

H.M.S. SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION

A MAGAZINE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP

MARCH, 2018

Nº 16



OUR SWORDS WE BARE
OUR SPIRITS DARE

CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION IS ROBIN SMITH

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Superb - Defending Britain Since 1710

ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

Greetings Shipmates, March 2018.

It is a rare month that passes without the R.A.F. Public Relations Department getting an advantageous article for their service in one or other parts of the media; there is no doubting their pre-eminence for it. Army, alas, only seems to figure when a maimed soul has been abandoned to become a suicide statistic.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the Royal Navy allowed a highly dangerous event, conducted in the heart of the City of London, to pass the nation by, reporting only on an inside column of a Sunday paper. I thought it warranted saturation coverage in all aspects of the media.

What the hell were all those Admirals doing to let such an opportunity pass? Portsmouth Clearance Divers removed an 1100lb. unexploded bomb from a Royal dock. It could only have been a decent catapult shot from the edge of City Airport single runway.

The two 'lower deck' divers, Waller and Bonato, had a splendid picture, all 'geared up', inside the Sunday Times. Sunken deep in silt U.X.B. was evidently a manual struggle to get a pair of strops around. Whether the lift was tidal or crane, and other details, were not forthcoming.

It was blown just down river at Shoeburyness, easily heard from my home, way over here near Sittingbourne. I forget the number of U.X.B's assumed to be still buried in the metropolis, but first blitz attempt at seventy six continuous days we know, from experience, had a surprising number, many hundreds!

On record the Pompey divers had 304 call-outs for ordinance in various places, of various sorts, during 2017 (that's to shout about, because no one got scratched)!

Normal fodder on every front page, large and black, was of thespians anxious to get on the 'casting couch' and become celebrities. I am sure, when a brand new adolescent, I was aware said 'couch' was a normal tool in 'Tinsel town' stepping stone to celebrity-hood, method of elevation.

The common Mantra that 'any publicity is good publicity' makes me feel all those 'strident feminists' must have been abysmally stupid. I am certain, as schoolgirls in the locker room, they discussed the best way to cool unwanted ardour was a sharp knee in the danglies, or elbow in the eye, then threaten publicity if not offered a fair chance.

Apologies for that rant, it may have brought on by those aforementioned Admirals not getting our sort on the front pages.

An important question being haggled about at Westminster, but rarely reported, is our nuclear missile subs.. A vocal minority in that place is hell bent on getting them scrapped. Surprise, surprise, they appear to be those who were on the 'Czech and Soviet spy' network payroll. At a reported ten grand a visit, it was worth them taking their hols. in East Germany or Cuba, to pick up the cash.

For better or worse I am pro-Polaris, and feel those who wish its costs to be removed from M.O.D. Naval and put back into the Treasury Reserve are right! It being a political tool of government.

Change to this current system was enacted by deposed Chancellor Osborne, Dave Cameron and deputy toe-rag Clegg. The results; plans and aspirations for the navy wrecked absolutely, as it goes down in a whirlpool of debt.

Proposed new class of 'trident boats' are now commonly to be known as Dreadnoughts. Artists' impressions show they have adapted current U-boat practise of combining 'planes and rudder' in an X shape. In place of steam turbine drive to propeller they will / are proposed to / use permanent magnet motors and 'shaft less' drive, that 'sounds good' - 'literally', 'no gears = no noise'...

But, oh, oh, a version of that method drives the six D's all tied up at Pompey, plus the pair of 'Super Carriers'. One would hope de-bugging has been major priority before scheduled time on station at - 2028. I can understand the lengthy gestation period for such a cutting edge vessel and the gargantuan cost. A report had 'first design' a really radical hull form, with propulsors embedded in ducts with lots of other mould-breaking innovation, all, alas, sunk by mega costs. Current proposal will tip the scales at 17,200 tons, my addled memory thinks that that approaches 'Superb x 2'. Only 12 Polaris tubes will be fitted in place of previous 16, provision made for torpedo and improved tomahawk ejection..

The growth in displacement said to be required for 'male and female' separate messes and ablution blocks - and a gym!

The Rolls Royce PW3 reactor, (development of PW2) said to be 'quieter, simpler to maintain and good for an unrefuelled 30 years', that must make early era stokers leap for joy.

As with the carriers at Rosyth, that needed massive civil works to enlarge their building dock, so with the new subs. at Barrow. Our solitary builder B.A.E. report 'trade unions' have agreed new working practises to help automation 'reduce building time'. How decent of them to assist the nation like that. 2028 is hardly round the corner.

Talk of build time highlights the serious problem to be coped with by end users of our war vessels. We know technology advances at such a pace these days that cutting edge, 'when planned' means 'obsolescence when commissioned' ten to fifteen years later. Our nation, with only one naval constructor of warships seem condemned to 'catch up' at every launch, regardless of type. Cost of keeping Trident without itemising how it's split up is published at £2.5 billion per year. It includes missile build at Aldermaston and refurbishments as required.

'This is less than spent on the N.H.S. Service IN A SINGLE WEEK.

Tatty Bye the Noo

Keep taking the pills!



Is China secretly building hypersonic rail gun?



On January 31, photos appeared on Twitter that suggests China is currently testing a ship-mounted hypersonic railgun. Also known as an electromagnetic railgun, the superweapon has been pursued by various nations—including the United States—but never known to be fully tested and deployed.

In the way that cannons use gunpowder to launch a projectile, railguns use electromagnetic energy, essentially giving them the speed of a cannon with the range of a missile, according to Popular Science. The "rail" part refers to the weapon utilising two rails with a powerful electromagnetic field generated in between. The gun's armature, meaning an electricity-conducting device made out of metal, shoots the projectile out through the field between the two rails, according to Popular Mechanics.

The nature of the photos hasn't been officially confirmed as of press time, but they appear to show the Chinese naval ship *Haiyangshan* docked in Wuhan, the capital of the Hubei province. China has been quietly moving its railgun technology forward for some time now, according to a separate report by Popular Science. Such a weapon would have the potential to shoot aircraft and missiles out of the sky, so the prospect of another country beating us to the punch has captured a lot of attention since the images began to circulate.

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INDEX "There isn't really a known defence mechanism against a railgun shot at high Mach numbers," Justin Bronk, a combat technology researcher at the Royal United Services Institute in the United Kingdom, told New Scientist. "It's too fast and too small for current

anti-ship missile and anti-aircraft defence systems. If they can get it integrated as a major component into their future fleet arsenal, it will give them a really significant edge over the U.S. navy."

Royal Navy dismisses nuclear submarine sailors for 'absolutely disgraceful' cocaine and prostitute parties

The Washington Post reports the following:-
HMS Vigilant crew in hot water after 'drug-fuelled' shore leave exposed



The British sailors who spend their lives in submarines safeguarding the nation's nuclear missiles are, without hyperbole, contenders for the most important job in the world.

The gravity of their mission is even evident in the names the British Royal Navy gave to the nuclear missile-equipped submarines that glide beneath the globe's oceans: the Vanguard, the Victorious, the Vengeance and the Vigilant.

But several sailors on the HMS Vigilant have recently been dismissed after their mission devolved into more of a drug-fuelled booze cruise - transgressions that happened last month as the sub was docked in the United States to pick up nuclear weapons.

According to the Associated Press, at least nine sailors tested positive for cocaine following "drug-fuelled parties." The Telegraph reported that one man had sex with a prostitute in a swimming pool. "We do not tolerate drugs misuse by service personnel. Those found to have fallen short of our high standards face being discharged from service," a Royal Navy spokesman said, according to Reuters.

But, as British media pointed out, the problems aboard the Vigilant run deeper.

Aboard every Vanguard-class sub is a safe that only the commander and the executive officer can access. Inside is a "letter of last resort" - instructions from the Prime Minister that detail what the crew should do if the United Kingdom is attacked with nuclear weapons.

Both command officers of the Vigilant have been embroiled in controversy because of sexual affairs with subordinates. The Navy has a strict "no touching" rule, according to The Evening Standard.

According to The Sun, Commander Stuart Armstrong, the sub's captain, has been relieved of duty amid the investigation, which includes a photo that surfaced of the woman he was allegedly intimate with wearing the captain's uniform. The No. 2, Lieutenant Commander Michael Seal, also faces disciplinary action.

Other members of the crew have threatened to resign over the widespread breaches in Royal Navy rules.

The Daily Mail did some math on what the recent developments mean for one of the free world's strongest deterrents to nuclear war: "Around 10 percent of HMS Vigilant's 168-strong crew have either been kicked out, quit, are under investigation or have been removed in what is believed to be one of the biggest sex and drugs scandals to hit the Navy."

The nuclear sub problems come as tensions around the world's most dangerous weapons are heightening.

Speaking in Seoul on Saturday, US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis said the threat of a nuclear attack by North Korea is growing.

"North Korea has accelerated the threat that it poses to its neighbours and the world through its illegal and unnecessary missile and nuclear weapons programmes," Mattis told reporters, adding that he could not imagine a "condition under which the United States would accept North Korea as a nuclear power."

And there have been reports that the United States and the world's other nuclear powers are dusting off Cold War deterrent protocols.

A few weeks ago, there were repeatedly denied reports that US Strategic Command - the government agency that maintains the nation's nuclear weapons - has placed its B-52 bombers on 24-hour alert, a state of readiness not seen since 1991.

Crews at Louisiana's Barksdale Air Force Base are conducting renovations near long-vacant "alert pads," where during the Cold War aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons once sat ready on a continual basis. So-called strip alerts were discontinued after the Soviet Union's collapse.

The activity comes amid an escalating international war of words, with potentially catastrophic consequences.

Coincidentally, the scandal aboard the HMS Vigilant was happening at about the same time as Kim and Trump were sparring in the media. The sex scandals surfaced as the sub was docked in Kings Bay, Georgia, according to The Daily Mail.

The sailors were back and forth between the sub and the hotel, while the vessel was docked, and held several parties that raged out of control, something others in the military called "disgraceful."

Rear Admiral Chris Parry, former commander of a Type 42 destroyer, told The Daily Mail: "This is not just a submarine; it is one of our deterrence submarines. It is absolutely disgraceful."

People in the Navy should remember playing for our country on an international level is a great privilege. It is a question of putting service before self."



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

This email refers to the efforts that Wendy and Mike Norman (son) made to obtain campaign medals for Wendy's husband shipmate Dave Nobby Norman regarding the Suez Crisis when the Superb was on standby in 1956

Just had a letter from MOD no medals were awarded to the Superb for this campaign , love the magazine, regards Wendy Norman

Following a request from Shipmate Ray Lambert I received this email

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.

Thanks again for including me.

Nick

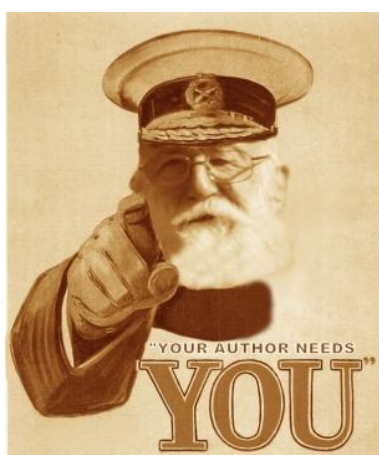


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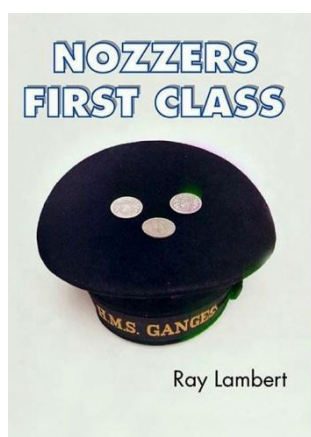
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Journalist & Best Selling Author



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



NOZZERS GO WEST



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.

Although the book has been printed - so will be in a physical state - we are awaiting the price.

However, it is available on Amazon for a download cost of £3.29 - if you know of a child who might enjoy the read please contact Phil by clicking on this [LINK](#)

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

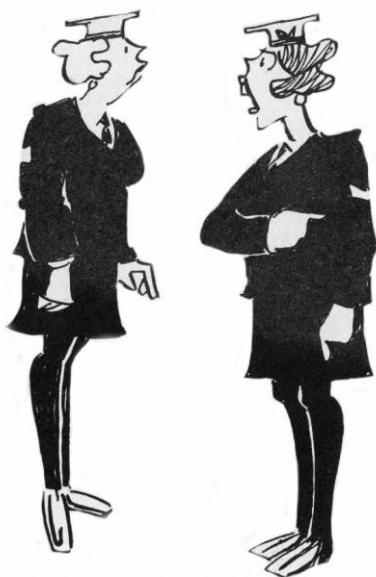
With 'Gibraltar' back on the telly again, it brought back memories of another of the good times the navy sponsored me for me.

As was customary, anyone in for any length of time had to supply a couple of bods for duties ashore and, so it came about that that instantly - "Lambert!" followed by a bit more thought, and then another bod was detailed. It was one of the best moves I ever had thrust upon me. I didn't know what lay in store for me but it turned out that I was moved into *Rooke*, the most laid back barracks that I ever encountered. I was given a cabin and left to sort out anything else myself: no station card, no duties and a free gangway any time of the day or night.

My job was in the Movements Office in the big building next to the signal tower and I used to stroll down there a little before nine each morning, collect the mail and signals en route, then make the tea but better was yet to come.

Every day I had to walk up to the Post office along the High Street, to post the mail. I learned to time my journey to about 1130, that way I was free until about 1330. Time for a couple of beers and dinner several days a week in a lovely little French café - large egg and chips for a shilling.

After about a week, I was trusted to go to the airport to meet any drafts coming in by air. In those days the airport was a single story shack type building and as laid back as everywhere else. My first priority was to get to know the two young ladies that ran the tea bar, good move that! I also got to know the passport control man who had a little broom cupboard office just opposite. I would get myself a freebie cuppa and also get him one, well it wasn't that busy!



I DON'T CARE WHAT MY PASSPORT SAYS
- I CAN'T LIE ABOUT MY AGE
WITH A GOOD CONDUCT BADGE CAN I?

All worked well until one night when a load of WRNS turned up.....

"Good evening ladies, welcome to Gibraltar. If you would give me your passports, I'll get you outa here as quickly as poss -" when I was interrupted, "What are you doing?" A very pompous chief Wren. She wanted to know the ins and outs of the proverbial ducks anatomy. "Who are you. What are you doing here....etc" With hindsight I should have sought her out first. She insisted that all twenty marched in and presented their own Passports.



Inside I shrugged my shoulders and the passport man got the message. He didn't want to be there any longer than I did but he gave them a hard time. It took them half an hour instead of me doing it in about three minutes.

Eventually, back on the coach I stood in the stairwell. The driver knew where I was going and pulled up outside *Café Royal*. My usual haunts were the Winter Gardens and, a bit further round The London Bar after the *Café Royal*.

"Good night ladies, enjoy you stay," I said as I got out.

But that was not good enough. Lady pompous was at it again. "Where do you think you're going. Who gave you permission..." I tried to explain although I felt like telling her to mind her own business. "You're still on duty. Report back on board," she demanded. This was now about nine o'clock. I assured her that was what I would do and I stood on the side of the road and waved them off until they were out of sight, before cutting the dust from my throat with a cold one.

But that was not the end of the saga. As soon as they had debussed at their destination that pompous old cow had been on the phone to *Rooke* demanding that they make sure I had returned as she had ordered.

I didn't know this until I staggered back around midnight and the Quartermaster called me over. I didn't know there was a Quartermaster; I had never noticed before. It turned out to be my old matey from my class at *Ganges* and he relayed the story to me. He had taken the call, not that it mattered anyway.

From all the drafts I processed through there, with help of the passport man and sustained with copious cups of tea, she was the only one ever to cock things up.



MEMORIES FROM 1956 (PART 3/4)

(as dictated by Ted Hill) **CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH**

Ted Hill was a British Stoker and Leading Stoker Mechanic who served aboard *HMS Belfast* in the Far East, 1950-1953; then as Leading Stoker Mechanic aboard *HMS Cockatrice* 1954; a Leading Stoker and Acting Petty Officer Stoker aboard *HMS Tyrian*, Portland Flotilla, 1955; as Acting Petty Officer Stoker aboard *HMS Woolwich*, Reserve Fleet, 1955-1956; and as Petty Officer Stoker aboard *HMS Superb*, Eastern Fleet, 1956-1957

(Continued from February Magazine)

We stopped on the way, I think it was Dakar where, in the war there was a big British base where there was an ammunition point and there was still thousands of tons of ammunition from the war. We had to call in there and load the ship's decks with shells and bombs and when we went to sea we passed a certain point where the sea really got deep all this stuff was dumped over the side. Every British warship going either north or south had to call into Dakar and shift some of this ammunition.

We came back to Chatham and went on leave in early '57 about February and I got married in March, March 23rd, from the *Superb*. I had 2 week's leave which was the end of my foreign service leave. After I was married I went back to the *Superb* and did the year around England.

We went over to the continent, we did a Scandinavian cruise where we went to Holland, Copenhagen in Denmark then we went to Sweden, to a big navy base in Sweden.

That was amazing for a neutral country. Me and Smithy went ashore and we were climbing up this hill, up the road, to the town and halfway up we had a beautiful view over the harbour. Smithy had a camera so we were taking pictures of the ship. I stood at the side of the road and he took a picture of me with the ship in the background and a blinking jeep screamed to a halt and it was the Swedish naval military police.

"What are you doing?"

"We're taking pictures"

"You can't take pictures here. That's a naval installation down there"

They took the camera from Smithy, took out the film, and gave him his camera back and told us to go and have a good time in the town. They'd been a neutral country and yet we weren't allowed to have pictures of their harbour. Not that there was anything in the harbour, the main thing in the harbour was the *Superb*.



While we were in the country our royal family were doing a royal tour of Denmark. They'd gone over in the Royal Yacht and when we left Sweden we went round to Denmark and escorted the

Royal Yacht back to England well, we went back to Scotland actually. We went into Invergordon and tied up to buoys with the Royal Yacht in front and the next day the Royal family came on board the *Superb* to meet the ship's company. But their idea of meeting us was a bit different from our idea of meeting them.

The Royal family, you know the Queen, Philip, Margaret and the Queen Mother, all lined up across the Quarterdeck and we had to march

down one at a time in single file, walk in front of them and salute them as we went past and say "Good Morning Ma'am" or something like that. And that was it. The preparation for this was horrendous from our point of view because it was a tidal harbour and all the toilets just flushed outboard and they closed our toilets about four hours before the Queen came in case there was anything floating in the water round the gangway I suppose.



There were some of us marching nearly crossed legged but it all went off OK and after we marched past they eventually opened the toilets and there were big queues everywhere.

We left the Royal Yacht and went from there to Rosyth and were there for a couple of months doing exercises with the Home Fleet. I do remember that I had weekend leave from Rosyth

and went back to London. The travel was so cheap for the Forces in those days, I think we only used to pay a third of the normal fare if you were in uniform and showed your pay book. If the fare was about 20 quid you'd only pay about six for a return ticket to London.

Then the ship came back eventually to Chatham for the summer leave because ships generally came back to the home port for the summer leave. Well, the *Superb* came back into Chatham in July and I was leaving the active navy in September. So we got back into Chatham on the 11th of July 1957 and on the 18th I was drafted into barracks. Not for demob at that time because I wasn't due to go until September but I had to take any leave due to me in that period.

One of the things that made me decide to leave was on the *Superb* I think we were at Trinco, I went ashore one afternoon to watch a cricket match and I hadn't got any money and I didn't like borrowing. And when I came back on board in the boat about 5 o'clock, we



were at anchor, and I nodded off in the boat because I'd been up all blinking night watch keeping.

Anyway when the boat came alongside someone gave us a shake and said, "Come on P.O. we're here". The Officer of the Watch was at the top of the gangway and he saw it, that I'd nodded off, and this bloke shook me.

Now when the troops come onboard they have to fall in. When P.O. s and Chiefs come on board you go to the Officer of the Watch, salute him and say "Permission to carry on for'ard" which I did and he said, "No P.O. I want you to stand aside"

So I stood aside on the Quarterdeck thinking what's all this about. He got rid of the libertymen, they got their cards and all that and went off and he came to me and said, "I kept you back because I think you're drunk" and I smiled at him and said, "You must be kidding", I said, "What makes you think I'm drunk. I haven't had a drink"

I said "I've been ashore at the cricket match that we played this afternoon. I'm stony broke and all I've done is watch a cricket match". He said, "No, I think you're drunk". and he smelt my breath and said, "I still think you're drunk". I said "Look I had my tot at lunchtime the same as everybody else and that's the only drink I've had". So he said, "Well anyway I'm going to charge you".

He sent for the duty RPO, Regulating Petty Officer, which is one of the ship's police and when he came down he was a Leading Hand, he was a Patrolman and the Officer of the Watch said "Alright will you charge this Petty Officer with coming on board drunk" So I said to the Officer "He's not going to charge me with anything. He's a Leading Hand and I'm a Petty Officer and you've got to get a Petty Officer or above to charge me with anything"

Because I thought well if you're going to be awkward so am I. But I was right. He said "He's Acting P.O. today" I explained he's a Leading Hand he has an anchor on his sleeve and if he was an Acting P.O. he'd have had crossed anchors and I would still query whether an Acting P.O. would be able to charge me who's a confirmed P.O.

The Officer said to this Patrolman "Is the Regulating Petty Officer on board?" and the Patrolman said "No but the Master at Arms is" so he was sent off to get the Master at Arms.

Well I knew the Master at Arms very well because he used to come to our mess every day at Tot Time to have a swig of our rum. Anyway, he came on to the Quarterdeck and asked the Officer of the Watch if he could have a word with me first. He asked me what was going on. I explained that I'd just come on board, I'd been to the cricket match and he's charged me with coming on board drunk. I said that it may be because I'd nodded off on the boat but I said that I'd just come off 24 hours watchkeeping and was bloody tired.



The Master at Arms said that the Officer seemed insistent that he was going to charge me. Anyway I had to take off my cap and was charged with coming on board drunk and so I was on Commander's Report for the next day. And that's what put me off the navy. That a bloke like that could bust your career at his whim because he was an Officer.

I went from the Quarterdeck down to the Engineer's Office and by chance the Engineer Commander was there and my Divisional Officer who was a Lieutenant, a big man. He said "Hill what are you doing here this time of the day?" It was about 6 o'clock. I said, "I just wanted to tell someone that I've just come on board from the cricket match. Haven't had a drink 'cos I'm broke. My last drink was Tot Time this morning and I've been charged with being drunk". and he said "What now?" and I told them yes just now.

The Commander then asked my Divisional Offer who was the duty Officer of the Watch and he said "Old So-and-So" and apparently old So-and-So hated the Plumbers, as they called us.

The Commander said, "Oh it's that bugger. It's a departmental thing. You're a Stoker P.O. and I'll sort him out". It came out later that, that night, at midnight, my Divisional Officer took this Officer of the Watch, who was off duty by then, on to the Quarterdeck and they had a "Grudge" fight and my Divisional Officer beat the hell out of him.

But the wheels had to keep turning so the next morning I had to get dressed up in full uniform and attend the Commander's Report.

When I was at the Commander's table, off caps, and he said, "P.O. (M.E.) Hill I've heard all about your case in the last 12 hours. We know what's happened and all I can say to you is Case Dismissed".

I put my hat on and went. But that more than anything put me off the navy.

That a bloke because he has gold braid on his sleeve could break your career. If I'd signed on for another 10 years or whatever and something like that had happened I'd have another 10 years in the navy as a Stoker Mechanic because that's what they do to a P.O. if you're charged with anything like that, drunk on board, you'd lose your rank. You'd go down to a Leading Hand and you'd never ever get the Long Service Medal because its full title is the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and if you've ever had anything taken away from you, you can't get that medal because of those words Good Conduct at the end.

Well I wasn't actually coming out I was going on to the Paid Reserve and I was subjected to instant call back, they could call me back for 2 or maybe 4 weeks training every year and I was going to be on half my normal pay.



Being prepared for demob you do a Leaving Routine just the same as you do in barracks before you join a ship.

The End

DRILL HALL MASSACRE IN CHATHAM

On 3rd September, 1917 four biplanes droned through the night sky at sixty miles an hour. Below they passed over an island and suddenly the target became clear.

Around the corner of the estuary lay the town of Chatham full lit in the night sky. The pilots changed course and brought the four Gotha G.IV bombers of Kagohl 3 around to face the city and the naval dock yard. They had crossed the coast at Westgate at 22:35 and began their approach on Chatham and Gillingham at 22:50.



Following the defeat of the Zeppelins the German Lufttreitkrafe began using the new Gotha G.IV bombers for operations against England during the day but with improving British defences they were forced to switch to night raids for the first time. This was the *Geschwader's* first sortie at night and was totally unexpected.

Security in Chatham had become rather lax. There was no blackout and earlier that day there had been an air raid drill. Local cinemas had shown a news flash that said there would be a further drill later in the day with the Anti Aircraft artillery being fired. Now as the aircraft rumbled over head and the anti Aircraft batteries began to fire people rushed out to get a glimpse of the action and the artillery opening up as part of a drill whilst soldiers tried to clear the streets.

The Germans passed over the Dockyard and the barracks of *HMS Pembroke* and released two 50kg bombs.

Due to an outbreak of Meningitis and the ensuing quarantine of the barracks quarters a large number of sailors were sleeping in the Drill hall, as was another group of sailors from *HMS Vanguard* who had been rostered to return to the ship and were awaiting reassignment.

A 50kg bomb fell through the glass roof and exploded amongst the sleeping men and the blast tore through the open space but due to the concrete floor mostly redirected up towards the ceiling shattering the glass roof and sending a shower of deadly glass shards down into the men.

Sidney A Moseley RNVR, who was the Assistant Paymaster wrote the following description;



1. Church Terrace.No2.WW1
Gotha Bomb Damage

I heard the noise of gun fire and bomb-dropping, but we had grown accustomed to such music, and I did not trouble to stir. In a few minutes, however, a steward came to inform me that "They were over the building and had dropped a bomb."

"Officers", he said, "Were ordered below".

That bomb, you remember, was one of the few Hun's bulls-eyes. It fell on the top of the men's quarters and killed a large number of the fellows whom I had seen drilling a few hours previously. The Huns were still above the building when I went across to the drill-hall. In the semi-darkness the scenes were weird and soul-piercing.

But what was so stirring to watch was the whole-hearted contempt the surviving sailors had for the presence of danger. I believe I was the first officer present, but there was no need to give orders to such men. They worked expeditiously and carefully, removing the debris of broken glass and timber, the dead and the dying bodies of their comrades.

Another witness, Ordinary Seaman Fredrick Turpin described:

It was a gruesome task. Everywhere we found bodies in a terribly mutilated condition. Some with arms and legs missing and some headless. The gathering up of the dismembered limbs turned one sick.

It was a terrible affair and the old sailors, who had been in several battles, said they would rather be in ten Jutlands or Heligolands than go through another raid such as this.

The falling quarter inch thick glass had caused many injuries including decapitations and severing of limbs as well as puncture wounds all the way down to minor lacerations. The clearance operation took until the following afternoon and lasted 17 hours, but only those with thick soled boots could work amongst the shards to rescue the injured or the dead. The wounded were taken to the naval hospital (now Medway Maritime) but the sheer number of injuries stretched the medical facilities available to the absolute limit, they were not prepared for such a disaster.



A total of 131 men were killed and a further 90 were wounded by the end of it.

The bombers had scored a lucky hit; their bomb aiming skills were limited and their equipment exceptionally basic. The same flight of Gothas also dropped bombs on Maxwell road (which killed another sailor and the blast knocked his friend and their female companions over), Maritime Hospital's grounds, the Woodlands Navy cemetery, on the lines, Brompton school

(which was badly damaged), Marlborough road, York avenue, College avenue and a house in May road.

There was a fear that poison gas had been dropped as well as a noxious smell filled the air around May road but thankfully this was not the case.



The Drill Hall today

However the death toll was the highest caused by any air raid and was the highest that the UK would see until the Luftwaffe returned to the skies above Kent and London some twenty three years later, but even then this was the highest death toll the Medway towns have ever seen.

The RFC scrambled several aircraft to attempt to intercept the enemy aircraft but with a lack of any kind of detection system they were flying blind and all four enemy aircraft returned to their bases in Belgium unaware of the devastation they had caused.

Ninety eight of the killed were interred in Woodland's road cemetery in a convoy of vehicles draped in Union

Jacks and followed by a procession of men who provided them with a full military burial on the 6th September 1917. Their graves can still be visited today and can be found scattered amongst the many other war dead and those killed on *HMS Bulwark*.



Funeral 1917

The above content was taken from the internet via the **Battle of Jutland** Website.

Further information can be found

[HERE](#)



A HEAD FOR HEIGHTS

By Brian Saunders

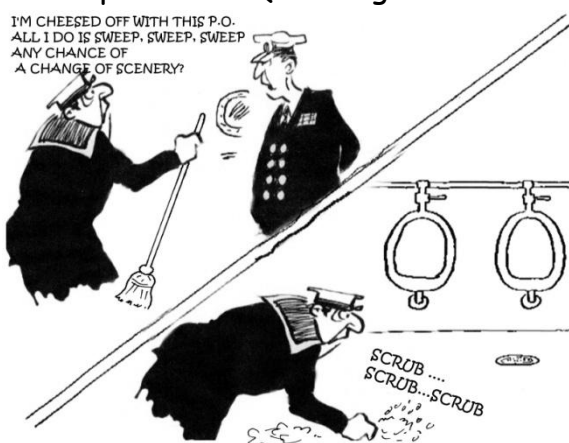
I've never been one for heights except perhaps when I was very young and when I was called up for National Service in the Navy I hadn't really given this problem very much thought.

Drafted to the *Superb* in march 1954 aged 18 looking very young but feeling like a proper sailor in my crisp, neatly ironed and screamingly new Pusser's issue number 8s the part of ship allocated to me was the Side Party which whilst the ship was in Chatham Dockyard meant that I was put in sole charge of the gash dump alongside the ship's berth.

Under Petty Officer Geveaux-Ross, the ship's Blacksmith, there were several of us working this part of ship but apparently I had been specially selected on account of my sharply creased trousers and my very highly polished boots (a spit & polish trick I had learnt from my schooldays being in the Army Cadet Corps).

On my first day I was getting used to the ribald remarks of those passing by as I stood there dejectedly in the cold drizzle of an English summer framed with all sorts of odds and ends which had been thrown on to the dump on the dockside.

Eventually I had a flash of inspiration and realised that if I up-ended a large wooden crate I could make myself a reasonably comfortable shelter rather similar to a sentry box and therefore keep myself dry, warm and, of course, alert to the chances of thieves relieving their Lordships of the Queen's gash.



The very next day the R.P.O. passing by told me to take it down as it wasn't a holiday camp and furthermore it made the place untidy!

The strange part about this duty was that although the gash was guarded assiduously during daylight hours it was left to its own fate during the nights.

After a few days of this I was then selected to the Side Party proper which involved pieces of rope and a rough paint-spotted wooden plank and with a deep sigh of relief I bid a fond farewell to the gash dump and learnt the art of lowering myself with a chipping hammer over the bows of the ship.

This was character building stuff or me, for standing on the foredeck, looking over the guard rails, the bows immediately disappeared from sight into a nerve-racking



drop directly over the water about a thousand feet below !

It was with my heart firmly between my teeth that I did overcome the rigours of lowering myself down the ship's side and eventually thoroughly enjoyed the conquering of my fear of heights. Or so I thought.

Dangling over the side with a pot of paint or a chipping hammer there was a certain sense of freedom and certainly you were left to your own devices way down there in space.

My confidence cannot have passed unnoticed over the following months to those in a higher station than I because one forenoon I was summoned to the foot of the wireless mast which on the *Superb* was situated amidships and started from a higher deck, and told that I was to start painting from the top down.

The ship was at anchor somewhere, I am unable to recall where but it was somewhere in the north Americas, and clutching the wire handle of a largish pot of white paint and a brush in one hand I started the climb. As I got higher up the mast the ship seemed to increase her sway and I could see anxious faces looking up as I inched my way towards the top.

It was eerily silent up there, all alone with the view, when my eyes were open, of the deep blue sea and the deep blue sky - then the sea then the sky, then the sea.....

Finally with a few feet to go before the top I was about to start to paint and it was then I could hear instructions from somewhere below. It was the voice of a Boy Seaman who was following.

"We've got to get out on the spars" he said, indicating a piece of metal sticking out some eight or nine feet at 45 degrees and supported by two lateral wires and another which started at the mast, just above my head, and finished some few inches from the end of the spar which tapered to the thickness of my wrist.

Tentatively I reached out with my left hand, clutching the paint pot with my right, to the wire angling down to the spar but before I could take hold of it the ship swayed again and it was then that I must have lost my presence of mind.

I just wrapped both my arms around that lovely, lovely comforting and safe wireless mast and hung on for dear life. I was frozen with fear not wanting to go up or out and not daring to come down.

There was a great deal of shouting, bellowing and a lot of rudeness coming from below and when I opened my eyes and looked down I could see sailors covered with splashes of white. It seemed as though a flock of dysentery infected seagulls had just flown over.



I had let go of both the paint pot and the brush and the boots of the R.P.O. who happened to be wandering in the vicinity looking for something, anything to fix his beady eye upon was one of the casualties.



The Boy Seaman, who had probably spent his youth at Ganges leaping up and down bloody masts one-handed and in his bare feet while drinking a cup of Kai, then gently coaxed me down to the deck and my painting days were finished.

Never again would I be coerced to scale the heights.

It was only in later years that I realised that I climbed that mast, as did many others, without any form of safety harness. They were tough men in those days (unlike me of course).

Shortly after this incident I managed to get a job as a Petty

Officer's Messman !

Much nicer.

Following an email from Shipmate Allan Harmer who sent in the photograph below I did some research into the firm and found this on the BBC website which was published in July 2007

Bernards ALLOTMENT SERVICE



Immediately the form overleaf has been satisfactorily completed you become a member of the largest and most comprehensive Naval Allotment service in the world.

The following points outline the Bernard Service

The Admiralty deducts your allotment and forwards this to us on the last day of each month. Your Allotment is continuous and may be used to meet your clothing and other requirements throughout the time you are in the Service. We allow credit up to a maximum of £18 on monthly allotments of £3 and upwards, while for allotments below £3 a month credit is allowed to the equivalent of six months' allotments. This credit is allowed immediately we have received the signed form or Form S69 duly completed by the Supply Officer of your Ship.

All Bernard Branches have a record of your account, and your purchases may be made from any branch convenient to yourself or, if preferred, from the Mail Order Department at Harwich.

Your uniform and civilian clothing requirements are adequately and expertly attended to. You Pay as You Wear without extra charge for credit.

The Bernard Service provides suitable gifts for all ages—Jewellery, Fancy Goods, Toys, Bouquets, Sports Equipment, etc., all obtainable on Allotment Account.

Radio, Furniture, Cycles and Musical Instruments may be obtained through an Allotment Account, on simple Hire Purchase Agreement.

With more than fifty years' experience in the Naval Trade, Bernards may be relied upon at all times.

The following Table shows how our Credit Terms assist in spreading the initial cost of your uniform or other purchases over the period of their use.

Should you feel your requirements in Uniform, other items of clothing, birthday presents, and so on are not likely to exceed £27 in the first year, then you will see from the chart that a suitable allotment would be one of 30/-.

BERNARDS FULL CREDIT TERMS

Showing purchasing power of typical Allotments

Monthly Allotments	20/-	30/-	40/-	60/-	80/-
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Credit allowed by Bernards	6 0 0	9 0 0	12 0 0	18 0 0	18 0 0
Add Allotment—					
1st Month	1 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
2nd Month	1 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
3rd Month	1 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
4th Month	1 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
5th Month	1 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
6th Month	1 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
Purchases permitted in first six months ...	12 0 0	18 0 0	24 0 0	36 0 0	42 0 0
Allotments in second six months	6 0 0	9 0 0	12 0 0	18 0 0	24 0 0
First year's spending power	18 0 0	27 0 0	36 0 0	54 0 0	66 0 0

BERNARD BRANCHES

6-8, Queen Street, PORTSMOUTH; Military Road, CHATHAM; 24, Martin Terrace, DEVONPORT; 8, Royal Terrace, WEYMOUTH; 3, Flower Buildings, LEE-ON-SOLENT; 11, Arwenack Street, FALMOUTH; 149, Cleethorpe Road, GRIMSBY; 17, Merrial Street, NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME; 17, Lumley Road, SKEGNESS; 22, North Road, WETHERBY; 17, Charles Street, MILFORD HAVEN; 88, West Princes Street, HELENSBURGH; 12, Kirkgate, DUNFERMLINE; The Shore, INVERGORDON; Hilton Road, ROSYTH; 43, Strand Road, LONDONDERRY; Cathedral Square, Main Street, GIBALTAR; 26, South Street, Valletta, and 18, The Strand, Sliema, MALTA.

B249/952

Outfitters closes after 110 years

A uniform manufacturer, based in an Essex town, has announced it will close after 110 years.

All 46 workers at Bernard's in Harwich have been made redundant with the closure of the firm which has made British Military uniforms since 1897.

Company bosses said after heavy losses to foreign competition the company had been placed in liquidation.

The liquidators, Carter Backer Winter, said British manufacturers could not compete with cheap imports.



'Mixed emotions'

As well as producing garments for the British Army and Navy, Bernard uniforms

were sold to the military in Oman, Kuwait and Libya.

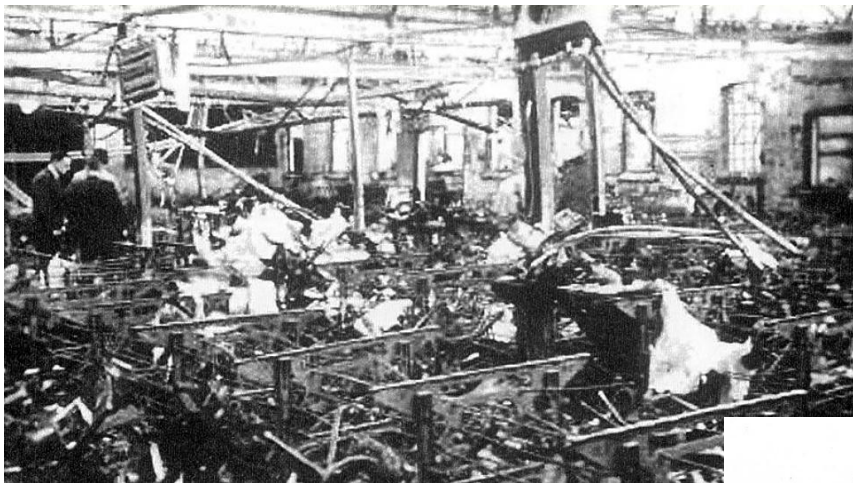
Audrey May, who worked for the firm for 43 years, said: "There's been mixed emotions yes, very upset, angry. There have been a lot of emotions rolled into one.

"I don't think there are many jobs available in the town but hopefully we'll be lucky."

John Alexander, of Carter Backer Winter, said: "The Ministry of Defence has been looking to get its uniforms made for the Army and Navy at lower and lower costs and British manufacturers can no longer compete with manufacturers in Eastern Europe and the Far East."

Cheap foreign manufacturing was blamed for the closure of Bernard's.

Bernard's has always been, throughout the 20th century, a name synonymous with Harwich. Charles Bernard started tailoring naval uniforms in 1896. The threat of war in 1938 led to the whole production line concentrating on uniforms, and extensions to the factory were completed in 1940. A second factory was set up in Luton 'just in case'. On May 9th 1941 a German bombing raid destroyed the factory and the aftermath can be seen here.



Production started again with three days in alternative premises and a new factory was rebuilt within five months.

Military Road, Chatham in 1963 Showing Bernard's Outfitters and the Royal Marines receiving the Freedom of the City

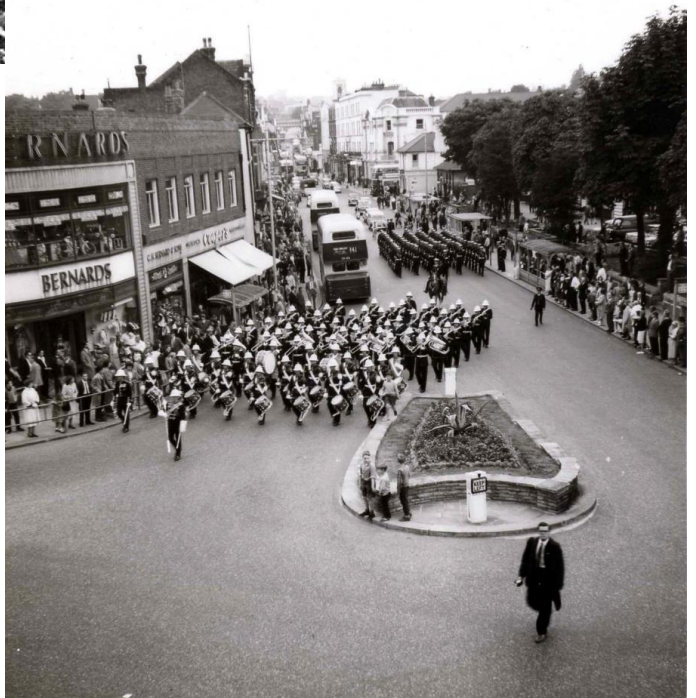


PHOTO ALBUM



The above photos, kindly donated from Australia by the granddaughter of Stoker Mickey Thornton on board during 1946



Have you a photo of the Superb?

We are endeavouring to collect as many photos or newspaper cuttings which relate to members of the crew (that does include YOU) or an image of the ship itself

The reason behind this is to help complete the history of one of the longest serving (by name) British Royal Navy ships

Contact Brian Saunders, if you can help, by email

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)

NO NOTIFICATIONS THIS MONTH



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

The Granddaughter of John George Travers known as Jack was a Stoker Mechanic thought to be serving on HMS Superb circa 1954. He lived in Gardiner Street, Gillingham about that time. Jack crossed the Bar in December, 1995. Does anyone recall him? If so Sarah, his granddaughter would love to hear from you

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) - on **Willshir** (1953 Thailand)

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

To send an email from this page

If you are using "GOOGLE CHROME" please right click with your mouse on the link above and select "open link in new tab" otherwise just left click on the link



MEMBERSHIP

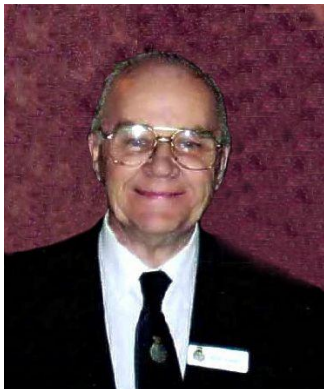
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An Application Form can be downloaded [HERE](#)



**Past Chairman
Fred Kinsey**



**Current Chairman
Rob Smith**



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2017 EDITIONS

January 2018

February, 2018

THE END

