

H.M.S. SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION

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CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION, ROBIN SMITH

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ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

Hello Shipmates, I must commence with greetings from *His Highness King Charles, of Gillingham*;

'Let it be known' he said 'that I will miss those bonny lads from Super B, my grief only mollified by the sure knowledge that we will collide once again in 2021; keep that upper lip stiff and keep taking your medicine'. Signal ends!

Question: Hands up; does anyone know what Royal Naval anniversary is upon us?

Answer: Three years ago a multi million pound dredging job at Pompey allowed Super Carrier No. 1 to 'home port' for the first time. De-bugging (exercises) have taken place a few times, S.C. No. 1 going out and in with the Pompey flotsam. Another six months will elapse before she sails with a carrier air group on board. We (the U.K.) do not possess one of those - shame on us.

P.M. Cameron had sold the last such R.N. group along with all their zero-times engines for 'scrap value'. The United States Marine Corps whooped with glee and bought the lot; they fly them to this day on their fabulous American class L.P.Ds and consider them their premier 'muck shifters'; loved by their pilots, ever eager to demonstrate their uniqueness.

I read, years ago, how *Phantom* pilots, who met *Harriers* thinking them inferior to the Airforce No.1 *Superiority* fighter, would ask for a burn-up and got a jaw-dropping lesson when the hand was dropped. *Harriers* accelerate with three tons of their thrust; *Phantoms* have four tons, hence they were left at the post. *Harriers* could not carry on and break the sound barrier but, by then, the pecking order had been established.

It goes without saying that when the U.S. Marine corps fliers take up residence on the *H.M.S. S.C No.1* next year it would be too much for the U.K. Plc if they brought their *Harriers*.

Covid continues to blight our lives and, though rules are observed, I do get aggravated by the muzzle which gets me puffing and panting; those with glaucoma will know how the drops get down into the bronchial via a duct in the corner of the eyes, a lousy side effect.

Remember the Hong Kong flu' of 1968-9? Its effect on the world was similar to Covid; it killed between one to four million people worldwide. The world population then was 3.6 billion - less than half of today's 7.8 billion; so the Covid kill-total of one million is less than the toll from H.K. flu - much less on smaller proportion of world population.

What I'm getting at is the feeling we massively over-react. Whole new bodies of bureaucrats,



several unelected quangos etc., have grown like leeches on the nation's uncomplaining back since 1968; all demand a voice, to spread doubt, fear even, to protect their fiefdoms. We have become a 'Health and Safety' country. All workers, especially those on the public purse; read 150 quids worth of **Day-Glo** apparel before convening for a 'risk assessment' meeting, in production time, of course. I think the risk is fear of finding some gainful work to be done.

I find media reports of virus fraud at £9 million per day suspect. If that's a government figure take it as read, it is wrong - on the low side. I am open-mouthed at another public purse amount awarded to three traveller louts who, knowingly, killed the young copper a couple of months ago, and all found guilty; their legal aid stands at £465,000 to 'protest their sentence'. The case is still ongoing, as is the cash aid; an obscenity to a sucker like me, a cash cow to our learned councils at the bar.

A dead duck with a following whose aim is to purchase and tow India's Harrier carrier **Vicrant**, now paid off, back to the U.K. for preservation. An idea already rejected by India for their own collection; has not a snowball's chance in hell; we know it as **H.M.S. Hermes**. The nation struggles to look after what it already has, frigate **Plymouth**, a Falklands' war veteran. Plymouth city, on the verge of creating a high end maritime museum had no desire to have it, which surprised me.

The last preservation attempt to purchase was **L.C.T. 7074**; its trust went bust! and she sank ten years ago. At a cost of £5 million the Portsmouth naval museum raised and restored it and, by now, is about to be available for public visitors.

You can read a short article about LCT 7074 -
Final Voyage of the Incredible Hulk later on Page 6 in this magazine

You may recall our late chairman Fred Kinsey was a contributor to that project and spread the word to other associations. I am pleased to record that your bit was not in vain Fred, and thanks for that!

I should be able to hear the sigh of relief from here when letting you know Whitehall (how long will that name last?), has just appointed 180 'Diversity Watchdogs' across 9 government departments; minimum salary of £70,000 per annum, 3 times that of a junior nurse. Whitehall witch-finders, who don't earn U.K. Plc a lead washer, seem wizards at the miss-application of your brass.

If 'one picture is worth a thousand words', as was famously said, I offer these two.



"Cassandra" guns crew in typical attire !

Pusser's shorts and 'Jesus' boots . . .

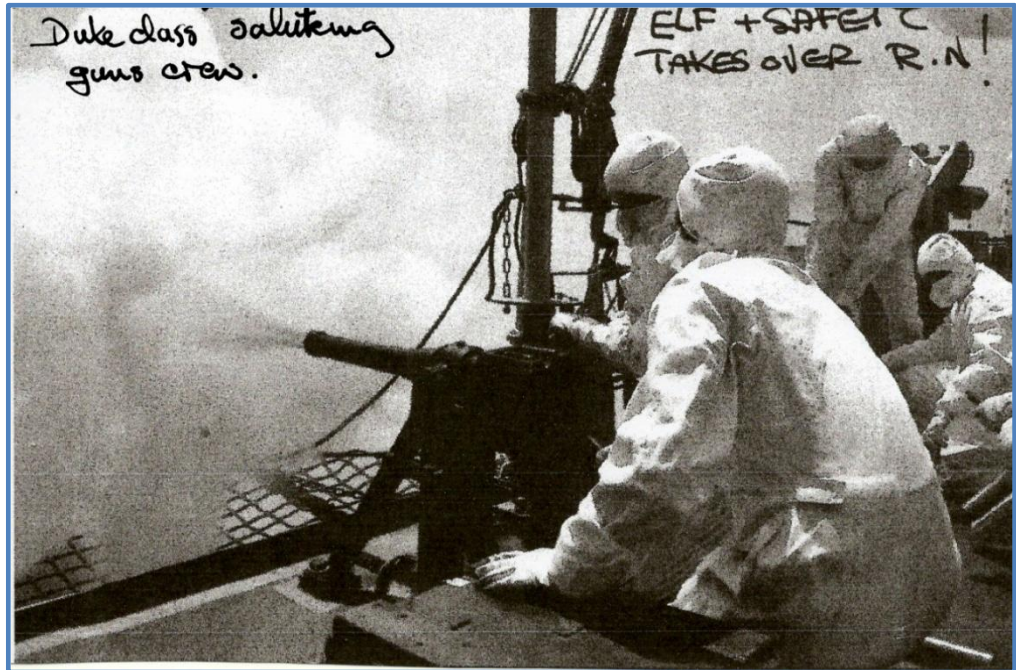
Note spent case in catcher net, still smoking as it falls
next projectile's already loaded.

Cartridge case follows - Gun crew look like a bunch of kids



First: The Royal Navy doing its thing
before the politician who dreamt up
the 'Health and Safety' monolith had
ceased wetting his nappy

Second: Another gun crew
of today's technical navy;
plastic hard hats under the
'whites' (oops, that word
again) as worn by
neurosurgeons, and gloves,
an absolute 'No-No on sprung
blocks'; a sure way to get
hooked up and trapped. It
illustrates Diversity, one
crew perhaps a lesbian, one
maybe a homosexual, one a
trans male to female, one
trans, female to male, gun
captain out of shot, possibly
the token ethnic.



All just musing shipmates, without a hint of malice of
forethought, should you surmise I'm just an ancient bigot.



FINAL VOYAGE OF INCREDIBLE HULK



LCT 7074 on Gold Beach 7 June, 1944

She evaded intense German shelling during the D-Day landings only to sink 66 years later in a dock on Merseyside.

Now, after being raised and restored, *Landfall*, the last surviving Normandy tank landing craft, is ready to make a last journey to her final home - the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

The 59-metre, 300-ton vessel, also known as *LCT 7074*, was one of 800 such boats which carried tanks and military supplies on to the French beaches as part of the Allied invasion force of 6th June, 1944. She narrowly avoided a German shell fire attack, which sank the boat next to her, to

offload her first cargo of ten tanks, then spent months ferrying tanks and troops across the Channel.

After the war she became a floating nightclub in Liverpool from the 1960s to the 1980s before being taken to Birkenhead to be repaired, only for the local restoration trust to go bust. Work halted and she sank in 2010.



LCT 7074 at Southsea

A £5million rescue operation by the Royal Navy museum saw her raised four years later and restored at the Portsmouth Naval Base.

Head of Collections Nick Hewitt said he hopes the public will be able to visit the ship from this October.

THE BARBARY SLAVE TRADERS

In the 17th century the seas around Britain were ruled by North African Muslim Slavers. They stopped British ships and carried off the crews to be sold as slaves in Algiers and Tripoli. The situation became so bad that fishermen from Devon and Cornwall wouldn't put out to sea in case they were captured by North African Slave Traders.

Between 1609 and 1616, 466 British ships were captured by Slave Traders in the English Channel, Irish Sea and North Atlantic, and the crews were sold into slavery.

In 1625 a raiding party landed at Mount's Bay in Cornwall and 60 people who had taken refuge in a local church were dragged out, loaded up and taken off to Africa to be sold as slaves.



“...to the Fleece tavern to drink and there we spent till 4 a-clock telling stories of Algiers and the manner of the life of Slaves there... those who have been slaves did make me full acquainted with their condition there. As, how they eat nothing but bread and water.... How they are beat upon the soles of the feet and bellies...” Samuel Pepys in his diary of 8 February 1661

On 12 August 1625 the Mayor of Plymouth wrote to London for military help after 27 ships had been seized by North African Muslim Slave Traders in just 10 days.

In 1645, 240 people were seized as slaves in Cornwall.

The situation only began to change after the end of the English Civil War when the Royal Navy was built up under Oliver Cromwell. By 1700, North African Slavers generally knew better than to bother the British Isles in the search for slaves because of the Royal Navy.

It was a triumph that Britain was finally able to control its own coastal waters.

It was in commemoration of this that in 1740, James Thompson wrote 'Rule Britannia'.

It is a hymn of thanksgiving rather than a proclamation of aggressive Nationalism.

Ironically, it was King Charles I attempts to raise ship money to build up the navy to deal with that and other problems that started the rocky road to the civil war .

Barbary Coast Pirates from what is now Algeria remained a serious threat to world trade and coastal populations in the Mediterranean up until France started colonising the area in the 1830's .

Pirates captured Napoleon's sister who wound up as the Ottoman Sultan's senior Wife and the U.S. sent Ships and the Marines in the early 1800's, hence the line "to the shores of Tripoli" in the U.S. Marine Hymn

It is commonly accepted that more than 15 million Africans were brutally enslaved in the 17th and 18th centuries, the majority of them captured in West Africa by Arab traders for the Muslim Empire.

This is the less-well-known history of the Europeans who were captured for the North African slave markets by Barbary pirates. It's possible that there may have been one million such "white slaves" seized from Spain, France, England and even the fledgling American colonies.

It is estimated that from around 1300 onwards at 2-4 Million Western Europeans were taken/stolen by the Moors, and sold into slavery, a small number of wealthy individuals were returned after ransoms had been paid. It wasn't just the West Country that was affected, the South Coast and the East Coast up as far as the Wash, were persistently raided.

Until around 1700 the coastal strip around the UK from Wales to the Wash was very largely unpopulated. At Walton on the Naze, the Walton Hall farm house was originally built as a massive defended and impregnable tower, in which the local population could shelter from the Moors. Also throughout the coastal areas in East Anglia all the church towers served a double purpose as they were built in part as a signalling system, where from the top of one tower the neighbouring towers can be seen, so beacons and warning flags (black) enabled the message "The Moors are coming", to be relayed rapidly!

So when activists state that it was England that invented forced transportation into slavery,



they are patently wrong; we just wrongly copied what had been done to us for century after century! A case of two wrongs not making it right !

At one time the tyrannical Sultan of Morocco constructed an imperial pleasure palace of enormous scale and grandeur, built entirely by Christian slave labour. This may explain why there are so many blue eyed people in Tunisia, Morocco and Libya.

If you get this far and are interested to learn more, read "*White Gold*" by Giles Milton.

White Gold: The Extraordinary Story of Thomas Pellow and North Africa's One Million European Slaves by Giles Milton, Hodder & Stoughton £18.99



HMS London in Zanzibar circa 1876.

Captained by Charles J Brownrigg, this vessel and her crew made several patrols aimed at hindering the slave trade and, on 3 December 1881, caught up with a slave dhow captained by Hindi bin Hattam. This dhow had around 100 slaves on board and was transporting them between Pemba and Zanzibar. Captain Brownrigg led a boarding party to release the slaves but bin Hattam's men then attacked the sailors, killing Brownrigg and some of his party before sailing away

NOZZERS GO WEST Part 16



That was good news for those on board but it was even better for news for those who had gone ashore because, with the ship on the move and the storm returning for a second fight, those ashore were stranded. Their good news was that they were to receive an extra payment whilst they were stranded, to help them with their 'survival' and, as they found sanctuary with those Rich Whites, who turned up in their droves to befriend them once their plight was known, courtesy of the local radio station, most didn't have to spend any money anyway. Those ashore, which totalled around 180, never had it so good. They had extra money to help them overcome their night of hardship, a coach to transport them across the island to the ship's new resting place the next afternoon and then it was insisted upon that they accept further extra money when they returned on board. 'Hard Layers' money to compensate them for their discomfort

Although Nassau was disappointing for most, apart from those who got a good run ashore in and were paid extra into the bargain, they were happy to throw the metaphoric doors open and allow visitors to come and visit them in their home. Open to visitors was always an extra and often tedious chore. Everything had to be scrubbed and polished prior to welcoming visitors aboard and they did it. They did it cheerfully despite spent the previous week in some discomfort battling the very bad weather. But those visitors would never have guessed what lay behind all those smiling faces: smiles that never flagged until the last of them had left the ship. But having the ship all to themselves again didn't bring an end to their misery and discomfort.



USS Newport News

Those smiles remained absent after the visitors had gone until Superb upped anchor and headed away toward Jamaica. Then the cheerfulness returned and was helped along when the journey was made on mirror-flat waters and a sighting of their old friend, **USS Newport News**, which was heading in the opposite direction.

Kingston was like an old friend and, after Nassau, was a welcome relief. They had only been there once before but somehow Ginger felt comfortable there and, after their trauma of the previous week, he felt he could relax to some degree.

This time they had come for oil and they passed their previous berth on the Kingston jetty to port about 1000, as they made their way down to the oiling jetty at the bottom of the bay. There, while the oil was being pumped aboard, they were entertained by the traders laying out



their wares on the wooden decking of the jetty and young boys of only seven or eight, diving for pennies that were thrown into the water from the upper deck.

Possibly because it was the only "real town" town they had visited Ginger loved Kingston. He hadn't ventured ashore in Nassau and although Guantanamo Bay naval base was very good, it was not a real town with real people and Bermuda dockyard was nothing too special. He had been ashore at Hamilton and although had enjoyed himself to some extent, the locals were not too friendly there.



They had all been told that Kingston was a place to treat with some suspicion and, sure enough, there was the odd skirmish with the locals in some bars and the upper deck had to be watched continually to stop everything that was not bolted down from being nicked. But despite all the warnings, Ginger got into town whenever he had the opportunity. He bought some nice souvenirs from the street traders and even bought an ornamental knife in one of the shops - which was instantly confiscated by the Buffer, the very first time he laid eyes on it.

It was their second visit to Jamaica in a matter of two months and Ginger enjoyed every minute of their four-day stay, which included an invitation to visit the rum distillery and a plantation growing sugar cane, which he was happy to accept. It also gave an opportunity to top up with more fruit and, although Christmas had come and gone, making sure there was a bottle or two stashed away this time.

Then it was time to bid farewell and move on again, this time to what they had been waiting for: the Promised Land - South America. But first they enjoyed the experience of going through the Panama Canal, which they did two days later on January 23

Despite the welcoming site of the world's two largest floating cranes *Ajax* and *Hercules*, at the canal's Atlantic entrance, it was not all plain sailing and reasons best known to the canal owner's medical boffins, they were obliged to stop and spray the entire ship throughout every compartment with some form of DDT before being allowed to proceed. This put them behind and, when there was no way around the spraying, the whole operation was accomplished in just less than twenty-five minutes, which in all probability stood as some kind of record for a ship their size.



It was Sunday but that didn't mean a leisurely

cruise to admire the scenery, although the Panama Canal really was a sight to behold, they had time to make up and ten hours later they said goodbye to the pilot who had guided them through and headed south into the heat of the tropics and King Neptune's domain.

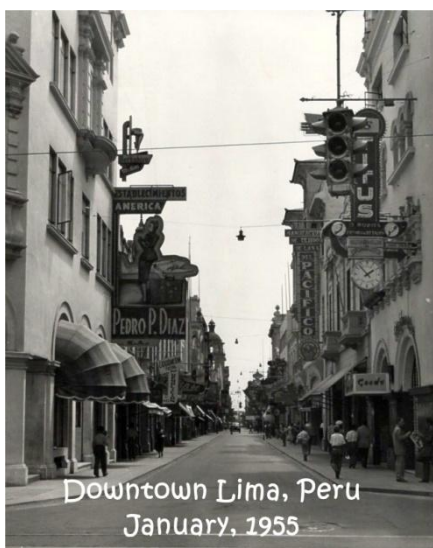
Two days later, Tuesday January 25, they officially crossed the line at 0815 and on Longitude 80 degrees, 55.2 minutes west. Crossing the line heralded a day of festivities with King Neptune and his court reading the *Articles of Crossing the Line Act*, shaving everyone with a large wooden razor and dunking them a large canvas bag-cum-pool, via a tip-back barber's chair that had been specially rigged up for the occasion. It appeared that no one was exempt, starting at the top with the Commodore, who was presented with the 'Order of All Knight Leave', to minor dignitaries who were recipients of the 'Bent Telescope Award'. It was hilarious and a first class spectacle



to watch but, maybe, not to take part in. Ginger was not alone in trying to keep out of sight but all their expertise in avoiding capture was no match for Neptune's henchmen who appeared to have extraordinary powers in sniffing out hiding boys. So good had they been at their job, perhaps with a little help, that by supertime everybody had been through the ceremony at least once. It was fun and everybody had a good day although Ginger was happy to concede that it was more fun to watch than to be the centre of attention and suffer the indignity of being half drowned in a pool that has become almost a quagmire by the time he found himself heading into its depths.

King Neptune had arrived from out of the sea the night before to proclaim his intentions for the following day. Then at the festivities end he left, just as abruptly as he had arrived, taking his Royal Court with him. He also took the good weather with him as the next day the sea temperature dropped by six degrees and soon after, visibility was reduced to just one mile. It was under those conditions that they trudged towards Peru and the seaport of Callao, where, for reason that boys were not privy to, they fired a 21-gun salute as they entered harbour.

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The Peruvians absolutely loved what they dubbed their *British Sailors* and the invitations that had been received from Nassau and Kingston faded into insignificance as invitations now poured in tenfold. In addition to the *Grippo up-Homers*, they found that their money stretched a lot further in Peru and many of them travelled the extra distance to Lima. Although they had a cheap run ashore for the first time, it was quite an art to actually spend any money because everywhere they went someone would be there volunteering to pay. Ginger and a couple of others had an afternoon out in Lima and although it would have been good to do a bit of sightseeing and maybe a little

shopping on their own, they gave in without much of a struggle and accepted the generosity and booze of a local bigwig.

The man, who couldn't speak more than a couple of words of English, looked the typical South American in appearance, which perhaps was not surprising in his own country. He wore a black suit with a white shirt and tie and his black hair was shiny. He sported a thin black pencil-type moustache. He was sitting at a table in a bar when they spotted him as they walked by.

He greeted them with a big wide smile and gestured with his arm for them to come in and join him. Still smiling, he stood up and shook hands with each of them, quite formally and invited them to be seated. At once glasses of beer were placed on the table by the barman and quickly followed by another round. The man wouldn't let them get their money out and, still smiling, rabbited on but in Peruvian. He was friendly enough, just like his country people but they couldn't understand a word he was saying. So there was for it but to nod politely and accept further beers from him. Whether he was the local gangster chief was hard to tell but he seemed to command a certain amount of respect and there were two 'heavies' always in attendance. In any case he was friendly enough and they were getting free booze.

But after a while they had to leave to make the journey back to Callao and the ship before their 1800 curfew. That looked to be a bit tricky particularly when he appeared to be telling them to stay. He put his hand on Ginger's shoulder, gesturing them to all remain seated and another round of beers appeared on the table.

They all tried to talk at once with Ginger trying to offer an explanation with the aid of sign language and pointing to the numbers on his watch. But, still smiling that smile of his, the man assured them through gestures that all was well, although by now they were beginning to wonder if all was well. A few minutes later and with the last beers downed, one of the heavies returned and the man spoke one of the very few words of English they had understood all afternoon "Taxi".

With that, the barman brought over two bottles of spirit and the man gave them to Ginger. They all breathed a sigh of relief. The man was on the level after all. Then, taking a minute to write his name and address on the back of an old business card, he gave it to them. After that and with another exaggerated round of hand shaking they bade him farewell and jumped in the taxi only to find the heavy, who hadn't said a word all the time he had been in their company, had got in the front.

That man took them all the way back to the ship and then watched them go up the gangway before returning to Lima. All the time he still hadn't said a word. Luckily he had left before Ginger reached the upper deck because it would have been embarrassing to have him see a Royal Marine gangway sentry take Ginger's bottles and throw them both over the side. They'd had a good afternoon out on the town and had plenty of free booze but they were not going to get those bottles courtesy of a turkey-necked, arrogant know-nothing corporal.



BACK IN 1956 Part 10

"SUPERB" GOES TO WAR!

"Jet" was over; each watch had spent ten days in the hills at Diyatalawa; in fact, everyone was feeling full of beans and looking forward to our flag-showing visits to Karachi, Muscat, Basra and Bombay, when for the third time we were ordered to go to Bahrein! This was on the 20th October and little did we realise, as we sailed from Trinco's beautiful harbour at noon, that this was the last time we should see it.

We arrived at Bahrein exactly a week ahead of our advertised programme, and the Suez 'war' started. At exactly 04.10 on 31st October 'Superb' sailed from Bahrein for Dubai at 27 knots - this was IT.

That afternoon at 16.20, 160 officers and men of the first Battalion. The Gloucestershire Regiment embarked, settling in with characteristic cheerfulness, and soon soldier and sailor were like life-long chums! At 21.00 on 31st October, 'Superb' sailed for a point about 40 miles from Mena-al-Ahmedi, where we were to remain at anchor for nearly 14 days, out of sight of land, and ready to put the army ashore at short notice if they were needed.

During this period great efforts were made to keep our military friends amused; deck-sports, tombola, fishing competitions and whist-drives were held, as well as cinema shows nightly. The Concert Party gave a show on the Quarterdeck on a stage which was a credit to the 'Chippies' and Boson's party.

Gradually tension in the Middle East eased, and we finally said goodbye to the Gloucesters at Sitra Jetty on 15th November-we all agreed they were a good crowd (for soldiers!) and they, in turn, said they had never enjoyed themselves so much-our food, particularly, was terrific!

'Superb' now remained at Sitra until 12th December, apart from some local sea exercises with *H.M. Ships 'Loch Fyne' and 'Loch Insh' and 'Loch Killisport'*. The air was thick with "buzzes"- were we going back to Trinco for Christmas? Would we relieve "*Newfoundland*" in the Red Sea? Were we going home via the Cape, the Panama or the Suez? In fact, we commissioned *H.M.S Jawada* as a tender under command of Lt. R. Bethell, R.N. Unfortunately this officer had to be operated upon for appendicitis and his command was taken over by Lt. D. W. Leach R.A.N.

The old 'Jawada' soon became a familiar sight tethered to our port side, and lots of people worked very hard to getting her radar, engines etc. ready for whatever task she may have been asked to perform, and she was affectionately christened the *Jabberwock*.



On December 4th thirty Army Land Rovers were embarked in *Jawada* and on December 12th, *Superb* embarked two companies of the old King's Shropshire Light Infantry, plus tactical H.Q. and sailed for that well know tourist resort 'Sir Abu Nu'air'.

On this completely deserted 'four by two' island we really enjoyed ourselves! Who has not thrilled to the films in which a small company of intrepid soldiers leap ashore from the gaping jaws of an L. C. T. Followed closely by their armoured vehicles, to blast their way through heavy fire against enormous odds!



Maybe our landings were quite like this, but they were a welcome relief from the inactivity at Bahreïn, and Jack even set up a bar on the beach!

Back to Bahreïn again, where Christmas was spent in the 'traditional way' perhaps our thoughts were thousands of miles away, but we made the best of things, had a jolly good dinner, and took the 'mickey' out of Santa (looking strangely like the Bo'sun) as he delivered his presents.

On Boxing Day, a dinghy 'Regatta' was held with no rules to follow - several people got very wet, but provided us all with a good laugh, especially the sailor who swam 100 yards to rescue a winning ticket on the Tote being run on the quarterdeck!

And now, at last, the biggest news of the commission! The Captain cleared lower deck and told us that we were to sail from the Gulf for home on January 21st - via the Cape, arriving in dear old 'Chats.' on March 4th.



We paid off *Jawada* on January 13th, back to the Qatar Petroleum Company, who, incidentally, had given her crew a wonderful time at Christmas when they visited Umm Said.

Our last few weeks at Bahreïn were spent mostly in quietly getting together the 'rabbits' we wanted to take home - everyone will admit that the shopping in Manama was pretty good - and in taking stock.

We had been in the Gulf for 13 weeks at a stretch, and during this time, to quote Vice Admiral Biggs, 'had remained in excellent heart' - could it be our presence had averted what might have been a major disaster if serious rioting had broken out in Kuwait and Bahreïn. If so, our journey really had been necessary.

STORY TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH

~ Prince Philip...

When a man opens a car door for his wife, it's either a new car or a new wife.



' I DON'T CARE HOW MAGNIFICENT YOU ARE
THE LAW SAYS SIX '



12 YEARS ON (AND UNDER)

THE WAVES - Part 3

by Wiggy Bennett

The accommodation in Derry was provided by a converted Tank Landing Ship, very basic but it was better than living on board the boat. When in harbour there is always posted a 'trot sentry', a sort of caretaker. At night he is responsible for the safety of the boat and carries out an inspection every hour, checking that no water is coming in and no fires are developing. When in Irish waters the trot sentry is issued with a Sten gun and 30 rounds of ammunition, the gangplank is removed from the boat and all hatches except the conning tower are shut and clipped, the theory being that he will repel any Irish militant boarders. If you arrived at the mouth of Loch Foyle late on a Saturday, too late to navigate the narrow river, you would secure to a buoy at Magilligan Point but the trot sentry would still be armed.

In October 1956 I left Anchorite to take an advancement course to become a Leading Telegraphist which meant 3 months in *HMS Mercury*, the home of communications in the R.N. It is (or was) just outside Petersfield in Hampshire.

February '57 saw me back home in Dolphin waiting for my next draft. The end of that month I travelled back to Scotland, the Gareloch on the Forth of Clyde, where the *Adamant* was now berthed. Two days later I joined *Trump* as a Telegraphist, no more hours spent on the bridge in wet and windy weather!



HM Submarine Trump

It was in the summer of '57 whilst on leave from the *Trump* that I met the girl who was eventually to become my wife - I doubt if at that time she had any idea what she was letting herself in for! More of the matrimonial saga later.

The *Trump* was built in 1943 and saw service in the Far East in the final months of the war. In the early 50's she was lengthened by being cut in half and a 20 foot section of pressure hull grafted in just aft of the control room. This enabled her to be given 2 more electric motors and an additional battery to enhance her



underwater capabilities. She was also streamlined to make her more "slippery" when dived.

One item that was not improved during this modernisation was the "Heads" or toilet facilities to the uninitiated. In the early submarines a bucket in the corner served as a means of relieving yourself, on **Trump** we had an up-market version. It could be likened to a bucket with lid that discharged overboard when you had done your business! As far as I can remember the procedure was as follows. Check the hull and intermediate valves shut and the 'bucket' had no compressed air in it before commencing to relieve oneself. On completion do the following: Open hull valve, charge air cylinder with air until it is 5 lbs per square inch greater than the outside sea pressure, pull lever on side to deposit your 'doings' into the 'bucket', put lever to centre position, open intermediate valve, push lever away from you. The compressed air now enters the 'bucket' and sends the contents outside the pressure hull. Bring lever to centre position, shut intermediate and hull valves and finally pull the lever towards you. If you had done anything wrong you 'GOT YOUR OWN BACK!' If the boat was dived, before commencing the emptying routine, you had to ask the Officer of the Watch for permission to do so.

I spent 16 months on Trump mainly exercising in the Atlantic and the north of Scotland but we did have 6 months in the Mediterranean, based in Malta. As the depot ship Forth was away we all had to find our own accommodation ashore. The submarine anchorage was in Msida Creek but most flats were in Sliema so it was quite common in the late afternoon to see the off duty part of the crew returning to their flats in fleets of horse drawn carriages to the sound of either "Wagon Train" or "The Deadwood Stage!" We had very little to do whilst in Malta, the occasional trip to sea to exercise with surface ships or be a target for anti-submarine aircraft.

We were sent to Cyprus for 3 weeks to be available as a target submarine, if my memory serves me right we left harbour once, the rest of the time was spent tied up alongside a Royal Fleet Auxiliary and swimming over the side! To relieve the tedium of our time in the Med we visited Naples and Leghorn, one week in each port. During our time in Naples half the crew were invited to visit the home of Gracie Fields on Capri, she wasn't there but a fine spread of food and drink was provided. On our way to and from the Med we paid the obligatory visit to Gibraltar.

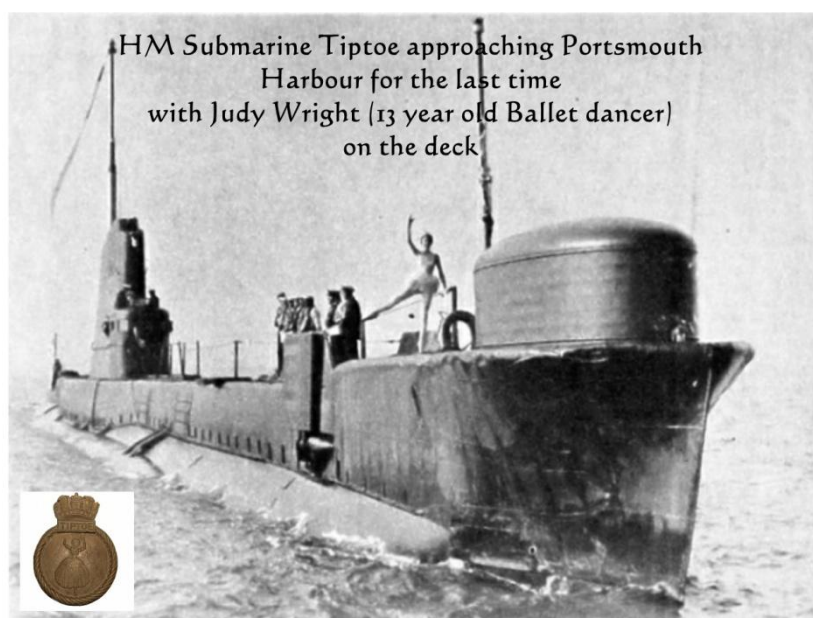
Whilst in Malta I had my 21st birthday and a bar restaurant we frequented quite often (every day when in harbour!) threw a party to celebrate, the memory of it is a little vague now but I'm sure it was a splendid affair. This birthday also meant that I now qualified for the 'tot', the once a day issue of rum. Because fresh water on submarines is a precious commodity it is rationed, especially if the period at sea is longer than three weeks, so you use it sparingly, no unnecessary washing bar teeth, face and hands! The rum ration for junior rates should be one



part rum to two parts water but because of the need to conserve water it was the tradition in boats to serve it in the mix one to one, which made it very palatable.

We left the *Med* in June 1958 and returned to Fort Blockhouse. *Trump* went into Portsmouth dockyard for a mini refit; I joined *Dolphin* for a couple of weeks before being sent to *Adamant* in the *Gareloch* as Spare Crew. The depot ship, in addition to being able to support and maintain the boats of the squadron also carries a complete crew of a submarine, known as the "spare crew".

Should a crew member of a boat about to go to sea suddenly become ill or has a compassionate reason for leave there will be a relief available. It has been known for this to happen within an hour of the boat sailing. Known as "a pier head jump" they are not liked by the spare crew.



10th September 1958 saw me once again a member of a sea-going submarine, another slippery T - *Tiptoe*. I joined her in Devonport dockyard where she was undergoing a mini refit. The duties of the Telegraphists was to man the submarine refitting group office telephone exchange, the routine was 1 day on, 3 days off. Once a month I would arrange with the person who was duty 2 days after me to do his duty, he would then do mine and this

gave me the opportunity to travel to Chatham to spend 2 days with the girl friend. My mode of transport was a 150 cc Lambretta scooter, 250 miles in 10 hours! I often would arrive so frozen that I had to be helped to get my riding gear off.

It was on *Tiptoe* that I had my first encounter with the 'cold war'. It is always nice to know what your potential enemies are up to so spying is the name of the game. The Americans and Royal Navy in the 50's and 60's always had a submarine on patrol in the Arctic keeping a watchful eye on the Russian Northern fleet. The Americans, I believe, did four patrols to one of ours as they had more boats available.

Preparing for one of these patrols involved replacing the two periscopes and radar mast with specially adapted ones with radio aerials attached. War-ready torpedoes were loaded (you did not want to be caught away from base should World War 3 start!). Divers were sent down to

check the propellers did not have any chips on them (chips would cause cavitation that would give your position away). Stores and spare parts were loaded for a duration at sea of up to 12 weeks. About a week before you sailed a team from the legal department of the Admiralty came on board and everybody had to sign the Official Secrets Act and be warned not to talk about what you got up to during the patrol for the next 30 years. Finally, just before you sailed a team of Russian speakers would embark. This usually consisted of 2 officers and 4 radio operators who had specialised in the Russian language and Morse code.

As you sailed down the Gareloch heading for the Forth of Clyde and the Atlantic Ocean beyond, the pennant numbers on the side of the fin were painted over with black paint. This was meant to fool the Russian spies who were resident in the Rhu Narrows Hotel from knowing which submarine was leaving harbour! On passing Ailsa Craig in the Clyde you dived and would remain submerged until Ailsa Craig was in sight 8 to 10 weeks later. The entire passage north was spent 'snorkelling' which was very tiring on the Planesmen who were responsible for keeping the boat on an even angle and at periscope depth if the weather was rough. If the seas were particularly rough it meant that the engines kept stopping as the seas swept over the open end of the snorkel tube thereby making the float valve shut off the supply of air to the engines. Between the time the float valve shut and the engines stopped, air was drawn from inside the boat causing a vacuum to be formed making it very painful on the ears!

So that the crew did not know where we were the normal navigational charts (which were always visible on the chart table in the control room) were replaced by plain sheets of tracing paper with points marked on them lettered A,B,C etc.

Only the Captain and Navigating Officer knew what these signified. However, it did not take long for it to be known that we had crossed the Arctic Circle, passed North Cape at the top of Norway and entered the Barents Sea, taking up a position outside the Russian naval port of Murmansk, home to the Northern Fleet. Here we would watch and listen hoping that they would go out on exercises and so be able to gather information about their procedures. As boats are able to receive radio signals underwater we would sometimes receive messages alerting us to possible movement of Russian ships and submarines. This would coincide with the officers getting into a huddle over the chart table and making strange muttering sounds! In the event of us striking it lucky we would follow them, often going further north in the Barents Sea to the island of Novaya Zemlya which seemed to be a favourite spot for them.

The air inside boats of this period would only last for approximately 48 hours before the need to come to periscope depth and charge the battery became necessary. Snorkelling meant that the air in the boat could be replenished and smoking could take place at will until the battery

reached a state of charge when it started to gas, then no smoking became the order of the day. When dived it was no smoking until the order 'one all round' was given. If the Captain was a heavy smoker you got more smokes than if he was one that did not smoke. We did have equipment onboard that could remove some of the CO2 from the atmosphere; we were also able to generate a small amount of oxygen. To help conserve the air the crew would spend as much time in their bunks as possible, reading and sleeping.

The time spent on station was normally 4 to 5 weeks but if an important exercise was taking place your time could be extended. Finally the time would come when the Navigator would be told "Head for home". We could never really relax until we turned the corner at North Cape - we were definitely on the way home then. Several highlights were looked forward to on the way home, the first being when the Officer of the Watch reported "Muckle Flugga light bears 180 degrees." For those not familiar with the Shetland Islands, Muckle Flugga is the most northerly point of the islands. From here it would take us about 2 days to reach the Clyde, weather permitting. Second highlight was when we surfaced in the Clyde and sent the one word message "Surfaced". Up until then we had maintained radio silence. Finally came the message "Wireless Room make to depot ship 'Passing Rhu Narrows'". You knew then that in about 30 minutes you would be having a hot shower and changing your clothes on the depot ship. It could also mean a period of leave.

STORY TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH

~ WH Auden...

We are here on earth to do good unto others. What the others are here for, I have no idea.

Stare at this picture carefully & you should see the man's head face a different way. It apparently means you are using the right side of your brain



A CHILD'S VIEW ON OUR COURTESY VISIT TO RIO

Some years ago John Cotter, a one-time Brazilian resident, sent emails to Shipmate Ray Lambert. Three of John's emails are published here

22nd May, 2005

Hi Ray,

I cannot express how delighted I was to come across your excellent website! In August, 1953 I was an eight year old child when HMS Superb visited Rio for the Coronation (as we thought) and we (my two sisters and I and other pupils from the Niteroi British School) attended a children's party on board. I have described this in a family history I have written. It was tremendously exciting with the officers dressed as pirates and giving us pennies, real Cadbury's chocolate and stamping our hands with red ink - I didn't wash my hand for a week after!

In 1955 she visited Rio again. I was on the beach in Icarai when I heard a loud bong and was absolutely thrilled to see her coming past the Sugarloaf firing a twenty gun salute (as my father, who was a C&W cable ship officer during the war, told me later. He also showed me her picture in *Jane's Fighting Ships* (landscape version) and told me how powerful her six-inch guns were. This time we boarded her by sea from Niteroi in a "naval barge", which added to the excitement. Also, when we left, we called at a Wave Class Auxiliary with important messages from Her Majesty (as I thought). You don't by any chance know the name of the Wave Class Auxiliary do you? I also know that my parent's friends entertained some of the officers in Icarai.

Incidentally, whilst writing my family history I discovered that my great grandfather served in HMS Superb as a signalman in the 1880's

John

I have the complete list of personnel on board for the census in 1881 - there is nobody with the surname "Cotter" and emails recently sent to John's address bounce back. (Brian)

24th March 2005

Hi Ray,

After your email I tried to look up where I had written more about Superb's visit. I didn't find anything but there is quite a lot more to tell. The first thing is that there were two visits, one in, I thought 1952, but it seems to have been 1951, and the other in 1955.



I don't really remember much more than I have told you about the 1951 visit but I do know more about the 1955 visit.

The first we heard that the *Superb* was visiting was when we (British), pupils at the Niteroi British School received an invitation to visit her, which caused tremendous excitement especially as we knew what to expect from her previous visit. As I have said, we imagined that the *Superb* had come all the way from England.

The next thing that happened was, that whilst on the local beach, I saw her coming into the Bay firing a salute as I have already described to you. Later my father showed me her picture in *Jane's Fighting ships*.

When the great day arrived the arrangements to visit her were a bit different from the previous time though. This time we were gathered by the ferry station (Frota Carioca) in Niteroi, on opposite side of Guanabara Bay from *Superb*. Presently we saw a launch approaching us and, to our great pride and joy, we saw sailors in white holding boat hooks in a shipshape (Bristol) fashion. My heart skipped a beat at this wonderful sight. They raised and lowered their hooks horizontally as they approached. We were very conscious of the people on the ferry looking at us and very proud to be British. I can still see this scene in my mind. I imagine a large white ensign in the launch's stern but I cannot be sure of this.

We boarded the launch, with help from the matlots, and crossed the Bay, somewhat in awe of our new found nautical friends. Presently we came alongside the ship, which seemed huge, and towered over us. I saw her mighty six-inch guns, which my father had shown me in *Jane's* and felt very small.

We went up a rickety gangway leading from the sea and gingerly climbed the stairs, one child after another. When we reached the deck we were greeted by the officers, some dressed as pirates. The events on board were much the same as I have described and as you probably know. There were Laurel and Hardy films in a darkened cabin also. As I have said we were stamped with red dye and I did not wash my hands for a week after!

When we left *Superb* we again boarded the launch but instead of going back to Niteroi we went off to a Wave Class RFA (I would love to know her name). When we approached her, our sailor shouted to a sailor on the RFA and he threw (I think he might have come down a gangway) a parcel to our launch (possibly a spare part?) On the way to the RFA I was imagining that we had a very important message for them from Her Majesty.



We then returned to the Frota terminal in Niteroi and watched sadly as the launch sailed away. We were very proud to be British.

The next day an English lady living just up the road from us in Icarai, a Mrs Cully, told my mother that she had invited some officers from the Superb to dinner. After dinner they had swum out to a large diving board structure built by an Englishman, which was off Icarai beach. To her disgust the boards were covered with human shit and she was most disgusted. Other members of the ship's company were entertained at the Rio Cricket Club in Icarai, which is very famous as it was here that the British formed the first football teams thus introducing the sport to Brazil. Check this out on the internet Ray as it is very interesting. Also check the Rio Yacht Club where the sport of sailing was introduced.

There was a large British community in Icarai (the British were the biggest investors in Brazil) I fact we had our school, All Saints Church, the Rio Cricket Club and the Rio Yacht Club as well as the Niteroi Rest Home for old people. In Rio we had a cathedral too where I was christened and also a British school.

John

30TH March 2005

Hi Ray

You won't believe this but I kept a diary for 1955 when I was nine (only two or three lines a day) and confirm I visited Superb on the 17th March. Here is my entry for the day.

"Went on the 'Superb' Drove an AA gun. Came back in a special launch.

Officers were dressed as pirates. Got stamped nine times".

Incidentally I got my invitation to go on the Superb on 14th March.

I am puzzled by your reference to carnival, which I cannot remember being at that time even though it was a very big thing. Carnival was for three days before Ash Wednesday or the start of Lent, if you recall Easter in 1955 was on the 10th April. My diary records Carnival as being on Sunday 20th February to Tuesday 22nd February and I am sure this is correct. It couldn't be that of a special welcoming show put on for you could it Ray?

 John

THE WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER:

Why Do They Mean So Much To The Forces?



White Cliffs Of Dover

Forces Sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn sang of bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover as she once paid homage to the iconic British landmark that became a symbol of home and of our war time defences.

But what makes the cliffs such an enduring icon of British resistance?

Dame Vera's role in cementing the cliffs into the fabric of the British psyche cannot be underestimated as, during the Second World War, her uplifting lyrics of the White Cliffs of Dover song resonated with the British people as they faced the onslaught of German bombings - giving the nation hope that, tomorrow, "There'll be bluebirds over the White cliffs of Dover tomorrow, just you wait and see."

In 2017, Dame Vera praised the British public after £1 million was raised to secure the future of the White Cliffs and protect them from erosion.

She spoke after more than 17,500 people made donations to an appeal to help the National Trust secure 700,000 square metres of land behind the cliff tops, which it has been looking after since 2012.

The Trust said it would work to restore habitats like the chalk grasslands, as well as preserving historical features and ensuring access routes are maintained for visitors.

BUT WHY ARE THE CLIFFS SUCH AN IMPORTANT SYMBOL TO THE ARMED FORCES?



The White Cliffs are hugely iconic in Britain - and for the most part, that's due to their place in military history.

They sit across the narrowest part of the Channel, facing towards continental Europe at its closest point to Britain and forming a symbolic guard against invasion.

On a clear day, the cliffs can quite easily be seen from the French coast.

And it was this landmark that greeted the thousands of Allied troops evacuated from Dunkirk by the famous 'Little Ships' of World War II.



Dunkirk beaches

The White Cliffs sit just the other side of the Channel from the beaches of Dunkirk, where Allied forces made their famous retreat

Similarly, the cliffs were the last sight of Britain for many travellers en route to the continent - and the fighter pilots who left Britain's shores as they set out to take on enemy aircraft over The Channel during the Battle of Britain.

The White Cliffs saw plenty of action in the summer of 1940, when people gathered at Shakespeare Cliff to watch Battle of Britain dogfights between German aircraft and the Royal Air Force.

The National Trust said during the campaign to save the cliffs in 2017 that the chalk cliffs, which reach up to 350 feet (110 m), are an "icon of Britain", with "the white chalk face a symbol of home and war time defence."

They also helped launch the hugely-successful career of the Forces' Sweetheart, Dame Vera, whose 1942 song about the cliffs stirred public emotions during the war, and ensured the vision of the cliffs became entwined with the war story.



In a letter to the National Trust the singer at the time of the campaign to secure the cliffs, said:

"My thanks to everyone who embraced the campaign to protect this national icon.

"The White Cliffs of Dover are a significant landmark and it is so encouraging to know that they will now be protected for future generations.

"Over many years, I have been a supporter of the National Trust and the vital work that they do in preserving our heritage and landscapes - long may this continue."

The area also still boasts a number of *Second World War* features, including several buildings and two large gun emplacements, which the Trust is planning to make watertight and accessible for visitors.

One of these, the Wanstone gun battery, was the largest ever built in the British Empire.

In the *Second World War*, it deterred invasion, supported D-Day and closed the channel to enemy shipping.

The site also includes the D2 heavy anti-aircraft battery which played an important role in the Battle of Britain and protected the early radar towers at nearby Swingate.



Swingate transmission towers

The cliff face, meanwhile, is eroding at an average rate of 1 centimetre (0.4 in) per year, making the work all the more crucial.

Large pieces sometimes fall off, so anyone who does visit is advised to remain well away from the cliff edge.

A section of the edge as large as a football pitch fell into the Channel in 2001, while another large chunk collapsed in 2012.

Dame Vera Lynn, meanwhile, had at the time celebrated turning 100 in March 20, 2017, by breaking her own record and again becoming the oldest person to release a new album.

MERCHANT NAVY DAY

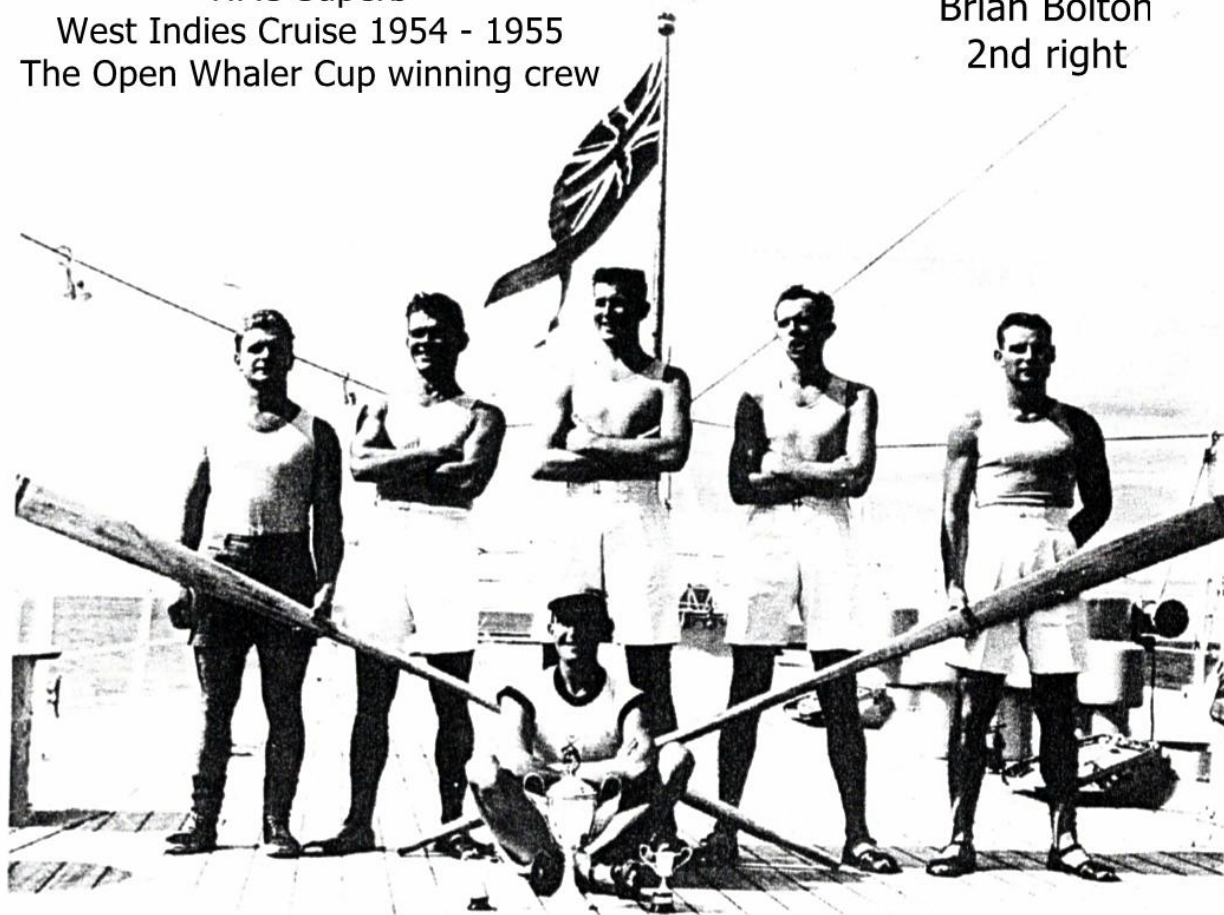


Shipmate Brian Hill (on the left) with Ken Verrall, *HMS Ganges Association's* oldest member. Ken was at *Ganges* in 1947 and was in Devonport's field gun crew twice back in the early '50s Brian laid the wreath on behalf of the *Ganges Association* to commemorate Merchant Navy Day at Plymouth Hoe on 3rd September.

PHOTO ALBUM

HMS Superb
West Indies Cruise 1954 - 1955
The Open Whaler Cup winning crew

Brian Bolton
2nd right



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)



Arline Grundy on 4 September, 2020



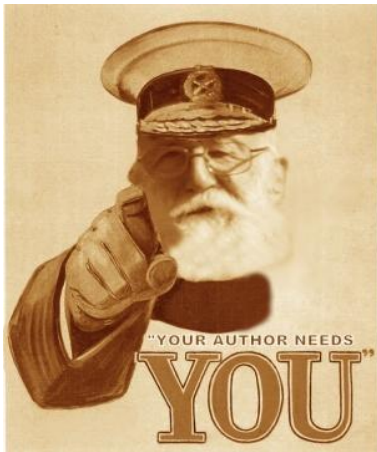


LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Whatto Brian, Magazine received. Another good job matey. But a mistake in my article "**Nozzers Go West**" (just had to be me!) Bottom of page 13 in the magazine "Alas I was one of those..... to the end" is someone else's story! **Ray Lambert**
(Sorry Ray I hope it didn't confuse too many of our readers - My mistake - somehow things got a bit mixed up in my editing. I promise to try harder and it's been carefully checked for this month ! Brian)

Hi Brian, Thank you for another magazine I do enjoy Andy's musings. It's Merchant Navy day tomorrow the 3rd (September). I shall be on the Hoe (Plymouth) at the **Merchant Navy Memorial** to lay a wreath on behalf of the HMS Ganges Association. The problem is it forecasts drizzle. Not to worry worse things happen at sea ! **Brian Hill** - (click [HERE](#) to see the photo).

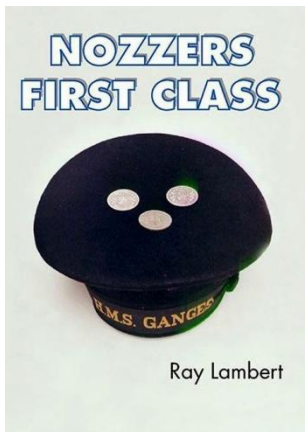
Journalist & Best Selling Author



OUR IN-HOUSE **BEST SELLING AUTHOR** IS OFFERING THE FOLLOWING BOOKS AT A SPECIAL PRICE FOR MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

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. Click **HERE** for more information & to contact Ray by email



Ray Lambert

NOZZERS GO WEST



Ray Lambert



Something for the Youngsters

Phil Grimson

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.

KINDLE DOWNLOAD £5.59

PRINTED VERSION £13.99 + P&P*

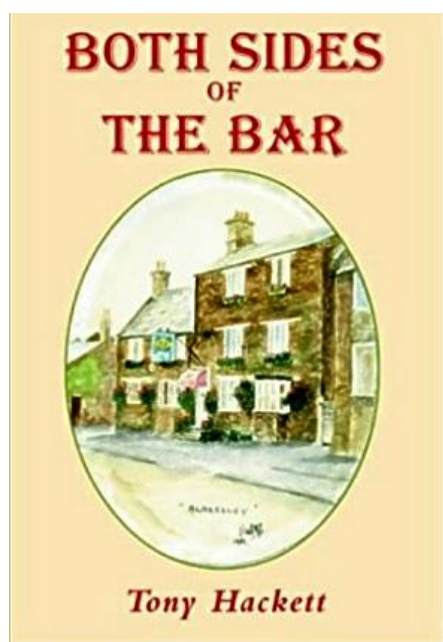
Phil can be contacted by email by clicking on this [LINK](#)

*** 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 Hackett



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

PEOPLE SEARCH 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 months

From previous issues

The son of **Jim (James) Johnstone** asks if anyone knew his father - a Royal Marine on the 1954-55 cruise

Stoker Stephen (Steve) Maddison (1946-47) and still going strong at 92 asks if anyone remembers him.

Keith (Danny) Lambert was a stoker on board the 1954-55 cruise and is looking for old oppos. Hopefully he will join the Association.

The following message received from Derek Thompson, via Facebook

Just wondered if any of you gents knew my father **Derrick Thompson (Tommo)** he was a stoker mechanic (E) 1st class on board HMS Superb in 1955/56. He passed away in 2003 aged 72. I myself was in the Andrew and served for 23 yrs. I would be grateful if anyone knew him

Neil Cooper, the son of Terry Willey, writes

"My late father appears to be mentioned in the booklet from the 52-53 tour of West Indies. He's stated as leading electricians mate. His full name was **Terry Keith Willey**. Be great to hear from anyone who knew him"

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

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

