

H.M.S. SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION

A MAGAZINE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP

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CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION, BRIAN SAUNDERS

CONTENTS

Andy's Musings

[Click Here to Go There](#)

Letters to the Editor

[Click Here to Go There](#)

A Naval Career

[Click Here to Go There](#)

Nozzers Go West

[Click Here to Go There](#)

The Admiralty Regret

[Click Here to Go There](#)

Photo Album

[Click Here to Go There](#)

Crossed the Bar

[Click Here to Go There](#)



Superb - Defending Britain Since 1710

REUNION REMINDER

THIS YEAR'S REUNION WILL BE HELD OVER THE WEEKEND OF FRIDAY 13TH AND SUNDAY 15TH MAY

DOWNLOAD A BOOKING FORM NOW – CLICK ON THE BADGE



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

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

IF YOU CANNOT MAKE THE WHOLE WEEKEND AND LIVE LOCALLY - COME FOR THE SATURDAY DINNER ONLY





ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

Good day all y'all,

It must have looked as if I was being unkind to President Macron when I last passed comment on his apparent aspirations for a leading role in a European military force with the U.S.A., not leader of N.A.T.O, but another partner nation.

I could not imagine a Germany unwilling to back Boris's proposed sanctions against Putin for his invasion of Ukraine, joining the wimps of Italy, India, etc. in standing back, fearing their own fate. President Macron would appear to know more about his own neighbour than we do. I cannot get out of my mind the fact that Frau Angela was, once upon a time, an informed member of East German administration. Her successor seems to march to the same drum; for some reason opposes financial sanctions against Putin's plans for Europe.

Newsprint today is wringing its hands over the poor footballers, on three grand a week, wondering if Abramovich will sign the wage bill next week. He - being 'Just another' in the enormous Laundromat chain, cleansing bloodstained roubles.

I guess what the military think tanks call 'force protection' comes in many guises. All those oligarchs getting several mega super yachts built are, as customers, party to a yard's forward thinking on rapid economic design and build methods that go straight across to serious building of cutting edge frigates etc.

Today's newspaper tells Boris is to revitalise our ship building industry; to get the industry rebuild ports enlivened --- AGAIN. It may be more of those O.P.V's with the 30 mm gun on the foc'sle, what a load of horse feathers we are fed.

Germany's attitude to Putin's violation of Ukraine convinces me they are certainly not the folks to run a European Military. A trawl through the remainder of Europeans is a catalogue of underfunded political disinterest who feel Uncle Sam will fix it for them if the shooting starts.

Under the present president that is a bit of whimsy. Germany was involved in the skulduggery that over threw Ukraine's previous president in 2014. I feel France alone is able to have its own foreign policy.

It is backed by what used to be called 'La Force de Frappe' (Fighting force). Maybe still is.

A nuclear deterrent air force of strength, aircraft of quality, designed, operated and built by France. Right now it operates a nuclear powered carrier, own strike group and nuclear



submarines with missile fits. Troops in her overseas territories free of civil strife and unrest. News print says right now their carrier task group has left on patrol with its own modern A.A frigates, support vessels, nuke powered hunter/killer submarine. A most creditable show of how its defence cash is spent; maybe the only one that meets Roosevelt's instruction 'to walk softly -- but carry a big stick'.

What say you Shipmates?

I can say, without fear or favour, it was a struggle to write that. I blame a new potion given by neurology consultant to hold prostate problem at bay. I swear it had destroyed every joint in my upper body - fingertips to shoulder.

To hold a pen is possible as ones hand lays on table. When I related the 'second side effect' he laughed at me; you may imagine I shared the joy with him!!!! My nipples were hard and sore, becoming prominent on my emaciated frame; I was growing breasts and ceased the pills at once. To peruse side effects as printed on the side of the pill box there is no mention was made of this. Told the *femmes* of our household, no problem at Christmas, just change 'book token' to 'M&S bra section'.

Eventually got a new full top denture for that trodden on in the op theatre at Medway Maritime Hospital. Was initially quoted £1400.00; it took a month on slops.

When I mentioned itemised bill to N.H.S. to support claim for cash back he had a magical rapid rethink as it came to £980.00. I hope the thieving bastard's mouth rots in hell on reaching my vintage.

That's it folks - as my dreary tale goes on a bit I will desist, as am very sore.



Some local Russian folk did some research and found that they could buy a cow from Moscow for 2,000 roubles, or one from Minsk for 500 roubles. Being frugal, they bought the animal from Minsk. The cow was wonderful.

It produced lots of milk all the time, and the people were amazed and very happy. They decided to acquire a bull to mate with the cow and produce more cows like it. Then they would never have to worry about the milk supply again.

They bought a bull and put it in the pasture with their beloved cow. However, whenever the bull came close to the cow, the cow would move away. No matter what approach the bull tried, the cow would move away from the bull and he could not succeed in his quest. The people were very upset and decided to ask their wise Rabbi what to do.

They told the Rabbi what was happening. They explained: "Whenever the bull approaches our cow, she moves away. If he approaches from the back, she moves forward. When he approaches her from the front, she backs off. An approach from the side and she just walks away to the other side."

The Rabbi pondered this for a while and asked, "Did you buy this cow from Minsk?" The people were amazed and dumbfounded, since they had never mentioned where they had gotten the cow from. "You are truly a wise Rabbi," they said. "How did you know we got the cow from Minsk?"

The Rabbi answered sadly, "My wife is from Minsk."

Contributed by Bill Cook

AT A PUBLIC MEETING ON SATURDAY
MARCH 20, 1956.
MAY AND OTHER EAST END
SPORTING EVENTS STOP
WHEN IS IT ALL GOING TO
STOP

ALARMED

March 20, 1956.

Editor,
Royal Gazette.

Dear Mr. Editor:

At the Tennis Stadium, I understood from proceedings in the House of Assembly, was no longer required by the Trade Development Board, or the Bermuda Lawn Tennis Association as a tourist attraction, so was to be turned over to the coloured people of Bermuda. In turn were to form a trust to operate it for the benefit of the coloured youth. But to my surprise I find it has been turned over to the "Do-Gooders" of Bermuda who with their ample net-

H.M.S. SUPERB TO VISIT GULF TROUBLE SPOTS

LONDON, March 21 (Reuter). — A British cruiser, H.M.S. Superb, will call shortly at Bahrain Persian Gulf sheikdom where there have recently been riots, an Admiralty spokesman said today.

The warship will visit the oil-rich British protectorate on her way to join the British East Indies fleet at Ceylon. She will also call in at Kuwait and Mina, other Persian Gulf ports, staying two or three days at each place.

The spokesman did not mention the Bahrain disturbances, but diplomatic quarters here regard the cruiser's visit as a form of "flag showing."

WARWICK ACADEMY

Senior Prize Lecture

TODAY

at 2.30 p.m.

His Excellency the Governor, Lt.-Gen. Sir

K.B.E., C.B., M.C., will present

5105†w.th.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Tells its forces to stop using negative phrases like 'crippled by debt' and 'blind drunk' to avoid giving offence

Ministry of Defence had insisted Inclusive Language Guide was 'practical' toolkit

Mail On Sunday raised concerns and 30-page document now being withdrawn

It is now being revised as Defence Secretary Ben Wallace is 'unhappy' with it

By GLEN OWEN AND BRENDAN CARLIN FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

PUBLISHED: 12 December 2021

The Armed Forces were issued with guidance telling service personnel not to say 'crippled by debt' or 'blind drunk' to avoid giving offence.

Despite criticism that it was '**woke nonsense**', the Ministry of Defence insisted its Inclusive Language Guide 2021 was a 'practical toolkit' to help personnel understand why 'certain words or use of language is hurtful or non-inclusive'.

But after concerns were raised by The Mail on Sunday, it emerged that Defence Secretary Ben Wallace was withdrawing the 30-page document.

MoD sources confirmed last night that the guidance - which advised that '**not all women are biologically female**' - was being revised.

A senior insider said Mr Wallace was 'unhappy' with it and it was being taken down from the MoD website. But the source insisted a new version would be published because 'criticism over the conduct and attitudes across the Armed Forces' showed it was needed.

However, Tory MP Peter Bone, who had urged Mr Wallace to put it 'in the shredder', demanded to know why the MoD had produced it in the first place.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace withdrew the Inclusive Language Guide, hours after it was declared 'woke nonsense' by critics

The guide, produced by the MoD's Diversity and Inclusion Directorate, denies being 'an attempt to police language' or 'restrict your personal style of communication' but was created to help staff 'speak more powerfully, precisely and respectfully'.

However, some recommendations caused fury, including advice to soldiers, sailors and RAF personnel to avoid '**deaf to our pleas**' in case it offended the disabled.



The section 'Woman or female' states those words 'mean different things but are often used interchangeably', adding: 'Referring to women as females is perceived by many as reducing a woman to her reproductive parts and abilities.'

'Not all women are biologically female, and the conflation of 'female' to 'woman' erases gender nonconforming people and members of the trans community.' SAS veteran James Deegan tweeted that it was 'woke nonsense'.

The MoD source said the decision to revise the document was taken 'over the past few weeks', adding: 'There is a need for a guide. But the Defence Secretary is unhappy with the current approach and with the lack of consultation and piloting before publication.'

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE: The MoD's inclusive language guide which is being revised after it faced criticism

Last night, Mr. Bone said he was 'delighted' at Mr Wallace's intervention, but slammed the guidance. The MP said: 'Everyone should be mindful of the language they use, but for the MoD to produce such a guide is utterly ridiculous.'

'Whatever they say, this is political correctness gone mad and woke nonsense, pure and simple.'

'The average person in the street or on the Clapham omnibus will simply not understand why the MoD has to waste time - and no doubt money - producing this rubbish. We don't need to tell our brilliant, brave servicemen and women what to say.'

'We should be concentrating on teaching them how to defend themselves in conflict and when they are protecting us. The best thing the Defence Secretary could do with this absurd document is put it through the shredder.'

'Careless or ill-considered language can categorise or stereotype': British council urges staff to avoid 'Brits' and 'the Queen's English' in a 'non-discrimination' guide

BY CHRIS HASTINGS ARTS CORRESPONDENT FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

Its mission is to promote the nation to the world, yet the British Council has urged its staff not to refer to 'Brits' or 'the Queen's English'.

The taxpayer-funded body, which will receive £189 million from the Foreign Office this year, has issued employees with a 'non-discriminatory' guide that states: 'Careless, uninformed or ill-considered use of language can categorise, marginalise, exclude or stereotype.'

In the document, the use of terms such as 'British English' or 'Queen's English' is deemed 'problematic as it implies that these varieties of English are more correct or of greater importance than others'.



It also advocates avoiding the term 'native English speaker' because 'it is often understood to relate to countries like the UK, the USA and Australia and to discriminate against others who are often called non-native speakers'.

The document - obtained by The Mail on Sunday under Freedom of Information legislation - advises against the use of the word '**Brits**' to describe people from the UK, 'as the term generally does not include people from Northern Ireland'.

Even '**politically correct**' is frowned on, because it 'downplays and trivialises the hurt and offence caused' in certain circumstances.

THE TAXPAYER-FUNDED BODY WILL RECEIVE £189 MILLION FROM THE FOREIGN OFFICE THIS YEAR.

Meanwhile, remarking that '**the colour scheme is insane**' or '**they had a fit**' should be off limits due to the mental health connotations.

The guide also advises readers to use the terms 'lower-income country, middle-income country or fragile and conflict-affected state' instead of 'developing country', and says it is preferable to avoid saying 'guys' when referring to a group of people because it is 'usually associated with men and can be perceived as excluding women'. Suggested alternatives include 'folks', 'team', 'friends' or even just 'everyone'.

The council has offices in more than 100 countries. According to its website, it forges 'connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language'.

Screenwriter and novelist Julian Fellowes criticised the guidance, saying: '**The British Council should be encouraging people not to take offence when no offence is intended - in other words, the exact opposite of what they are doing here.**'

A British Council spokeswoman said the guide was 'advisory' rather than 'prescriptive', adding: 'We are proud of our work promoting the UK to the rest of the world. Last year we reached more than 791 million people globally, so it is important the language we use reflects the diversity of our audience.'

She added: 'As a global organisation, we are committed to being as inclusive as possible. This guide helps our colleagues across the world to achieve that aim.'

A NAVAL CAREER PART 1 (OF 4)

By Jim Hirst

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This story were found on the BBC World War II website and Contributed by fireblade-sue subject John Malcolm ("Jim") Hirst and Contributed on: 01 January 2006

JOINING-UP

Soon the time came to 'register', which I did with a preference for the Royal Navy. Unusual though this was from middle England I think I was still influenced by future hopes of marine biology, my experience with the Norfolk fishermen and because neither had my father nor brother fared well in the Royal Artillery or RAF. I was told to report to *HMS Glendower* at Pwllheli, N. Wales, this 'ship' turned out to be a newly built Butlin's Holiday Camp. Accommodation was in chalets, each holding eight ratings. My eight had widely different backgrounds; few of us had ever been to sea but managed not to disclose that. I was unique in being the only one who had never 'done time'. It did not seem to be the occasion to flout my experience in the 'Fuzz' as a Police auxiliary, although that had taught me much of the accompanying language that would otherwise have been a mystery.

Having been kitted, marched up and down, fired a few shots with a rifle, learnt to tie the regulation knots (some behind the back to ensure they could be done in the dark), even pulled an oar in a clumsy old cutter and expressed a preference to gain the extra three (old) pence per day pay for not accepting 'grog' (the rum ration), as Ordinary Seaman Hirst P/JX 291295 T (T for temperance), I was deemed fit for sea about two months after my arrival. A week or so was spent in Chatham and Portsmouth dockyards while the crew for a new Hunt Class destroyer, *HMS Lauderdale*, was accumulated before commissioning at Vosper-Thornycroft's yard in Southampton under the command of Lt George Pound RN, son of Admiral Sir Dudley Pound.

As a very raw and unskilled ordinary seaman my duties were simple, mostly deck duties in harbour, lookout duties at sea (practice with my brother had in fact made me really expert at aircraft recognition) or watch-keeping on a variety of guns. My action station was as a 'loading number' on "A" Gun, the twin 4in. high angle/low angle mounting on the forecastle. In any sea this was a wet spot and, at high angles, fusing and loading the shells was exhausting to say nothing of trying to ensure that you were clear of the recoil as the guns fired. Close to the limit of my physical strength.

The messdeck was a quick way of meeting life in the raw but not a very comfortable home. There was no problem sleeping in harbour when hammocks were permitted but at sea in wartime these could not be slung as they would interfere with the flow of ammunition from the magazines below. The messdeck was often awash with water shipped over the bow that then gushed down through the open ammunition hoists. So when not on watch one had to grab sleep on a side locker, a bench or table; failing to brace against roll and pitch meant a wet roll on the

deck. Although rough, the life, food, company and behaviour in the fo'csle were experiences that enormously broadened later understanding.



HMS Lauderdale

Once commissioned, we departed (midst a westerly gale and air-attack off Land's End) to 'work-up' from Scapa Flow, spending much of the time acting also as escort for the, later ill-fated, battleship *Duke of York* which was similarly engaged. Becoming operational coincided with the appearance of U Boats in quantity in the western Atlantic, so we were rushed across to St. John's,

Newfoundland (to be met with the unaccustomed pipe, "The ship will not be darkened" and a snowball fight).

We soon settled down to our routine convoy escort duties. Our fuel capacity limited us to shuttling between Halifax, Nova Scotia, mid-Atlantic and St John's. Inevitably during winter we had our share of fogs and pack-ice on the Grand Banks mixed with gales. At first I admit to doubts whether the ship would break as it shuddered in the head seas or would ever manage to surmount the walls of water that seemed likely to submerge us from astern, as we dawdled with a slow convoy. Likewise, when down-below, confidence in the ship grew as the ship's thin plating withstood the flexing caused by pounding into seas or shoving ice floes aside. The conversion from Ordinary to Able Seaman had started!

We were lucky, although we did a few depth charge attacks and towed back a half-tanker or two and had our look-out duties much sharpened by reports of the pocket battleships *Gniesenau* or *Scharnhorst* in the Denmark Strait (the prospects were not good, although we were the best-armed ship to meet them!). Probably the U Boat commanders found no shortage of fatter and less hazardous targets than a new escort destroyer. *Lauderdale* was among the first to be equipped with gyroscopically controlled stabilizers to reduce rolling and give a more stable 'gun-platform'.

Usually being outside the range of the Focke-Wulf Condors it was seldom used, because we shipped much more water when it was in use. However, when passing through merchant ships assembling for convoy in the glassy calm waters of the Bedford Basin at Halifax, we caused amazement on board each as we roared past them blaring our signature tune 'A hunting we will go' and rolling wildly as the stabilizers were oscillated in hand control. The Admiralty must soon have decided that a new Hunt class ship should be in waters more likely to require the use of its considerable armament, so when due for a boiler clean we returned to Londonderry and a brief leave, (accompanied by the amazed stares of Birmingham residents as I struggled home with a kit-bag full of little but sugar, butter, tinned meats and a couple of hands of bananas slung across my shoulders). Indeed 'Jack' was, briefly, home from sea.



Our next assignment was to escort East Coast Convoys, (Rosyth to Sheerness), the southern part of this was the so-called 'E Boat Alley' but had other delights like the new acoustic mines which the diesel colliers for London power stations seemed to have a special facility for detonating, often well before they reached the mine themselves. For me, this phase did not last long either, because having been Canada-based; *Lauderdale* had not shed any quota of "CW (commissioned warrant) candidates". I was lucky enough to be among the half dozen posted to *HMS King Alfred* in Hove for officer training.

Once in Edinburgh, on our way south, we considered the circumstances and having some hours to spare before catching the night train south, we decided to seek a meal indicative of the style that we hoped was to be ours. Nobody else having any suggestion, I said that I remembered my mother saying that she had once been taken for a fine dinner at the Caledonian Hotel. Clearly the hotel staff regarded us as an incongruous group among all the gold braid and staff officers. However, appearing sober, well behaved and doing nothing illegal, we gave them no reason to eject us.

By comparison with messdeck food the menu was excellent but the real joy came when we asked for the bill and none less than the Head Waiter came to our table to announce that a resident couple (who wished to remain anonymous) were intrigued by our presence, had offered to pay our bill and "would we like liqueurs and cigars?" Of course we gladly accepted, wrote them a note of thanks and explanation and departed, collecting our seamans' caps from among the gold braid and red bands in an aroma of liqueurs and fine tobacco. We all slept well in the train compartment that night.

OFFICER TRAINING AT HMS KING ALFRED AND ELSEWHERE

The first part of the King Alfred course was somewhat incongruously spent within Lancing College from which the boys had long since been evacuated. What I remember most of that spell was doing night sentry duty among a herd of cows which made it difficult to detect the approach of patrols I was supposed to challenge. I don't think that we would have been much use against paratroops! Lancing College was a mile or two inland, but King Alfred was right on the beach.

Strangely, life at *HMS King Alfred* itself (the partially built municipal swimming baths in Hove) seemed somewhat nearer to the war than much of what had gone before. This may have been connected with the barbed wire which covered almost everything except the short length of beach from which the Navy insisted that it retain the right to swim. We were kept quite busy, but the only 'sea time' was brief spells of ship handling training within Shoreham Harbour (where we got strafed by a fighter bomber one day).

My only problem was passing the test at reading Morse code by light. The test was passed with the help of a *Lauderdale* shipmate (who aspired after the war to be an Egyptologist) and the exercise of what we regarded as an exercise of "the Nelson touch" (I much regret that I never had the chance to thank Peter Kirwan for his help in what, I do believe, has been the only



exercise of real cheating in my life). Eventually, having been more resplendently uniformed by Gieves, we had two very pleasant final weeks at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, where the newly commissioned officers (or `temporary acting gentlemen') were given the opportunity to learn how to behave in a naval wardroom (besides being instructed in other officers' duties). The basement skittle alley provided amusement and some air-raid protection.

The College and the famous "Painted Hall" provided inspiration, splendour and good food which were in stark contrast with much of bomb-damaged East London outside. We were then given our next postings; mine was, as requested, to *HMS St. Christopher* for training for Coastal Forces. Later I learnt that up to the previous week many had been posted to `mines-rendering-safe' duties, of whom many, like the army's BDS officers, had something like a ten weeks life expectancy! Having missed it, in retrospect, it is safe to say that (if surviving successfully!) I would probably have quite liked that assignment because I do enjoy trying to unravel a mechanism.

In preparation for meeting Fairmile "B" Class MLs at *HMS St. Christopher*, I had to do short courses, one in gunnery at *HMS Excellent*, Whale Island, Portsmouth. The gunners' love of drill is well known but was not equally appreciated by the "Light Craft Officers Course" who did not easily comply. Perhaps for this reason we were accommodated in seclusion (and considerable comfort) among the somewhat faded glories aboard the former *Royal Yacht Victoria and Albert*. I am afraid that I found the instruction in our light armament to be simple and painfully repetitive. It was in stark contrast to the second course among the more clever mechanisms, procedures and fiendish trickery associated with mines and torpedoes which were the responsibility of *HMS Vernon*.

Although we lived in a rather sleazy hotel on the Brighton seafront, we took our lectures on mines and torpedoes along the coast at the vacated Roedean Ladies College, an interlude that has often come in handy in after dinner conversation. At *HMS St Christopher* in Fort William I got a first taste of firing a practice torpedo, hopefully to pass beneath a target ship; how to set and release depth charges and first contact with the mysteries of underwater detection with asdic. We also had an all too brief taste of handling an ML and coastal navigation, before I was released for a day or two of leave before proceeding south to be First Lieutenant of a new 112 ft Fairmile "B" Class ML, then nearing completion at East Looe in Cornwall.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH

Don't let them take the temperature on your forehead as you enter the supermarket, its a government plot to erase your memory. I went for a bottle of milk and a loaf of bread and came home with a case of beer and 12 bottles of wine!





NOZZERS GO WEST Part 34

Everyone worked away quite happily while that radio was playing, most singing along at some stage. Ginger loved to listen to Slim Whitman records and would have cheerfully done all day long. It was all new to him and a vast improvement on the rather pompous and far too formal BBC. The radio station also broadcast a commentary on the Regatta and various sporting activities involving the ship, as they occurred. Things such as football, rugby, hockey, cricket and even water polo that seemed to be forever ongoing either inter-ship, against other ships, or challenges thrown out to local communities.

But if they thought they were for an easy time now that the frantic hustle and bustle of that sea work-up was behind them, they were soon to learn that that was not to be the case. There was still a lot to do. Fearless Freddie was not one for letting the metaphoric grass grow under his feet, there was still the Queen's Birthday Parade and that was a mere two weeks away.

Once again Ginger landed on his feet. He was not in the blue jacket guard thanks to his gangway duties and, hopefully, those 'duties' would ensure that he took no part in those celebrations; with a bit of luck it would be decreed that he would be required to stand his watch on the gangway when the big day arrived. It was a tough life but someone had to do it.

The Queen was luckier than most in that she had two birthdays each year. They had already helped her to celebrate on April 21 and now they were gearing up for the second slice of cake. Word had it that June 5 was her 'official' birthday but that date appeared to be flexible. When he joined Ganges, Ginger recalled that the Queen's official birthday was almost upon them and although he and his recruitment had no part to play, through having joined up too late to learn all the drills required, they still had to attend the actual parade as spectators. That parade, he remembered, was held on June 11. The following year he had just joined HMS Implacable but couldn't recall the parade being mentioned. Maybe it was held while he was working in the laundry in which case he wouldn't have known about it. But this one this year, for reasons known only to themselves, would be celebrated on June 9. But before that time arrived a twenty-one gun salute had to be fired on June 2, to celebrate Coronation Day. For reasons that were never made clear the guns opened up with their twenty-one loud bangs exactly at 1200 - dinner-time!

For the official birthday a week later another salute had to be fired and it dawned on someone that holding the parade in Bernard Park, Hamilton would be a bit far from the ship when it came to the twenty-one-gun salute. The sound would echo across the bay with no trouble, as Ray Leeward found to his cost with his reference to cocks and socks over the Tannoy of reveille



some time earlier, but the spectacle of the loading, the firing and the smoke - all part of the rich tapestry - would be missing for the spectators.

So it was decided that the two Bofors guns from either side of the bridge would be unshipped and transported to the park to use as saluting guns.

Ginger missed that choice titbit somehow; he never saw or heard anything about it. Those guns must have been unbolted and lifted by crane onto the back of a lorry and transported by road around to Bernard Park. He also missed the Queen's Birthday Parade a spectacle that, by all accounts, was something not to be missed with everyone involved having a whale of a time. Although there were not many people left onboard after everyone that was able had gone to Bernard Park for the celebrations, the ship was dressed overall for the occasion. The only excitement arising from that was when the fore to main dressing cable was snagged and brought down by the crane. The resultant tangle of rope and bunting was immediately descended upon by the duty watch onboard and repaired and reinstated in record time, which was just as well because it was required again the very next day when the ship was dressed overall once more, this time for the Duke of Edinburgh's birthday.

The Royal Marine Band stole the Queen's Birthday Parade show in Bernard Park as usual but the after show reports suggested that that they didn't have things all their own way and the spotlight position was contested by the Blue Jacket Royal Guard and the Queen's Colour and Escort Party. The Royals also put up a marching contingent and the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry represented the army. Several other invited odds and bods helped to swell the numbers and make the parade a day to remember for all those attending. The bofors played their part and carried off the salute to the delight of the crowd, perhaps not as loud or as majestic as the four-inch guns did it but spectacular just the same.

The following day, Saturday, lower deck was cleared for the third warrant reading in as many days. Ginger missed the actual reading by being engaged on the quarterdeck gangway but was able to gain his information by reading the entries in the ship's log during quiet periods. He reflected that there were an awful lot of warrants being issued. Quite a few were fairly low-key affairs with only those involved being required to witness the reading. He also noticed in the log that a couple of days previously two boy seamen had been released from cells since his own incursion in Montevideo and he certainly hadn't missed anyone and he didn't know who they were.

Sunday Divisions were held on the jetty the following day at 0800 but most if not everyone knew that was the lull before the storm with the anticipated harbour inspection by the C-in-C almost upon them. The arrival of the big day was heralded by the return of the Admiral and his gaggle of sidekicks the following morning and the first order of business was to drop the



bombshell that the awaited 'big day' - now it was here, would in fact encompass three days instead of the anticipated one!

The first thing on their agenda that first day was full divisions and march past on the jetty, although they had just done that the day before. Luckily Ginger was on the quarterdeck as a member of the gangway staff and missed the majority of the preparation and those divisions. He had deliberately kept out of the way as much as possible but had been roped in to help with the ship's painting during his off-duty days. It came as a bit of a blow especially during his forty-eight hours off-duty but he was soon to learn that he was not alone; most, if not all, of the off-duty seamen were 'volunteered' to work through their free time of the dog-watches when they could have been ashore.

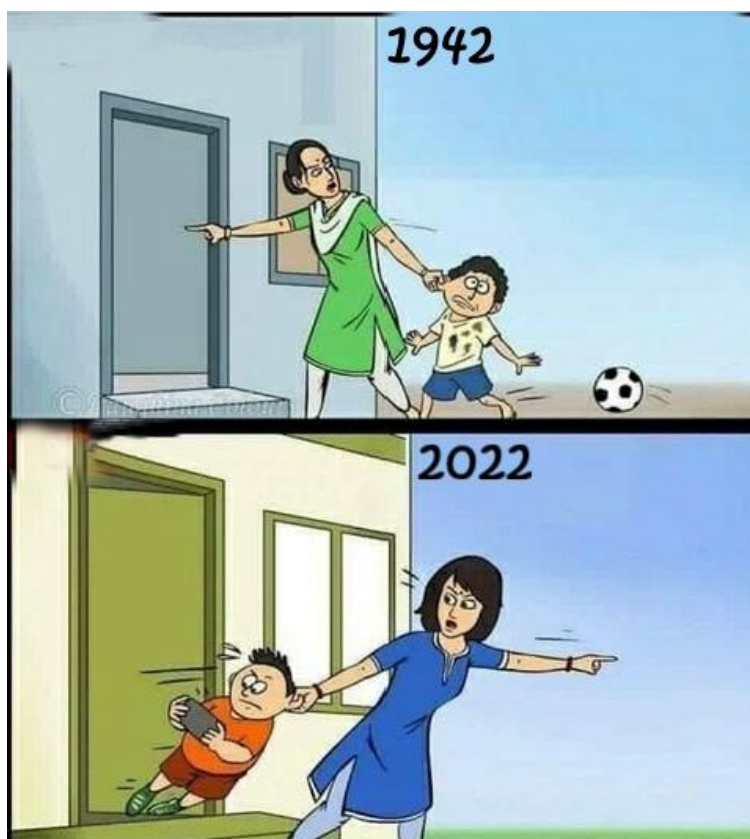
After Divisions at 0930 the Admiral started on his primary functions - his inspection. He started with an upper deck inspection at 1045 and didn't leave the ship until 1640. The next day he returned for his between decks inspection and that took him until 1600. The third day he was back again but after inspecting the after messdecks, he left the ship at 1220 to give the recreational facilities of the canteen and cinema his expert scrutiny. Although Ginger had no direct dealings with those proceedings he had all the information at his fingertips courtesy of the ship's log.

At the end of the Inspection and Evolutions the Admiral addressed the ship's company. He told the assembled multitude that they had done very well. He said that he had never seen a cleaner or more efficient ship and, as if to emphasise the point, he said that he had never inspected so thoroughly.

Ginger listened from afar. Were those comments meant to make them feel proud, he wondered. Was this something unique to naval officers? Did they all have to knock of enthusing praise and at the same time diluting that praise? His mind went back to Ganges and the time when, as new boys, they won almost everything there was to win for the division only for Cassidy, the Divisional Officer, to tell them to watch it or their long leave might be stopped, after he had finished telling them how proud he was of their achievements.

Being on the gangway, Ginger had very little to do with the entire inspection episode particularly the harbour segment, apart from a couple of times when he had been pressed-ganged into helping during what should have been his free time. For the sea trials part of the exercise he had been expected to muck in but had done very little training or preparation, he was not really accepted as part of the 'team' and although no one actually said as much, he was not wanted. Therefore his contribution to events was on the insignificant side, so he was not really interested in rousing speeches. What did grab his attention was when the Admiral declared a three-day make-and-mend for the following weekend.

HOW DID WE GET FROM THAT TO THIS?



The Gunnery Chief P.O. noticed a new Boy Seaman and screamed at him, "Get over here! What's your name lad?"

"John," the lad replied.

"Look, I don't know what kind of bleeding-heart pansy crap they're teaching sailors in training camp these days, but I don't call anyone by his first name," the chief scowled. "It breeds familiarity, and that leads to a breakdown in authority. I refer to my men by their last names only; Smith, Jones, Baker, whatever. And you are to refer to me as 'Chief Petty Officer'. Do I make myself clear?"

"Aye, Aye Chief Petty Officer!"

"Now that we've got that straight, what's your last name?"

The lad sighed. "Darling, My name is John Darling, Chief."

"Okay, John, here's what I want you to do."

THE ADMIRALTY REGRET

A true eyewitness account by Philip Munro of the loss of the cruisers "Dorsetshire" and "Cornwall" in the Indian Ocean, April 1942.

As we sat in the Petty Officer's mess onboard another cruiser, the realisation came that only four days had elapsed since those two big cruisers had made their final rendezvous. Without emotion, the radio announcer's voice droned on... and five thousand miles away, eight hundred families wondered and worried — were their husbands, sons or sweethearts safe? What had happened?

We had been steering south all day to rejoin the battle fleet, miles out in the Indian Ocean when suddenly, out of the sun, like hungry lustful hawks screaming murder and death, came dive bombers. The sky seemed full of them, peeling off from their formations; black specks, each spewing a bomb from its belly as they screeched down on us.



The vicious cracks of our four-point-seven guns were drowned by the crash of heavy bombs. The Dorsetshire shuddered and shook as her decks and sides were blasted and torn. Chattering cannon and machine gun bullets punctured her superstructure. Bomb after bomb crashed down, and they never seemed to miss! A dozen in as many seconds, thousand-pounders, tearing the 'Old Girl's' heart out. Both starboard H.A. mountings were hit, the

twin guns sticking out crazily at odd angles from twisted and blackened shields; a funnel gone, the mainmast hanging like a drunken blackened ghost; smoke and hissing steam everywhere.

"Keep the guns firing", shouted the Captain. The order was repeated down to the guns, but more than half of them were completely out of action, the remainder with sorely depleted crews. Seconds went by — they seemed like years — then more bombs came screaming down. The port after H.A. gun was hit, the foremost gun blasted. A member of the gun's crew, headless, with a shell in his arms, staggered a pace to the breech. The shell went in, the breech closed; the gun recoiled, knocking the headless body across empty shell cases.

The telephone operator rang up to the Bridge 'phone from his exchange in the bowels of the ship. The Yeoman of Signals answered it, and on saying who was speaking heard, "Sorry, Bunts, but I can't get out... my legs are gone." The ship gave a lurch and the 'phone went dead.



HMS Dorsetshire on fire

The Captain gave the order to abandon ship, the order being passed with difficulty over the noise of battle, the hiss of escaping steam, and the moans of the wounded and dying. One man shouted out, "Women and children first..." and even the badly wounded managed a smile; it somehow broke the awful tension. A man with one arm gone and the other skinned by scalding steam, fought his way along the guard-

rails, his one poor maimed hand holding a knife, cutting away life-rafts.

She was going down fast now, seemingly on her beam-ends. The water was covered with men who, regardless of splashing bullets, so deceptively harmless, shook their fists and hurled curses, as only a sailor can, at the murderous machine gunners. Then came the worst and most terrifying noise of all. The ship righted herself then eerily lurched up to stand on her stern. In the space of about thirty seconds everything in the ship moved. Her engines and boilers tore off their mountings; her turrets slid screaming from their barbets. Then, the ship that sank the "Bismarck" shuddered, and slowly slid under the waves to the accompaniment of an orchestra of tortured metal and wailing wrecked bodies. Above the sound of all the hissing steam and rending of steel came a cry, "Help me... I can't get away..."

Such a feeling of loneliness and utter helplessness then came over those of us in the water, for



we could only see one small boat and a couple of very small rafts, each already swarming with bodies. None the less, surely more than a handful had got away...

The afternoon wore on, and slowly, over our low horizon, other clusters of men appeared. We managed to get together by nightfall, but could still see no survivor's from "Cornwall". They must have been only about five miles away, but with our eyes at

sea level we had a horizon of only a few hundred yards.

Oil fuel from the sunken ship coated everything and everybody. Small pieces of cork and rubber, soaked in oil, stuck like horse collars around our necks. With the darkness came intense cold. Some were singing, others moaning; one or two went mad.

Every few minutes somebody could see a light. All were wishful thinking! Once we saw a very red light, possibly from the "Cornwall" survivors, but probably just another hallucination. Some men suffered from cramp. They would sink away and perhaps surface again after half an hour or so, floating beside us, eyes staring. It seemed that daylight would never come, but at long last the first streaks of dawn appeared over the horizon.

About an hour after dawn a small piece of ship's biscuit and a sip of water were served out to each man from the solitary boat. There appeared to be several hundred of us by then, but many of those who floated had no life, their lifebelts keeping them on the surface.

Hours passed like years until, at about noon, the first of a number of sharks, until then frightened by the heavy explosions of the previous day, came up to feed on the floating dead. Several who still had life also disappeared. The sea was so clear we could see them, seemingly just beneath our feet. But they must have been three or four fathoms under, for they just looked like harmless, big-headed sardines. Others made a fairy ring around us with their dorsal fins. They looked neither harmless nor small! Feebly we splashed and made noises to ward off the evil monsters, batting them on their noses with bits of flotsam when they got too close.

Slowly the day passed, each hour bringing its false alarms: masts sighted, ships coming, aircraft engines throbbing... and tortured bodies giving up their one remaining shred of life. We had already anticipated another night swimming around, waiting to die, when we got our final, "Look boys...there's a mast...no, two of the buggers!" Some did not even bother to turn in the direction of the report. One man, however, climbed onto a small raft, others holding him in a standing position as he excitedly shouted, "Nah, there ain't..." We held our breath. He then gave us an oily grin and yelled, "There's three of 'em!" A few more minutes passed while our informant struggled to keep his balance. He then grinned again and shouted, "A cruiser and a couple of destroyers, or summat. Hope to Christ they ain't Japs!" No, we all agreed it would be better to stay where we were than to be taken prisoner by the Japanese. But then our oily grinning commentator, more excited than ever, sang out to me, "Bunts, the cruiser... she's bobbing!"

All necks were craned as this signalman levered himself out of the water, on the shoulders of three or four others, and read slowly, "Duff pendants forty-five — the bloody old Altmark." And everyone knew which ship bore the nickname "Altmark" in our fleet.



They picked us up, and then went on a few miles to collect the survivors of the "Cornwall". It didn't take them long. With calm and cool efficiency they tended the wounded, found warm clothes, hot water, hot drinks, food, rum... in fact they looked after us as only shipmates can. There were several hundred of us on board one of the two destroyers; actually, she had many more on board than the cruiser, but we were all tended as well as if we'd been guests at the Ritz. They then transferred us at a secret base to other ships. Some of us, myself included, went aboard a cruiser bound for Mombasa.

Two days later, whilst still aboard the cruiser, we heard a BBC announcer informing the world, "The Admiralty regret to announce the loss of His Majesty's cruisers "Dorsetshire" and "Cornwall". No details are available yet. The next of kin will be informed as soon as possible."

The above short story was written about two months after the incident and was intended for publication, but suppressed at the time for security reasons. The secret base referred to was Mali in the Maldives. The cruiser that took us to Mombasa was the "Dauntless".

Upon our arrival at Mombasa, we made our way to the Navy Office in order to send loved ones news of our safety. We could only use the Ships Letter Service, which consisted of a number of set phrases, represented by numbers, which could then be transmitted by radio to England. The message always consisted of the address, the number of the phrase, and a one-word signature. This was all that was permitted. I sent one to my future wife, Nora, in Liverpool, as follows: "Nora Jones. 85, Goodison Road, Liverpool 4. Many happy returns, Philip." As her birthday was on December 4th, I figured she would work it out, as this was only April. She did!

Then it was back to our accommodation, which turned out to be a captured Vichy-French cattle boat, which stank to high heaven, and which, it was decided by the powers that be, we survivors would utilise to steam down the east coast of Africa to Durban. After a very slow, smelly but uneventful trip, we duly arrived at Durban, South Africa. There, we were accommodated in tents sited on a sports field and, after a few days, were fitted out with some Kit... suits and bedding, etc. The old battleship "Valiant" came into Durban, having been badly damaged in Haifa in the Mediterranean. She was on her way to the United States for repairs, and a lot of our crowd was sent onboard "Valiant" to replace crew members killed or wounded. I managed to escape, saying that I wanted to get back to England and the Signal School for a Signal Boatswain's Course. I was eventually given a passage on the SS "Oronsay" to Liverpool.

PHOTO ALBUM





May 1949: Crewmen of HMS Amethyst F-116
while trapped on Rose Island during the Yangtze Incident
Back row L-R: Ray, Bell, Day, Townsend, Murphy and Hutchinson.
5th row standing L-R: Fellows, Murphy, Augustyns, Cavell, Munson,
Maddocks, Winfield, Pierce (?), Parish, Bernard Grazier, Brown, Donelly,
Jones, J. McCullough and Walker.
4th row sitting L-R: Wilson, Keicher, Roberts, Saunders, Wright and Horton.
3rd row sitting L-R: D. Jones, Hawkins, Delve, P. Jones, McLean, Bryson, Kay and Mitchell
2nd row squatting L-R: Wells, Venton, Hartness, Garfitt, A. Williams, Harris and Smith.
Front row L-R: Nolan, McGlashen, Holloway, Griffiths, Freeman, Rees and Peggy.

This photo is included as a result of Shipmate Sharky Ward seeing a wreath (at a different funeral) dedicated to "Fellows O.B.E. of H.M.S. Amethyst'

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)





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Brian,

Having recently lost my two eldest children, I was hoping the only one I have left, my younger lad, would move nearer to home. As I have said before in a letter he lived in the Ukraine. Well on the early morning of 24th February he was loading his Land Rover, Freelander, with the extra fuel and food he thought he might need in the coming days. Being ex Royal Artillery he instantly recognised the sound of 'incoming' as the first rockets landed near to him in Kharkiv. A dash upstairs, grabs the wife and mother-in-law, load up and get out of town.

He headed west with the intention of getting across one of the few crossings on the River Dnipro, he made good time and crossed with ease within 8 hours at a place called Cherkasy Now the plan was get to Kiev and put said mum-in-law onto a flight to Spain, where her eldest daughter lives and works. I had received the emergency phone call and was now watching full coverage on Sky news. Hence he got the news that Kiev airport had been bombed. A quick turn left and he was headed for Lviv and Poland.

Further sky news soon put the mockers on that and he headed for the crossing near Chernivtsi and Romania, arriving on the afternoon of 25th. The queue was 4 lanes wide and 8 miles to go, not too bad thought he. The next morning he found he had travelled 100 yards that night. During that day it was about 800 yards, the next day nothing, no movement. They decided to abandon the car and walk over the border, only about 6 miles away. On arriving at the border it was total chaos. After a couple of hours they decided to go back to the car, fearing they would get separated. No bother however they had not lost their place in the queue.

It was now that he told me he had no English Insurance, Tax or MOT. A quick phone call to one of my ex Army Cadets who is a Traffic Cop, put me straight about that and cost me £456 Insurance for him, i now await homecoming date to book the MOT. Meanwhile using his Mobile, contact was made with several students and friends from that Region of Ukraine, giving him a better route to take. With it starting to snow, he set off across the Carpathian Mountains to a small village called Vytok, (don't look it up, it's that small it's not on the map). As they came out of the mountains they found they were on a single lane winding country road leading to the village.

Having been useful in getting his car documents sorted out I was employed in arranging the Visa for his wife, using an emergency phone number he had been given by the Foreign Office a



few days earlier. Dialling this number i expected the usual set of numbers to choose from, no, answered quickly and put through to the Home Office. They put me through to the Visa and family section, then the numbers came, but I wanted No 1. Answered straight away, told I could apply for them as Proxy, I gave the needed details and told it was now being dealt with. Went back to the PC on Skype to tell them, there was a message telling me it had arrived on their Mobile.

They arrived at a bridge and a small checkpoint, crossed the bridge and arrived in Hungary. The police and officials wondered how they knew this way, but were very friendly and soon they were on their way to Budapest. Once again the friends and students network began working and they are now in Budapest, resting up and preparing to head for Calais.

Just for a while I can breathe easily also sleep better, but I fear the Bank of Mum & Dad might take a bashing. **Malcolm Milham 1 March, 2022**

Hi Brian

Together with husband and my daughter, I spent a cold afternoon yesterday (6th April) at Chatham Dockyard for the scattering of Norman's ashes. it was a short scattering but the sun came out just at the right moment.

We had a conversation with Norman's sons about their dad's navy service they asked me about my dad's (Fred Kinsey's) service and travels to which I couldn't answer I was wondering if there was anyone that knew dad that had any information about him. **Sharon Goodall**



THE END