. In the back of my mind I figured they were playing with me but I stayed in the lead until the last bend and with the flag in sight - I fell off.

The fall was heavy but brought me to my senses. I had fallen out of bed. It was all a dream.



Well, after that load of old twaddle we'd better stick to navy anecdotes!



NOTES FROM MY DIARY

by Andy Brierley (From 2009)

Not all are moved by history so I hope this tale is of interest.

It centres on a twenty year old Able Seaman called Alexander Stanners. He lived in the street behind my own in Corby, at that time a sooty steel town in Northants. He was approximately four years older than I.

To my schoolboy's eye he was far more handsome than Clarke Gable. Home on leave, with bleached white front and pristine white cap at a jaunty angle and white silk scarf draped fashionably, I was hooked; who could possibly want to be a soldier dressed in brown serge?



As W.W.2 drew to a close Alex served on *H.M.S. Goodall*, escort to the 'very last' Russian convoy on the arctic route; they reached Murmansk O.K. When the return journey of R.A. 66 got under way, just outside Kola Inlet a torpedo from U286 struck *Goodall's* bow, setting off the forward magazine. The bow curled back and ripped off, killing all on the bridge. Only two officers and twenty nine ratings

survived.

I learned the local Corby paper soon had pictures of street parties celebrating V.E. Day. Visible in one picture is Alex's Mam with the kids, delighted the whole sorry mess was over. Alas, she had not yet learned that for the handsome Alex it really was. He perished with one hundred and thirty of his shipmates at 69°-25n, 33°-38e. Date: 29th April 1945.

So, why am I telling you this? In June, 2009 where the sun never sets way above the arctic circle, I was going to pass the above co-ordinates. My initial personal intention was to drop a couple of roses and say 'I remember you Alex'..... This got to the ears of Sittingbourne R.N.A (I am not a member), they kindly offered to provide me with a ring of poppies with a note from their crew 'To all who failed to return from that thankless enterprise.' I am led to believe with scant appreciation by the recipients! I also attached a card from the 'Superb Old Boys'.



Eventually June arrived and Jo and I boarded the *M.S. Braemar*.

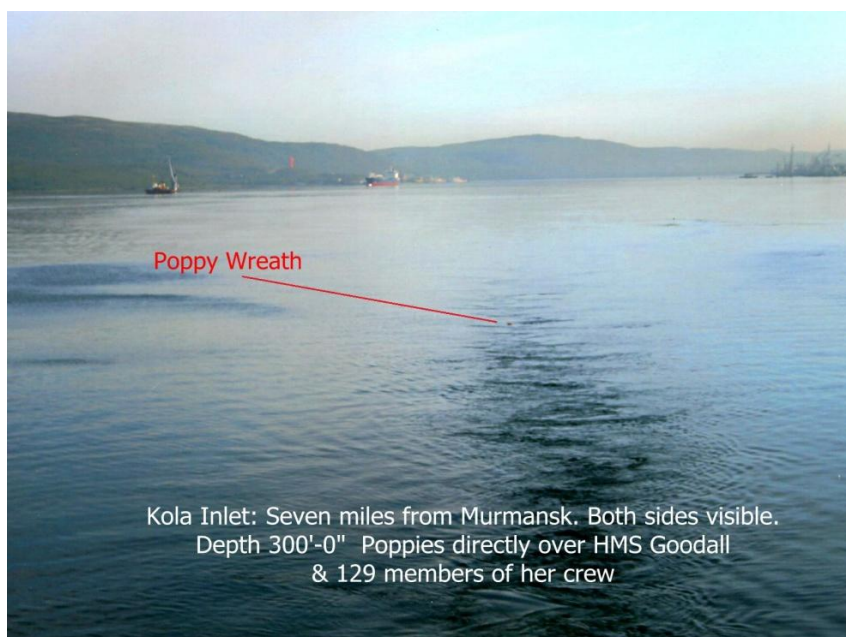
I am in the habit of wearing one of those tiny white ensign lapel badges; in a crowd it usually gets someone to approach asking 'When?', 'What ships?' and 'Who?' etc.

Lo! I was approached by the secretary and standard bearer of Wrexham R.N.A., like me, an old Shotley boy. I told the tale of Goodall's 'last sinking on last convoy' and my ring of poppies. He immediately said he would be on the quarter deck, regardless of the time of day (5.45a.m. - 25th June).

Also amongst the passengers was a young pastor (dog collar gave him away), a virtual cripple. I approached him and asked 'What time are you out of bed in the mornings?' - 'Why?' said he. Once more I told the Goodall story and asked for a compact, concise few words, if he were available. He told me he would be attending, even if 'sat on the deck gagged'!! So, all came together on a beautiful sunny morning 7 miles from



Murmansk, up the Kola Inlet. It is the time of the midnight sun that does not set, burnt faces all round! The Wrexham man and his wife, Mr. & Mrs. Chris Knight, the Pastor, Dennis Wright and his wife, also a pastor, my missus, Jo, and I.

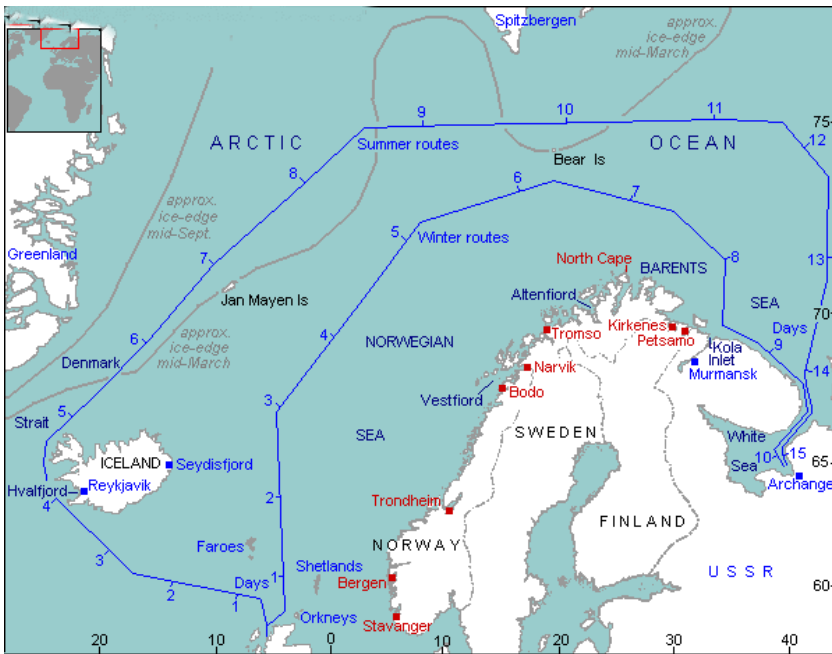


Kola Inlet: Seven miles from Murmansk. Both sides visible.
Depth 300'-0" Poppies directly over HMS Goodall
& 129 members of her crew

We passed smack over co-ordinates of Goodall's wreck and crew, 300'-0" down, dropped the poppy ring; an emotional moment, no one wanted to be the first to speak. Sadly my writing fails miserably to convey the scene or atmosphere.

As an Osprey trained Asdic Op., I tried to imagine the task of the U-boat in that confined area. I assume everyone would be pinging away with sphincters puckered up hoping to get in the first blow. In the U-boat's favour there were two rivers draining

into the inlet, so temperature layers and salinity layers would play hell with an asdic beam.



HMS Goodall (K-479) was laid down by Boston Navy Yard on 20 May 1943. Launched 8 July 1943, but never commissioned (USN). Sent to Britain as lend lease on the 4th October 1943, and renamed *HMS Goodall*. She was an Escort Destroyer that was torpedoed by U-968 off Kola Inlet, 29 April 1945, and sunk by gunfire from *HMS Anguilla*, 30 April 1945.

STANNERS, ALEXANDER SMITH MORRISON (19), Able Seaman (C/JX 454828), *HMS Goodall*, Royal Navy, died 29/04/1945, Son of David M. and Mary M. Stanners, of Corby, Northamptonshire. Memorial: Chatham Naval Memorial

(Full list of those who perished can be seen by clicking on this [link](#))





Drafting Guys Over 70

(Trawled from the web & passed on by Bill Cook)

I am over 70 and the Armed Forces think I'm too old to track down terrorists. You can't be older than 42 to join the military. They've got the whole thing ass-backwards.

Instead of sending 18-year olds off to fight, they ought to take us old guys. You shouldn't be able to join a military unit until you're at least 35.

For starters, researchers say 18-year-olds think about sex every 10 seconds. Old guys only think about sex a couple of times a month, leaving us more than 280,000 additional seconds per day to concentrate on the enemy.

Young guys haven't lived long enough to be cranky, and a cranky soldier is a dangerous soldier. 'My back hurts! I can't sleep, I'm tired and hungry.' We are bad-tempered and impatient, and maybe letting us kill some asshole that desperately deserves it will make us feel better and shut us up for a while.

An 18-year-old doesn't even like to get up before 10am. Old guys always get up early to pee, so what the hell. Besides, like I said, I'm tired and can't sleep and since I'm already up, I may as well be up killing some fanatical son-of-a-bitch.

If captured we couldn't spill the beans because we'd forget where we put them. In fact, name, rank, and serial number would be a real brainteaser.

Boot camp would be easier for old guys. We're used to getting screamed and yelled at and we're used to soft food. We've also developed an appreciation for guns. We've been using them for years as an excuse to get out of the house, away from the screaming and yelling.

They could lighten up on the obstacle course however... I've been in combat and never saw a single 20-foot wall with rope hanging over the side, nor did I ever do any push-ups after completing basic training. Actually, the running part is kind of a waste of energy, too. I've never seen anyone outrun a bullet.

An 18-year-old has the whole world ahead of him. He's still learning to shave, to start a conversation with a pretty girl. He still hasn't figured out that a baseball cap has a brim to shade his eyes, not the back of his head.

These are all great reasons to keep our kids at home to learn a little more about life before sending them off into harm's way.



Let us old blokes track down those terrorists. The last thing an enemy would want to see is a couple of million pissed off old farts with bad attitudes and automatic weapons, who know that their best years are already behind them.

A Group of guys, all turning 40, discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because the waitresses had big breasts and wore mini-skirts.

Ten years later, at age 50, the friends once again wondered where they should lunch. Eventually all agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because the waitresses were attractive. The food and service was good and the beer selection was excellent.

A decade later, at age 60, they again phoned each other to decide where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would go to Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because there was plenty of parking, they could dine in peace and quiet with no loud music, and it was good value for money.

After another ten years by now aged 70, the friends discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would rendezvous at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because the restaurant was wheelchair accessible and had a toilet for the disabled.

Finally ten years down the line, now in their 80s, they discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because they had never been there before.



CELEBRATIONS AT TRAFALGAR

(by Imperial War Museum)



It's an iconic photograph - one that has been used across the world to highlight the celebrations on VE Day, the end of the Second World War in Europe. But there's always been one big question surrounding this particular image: what was the story behind those two women smiling for the camera in the Trafalgar Square fountains on 8 May 1945?

Determined to find out more about the women, IWM put an appeal out on Twitter for help. Twenty-four hours later, they were contacted by a relative: their names were Cynthia Covello and Joyce Digney, and the two women were life-long friends.

Cynthia sadly passed away in 1983, but her family was able to put us in touch with Joyce, who



now lives just outside Vancouver. After speaking with Joyce and looking at photos and a letter supplied by the Covello and Digney families, we are now able to share the incredible story of the two women in this famous photograph.

Joyce and Cynthia first met in the Women's Land Army in the summer of 1944. Joyce was 18 years old and Cynthia was 20. They became friends almost immediately and worked together on various farms



across Surrey, just outside London.

Both Joyce and Cynthia had seen photos of the First World War armistice parades in London, and they decided that if they were still alive at the end of the war they would make the trip to London and join in the inevitable celebrations.



Joyce dunking a soldier in one of the fountains in Trafalgar Square, 8 May 1945.

Victory in Europe was announced on Monday 7 May 1945, and the following day was declared a public holiday in Britain. The two women held true to their word, taking the early train into London that Tuesday morning. Their first stop was St Paul's Cathedral, where they each said prayers for the family members they had lost during the war. After paying their respects, they headed out into the crowds to have some fun.

In a letter Joyce wrote to Cynthia's family in 2006, she recalled the atmosphere on the streets: 'We walked all over London, and unless you were there, you could not believe the euphoria; hugs, kisses, smiles and laughter. It was like a gigantic family

coming together.'


The two eventually reached Trafalgar Square, where celebrations were in full swing. The roads were closed to traffic, and policemen looked the other way as revellers climbed on Nelson's Column and the four lion statues.

Joyce and Cynthia dipped into The Chandos, a pub just off the square on St. Martins Lane. The pub was packed with people and glasses were in short supply, but Cynthia somehow managed to secure drinks for the two of them. Joyce described the scene in her letter:

'We went into the pub that was crowded to overflowing. They had beer but not enough glasses. I am laughing thinking about it. Cynthia and I managed to get two glasses from people who had finished their drinks. No glasses were washed. Just filled up again!'

After the pub, the two women headed into Trafalgar Square, where Joyce remembers a giant Conga line snaking its way around the statues and fountains. It was a warm, humid day, and people were sitting on the fountains, wading their feet in the water. To cool off, Joyce and Cynthia decided to join them. They took off their shoes, rolled up their trousers and stepped into the water.

In her letter to Cynthia's family, Joyce described what happened next:

 'Two sailors came into the fountain to join us. One of them climbed up into one of the fountains and dived into the two feet of water. How he didn't kill himself, I don't know! He put his arms around me and fell back, taking me under the water with him. I grabbed the chap by the shirt and dunked him up and down screaming: "Look what you've done to me. How am I going to get home?"'

After the dunking, the two women worked their way south to Waterloo station, where they dried off next to a bonfire lit by another reveller, before taking the train back to Surrey.

Both Joyce and Cynthia married Canadian soldiers shortly after the war ended, moving to Canada within a few months of each other. Joyce and her husband Ernest settled in British Columbia, while Cynthia and her husband Oscar moved to eastern Canada. The two women stayed in touch, and Oscar and Cynthia eventually moved west, also settling in British Columbia. To this day, the Digney and Covello families remain close.

Both photographers and film cameramen present in Trafalgar Square that day captured Joyce and Cynthia in the fountain, as still images and film footage of their exploits have since been used in articles and documentaries around the world.

Joyce remembers seeing a film of their fountain escapades in a cinema newsreel shortly after the war, but it wasn't until much later that the two families discovered just how famous that film footage and photograph had become, regularly spotting Cynthia and Joyce's familiar faces in television programmes, books and newspaper stories.

Speaking over the phone, Joyce laughed about the photograph's fame and thinks Cynthia would be tickled too. In her letter to Cynthia's family, she wrote: 'How I wish she were alive to share all this with me. She would have thought it was a hoot!'

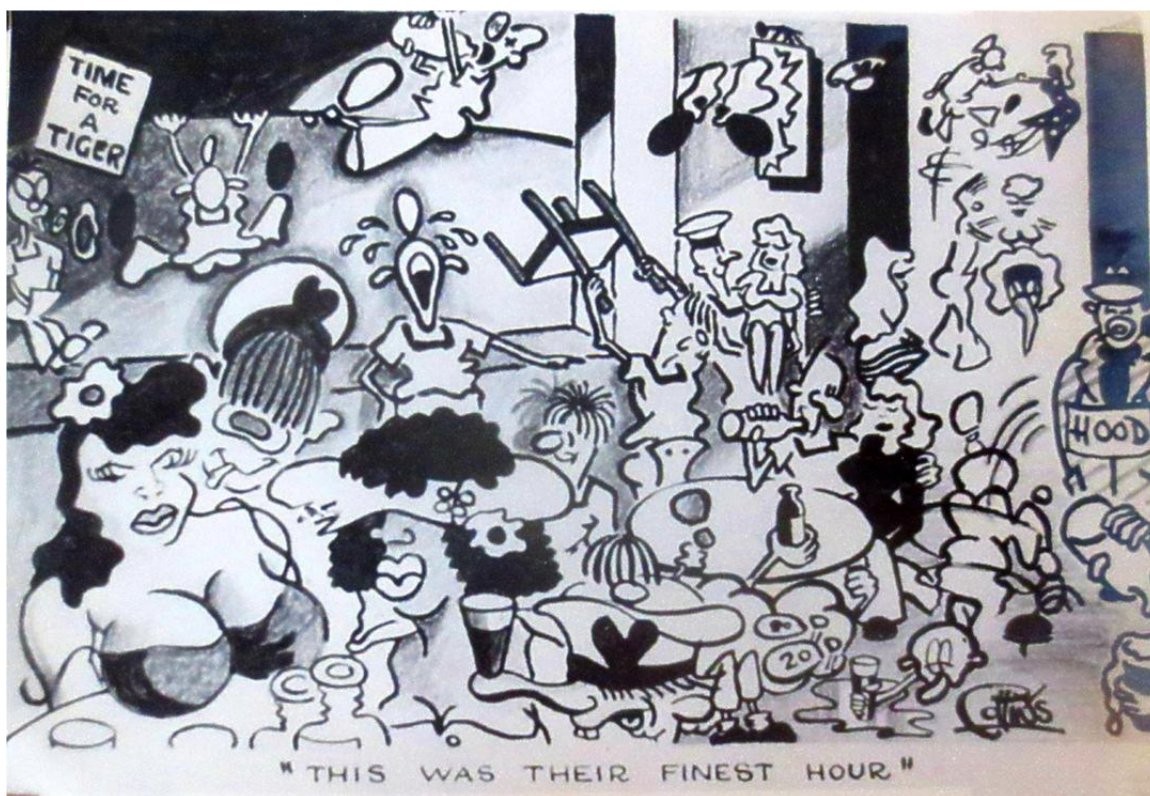
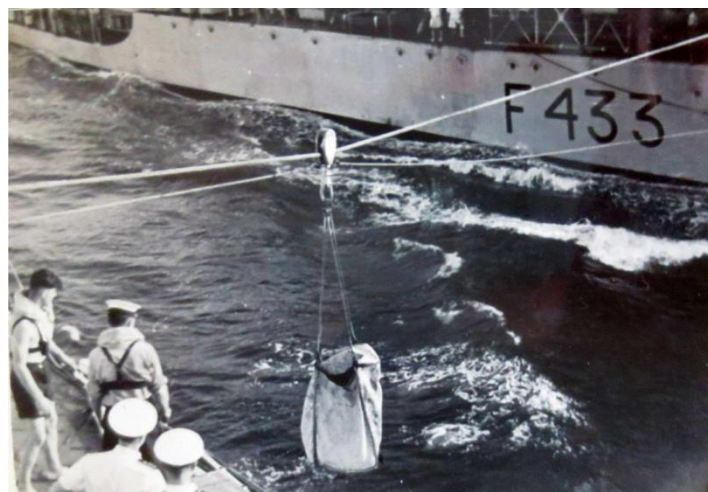
Joyce sadly passed away in November 2015.

Click [HERE](#) to see the video



"You're just the kind of person we're looking for to test our airline seats."

Photo Album



PHOTOGRAPHS FROM SHIPMATE BILL COOK

STRATEGIC PERFECTION ...

The *U.S.S. Constitution* (Old Ironsides) as a combat vessel carried 48,600 gallons of fresh water for her crew of 475 officers and men. This was sufficient to last six months of sustained operations at sea. She carried no evaporators (fresh water distillers).



However, let it be noted that according to her log, "On July 27, 1798, the *U.S.S. Constitution* sailed from Boston with a full complement of 475 officers and men, 48,600 gallons of fresh water, 7,400 cannon shot, 11,600 pounds of black powder and 79,400 gallons of rum."

Her mission:

"To destroy and harass English shipping."

Making Jamaica on 6 October, she took on 826 pounds of flour and 68,300 gallons of rum. Then she headed for the Azores, arriving there 12 November. She provisioned with

550 pounds of beef and 64,300 gallons of Portuguese wine.

On 18 November, she set sail for England.

In the ensuing days she defeated five British men-of-war and captured and scuttled 12 English merchantmen, salvaging only the rum aboard each.

By 26 January, her powder and shot were exhausted. Nevertheless, and though unarmed, she made a night raid up the Firth of Clyde in Scotland. Her landing party captured a whiskey distillery and transferred 40,000 gallons of single malt Scotch aboard by dawn.

Then she headed home.

The *U.S.S. Constitution* arrived back in Boston on 20 February 1799, with no cannon shot, no food, no powder, NO rum, NO wine, NO whiskey and 38,600 (of 48,600) gallons of stagnant water !!





BE AWARE OF THIS SCAM

A friend received a letter purporting to come from a local community group that wants more members. It gives an email address that indicates to be a local resident. Before you reply you will be asked to sign in with your email address within the next seven days. You have now disclosed your email address to someone who did not know it. You will then be asked to forward it to other residents and keep using the same process to finally get all the email addresses in your local area.

Visiting Barcelona

An acquaintance recently walking with a lady friend in Barcelona was suddenly aware that the back of her clothing had suddenly become spattered with what looked like paint. Out of nowhere came a man to offer assistance. They were invited into the entrance to an apartment block where the helpful man produced a bottle of water and a packet of tissues. Whilst cleaning the clothing the male friend had his wallet silently stolen from his back pocket. (ALWAYS A STUPID PLACE TO KEEP ONE'S WALLET).

One card was used by swiping it prior to it being cancelled. A phone call to the bank in the UK was made from the Spanish police station but no action was allegedly taken. Remember that there is no record of the phone call made from a normal fixed phone whereas there is from a mobile.



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)



Pete Tasker on 16th December, 2018



Some years ago my newly retired husband was watching as I went about my daily routine. I vacuumed, cleaned, ironed and sorted the laundry, and after making us both a cup of coffee, I sat down. Hubby looked at me thoughtfully. Was he finally realising he could help, I wondered?

My hopes were dashed when he said, "Isn't it wonderful how you always find ways to keep yourself so busy."

Submitted by Libby Saunders

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 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



MEMBERS RECEIVING THE 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) - Phil **Grimson** (1953 & 1954) - Tony **Hacket** (1953) - Alan **Harmer** (1955 - 56) - Joe **Heaton** (1956) - Brian **Hill** (1954) - Charlie **Kingston** (1956) - Ray **Lambert** (1955) - Peter **MacDonald** (1949-51) - George **Messmer** (USN 1954 - USA) - Malcolm **Milham** (1953) - Frank **Nunn** (1954) - Dave **Perrin** (1954) - Brian **Saunders** (1954 - 55 France) - Rob **Smith** (1956) - Brian **Turner** (Associate) - John **Ward** (1953) - Norman **Webber** (1956)

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



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