

H.M.S. SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION

A MAGAZINE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP

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Nº 6



**OUR SWORDS WE BARE
OUR SPIRITS DARE**

CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION IS ROBIN SMITH

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Superb - Defending Britain Since 1710

ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

Hello Shipmates,

'Tis May----- one hopes negotiations could be commenced in a mannerly, gentlemanly fashion, to our mutual benefit. To quote the bard; "parting could be such sweet sorrow".

Alas, our N.A.T.O. ally, Spain, made it a platform for a vicious diplomatic attack on Gibraltar, which they desire to occupy, despite residents aversion to such an event.



They violated Gib's territorial waters with a fully armed frigate. In its wake was the 'duty R.N. Guard ship', a plastic boat the size of a family cruiser on the Norfolk Broads.

It was finished in a fetching coat of Pussers light grey and 'allegedly' there was a rifle calibre fire arm in a locker down below: Sum total of the R.N. - U.K. muscle on site! Their desire to humiliate was total and absolute, brought upon us by our peers at Westminster i.e. our own fault.



To be a N.A.T.O member requires all to spend 2% of G.D.P. on its armed forces. Spain is not one of them but I would caution us not to fall out with them at sea. The core of their fleet is an aircraft carrier with 'Harrier' strike squadrons; the aircraft are known in Spain by the name 'Matador'. Their other carrier is also state of the art, as evinced by Australia's recent purchase of two copies.

In the N.A.T.O. alliance one cannot be surprised, President Trump has had a gut full. He goes to the good old U.S. tax payer to make up the short fall, despite picking up 75% of the standing bill. E.U. non-payers see no reason to 'hang their heads in shame'!!.

A couple of days following the frigate picture in the Daily Mail, another with 'Iberian flavour' equally as large, showed a Matador (genuine article, not the aircraft) impaled by the neck on the horn of a bull in a public arena of fare paying patrons baying for blood - a horrid spectacle.



One was meant to feel for the bull fighter. Visible was the bull's shoulder muscles with half a dozen barbed lances rammed in, blood flowing down his flanks; these are placed by

another gold braid-suited hero on a padded horse. The beast has no desire to maim, only munch grass and procreate. Instead he was being goaded, tortured to death by a team of brutal, medieval 'sportsmen'??

On this obscene spectacle I judge our N.A.T.O. ally Spain. Need I stress my total sympathy lays squarely with the poor bloody bull?

Spain's courage to 'strut its stuff' in the aforementioned manner is aided and abetted by M.O.D. - R.N.'s plan to cut another large chunk from '3 Brigade Royal Marines'. Our, about to be delivered, so called 'Super Carrier' was re-designed mid-build (a usual M.O.D. practise) to accommodate 900 Royal Marines.

If names, words or titles mean anything, this vessel is an 'Assault Carrier'. At once you realize, if the M.O.D. bullshits itself U.K. Inc. is beyond hope. I am not computer conversant, but much aware of their magic ability. I wager if you tap in 'America Class Assault Carrier' you will be blown away by the specs., ability, crew size and, above all, the cost of this class. The £6.2 BILLION spent on our super carriers would purchase four 'Americas' in about 5 of the 25 years taken to produce our unmanageable 'white elephants' --- No, I correct that slur on the noble elephant - 'the ROSYTH wind breaks'.

I was prompted to look up the Byng family. George Byng was an Admiral of the Fleet, 1663 - 1733 and Viscount Torrington. He took part in the capture of Gibraltar in 1704. In 1718 decisively defeated a Spanish fleet off Cape Passero, Sicily. A poignant reminder of his son, John Byng, appeared in the 'In Memoriam' column of the Telegraph on the 14th March. He also became an Admiral, without doubt aided by the influence of his famous father.

He was in charge of a small fleet to bring support to British forces in Minorca. His 500 marines were no match for the 5000 French and unable to break the siege, so failed. For this he was Court Marshalled on a spurious charge of 'Failing to do his utmost'. He fell a martyr to 'Political Persecution' in 1757 when bravery and loyalty were insufficient security for for his life and honour.

A 'political scapegoat' was required so he was publically shot by firing squad on the quarter deck of H.M.S. Monarch on March 14th 1757. If you have read *Candide* by Voltaire, the remark 'Pour Encourager Les Autres' will be familiar - he was referring to John Byng's unjust disgrace by his 'chair-borne peers' at Admiralty. 14th March is also the date H.M submarine Thunderbolt went missing off Sicily with her 39 crew. Capt. Lesley Hussey YEO D.S.M..

I had sent my reference book on the T's to shipmate Turner so am unable to verify a thought that it was the *ex. Thetis* when salvaged a few years earlier, and renamed. I bet a Google expert would know in a trice! So that boat claimed two crews in its lifetime.

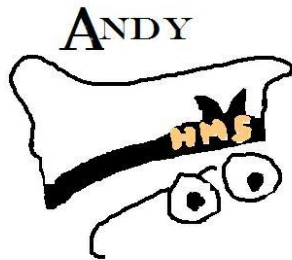


Two men, were in adjacent seats on an aircraft, one wore a dog collar and other man remarked on the fact. He was then asked, in turn, what his job was. I am a Rabbi he

answered. Following a short pause the Holy Father asked, 'Is it still a rule in your religion, that pork is strictly forbidden as a food?'. 'Yes' said the Rabbi 'a hard and fast rule'. Another short pause and Holy Father said 'Have you ever succumbed to the delicious smell, and the desire to partake of a slice?'. 'Yes' said the Rabbi 'to my eternal shame it did once happen to me' Short silence then Rabbi says to the Father 'Does your religion still practise absolute celibacy, as in the old days?' 'Yes' said the Holy Father 'it is our strictest rule, even to this day'. Silence for a while then Rabbi asks 'Did you ever succumb, falling to the temptations of the flesh and have carnal knowledge of a maiden?'. Holy Father blushes scarlet and confesses that once it did occur and he had been doing penance ever since. Long pause of thoughtful silence is broken by Rabbi who says, 'Sure beats a ham sandwich don't it?' (**typist's comment; the old ones are the best!!**).

Another selection from my rambling thought processes, I put it all down to a lack of Brussels Sprouts!!!!

Tatty bye from him,



NAVY NEWS

Paint Problems for Royal Navy's New Aircraft Carrier

"Series of Technical Issues" Behind HMS Queen Elizabeth Delays



The Royal Navy's aircraft carrier project dogged with technical issues is facing a new problem - the paint on one of the new carriers has not set properly.

It means yet more delays for the £6.2 billion programme.

Divers found that the top coat of paint has not adhered to the undercoat

on HMS Queen Elizabeth, which is currently based in Rosyth.

It comes just days after a report by the National Audit Office who warned that the project may not be ready by its 2020 deadline.

HMS Queen Elizabeth will carry the next-generation F-35 Lightning II stealth fighters. A Royal Navy spokesperson said: "There are areas of the hull of HMS Queen Elizabeth where the top-coat of paint has not adhered to the undercoat.



"We have worked with our suppliers to find out the reasons why and are putting in place a process to bring this to the right standard ahead of sea trials."



The two Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers are expected to have a lifespan of 50 years

One of Britain's top military officers has revealed a "series of technical issues" are behind delays to the launch of Britain's new aircraft carrier.

The government said yesterday it expected sea trials of HMS Queen Elizabeth in the summer, just weeks after publishing a document that said she would sail in the spring.

After Labour challenged ministers in the commons, it was raised again as the Defence Procurement Minister Harriett Baldwin faced the Commons Defence Committee.

Asked by Labour's Madeleine Moon what was behind the change in timetable she said:

"I acknowledge that the carrier is due in Portsmouth this year but what I can't give the committee is the specific days of the week."

"By the very definition of what you're going through when you're going through trials is that you're potentially in that trial process has to make some corrections to something, that's the whole point of a trial."

She said the crew was stood up ready to serve and that there were no delays through budgetary problems.

Then the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff for Military Capability, Lt. Gen. Mark Poffley, offered a more candid answer:

"There have been a series of technical issues associated with bringing the vessel to the point where she can commence her sea trials."



But he tried to reassure MP's this was not outside the tolerance they had anticipated in the programme and told them it would have been a 'fantastic achievement well beyond any other programme' if they'd not had some difficulties at this stage.

As the first ship of her kind, it is not terribly surprising that HMS Queen

Elizabeth has some teething troubles to be sorted.

What matters is whether those troubles can be fixed quickly and simply, or if they pose much bigger challenges.

It is clear now that there has been some small slippage in the programme to bring back carrier strike capability to the UK.



That capability isn't due to be in service until 2020 so right now it isn't causing too much alarm. But it is a warning light, and if HMS Queen Elizabeth has not sailed by the autumn, ministers may face some harder questions.



GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT

AMERICAN WAR

What a Brilliant Prospect does this Event hold out to every Lad of Spirit, who is inclined to try his Fortune in that highly renowned Corps,

The Royal Marines,

When every Thing that swims the seas must be a
PRIZE!

Thousands are at this moment endeavouring to get on Board Privateers, where they serve without Pay or Reward of any kind whatsoever, so certain does their Chance appear of enriching themselves by PRIZE MONEY! What an enviable Station then must the ROYAL MARINE hold, *** who with far superior Advantages to these, has the additional benefit of liberal Pay, and plenty of the best provisions with a good and well appointed Ship under him, the pride and Glory of Old England, surely every Man of Spirit must blush to remain at Home in Inactivity and Indolence, when his Country and the best of Kings needs his Assistance.

Where then can he have such a fair opportunity of Reaping Glory and Riches as in the Royal Marines, a Corps daily acquiring new Honours, and there, when once embarked in the BRITISH FLEET he finds himself in the midst of Honour and Glory, surrounded by a set of fine Fellows, Strangers to Fear, and who strike Terror through the Hearts of their Enemies wherever they go!

He has likewise the inspiring Idea to know that while he scours the Ocean to protect the Liberty of OLD ENGLAND that the Hearts and good Wishes of the whole of the BRITISH NATION, attend him; pray for his Success, and participate in his Glory. Lose no Time then, my Fine Fellows, in embracing the glorious Opportunity that awaits you: **YOU WILL RECEIVE**

SIXTEEN GUINEAS BOUNTY,

And on your Arrival at *Head Quarters*, be comfortably and genteely CLOTHED. ** And spirited Young Boys of a promising Appearance, who are Five Feet high, WILL RECEIVE TWELVE POUNDS ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE BOUNTY AND EQUAL Advantages of PROVISIONS AND CLOTHING with the Men. And those who wish only to enlist for a limited Service, shall receive a Bounty of ELEVEN GUINEAS, and Boys EIGHT. In fact, the Advantage which the ROYAL MARINE professes, are too numerous to mention here, but among the many, it may not be amiss to state ** that if he has a WIFE, or aged PARENT he can make them an Allotment of half his PAY, which will be regularly paid without any Trouble to them or whomsoever he may direct: that being well clothed and fed on Board Ship, the Remainder of his PAY and PRIZE MONEY will be clear in Reserve for the Relief of his Family or his own private PURPOSES. The Single Young Man on his return to Port, finds himself enabled to cut a Dash on Shore with his GIRL and his GLASS, that might be envied by a Nobleman. ** Take Courage then, seize the Fortune that awaits you, repair to the ROYAL MARINE RENDEZVOUS where in a FLOWING BOWL of PUNCH in Three Times Three, you shall drink

Long live the king, and Success to his Royal Marines

The Daily Allowance of a Marine when embarked is:- One pound of BEEF or PORK - Flour, Raisins, Butter, Cheese, Oatmeal, Molasses Tea, Sugar, &c, &c And a Pint of the best WINE or Half a Pint of the best RUM or BRANDY, together with a Pint of LEMONADE. They have likewise in warm Countries, a plentiful Allowance of the choicest FRUIT. And what can be more handsome than the Royal Marine's Proportion of PRIZE MONEY, when a Sergeant shares equal with the First Class of Petty Officers, such as Midshipmen, Assistance Surgeons, &c. which is Five Shares each, a Corporal with the Second Class which is three shares each; and the Private, with the Able Seaman ONE Share and a Half each.

For further Particulars, and a more full Account of the many advantages of this invaluable Corps. apply to Sergeant Fulcher, at the Eight Bells, where the Bringer of a Recruit will receive THREE GUINEAS,

S. AND I. RIDGE, PRINTERS, MARKET PLACE, NEWARK

(A royal marine recruiting poster of bygone days)

An appeal to join the Royal Marines in the war between the U.S.A. and Britain in 1812-14



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Message from Malcolm Milham

Brian,

Concerning the 1953 British Guyana Incident and the confusion as to whose photo appeared in the American newspaper, you are correct regarding the sleeve of Commodore Tosswill, he was ranked as a Commodore whilst we were on station, as the second in command of the AWI Squadron. If you can look at a copy of the Coronation Fleet Review, showing all the ships locations, you will see Superb is shown flying a Broad Pennant, for the Commodore, as the Admiral was not onboard. One of those ratings hanging onto the wire is me, but which one I cannot recognise, possibly the little one.

So the photo should state that it was Commander Tosswill and not Sir William Andrewes



NXP941-9/22 - NEW YORK. Under the white ensign of the Royal Navy aboard H.M.S. Superb, five young passengers from Newport, R.I., handle a hawser under the eyes of Vice Admiral Sir William Andrewes. The youngsters were given a free ride as guests of the ship. L-R: George Morris McDonald, 11, New York City; Joseph Strutt, 12, Newport; John W. Richmond, 10, Newport; John J. Sloona, Jr., 11, New York City; Thomas Achincloss, 14, Newport, and Admiral Andrewes. UNITED PRESS TELEPHOTO. -Teh-



Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Fleet Review June, 1953



Message from Jon Willshir

Able Seaman Bloggs of blessed memory and legend returned onboard an hour or so adrift. This mystified authority as Bloggs had recently married and was on RA, i.e. living ashore. Paraded in front of the OOD he was asked to explain himself.

He offered that he had domestic troubles which, rightly or wrongly, he gave priority to. He apologised for his misdemeanour with most expressive display of contrition that he could muster. On enquiring the nature of any problem Bloggs stated "Well sir, my wife is pregnant, see?'

"I see," said the OOD sensing that this matter would be resolved during a personal interview with the Commanding Officer. "How soon will be the happy day? How long has she been pregnant?"

"Oh. replied Bloggs. After consulting his watch he replied "About 30 minutes".

(Salvaged from the bottom of my ditty box).



SCRAN BAG (FREE ADVERTISING)

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

If you have something to say about this section or advertise an article please email Brian at hmssuperb2u@sfr.fr

Ray Lambert



Has some of his books for sale which may remind you of how it was when we had wooden ships and iron men (well almost!)



NOZZERS

The book portrays HMS Ganges' life of the early 1950s as it really was. Follow the author's footsteps through His first kit issue Their washhouse routine The swimming test The mast test It takes you through the Annexe Life to the full blown rigours of Main Establishment six weeks later - and much more. Meet the people,

good and bad, endure the daily routines - always bad.

NOZZERS FIRST CLASS

This book continues where Nozzers left off, but this time they are First Class and have adapted to Ganges and all she could throw at them - until they get out of the place for good. Re-live again Their pay rise, The heavy gun battery, Boats and boating, Taking their finals, Their only ever shore leave.

NOZZERS GOES WEST

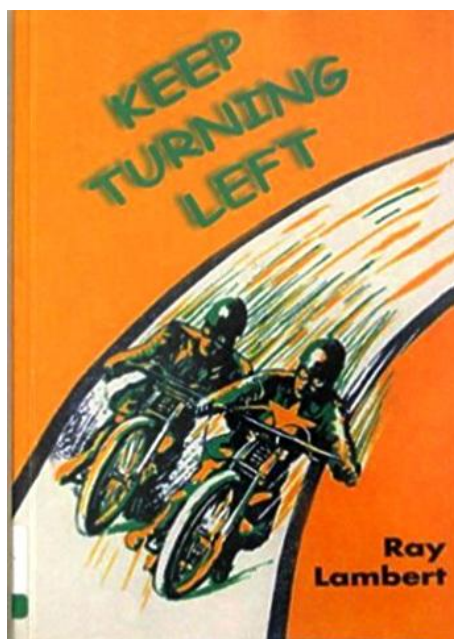
Follow the author as he joins HMS Superb at Chatham. Go with him as he begins the "Luxury Cruise" of 1954-55. Join him from Punta Arenas to Vancouver and much in between. Learn of Guantanamo Bay and the Falklands before they became headline news.

Each book costs £7.95 including UK postage. For more information contact Ray by email

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

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Ray Lambert's *Keep Turning Left* is an affectionate romp down memory lane. It's a bargain-priced must for any self-respecting speedway fans' bookshelf. The book is a compulsively readable treasure trove of facts, photographs, stories, tables, letters, quirky observations, transfer fees, poetry, wisecracks and quotes. Ray knows his speedway onions - having reported on Canterbury and Crayford speedway clubs in the 1970s - and isn't afraid to ride his hobbyhorses in some style.



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SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FIRST COMMISSION OF HMS SUPERB 1945 - 1947 - PART 2/4

(by Ted G. Davy, AB - Seaman Torpedoman)

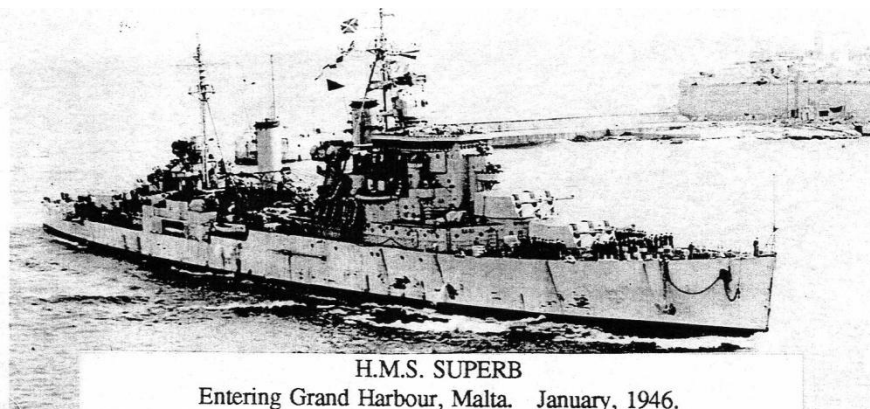
Working Up

Our first cruise was earmarked for "working up", the process intended to bring new ships up to maximum efficiency. During the war there had been little available time for such necessities, and *Superb* being among the first new post-war commissioned ships, few on board had ever experienced such exercises as were practised during this phase. It included many that were of seemingly little practical use although no doubt ideal for training purposes. Having a "cushy" job, I was little exposed to such seamanship exercises except those necessarily involving the Torpedo Officer and/or requiring an extra large number of men to carry out, e.g., weighing anchor manually.

Although *Superb* was part of the Home Fleet, she was sent to the Mediterranean to work up; perhaps this is normal? While there we were based at Malta. That was where we were headed when we left Chats in early January, 1946.

Leaving cold weather behind us was a bonus. The Bay of Biscay lived up to its reputation for rough weather, but few on board seemed to suffer its consequences. On the whole, in my two years the *Superb* took high seas better than I had previously experienced on merchant ships. I remember very few cases of sea-sickness.

For quite a few of us, seeing Gibraltar for the first time was an impressive sight. Finally we reached Malta. I am looking at a postcard photo evidently taken from the air showing us entering Grand Harbour (Valletta) the first time.



H.M.S. SUPERB
Entering Grand Harbour, Malta. January, 1946.

Malta had hosted the Navy over a long period, and the locals were ready to provide for our needs. Almost as soon as we had moored between buoys than we were surrounded by any number of local boats, "Dghajsa" selling various goods and services. Ashore were taverns, eateries and pubs offering "eggs and chips Nyvee," a popular meal with matelots, even though we ate well on board. Also, cheap but clean overnight accommodation was available in Valetta, a welcome alternative to returning to the ship after a run ashore.



The "working up" continued until half way through March when an unexpected pause was signalled. This was to the effect that we were to return to the UK forthwith. The buzz

spread like wildfire. The object of this change of plan was to serve temporarily as the "Royal Yacht." (This was pre-*Britannia* and being the newest commissioned RN warship, the *Superb* was a temporary substitute.) We were to provide a passage to Belfast for Princess Elizabeth, where she would launch the latest aircraft carrier, *HMS Eagle*. I was not on board for this occasion, being one of the lucky ones who were given leave on arrival in England.



March 1946 Princess Elizabeth inspects the Ship's Company

I think most who were on board the *Superb* might agree that she was not always a "happy ship" at this time. There were several reasons, but I think overcrowding was the main one.

Dozens of "Hostilities Only" men were "champing at the bit" to be released from the Service. There were other factors, the canteen being one. After several months, some officers were replaced, and I think one of the new ones especially was responsible for speedily identifying the

causes of some petty grievances and removing them immediately. The result of which was that morale was fairly quickly restored.

Showing the Flag in the Med

After this welcome break from training, it was back to the Mediterranean and Malta in April to finalize the working up. En route, I had a gastro-enteritis problem, perhaps due to food eaten ashore. Confined to Sick Bay for two or three days, I was impressed with this small hospital facility. On this leg, as well as training we had something to look forward to: a "show the flag" visit to Trieste and Venice.

We were due to be in Trieste in time for May 1, the International Labour Day. At that time, the Italian population of Trieste seemed to be augmented with Yugoslavians, most of the latter being supporters of the dictator Tito. Authorities were concerned with communist activities in the Balkans and the Labour Day might trigger disturbances. In the event there seems to have been few serious incidents. During the May Day parade a Royal Marine who had "borrowed" a motor cycle drove it in the opposite direction from the marchers, which rather than stir up the onlookers, seemed to amuse them.

That evening I sat in a café drinking beer with a couple of messmates listening to a local girl singing a popular Italian song when someone threw a bicycle through the window. After a pause the singer continued almost as if nothing had happened. But the anticipated serious problems that warranted the presence of two cruisers, never happened. From the surrounding hills, the *Superb* looked like a large yacht and really lived up to her name.



From Trieste we took passage to Venice, a fairly short distance. I have a vague

recollection of a couple of officers and a petty officer sailing the ship's whaler between the two ports. The *Superb* was allotted a berth by *St. Mark's Square*. Venice never fails to impress a first time visitor, and it did me, although on this occasion the smells made a negative impact. We were treated well, thanks I believe, to the American armed forces who still ruled the roost in Italy. They arranged for a number of us to spend a night in the *Hotel Excelsior* at the Venice Lido. A fellow Torpedoman and I shared a huge luxury room there for free. We had planned to swim off the Lido beach, but after spotting excrement in the water decided to sunbathe instead.



An incident the evening before we left Venice stays etched in my memory. In their dress uniforms, The Royal Marine Band (which I believe had been supplemented on this occasion) performed the "Beating the Retreat" ceremony on St. Mark's Square. Their task, well executed as always, was somewhat marred by young Italian Communists heckling and throwing tomatoes. The "Royals," seemingly unfazed by this, marched back to the

ship, changed into battle dress, and returned to the Square to give the tormentors something they would remember. (I really hope this incident is officially on record somewhere. It was certainly good for the morale of the ship's company, and the RM detachment on board were thereafter treated with increased respect.)

(Next Time: Ted has thoughts on the famous Corfu Incident, escapes an ambush near Nazareth and enjoys the delights of Loch Ewe)



HAVE YOU A STORY TO TELL ?

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

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

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



JOTTINGS OF A VERY ORDINARY SEAMAN

PART 2

(by Ray Lambert)

My time on the Superb was drawing to a close and my thoughts turned to an attempt at a non-sub rate and, through what I had seen for myself and what I had been told, torpedoes seemed the way to go.

I wasn't in the least interested in torpedoes or anything else for that matter but torpedo men seemed to have it easier than other seaman branches. They had their own mess and rarely mixed in with general duties. At sea or in harbour they would disappear into their parting shop only to emerge at meal times so, that to me was the way to go.

So after the Super B, I was packed off to Osprey, in Portland.

I was told some time previously that being on the fish was better than control so not to get the hearing test exactly correct. At the appointed time I remembered the advice and just fiddled with the buttons and, not unexpectedly, got the control test wrong - but worse, or better as it transpired, was yet to come... "follow me said the examiner", I meekly followed him, "where we going" I asked. "You'll see!" It soon became apparent that we were heading for the sick bay and a further hearing test.



I see that you're taking the Weymouth convalescence quite seriously, Lambert !

The doctor was a very nice man, an ENT specialist and far too nice to be a naval officer. His name was Peter Head and he appeared to be crippled up with polio, far too much to ever march in a straight line but a first class doctor.

Just prior to entering Osprey my ears had made their presence known big time, courtesy of the tropics over the pond so they were a raging mess which got me a berth in the sickbay, where Doc Peter had me sorted out after a couple of weeks - a couple of weeks with no duties and a trip into Weymouth every day (good old Peter).

Naturally I was no use to the torpedo profession and was packed off back to Pembroke, wondering what I should try next.



That decision was made for me with those immortal words...."Gunnery School, Monday!"



The saga of my Gunnery School exploits later - if you can stand it!



EMERGENCY REPAIRS

(By Frank Nunn)

This photo is of the Main Circulator repair team that undertook the repairs when we dry docked in San Diego after we hit the bottom coming out of Bermuda on our 'Summer Cruise' up the West Coast of America.

We knocked off the zinc sacrificial pieces fitted to the inlet of the mn. circ.. They were sucked into the circ. and really damaged the blades. I was in the repair team for the temporary repair but managed to wriggle out of the main repair when docked in San Diego.

In case some of our shipmates remember their faces I will name them:

Back row, left to right: 'Butch' Thomas ERA2; Ted Heap ERA5; 'Lucky' Mechanician; 'Bill' Baily CERA; 'Slacko' Slade ERA2.

Front row, left to right: 'Rufus' Pettifor ERA1; 'Wiggy' Bennet ERA3; 'Bryn' Dorling ERA4.

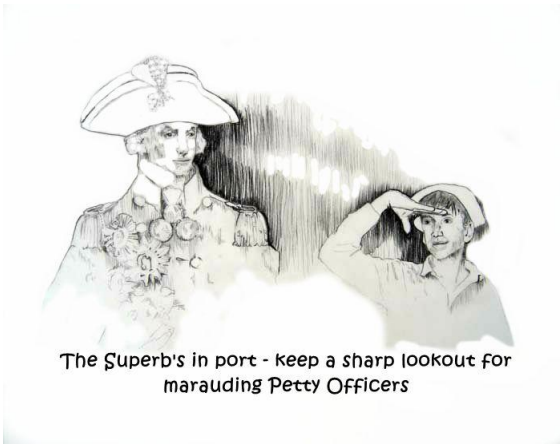
The person who sent me the photo was Ted Heap who went on to become a Lieutenant Commander in the Canadian navy and we keep in regular contact.

I hope this may bring back memories for some of our shipmates.



NEAT SEAT TO REST HIS FEET

(by Phil Grimson)



The Superb's in port - keep a sharp lookout for marauding Petty Officers

More digging around in my bits and pieces - old letters to family and friends relating to those years travelling around with the Grey Funnel Line, most of which are in a sorry state but are still legible and I came across one which refers to our visit to Antigua.

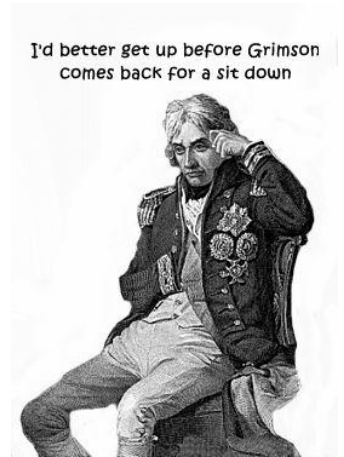
Earlier, I was speaking to a friend who married a nurse from Antigua and the island cropped up in conversation which prompted me to search around for I knew there was something that had happened there.

A trip to English Harbour, Lord Nelson's old stamping ground in the West Indies, was arranged, and a party of about twenty or so of us went across and eventually found ourselves at Nelson's quarters, which we were allowed to enter, passing through a room roped off, which contained a small armchair.

A desk-cum-table and a small wardrobe with one of His Lordship's uniforms hanging in it. There were notices posted advising that entrance to the roped off area was not permitted, but the temptation was too strong.

A young O.D and I were the last in the queue and when the rest of the party had carried on through to the rest of the building I slipped under the rope AND SAT IN NELSON'S LITTLE CHAIR - for a few seconds only while my companion kept an eye out for me, and as soon as I had vacated the chair he took my place.

We then carried on and caught up with the others who hadn't seemed to miss us. I didn't know my companion- in-crime's name and never found out but he was as excited as me.



I'd better get up before Grimson comes back for a sit down

I don't know what the penalty would have been if we had been seen, but at this late date we can hardly be keel-hauled for our infraction of the rules, and I remember that feeling I got when sitting in that little chair to this day.



A SAD LOOKING HMS BRONNINGTON

(By Brian Saunders)

Recently I came across this photo on the internet

The ex Royal Navy Minesweeper once captained by HRH Prince Charles, now lies sinking in Birkenhead and is a sad end to a home for so many men over the years.



HMS *Bronnington* was a Ton-class minesweeper of the Royal Navy, launched on 19 March 1953. This mahogany-hulled minesweeper was one of the last of the "wooden walls" (wooden-hulled naval vessels).

After being decommissioned from service, the ship was purchased in January 1989 by the Bronnington Trust, a registered charity, whose patron Charles, Prince of Wales, commanded this vessel in 1976.

For some time, the ship was berthed in the Manchester Ship Canal. In 2002, she became part of the collection of the Warship Preservation Trust and moored at Birkenhead, Merseyside, England.

Since the closure of the Warship Preservation Trust, she remained in storage, formerly alongside the *Rothsay*-class frigate HMS *Plymouth*, at Victoria Dock, Birkenhead, and latterly in the West Float of Birkenhead Docks.

On 17 March 2016, she sank at her moorings. The decision was taken to scrap HMS Bronnington due to her condition.





USS Salem on view in Quincy, Massachusetts

Ordered by the US Navy on 14 June, 1943, USS *Salem* (CA 139) was laid down on 4 July, 1945 at the Bethlehem Steel Company's Quincy Yard in Quincy, MA and launched on 25 March, 1947. She was commissioned at the Boston Navy Yard on 14 May, 1949.

USS *Salem* served a distinguished 10 year career as flagship of the US Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and the Second Fleet in the Atlantic. During her career she served as host to such notables as the US Ambassador to Spain, John D. Lodge; the Honourable Thomas S. Gates, Undersecretary of the Navy; Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; the Shah of Iran; the President of Lebanon and the King and Queen of Greece.

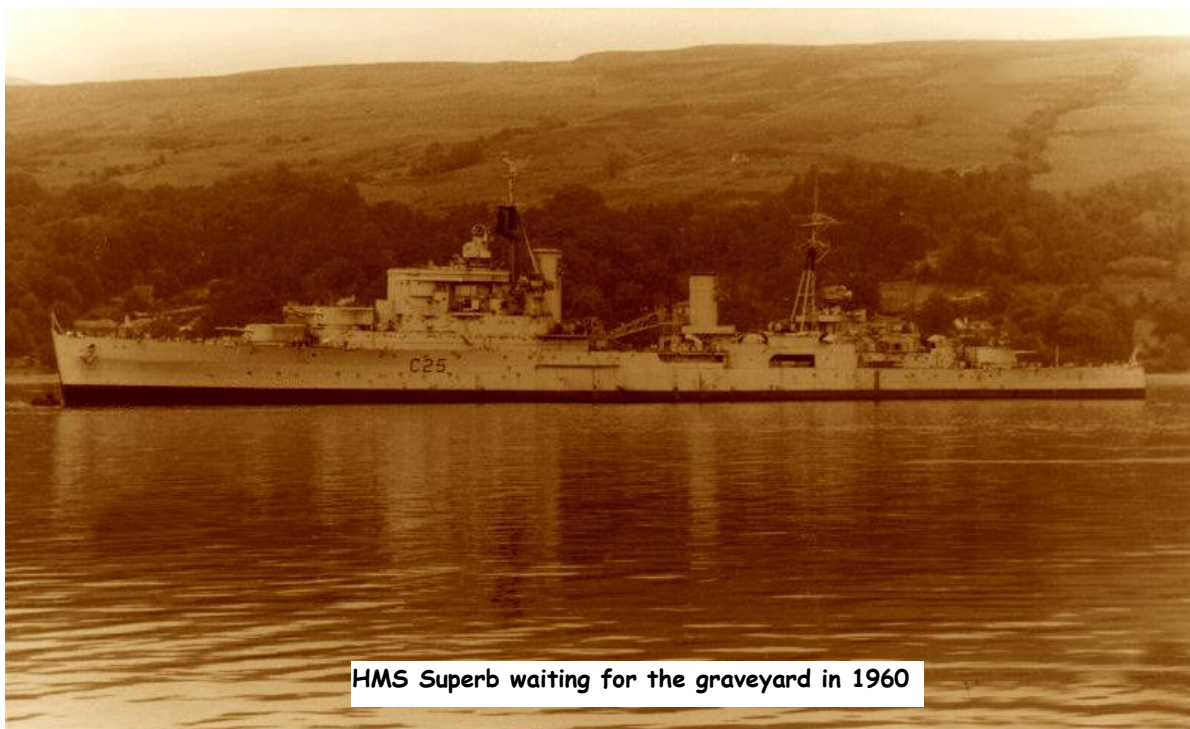
Although *Salem*, like the *Superb*, never fired her mighty guns in anger, her very presence served as a stimulus for peace during those troubled times that came to be called the Cold War. She served as a Lady of Diplomacy, rather than as a means of exerting brute force.

Imagine a small city placed in "mothballs", stored for 35 years, and then reopened and restored to its former glory. When USS *Salem* was decommissioned on 30 January, 1959 and joined the Atlantic Reserve Fleet at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, Dwight D. Eisenhower was president of the United States and everyone was watching *I Love Lucy* on their new television.

She is now attracting visitors in the former Fore River Shipyard, Quincy, Massachusetts.



The *Superb*'s keel was laid by Swan Hunter & Wigham Richardson, of Wallsend, Tyne and Wear on 23 June 1942. The ship was launched on 31 August 1943 and commissioned on 16 November 1945.



HMS Superb waiting for the graveyard in 1960

Superb was involved in the Corfu Channel Incident in 1946, but otherwise had an unremarkable career. In 1953 she took part in the Fleet Review to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

During her career the *Superb* also attracted notables such as H.R.H. Queen Elizabeth II as princess & monarch & President Tupman of Liberia.

The cruiser spent some time as the flagship of Rear Admiral Sir Herbert Packer, was refitted in 1955-6 and decommissioned 18 months later in December 1957. She was approved for disposal 2 years later and arrived at the Dalmuir yards of Arnott Young on 8 August 1960 to be scrapped.

Although *Superb* was the latest of the line of 6-inch gun cruisers to be completed, (the 1943 *Minotaur* class followed directly from the 1938 Colony and 1936 Town classes), she was also one of the first of this type to be broken up.

Unlike the *Salem* plans for her modernisation were abandoned after the 1957 defence review. No more cruiser modernisations were approved, with new guided missile ships to take precedence. Pre-war ships lasted longer, showing the difference between peacetime and wartime building standards.



So *USS Salem* and *HMS Superb* had very similar careers and life spans over the same time and we in Britain had Harold MacMillan as Prime Minister and were tuning in to steam radio for Jon Pertwee and Leslie Philips on *HMS Troutbridge* in *The Navy Lark*.



Prince Charles taking the final salute on leaving HMS Bronnington



DIVER RISKS HIS LIFE IN BERMUDA

(By an unknown correspondent)

Bermuda 20 April to 15 June 1951

Captain Yendell, in command of *HMS Superb* up until now, was relieved by Captain E W J Bankes shortly after the Ship's return to Bermuda.

Whilst in Bermuda an employee of the Admiralty Fuelling Installation sank our oil barge. The



barge was 60 feet long and held 300 tons of fuel. Whilst filling it, he allowed too much fuel to be pumped into one side of the barge so that the deck became awash, water entered a hatch on the deck, the barge sank, and fuel oil escaped. A boom was put across Clarence Cove to protect one of the beaches.

The three divers carried on the *Superb*, aided by other seamen, put in many long and sometimes dangerous hours refloating the barge. It was a difficult job, made more difficult by the limited equipment available, and the need to improvise.



All vents and hatches had to be sealed and an air line attached using a Cox's gun. With air being pumped in, the fuel/water mixture was pumped out through a special adapter

made on board. After blowing and pumping for many hours the barge suddenly, and without warning, lifted to the surface hitting and nearly sinking the dive boat.



One of the divers, Bernie Robinson was on the bottom at that moment, checking for signs of movement, and was fortunate not to lose his life.



The oil ruined everything it touched - all of the diver's working gear. All helmets had to be stripped down, springs replaced and suits and boots renewed. But, perhaps worst of all, the Diving Store Parakeet died of oil fuel poisoning after getting soaked in oil. The divers cleaned it up, but the oil affected its brain. It seemed to go mad, attacked all on sight and then collapsed and died (but maybe it was helped towards the end when it was in severe distress).

The pictures shows the barge being recovered and the three divers, P.O.

'Nutty' Carr with the Parakeet on his wrist in the centre, Jack Sayers on the left and Bernie Robinson on the right.

(Jack is still a member of the Association)



A SUPERB LITTLE PHOTO

(by Brian Saunders)

I re-coloured this from a black & white photograph taken by Charles W. Blackburne sometime between 1897 - 1912 in Christiansted, St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands of children wearing sailor's hats from *HMS Superb*.

Although sailors from the *Superb* (and from other ships as well) are reputed to get around it's a puzzle how the gold wired lettered cap tallies were available here on this West Indian Island.



There wasn't a British ship *Superb* for the most part of the years above; the previous ship was broken up in 1869 and the next in line wasn't commissioned until May, 1909.

Between 1849 and 1852 the *Superb* was in Home waters and the Mediterranean.

In 1806 the ship was in the West Indies but that was before cap tallies were introduced.

At the time of writing there is no information on the ship's movements between 1909 and 1922 when she was broken up.

Ratings were wearing cap tallies in the 1840s as part of their uniform. This was during the period in the 19th century when the uniforms for ratings as we know them now were

being formalised.

Cap tallies were first formalised in the *Uniform Regulations for Petty Officers, Seamen and Boys* published 1857. Hat ribbons bearing the name of the ship were recognised as part of the uniform.



The regulations did not state specifically how the cap tally would be marked but it had been customary for sailors to print the names of their ship in large capitals. In February 1858 gilt wire lettering was officially introduced and it was adopted first by the Commanding Officer of HMS *Waterwitch* Commander P.R. Sharpe. He had purchased some tallies from Thomas Stevens in Coventry and issued them to the ship's company at one shilling each.

In the same year ribbons with letters woven in silk were submitted for issue as an article of seaman's clothing but the gilt wire woven ribbons issued to *Waterwitch* were adopted as official uniform issue.

Stationary and ironclad ship's companies were the first to be formally issued cap tallies. At first the regulations did not state how the cap tally was to be tied, although there were illustrations in the Uniform Regulations published 1879 that show ribbons tied at the back of the cap with long ends hanging down.

Between 1893 and 1911 cap tallies were tied in a bow over the left ear. From 1911 they were tied with the ends of the bow equal and not more than two inches (5cm) long.

With the outbreak of war in 1914, the Admiralty issued orders that cap tallies were not to be worn ashore as a security measure. In 1915 orders were issued that ship's companies when ashore should wear the cap tally of their depot. In the Second World War, Royal Navy cap tallies were only issued with H.M.S. or H.M. Destroyer/Minesweepers. The Royal Canadian Navy ordered that only H.M.C.S. were to be worn their cap tallies in May 1942. The same practice was followed using H.M.A.S. for the Australian Navy and H.M.N.Z.S. for the Royal New Zealand Navy.

Cap tallies were reissued with ship's names after the end of the war and to date this remains standard practice in the Royal Navy, RAN, and RNZN and other navies.

Subsequently British sailors tie their bows on the left hand side whilst the Germans and Russians tie theirs at the back leaving a pair of streamers. The French stitch their tallies on the cap like an ordinary hat band.

It can be seen in the above photograph that the cap tallies are obviously British and apparently with gold wire lettering, but they are tied either in the German or Russian way or in the fashion prior to 1879.

The style of the cap is very similar to that worn by ratings around 1882 as can be seen from the below photograph of the Gatling-gun crew and shore party in HMS *Superb* at Tel-el-Kebir, in 1882. The sailors are armed with Martini-Henry rifles and cutlass bayonets

So it is just possible given the dates and that the condition of the cap tallies seems good that the photo of these two young lads was taken between 1909 and 1912



PHOTO ALBUM



Photo sent in by Vic Owen who was a National Serviceman EM and served on the ship from Aug or Sept 1949 till after the Spring cruise of 1950 prior to finishing his time in Aug '50. The photo is of Vic (extreme right) with some members of the EM mess. Gwilliam was another National Serviceman the other two were long servicemen.



Photo supplied by Phil Grimson of HMS Superb docked at Pier 92 New York in September 1953

Have you a photo of the Superb?

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

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

Contact Brian Saunders, if you can help, by email



CROSSED THE BAR

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

To go there please click [HERE](#).

Crossed the Bar (Recently Notified)

NO NOTIFICATIONS THIS MONTH





PEOPLE SEARCHING FOR PEOPLE

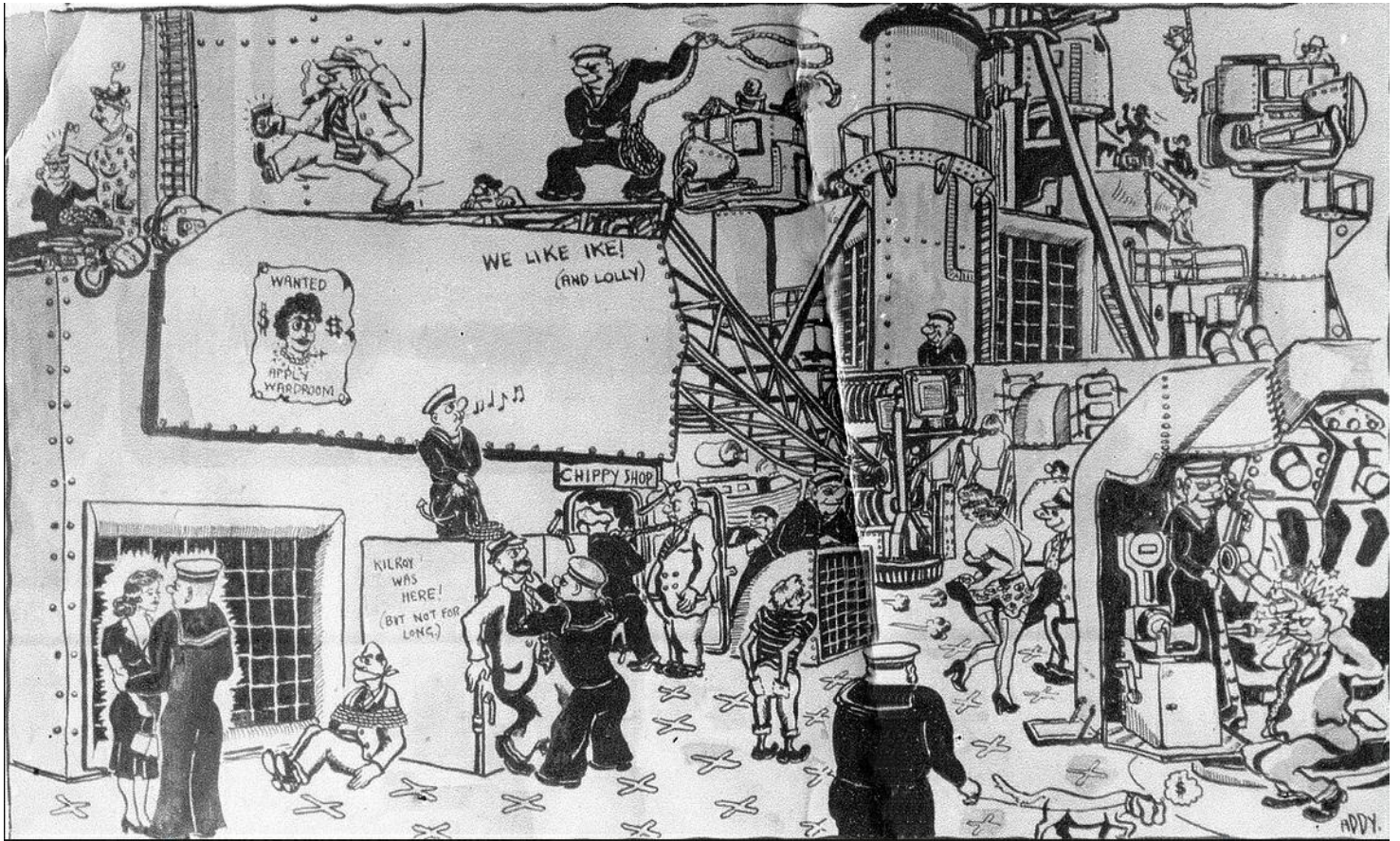
If you can assist with any of these appeals please contact Brian Saunders in the first instance. No details will be passed on to third parties without express permission. These appeals will be left in the magazine for a few

No Requests this month

From previous issues

- ◇ **Derek Baldry** (Killick Sparker) wonders does anyone know **Ginger Dunne** or know of his whereabouts.
- ◇ From the daughter of a friend of Tony Facer who was probably on the 1956-57 Cruise. She'd like to trace Tony as he is a long lost friend of her father who was a serving soldier.
- ◇ 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)
- ◇ The granddaughter of **John Eccleston** a Stoker is hoping to find some information about John. He was on board in the mid to late 1950s probably around 1955 to 1957. He also served on the *Whitby & Cumberland*. Any info would be gratefully received. John is approaching his 80th birthday and she wonders if anyone knows him as she's planning a surprise party. **One Friend Found thanks to the magazine** 
- ◇ Shipmate **Larry Boudier** who was in the **CHATHAM FIELD GUN'S CREW** in 1955 would like to know if anyone remembers him and wonders if anyone knows of others in that crew. (I believe that Shipmate **Andy Brierley** was in the same crew - Editor)
- ◇ Eleanor Ingalls Fochesato from New Jersey, USA would like to contact **John Stevens**, from the 1953 cruise to Maine, USA.
-  **INDEX** ◇ **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 who is researching her grandfather, **Charles Harris**, who served on HMS Superb 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

Cartoon sent in by Tony Hackett, Jon Willshir & Malcolm Milham from 1953 Cruise



Open Day In Boston 1953



REUNION REMINDER

A Note for Your Diary
The next Reunion
will be at
The King Charles Hotel,
Gillingham, Kent
Friday, Saturday + Sunday
6th to 8th October
Be There or Be Square !

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

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?

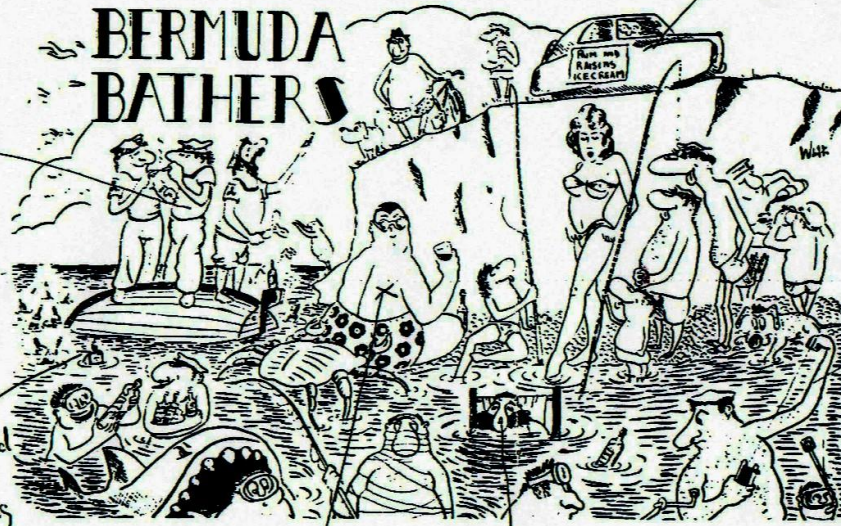


A van selling Rum & Raisins Ice Cream pulled up alongside every evening

The 3 Stokers who managed to Sink the Captains Skimming Dish early on Christmas Morning 1954

Rum at 3/6 a bottle was quite cheap & only required a little Coca-Cola to make a refreshing long drink

Fishing was a good cheap hobby



Bandmaster Royal Marines

Corporal Royal Marines

MEDWAY TODAY

TUESDAY JUNE 12, 2001 11

Editorial: Telephone 01634 830999

A superb response for crew members

MORE former crew members of the Chatham-based cruiser HMS Superb have been traced after an appeal in *Medway Today*.

Ray Lambert, Medway contact for the HMS Superb Association, said: "We are delighted to have had an influx of new members following the article."

"But we know there are still many more 'ex-Superbers' out there and we would to get in touch with them."

The association's membership is spread worldwide - including one former crewman now living in Rio de Janeiro - and stands at about 200.

The association holds an annual reunion, usually in September, at Gillingham's King Charles Hotel - formerly the NAAFI Club.

All new "recruits" to the association are supplied with a full list of members.

HMS Superb, a Tiger class cruiser, was brought into service in 1945 and was broken up in 1960.

Mr Lambert estimates that during that time something like 7,000 men must have sailed with her.

Membership is open to all lower deckers from all commissions during Superb's 12-year active life.

Contact secretary Fred Kinsey on 01223-871505 or Ray Lambert on 01634-865970 for membership details.

Or you can visit the web site hmssuperb@btinternet.com

Cartoon & newspaper cutting supplied by Shipmate Ray Lambert



PERSONS WHO RECEIVE THIS MAGAZINE

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

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

To send an email from this page

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



MEMBERSHIP

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION ?

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

TELEPHONE ROBIN SMITH AT 01634 362 379

OR EMAIL HIM AT robinsmith173@yahoo.co.uk

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



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[March, 2017](#)

[April, 2017](#)



THE END