



ROYAL NAVAL
ASSOCIATION



The Semaphore Circular

No 705

The Beating Heart of the RNA

December 2020



**WISHING ALL OUR READERS A MERRY
CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Shipmates Please Stay Safe

If you need assistance call the RNA Helpline on 07542 680082

This edition is the on-line version of the Semaphore Circular, unless you have registered with Central Office, it will only be available on the RNA website in the 'Members Area' under 'downloads' at www.royal-naval-association.co.uk and will be emailed to the branch contact, usually the Hon Sec



indicates a new or substantially changed entry

Contacts

Financial Manager	023 9272 3823	michelle@royalnavalassoc.com
Finance Assistant	023 9272 3823	kathryn@royalnavalassoc.com
Communications Manager	07860 705712	comms@royalnavalassoc.com
Digital Communications		mike@royalnavalassoc.com
Operations Manager	023 9272 0782	andy@royalnavalassoc.com
Membership Support Manager	023 92723747	nigel@royalnavalassoc.com
General Secretary / CEO	023 9272 2983	bill@royalnavalassoc.com
Admin	023 92 72 3747	admin@royalnavalassoc.com
Project Semaphore		Julie@royalnavalassoc.com
National Branch Retention and Recruiting Advisor	07713 876846	rna.brre@outlook.com
National Welfare Advisor	07934 775087	ritalock@sky.com
National Rules and Bye-Laws Advisor	0860 214766	njpurkis@hotmail.com
National Ceremonial Advisor	07810 300383	robertcoburn001@btinternet.com

PLEASE NOTE DURING THE CURRENT RESTRICTIONS CENTRAL OFFICE IS CLOSED. PLEASE USE EMAIL OR, IF THE MATTER IS URGENT, THE HELPLINE ON 07542 680082.



Staff

photo (L – R) Bill Oliphant, Nigel Huxtable, Kathryn Brindley, Michelle Bainbridge, National President Vice Admiral John McAnally, Mike Gray, Charlie Darlington, Andy Christie

Daily Orders (follow each link) Orders [follow each link]

1. [Special National Conference](#)
2. [Remembrance Parade](#)
3. [Welfare Spotlight](#)
4. [Tis the Season to be jolly Aware](#)
5. [National Standard Bearers Competition Update](#)
6. [100th Anniversary of the Unknown Warrior](#)
7. [Monday Fireside Chats Programme](#)
8. [Respectful Covid Humour](#)
9. [Last Month Unusual Photo](#)
10. [Decembers Unusual Photos](#)
11. [Operation One Thousand Good Deeds](#)
12. [Shipmate Jack Morris](#)
13. [BAD Joke Time](#)
14. [Defence Settlement Message from First Sea Lord](#)
15. [Company of Makers](#)
16. [Stowmarket FAA and Battle of Britain](#)
17. [Importance of Keeping Contact](#)
18. [China Fleet Club](#)

Glossary of terms

NCM	National Council Member
NC	National Council
AMC	Association Management Committee
FAC	Finance Administration Committee
NCh	National Chairman
NVCh	National Vice Chairman
NP	National President
DNP	Deputy National President
GS	General Secretary
CONA	Conference of Naval Associations
NCBA	National Charter, Rules and Byelaws Advisor

Find Semaphore Circular On-line

<http://bit.ly/RNADownloads>

or

RNA Website / Members Area / Downloads /
Circulars / Code (shipmate)

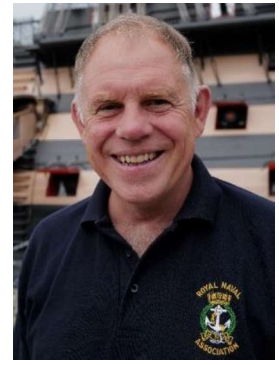
Snail Trail Mail - Postal Address

RNA Central Office,
Building 1/087,
Scott Road,
HM Naval Base,
Portsmouth
Hants PO1 3LT

From the General Secretary

Dear Shipmates,

Andy, well done on stitching another Semaphore Circular together and let me start by sending a big BZ to all those shipmates who made the effort to get out and down to their local war memorial on Remembrance Sunday – please see the fantastic array of Branch inputs later in this edition. It was a difficult year for commemoration with Remembrance week occurring during this second period of lockdown so many ceremonies were scaled back with a lot of official ceremonies cancelled. What it did mean was that there were quite a few unofficial ceremonies which happened throughout the country and I am proud to say that the RNA was at the forefront of many of them.



At the naval memorial on Southsea Common, we had a ceremony of our own and I was proud to be joined by WO1 Mick Turnbull, Warrant Officer to the Fleet Commander, and Alan Wilton who represented the Fisgard Association – us former Tiffys have to stick together you know! I can almost hear our National Chairman, Stoker Keith Ridley, clearing his throat! Mick took the opportunity to read out the list of names of all the naval personnel who had crossed the bar whilst in service this year. It seemed a lot and was a sober reminder that personnel were still being killed even in a year where we are supposedly at peace.



Meanwhile, those who saw this year's scaled back commemorations at the Cenotaph will have witnessed our National President, John McAnally, lay a wreath on behalf of all naval veterans. You will also have noted that, of the 26 veterans who were permitted to march past the Cenotaph this year, the only naval veteran representation were the 2 members of the RNA. This underlines the special position of the RNA within the Veteran community. We are the only naval association representative of, and open to all, naval serving and veterans, and their families. Special BZs therefore to both our representatives, S/M David Corrigan and S/M Catherine Lewington, who were smart as pins and drew praise from none other than the Prime Minister Boris who met them in King Charles Street after the ceremony.

Of great import at the moment are the preparations for the **Special National Conference on 21 December 2020** where the **motion to reduce annual subscriptions to £0** will be made as the Association seeks to increase its membership and switch to a donation based funding model. Please see the briefing at Item 1 below. The National Council would be glad of your support at the Conference.

Finally, last month I reported on the birthday of S/m Duncan Knight of the Chichester Branch who had turned 100 in October. It is with considerable sadness and much sympathy for his family that I must now report his passing on Remembrance Sunday only 3 weeks after his birthday. Sir, rest in peace, and to his family I express my deepest condolences as, indeed, I do to all the families of those bereaved in the obituaries section of this Circular.

On a brighter note, it only leaves me to wish all our readers a Merry Christmas although I suspect for many it will be a very different one this year. And, let's hope that the New Year brings a vaccine so that we can put this hideous episode behind us and start to meet and enjoy each other's company once again. Roll on 2021.

To end on a happy note, I see that 'Pussers' have introduced a new product called Gunpowder Proof Spiced Rum – I'd better go and write my letter to Santa.....

Oh, and Happy St Andrews Day!!

As ever,

Bill Oliphant



Chairman's chat

Yet another Lockdown since last month, and like most parts of the UK, most of us are no doubt having difficulty in keeping up with what and where we can do or go. Now I can understand where the phrase from 'I don't know whether I am coming or going'.

I will start by thanking all Shipmates for paying their respects during the Remembrance Period. From our National President to the lonely Standard Bearers be they RNA Branch or Ship's Associations who turned out you are to be commended for showing your respect for the fallen and you all looked very smart. In reading through the various Facebook posts it became evident that some local Councils, may have mis-interpreted the Regulations that stated Remembrance Observance Services were exempt, but certain safety precautions had to be observed. No doubt those of you like myself who was involved with planning, noticed how many members of the public who just happened to be passing by the War Memorial between 1045 – 1105 on Sunday 8th & Wednesday 11th November – 'Lest we Forget' and we will not forget.



High on my list of priorities is still Covid-19 and the continuing need for us all to take safety precautions and observe the guidance we are given. I would like to make a special mention here of S/M Geoff Apperley our Deputy National Welfare Adviser who has and continues to send out excellent advice to us all via Branch Secretaries. BZ Geoff. I have heard it said that some amongst us have expressed the view 'Oh no, not another email'. Shipmates, the Association has a Duty of Care to all Members, and Geoff is simply the messenger to share information with us and not be scorned for his dedication, more so, as a volunteer. What we are all missing is the chance to meet up within our Branches for camaraderie, banter, and a pint. If you are feeling lonely, in need of cheering up, or curious and just want to listen, or take part in some good humorous banter, then the Saturday evening virtual Tot is for you. You will be amazed how many new Oppos you will make. The downside is you must provide your own Tot, Dram, or can/bottle (we do have some uncouth Shipmates). Checkout the RNA-Community website on a Thursday or Friday for Zoom access details under Events. Access ID & Password change weekly. Sign on from 1830 for the 1900 toasts and stay on until the Sun sets.

My congratulations to S/M Karl Web at my neighbouring RNA Huntingdon & District Branch on being elected Mayor of Huntingdon. A fine photograph of Karl in his refinery appeared in last month's Circular – section 15. BZ Karl on becoming your Town's No 1 Citizen.

I am convinced that the Royal Navy Fleet today comprises totally of Submarines 'Gone Deep' because as members of this Association we never hear any news or Dits from you. So please, send something into Andy Christie's man cave at andy@royalnavalassoc.com to arrive no later than the 22nd of each month. The first serving Shipmate who sends in a sensible & reasonable dit will receive a bottle of PUSSER'S Gunpowder 54.5% Rum personally donated by me. So now is the time to get scribing.

With the festive season fast approaching I hope as many of us as possible will spend time with our families. To all our serving Shipmates including reservists, who continue to support the frontline against Covid-19, keep up the good work, to Shipmates and your families in the UK and throughout the world keep safe and adhere to all the advice being given to you, to all Shipmates

who because of Duty will not be with your families, we will be thinking of you and thank you for keeping us safe.

On behalf of my wife Maureen and myself, we wish you all Season's Greetings, a Happy, Prosperous and Healthy New Year.

Stay safe, we will overcome Covid, and we will all emerge to share a Tot together.

Yours aye

Keith Ridley

nationalchairman@royalnavalassoc.com

Important Information.....

The General Secretary has prepared a brief for Shipmates to review prior to their delegate voting at special National Conference votes as it is essential that all Shipmates are aware of the detail. The Agenda for the Special Conference can be located at the at rear of this Semaphore Circular.

REPORT OF SPECIAL NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING ON 17 NOV 2020

1. A Special online meeting of the National Council was held to discuss the specific issue of switching the RNA's funding model from subscription based to donation based. It is of note that the Royal Marines Association has gone down this path and has already significantly grown its membership numbers. The National Council unanimously agreed that this model gave the best opportunity of allowing the RNA to arrest its declining membership numbers and allow it to grow and become sustainable. It was also agreed that the sooner it was implemented the more its chances of success. The time for collecting 2021 subscriptions is imminent. Members need to be told soon if they are no longer required. Moving to donation based funding is of such significance that Conference approval is appropriate. Therefore a Special National Conference will be held online, 21 December 2020, 1400, to consider the following National Council motion:

To move that the RNA annual subscription, for all membership categories, is zero (GBP0.00) with effect from 1st January 2021.

Background

2. An important catalyst for this change has of course been Covid and the very real possibility that Branches will still not be able to meet come the New Year. This leaves the pragmatic problem of the collection of subscriptions but notwithstanding, membership numbers have been creeping South in recent years and despite many initiatives and attempts at recruiting, the numbers continue to decline. The RNA has lost over 1000 per year for at least the last 6 years reducing to a total membership at 31 Dec 19 of 11230 shipmates.

3. At a meeting of the NC in December 2019 declining membership was discussed and the NC resolved that they were not content to allow the Association to wither to a core. All felt that the RNA brand deserved more and that we ought to be more ambitious for our Association. A vision was thus agreed:

To have established and maintained the RNA on a sustainable footing which still meets the original Objects of the Charity while maintaining relevance and respect in modern society.

4. Taking this vision, during 2020 the Strategy Group within the NC developed a strategy which was defined simply as:

A strategy to provide the RNA with a capability update to make it accessible and attractive to a wider cross section of the Naval Family.

5. During the development of this strategy, Covid appeared and the Association switched from our usual routine of meetings and events where we could meet like-minded folk for social gatherings to a support network linking in shipmates and ensuring that our Oppos were looked after and had the support they needed to fit their circumstances.

6. At this point, the RNA was approached by the RNRMC¹ to ask for help in achieving their objectives by reaching more of the naval veteran community and especially those veterans who might be described as hidden, lost or lonely. The RNA was the obvious Association to do this as membership was not restricted to Arm, Branch, Type, sex or ship. It is envisaged that by deleting annual subscriptions we can bring about a situation of "why would you not join the RNA? Furthermore it also offer the possibility of automatically enrolling Naval personnel something that is not possible for a subscription based organization. It was suggested that the RNRMC would support the RNA while it increased its donation base to make it self-sustaining. A partnership was envisaged with the following intent.

Intent

7. To grow the RNA from its current membership base of circa 11,000 members to reach much more of the veteran community to allow them to share in the benefits of RNA membership and especially to reach hidden, lost and lonely naval veterans in the community to enhance their lives and allow them some dignity and respect while recognising society's debt to them for their service to the nation. Also, recognising the positive effect that camaraderie has on wellbeing, it will allow individuals to reinforce their mental health resilience through their friendships within the RNA and other Naval Associations. By making the RNA a "Free to Join" organisation, it would improve accessibility and attractiveness making it complementary to the extensive network of smaller and more restrictive associations and allow the RNRMC to communicate more effectively with the veteran community. With the establishment of befriending networks and working with partners like ASDIC², VOS³ and Silverline we hope to reach more of the naval veteran community. The intent is also to improve the benefits of membership to reduce the average age of the RNA membership so that it is more relevant and appealing to veterans in the community of all ages, not just the elderly.

Desired Outcomes

8. The desired outcomes of this arrangement between the partners are:
- To have established and maintained the RNA on a sustainable footing which still meets the original Objects of the Charity while maintaining relevance and respect in modern society.
 - To have improved communications to reach more of the veteran community and wider naval family.
 - To have created the opportunity to build mental health resilience within the membership
 - To have created the framework to allow a sense of dignity for hidden, lost and lonely naval veterans
 - To establish an organisation which is seen as the "go to" Association for camaraderie
 - To enhance the Transition process by giving Service leavers access to a network of RNA mentors (sea daddies or, rather, sea civvies)

¹ Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity

² Association of ex-Service Drop In Centres <https://www.asdic.org.uk/>

³ Veterans' Outreach Support <https://www.vosuk.org/>

- To pursue the goal of extending the concept of joining not just the RN but a wider, life long, Naval Family
- To improve accessibility by withdrawing subscriptions and allowing auto-enrolment of naval personnel.
- To make the Association more attractive by introducing a mentoring scheme for those leaving the Service, by introducing more activity-based Groups and by better using the diary and events available to us to exploit opportunities for comradeship.

Means

9. The RNA would cease collecting subscriptions and move to a donations based income sharing the risk by using RNA strategic reserves along with RNRMC funding which would reduce on a tapered scale until the RNA is able to declare itself self-sustaining. It is estimated that this will be achievable within 4-5 years. The RNA would be “contracted” to achieve the desired outcomes with SMART⁴ objectives set through agreement.

Finances

10. The National Council has, for some years now, set a deficit budget to achieve its objectives. In most years until recently this deficit has been reduced or eliminated by legacies which has masked the decline in revenue through subscriptions. But in recent years this effect has declined such that in 2020 legacies have amounted to less than £1000 of income. Every year that legacies do not cover our losses, we must nibble into our reserves. Unless any miraculous legacy income appears in the next 5 weeks, we stand to run at a loss of £130k this year. All of these losses inevitably come from our reserves. The point here is that rather than frittering away our reserves with the current model and allowing a slower decline, the concept is to use those reserves for a deliberate action which would allow us to set ourselves up to be able to achieve a sustainable financial model.

11. Without subscriptions, the RNA budget for 2021 shows a deficit of £280k which it is proposed is shared between RNA Strategic Reserves and RNRMC funding. The grant request therefore sits at £140k which is considerably more than we might expect from subscriptions if they were retained.

12. Analysis suggests that a donations based funding model could in time produce significantly more revenue than retaining subscriptions. This is borne out by Royal Marine Association experience to date.

Risk

13. Clearly, there is a risk in changing to a donation based income model. However the National Council consider that the risk of maintaining the status quo is greater. The recent move of Central Office to a refurbished independent building within Portsmouth Naval Base, indicates that the RN is not about to make the Association’s administrative offices destitute therefore, using an element of the strategic reserve currently held in the Property Fund since the office moved from London in 2008, to establish the new model is deemed a sensible way to re-launch the Association out of Covid.

14. In addition, the RNRMC Board is yet to approve this funding stream, however, this initiative stems from their Chief Executive, Adrian Bell, and is being strongly pushed at a Funding Board on 3 December as supporting the RNA to achieve the reach to support the naval veteran

⁴ Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound

family which RNRMC is obliged by their Charitable Objects to achieve. The funding the RNRMC would grant to the RNA in 2021 represents a relatively small element of a £3m deficit budget for RNRMC in 2021. On the basis of numerous discussions at Chief Executive level between the RNA and RNRMC the National Council believe that it is reasonable to plan on this grant being provided and that it is therefore appropriate for The RNA to anticipate it in order to line itself up for immediate implementation in 2021 rather than wait until 2022. Hence the need for a Special Conference.

Responsibility

15. Those who saw this year's scaled back commemorations at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday will have witnessed our National President lay a wreath on behalf of all naval veterans. You will also have noted that, of the 26 veterans who were permitted to march past the Cenotaph this year, the only naval veteran representation were the 2 members of the RNA. This underlines the special position of The RNA within the Veteran community. We are the only naval association representative of, and open to all, naval serving and veterans, and their families. The National Council of the RNA are proud of their ambition for our Association and believe that it must seize this opportunity for growth and sustainability.

Recommendation

16. The National Council unanimously recommends that Branches support this Motion.

BULL POINT SUMMARY

- **RNA membership numbers have been falling by 1000 per year for the past 6 years.**
- **We've been trying to arrest this for 20 years but have not found a route.**
- **The RNA have already dispensed with subscriptions and moved to a donations based funding model and a close relationship with the RNRMC.**
- **They have since grown their membership numbers.**
- **The RNRMC have approached the RNA for assistance in reaching more naval veterans especially the hidden, lost and lonely.**
- **The larger our numbers the more effective assistance we can provide. The corollary of this is that with a declining membership the sooner we clinch the deal with the RNRMC the more attractive a partner we are to them.**
- **A no subs/donation based funding model holds out the prospect of marketing membership as "why would you not join the RNA?" and also the possibility of auto enrolling all naval personnel. That could not be done with a subscription based model.**
- **Subject to the approval of their Board the RNRMC envisage a substantial financial contribution to the RNA while its donation based funding model finds its feet.**
- **There are of course risks but the National Council consider that posed by the status quo is at least as big and probably bigger.**
- **Our financial reserves have avoided reduction commensurate with falling subscription revenue largely through legacies. But we are not receiving many now- less than £1K in 2020. A donation based model will make it much easier to approach corporate donors.**
- **This move offers the only way the National Council can see of achieving the holy grail of increasing membership numbers.**
- **By achieving greater membership numbers we can implement a wide range of initiatives to make the RNA offer broader and even more attractive. (paras 8 and 11 above).**
- **So please support the National Council Motion at the Special Conference.**

2. ★ National Remembrance Parade

National Ceremonial Advisor, S/M Bob Coburn wished to commend S/M David Corrigan and S/M Catherine Lewington for their exemplary performance parading at the National Remembrance commemoration at the Cenotaph and thank our National President Shipmate Vice Admiral John McAnally, complete with dodgy knees! For laying a wreath not only on behalf of the RNA but importantly **all** Naval Veterans. BZ Shipmates

The photo shows S/Ms David and Catherine considering their next assignment!!!



3. ★ Welfare Spotlight Column

Welcome shipmates to a further monthly issue of Welfare Spotlight focusing on areas of interest as well as support. I hope all are well and coping with their current restrictions and lockdown in England. I wish you, your family and friends the best Christmas you can have, subject to Covid restrictions of course. I again ask for queries or topic ideas as we want this feature to be useful to shipmates. **Please note that as Deputy National Welfare Advisor, I have now been given an email address of geoff@royalnavalassoc.com.** Please send in your requests for topics or requests for advice there.

The General Secretary wrote to all shipmates early in Lockdown 2 and the points he raised bear repeating. Lockdown 2 has prevented Branches meeting and closed Clubs so we all need to support each other and our more isolated or vulnerable shipmates. Across the UK branches responded well in Lockdown 1 with support systems of different means at Branch level to reduce enforced social isolation. In addition, all Branches were asked to ensure that more vulnerable shipmates were contacted to ensure that they have both a personalised support system in place (if shielding) and a regular comms check either through a buddy-buddy system or a ring round system. Lockdown 2 has required that this continues and, looking ahead to Dec 2, it is likely that new restrictions require us all to carry on supporting each other. **Please remember that the RNA Helpline remains open on 07542 680082 and the Veterans UK Helpline 0808 1914 218 or email veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk**

Are you a tall, dark and handsome ex-matelot or a petite blonde and attractive female AB? Lucky you! However, what we need are volunteer Welfare Officers in some of our many branches. I have a Welfare Officers list used to send briefings out to and, sadly, many branches do not appear to have a Welfare Officer (WO). Branches still get Welfare information via the Branch Secretary or Chairman but it's not the same. The Welfare Officer is an essential part of a Branch and in these times of Covid can be an important link to maintain contact with shipmates enduring yet more isolation. The job is rewarding and can be tailored to what you do best. There's no one size fits all for a WO. Training, help and advice are available (just ask) but the key skill is wanting to help your shipmates and put "an arm around the shoulder" of those who need it. Even a simple telephone call makes a difference to a shipmate on their own.

What's changed? Some things haven't. The clear sensible and simple rules that have not changed are in lockdown stay home and if you are out:

- **Wash hands** - keep washing your hands regularly for at least 20secs
- **Cover face** - wear a face covering in enclosed spaces
- **Make space** - stay at least 2 metres apart or 1 metre with a face covering or other precautions

Details of current restrictions should always be checked for the country you're in and these can be found at:

England – <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Northern Ireland - <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Wales - <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

What next? At the time of writing and submitting this copy for Circular we await clarity on what new restrictions eg stricter tiers will follow the Dec 2 end of lockdown in England. In the other devolved administrations, there are in operation different restrictions. Please realise that the end of lockdown or tier restrictions cannot be replaced with a free for all as R rate remains high in some areas but hopefully each administration will have sensible measures in place. The government has published on 23 Nov a Winter Plan at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-winter-plan> (*printer warning it's 64 pages long!*) In the interim we all need to follow the guidance's where we live to do our bit and help stop this pandemic. Do please look at the rules where you are and comply for everyone's sake. When new guidance has been published, I will share a Welfare Summary via Central Office circulation. Christmas is not cancelled yet.

Will it get better? Yes, over time. We have promises of at least two effective vaccines becoming available soon in the UK (one British – hooray!) but delivery of and effect of these on Covid spread will be not be immediate. In any event, roll-out will need to be prioritised across the population. So, no magic bullets there. However, encouragingly in many places the infection rate (R) is falling although there are others that are increasing however cases and deaths are not as yet soaring to the levels seen earlier in the year. **This all means there is hope but that we all need to keep doing our part now to protect ourselves and others and remember our vulnerable shipmates.**

Geoff Apperley

Deputy National Welfare Advisor

4. ★ Tis the Season to be Jolly Aware of the 'Scammers'

As the prime Minister recently was quoted "Tis the season to the jolly careful" and he is quite right about being aware that the Scammers operate 24 hours and 365 days annually so please be on your guard..... Below is a gentle reminder.....

One shipmate recently received an urgent message from a friend in the middle of the night who said he had been rushed to hospital and needed funds. Being a kind-hearted soul, the shipmate sent hundreds of pounds to the account number he was given – but it was a scam. His friend was fine and nowhere near a hospital – but the money had already been spirited away, out of reach, as the friend's account had been compromised without his knowledge.

Security experts have noticed a lot of fraudulent activity around the Covid-19 pandemic – maybe people offering to obtain a government grant for you (turns out to be a loan – they keep the

money, you get the bill) or sign you up for Universal Credit but they take the cash leaving you to clear up the mess.

You should always take a moment to pause and think about any message that strikes you as odd or unusual – why would somebody ask you to invest in a foreign fund? Is your mate really in hospital? Have you really won an overseas lottery that you never actually entered?

That old-adage of 'if it seems too good to be true, it probably is' still holds true in the digital age.

*Apply the same common sense to cold-callers or phone-callers – they have their own plausible techniques to try to get their hands on your hard-earned money. **Remember they will try to get you to call them back on premium rate numbers please be aware...***

It sounds frightening, but there are some simple rules of thumb when trying to avoid online scams. Take a look at Age Concern's comprehensive advice at this link;

[Scams and fraud | Money Matters | Age UK](#)

5. ★ National Standard Bearers Competition – Update

Shipmates and Standard Bearers amongst you, are probably wondering when will a new date for the postponed/cancelled 2020 National Standard Bearers Competition be announced.



Answer..... The competition scheduled for this year 2020 has been formally cancelled. The next competition will be held in May 2022.

So..... plenty of time to get your drill and kit up to exceptional standards and give you a chance of a victorious victory in the National Standard Bearer competition and be crowned as the winner of this prestigious competition and take up the coveted role as National Standard Bearer.

For your information Shipmate David Corrigan will remain as the National Standard Bearer with National Ceremonial Officer and, NSB veteran, Shipmate Bob Coburn covering when required

6. ★ 100th Anniversary of the Unknown Warrior

On November 7th, 1920, in strictest secrecy, four unidentified British bodies were exhumed from temporary battlefield cemeteries at Ypres, Arras, the Asine and the Somme.

None of the soldiers who did the digging were told why. The bodies were taken by field ambulance to GHQ at St-Pol-Sur-Ter Noise. Once there, the bodies were draped with the union flag. Sentries were posted and Brigadier-General Wyatt and a Colonel Gell selected one body at random. The other three were reburied. A French Honour Guard was selected and stood by the coffin of the chosen soldier overnight.

On the morning of the 8th November, a specially designed coffin made of oak from the grounds of Hampton Court arrived and the Unknown Warrior was placed inside. On top was placed a crusaders sword and a shield on which was inscribed:

"A British Warrior who fell in the GREAT WAR 1914-1918 for King and Country".

On the 9th of November, the Unknown Warrior was taken by horse-drawn carriage through Guards of Honour and the sound of tolling bells and bugle calls to the quayside. There, he was saluted by Marechal Foch and loaded onto HMS Verdun bound for Dover. The coffin stood on the deck covered in wreaths, surrounded by the French Honour Guard.

Upon arrival at Dover, the Unknown Warrior was met with a nineteen gun salute - something that was normally only reserved for Field Marshals. A special train had been arranged and he was then conveyed to Victoria Station, London. He remained there overnight, and, on the morning of the 11th of November, he was finally taken to Westminster Abbey.

The idea of the unknown warrior was thought of by a Padre called David Railton, who had served on the front line during the Great War, the union flag he had used as an altar cloth whilst at the front, was the one that had been draped over the coffin.

It was his intention that all of the relatives of the 517,773 combatants whose bodies had not been identified could believe that the Unknown Warrior could very well be their lost husband, father, brother or son. This is the reason we wear poppies.

We do not glorify war. We remember - with humility - the great and the ultimate sacrifices that were made, not just in this war, but in every war and conflict where our service personnel have fought - to ensure the liberty and freedoms that we now take for granted.

Every year, on the 11th of November, we remember the Unknown Warrior.

7. ★ Monday Evening Fireside Chats

For Shipmates who are unaware a series of 'Fireside Chats' featuring some fascinating subjects including; Battle of Jutland, Operation Paraquet (Re-capture of South Georgia 1982), Naval Recruiting in 2020 to name but a few. The presentations are held on Monday evenings commencing at 1800 using 'Zoom'.

Meeting ID - 288 830 5105 Password – Shipmate (case sensitive)

Date	Presenter	Subject
Monday 30 Nov	Keith Malcolm (QA Hospital Veterans/ AFC Lead Nurse)	Naval Veteran Support at QA Hospital Portsmouth
Monday 07 Dec	Jon Pearson	BAE Systems Support to the RN
Monday 14 Dec	Unashamedly Shep Woolley	Christmas Concert
2021		
Monday 04 Jan	Dr Jann Witt	Mutiny and Piracy
Monday 11 Jan	WO1 Ian 'Tug' Wilson	2SL Warrant Officer
Monday 18 Jan	Capt John Joyce RN	CO HMS Sultan – The History of the Naval Sword
Monday 25 Jan	Burns Night	
Monday 01 Feb	Capt Roger Readwin RN	CO BRNC Dartmouth – The challenges of Training in the Covid environment.

8. ★ Respectful Covid Humour.....

Ran out of toilet paper and had to start using old newspapers

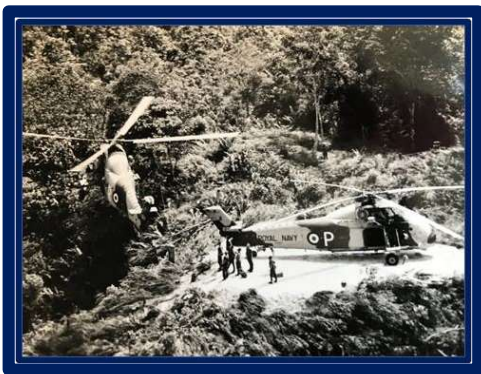
Wait for it.....

'Times' are rough.....!!! (Boom Boom)



9. ★ Last Month's Unusual Photo - More Information

Further to the unusual photograph taken in the jungles of Borneo during the 1964 Indonesia-Malaya confrontation and features two Wessex Helicopters.



I asked for your assistance (Stand Too! FAA) in trying to work out which aircraft mark they are and which squadron?

One of my own branch, S/M Tony Fenn, very kindly provided the answer..... Which was corrected by S/M Charles Buckle..... Or so we all thought!

However, S/M Tony has replied, landing (forgive the pun) a knocked down!

Andy, sorry to say that SM Buckle is wrong. WX1 have two smaller exhausts each side whereas WX 5 have a single larger exhaust. If you blow the picture up Andy an A for Albion is clearly seen on the tail pylon. Definitely Wessex 5s. 848 were commissioned 7 May 1964 with 18 Wessex 5.

These were the helicopters that deployed to the Far East on HMS Albion who we relieved in 1966. It is possible that S/M Buckle did his flying training in WX 1s but this most probably been the training Sqn (707 Sqn) for 845 & 848 The saga continues! Yours aye, Tony

Please send your photos (Which I will send back) / old 'dits' etc to andy@royalnavalassoc.com

10. ★ Decembers' Unusual Photo's

First of this month's pictures was taken on 05 April 1953, Easter Sunday, during the Korean War and features HMS Cardigan Bay in action conducting a shore bombardment. She was operating in conjunction with HMS Charity and HMS Birmingham and air support from HMS Glory and USS White River (LSMR 536) who was a 'Rocket Ship'. You may be able to recognise in the photo it was still wintery with large lumps of ice floating near the ship.



Our grateful thanks go to Shipmate Frank Pretty (HQ Roll) who forwarded the information and photo.

For the second photo we are grateful to S/m Mike Milne (St Neots Branch) and was taken on the flight deck of HMS Hydra in 1969 after the Atlantic Trade Wind Experiment, which involved ships from the UK, US and Germany drifting in the Atlantic for 15 days. To keep the troops amused, several diversions were organised, including a beard-growing competition.

I was the LO (electrical officer) and had a reasonable full set and had a good chance of winning,



but the buffer's looked even better.

On the day that the beards were due to be judged, the senior rates in my division (who had bet heavily on me winning) had plied the buffer at lunchtime with enough spirits to sink a ship.

As a result, he was comatose on his bunk and, without any other serious competition, I took the honours. In many ways, it was a win-win situation - I had the honour of winning the competition, the buffer had a hangover to beat all others and my division cleaned up on the sweepstake!

On my right in the back row is Lt Cdr Peter Whelan, instructor officer, who permanently sported a full set and so was the judge! Between the two of us, in the front row, is Sub-Lt Shorty Sheather, 5'6" in his socks, an SD survey officer from the East End of London, who knew almost all of the senior survey officers, including the Hydrographer, from his time on the lower deck and could certainly spin a dit or two! On the right in the front row was the 1st Lt, Lt Cdr Davidson, RAN, who introduced us to the idea of drinking raw eggs in beer as a hangover cure!

The photo of me on P27 of the 2020/2021 RNA Yearbook shows that I can still grow a respectable full set at 75!

Finally, this month a smashing photo sent in by Shipmate Tony Fenn (Lee on the Solent and Stubbington) featuring the HMS Hermes Weapon Supply Party from 1974/76.



L to R boss Lt Glennen, me, middle OS Booth, AB Mcleod, OS Shipston, LS Richardson, LS Mullen, back AB Wright, AB Hopwood, AB Pearey and AB Checkett

I know Shipston became a PTI (down for ten!), Checkett re-catted to WAFU (my influence) and Lt Glennen (great boss) slipped his painter.

Central Office would be delighted to receive any of your unusual photos, which will be returned, however, a quick snap taken on your phone and sent to – admin@royalnavalassoc.com in is so much easier. I'll bet there are some amazing photos out there.

There could be a bottle of 'Pussers' available for the best photo! So send them in....

11. ★ Operation 'A Thousand Good Deeds'

Shipmates may be interested to know that two Second World War Naval veterans have been connected by Central Office staff via RNBT and it proved the system works.....

Shipmate Bob Taylor and Shipmate George Corin both served, during the War, in HMS Activity an Escort/Ferry Carrier in 1944/45 operating in the East Indies Fleet. S/M George was well known for playing his 'accordion' on the upper deck to entertain the Ships' Company and returning Prisoners of War.

Shipmate Bob contacted the RNBT and spoke with their pet 'Bootie' Dave Gibson who rang Andy Christie to ask if the RNA knew of anyone who had served in HMS Activity. By pure chance (Right time right place etc....) George had been interviewed by Charlie Darlington, the RNA Comms Officer, during the VE/VJ period and she recalled he had served in Activity. They were connected by phone-call which prompted many memories.

Sadly, S/M Bob's claim to be the youngest onboard, he is now 95, was shot down in flames by S/M George a mere baby at 94!!!!

12. ★ 100 Club – Shipmate Jack Morris

RNA Corby Treasurer, S/M Gareth Price has contacted the Semaphore Circular to inform Shipmates that RNA Corby Branches oldest member Shipmate Jack Morris will be 100 on the 11th December 2020 and thought we would like to wish him a happy birthday and congratulate him on this magnificent achievement .

S/M Jack joined up on 30 April 1941. His first ship was HMS Windrush a river class frigate but only did trials on her before she was given to the French. Then he was drafted to HMS Moyola also a river class frigate.

From there he was drafted to HMS Walker a V&W class frigate on which he completed one arctic convoy, after the trip to Russia she returned to Chatham for repair, as it was near the end of the war next time she went to sea was to sail to the breakers yard. He then spent a short period of time on light carrier HMS Ocean but never went to sea, his last ship was HMS Orwell from where he was demobbed in May 1946.

Jack returned to the Corby area where he met and married his wife Sylvia they have one son Peter. Jack spent most of his working life running a Tailors shop, living in the Wellingborough area, on retirement he purchased a bungalow in Stanion where he still lives with Sylvia.



Jack helped with the poppy appeal every year and only stopped a few years ago. Jack was a popular figure in Corby town centre wearing his arctic convoys white beret, he is a holder of the Russian Convoys medal and journeyed to the Russian embassy in London to collect it. He has been a member of the RNA for over 20 years. BZ Jack and very many happy returns from the National Council and Central Office team.

(S/M Jack is pictured above with S/m Gareth Price Hon Sec at RNA Corby)

13. ★ Bad Joke time!

Why can't owls make love in the rain?

Wait for it!.....

'Cos it's too wet to woo!!!! (Boom Boom)

(Any complaints please contact Shipmate Carl Beeson!)

Is that S/M Maureen Ridley chatting with Wren Ethel.....



Many of you will have seen the Prime Minister's speech yesterday, setting out an increase in Defence spending of £16.5 billion over the next four years and outlining his vision for the future of the Armed Forces. Today, I would like to reiterate some of his key points and put these into a maritime context.

Firstly, this is an extremely positive outcome for Defence. Despite the ongoing uncertainties of COVID, this commitment allows for the strategic decisions required to guarantee the UK's long-term security and strengthen our global influence, and my fellow Chiefs and I welcome this. The Prime Minister has set out a vision of UK Armed Forces that are modern, relevant and equipped with the latest technologies. Armed Forces that play a key role in the government's priorities for increasing national prosperity, levelling up and supporting the Union. And Armed Forces that play a key role in the UK's leadership in the world, upholding international law, maintaining freedoms and improving people's lives worldwide.



Although the full detail of the Integrated Review will not be announced until next year, the Prime Minister gave some of the headline decisions. As well as the introduction of a new RAF Space Command and a National Cyber Force, he committed to building more ships for the Royal Navy, benefiting the UK's shipyards and generating employment. As well as confirming all eight ships of the Type 26 class, five Type 31 frigates and the Fleet Solid Support ships, he announced the development of multi-role research vessels and a new Type 32 class. This will be a variation on the Type 31, updated with tomorrow's technology and equipped for a wide range of tasks around the world. This will allow us to increase our forward presence in key global regions and to realise the Prime Minister's vision of the Royal Navy as the foremost naval power in Europe.

At the same time, the Prime Minister pledged to reduce or retire obsolete and outdated equipment, freeing us up to focus on achieving better effects more efficiently, more effectively and more safely. From using drones to conduct reconnaissance to deploying offensive cyber capabilities, tomorrow's Armed Forces will be able to draw on a host of networked capabilities, working in conjunction with technology to deliver battle-winning superiority. This will be epitomised in the Future Commando Force, which is already proving itself in trials and exercises today.

Next year, HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH will set sail on the CSG21 deployment in company with our allies, taking her to the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and East Asia. This is the floating embodiment of the Prime Minister's vision, showcasing a Global Navy, supporting Global Britain. You will recognise in much of this the pillars of Royal Navy Transformation that you have all been working so hard to deliver. We are renewing our nuclear deterrent, building the Type 26 frigate and conducting more operations in the High North to increase our operational advantage in the North Atlantic. We will have two operational aircraft carriers, able to deliver a carrier strike task group. Our forward presence around the world will continue to grow, with the Type 31 and Type 32 augmenting our new Batch 2 OPVs.

The Future Commando Force and its use of technology will deliver sophisticated, networked troops to conduct operations worldwide, and continue to contribute to the UK's Special Forces. And underpinning all of this, we are exploiting developments in technology and innovation as they emerge and getting these to the front line much faster.

Thank you for all your hard work in getting us here. Despite the challenges of COVID and the uncertainties that have accompanied it, the Royal Navy has continued to deliver, and this announcement is excellent for all of us, as well as for Defence and the nation. I will be able to bring you more details on the specifics of what this will mean for you early in the New Year, when I intend to visit as many of you as possible to talk to you, hear your views and questions and explain how we will move forward to fulfil the Prime Minister's vision of a Global Navy, modern and ready, for Global Britain.

1SL

15. ★ Company of Makers – Veterans Transition

Company of Makers exists to support Veterans and their families struggling to transition to civilian life, no matter how long ago they left the Armed Forces. We're based at Fort Cumberland, an 18th century fort built to guard the entrance to Langstone Harbour in Portsmouth, now a Scheduled Monument administered by Historic England.

As well as providing wellbeing support, we run practical workshops where people make things. 7 years down the line, demand for our workshops gets higher all the time. Never-the-less, we keep our groups small because you tell us that you love the individual attention and guidance.

Over the years, we've developed a wide range of activities driven by what you tell us you want to do; from drawing to photography, art to sewing, podcasting to woodwork.

Military people adapt and overcome!

We often hear at the start, 'I haven't got a creative bone in my body' ... 'I'm no good with my hands' ... yet everyone ends up surprising themselves and is chuffed with what they make and take home to keep.

In today's Covid-world, you'll need to bring your own tea, we'll still lay on the banter. Men and women of action, join us, this is for you!

<https://www.companyofmakers.com/workshops/>

For you information RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant will feature in our podcast at 1000 on Monday 14 December.

Our Armed Forces operate in challenging environments. For them, separation from loved ones, dealing with sudden change and uncertainty is part of the day job. They are trained to 'adapt and overcome' in the most extreme conditions.

So, what can we learn from their experiences? Week-by-week, we'll explore the Lockdown with people who have Served in the Armed Forces and the organisations helping those in need within the military community. Hosted by Company of Makers co-founder Steve Bomford and former submariner Mike Davis-Marks. <https://www.companyofmakers.com/lockdown/>

16. ★ Stowmarket link to FAA and Battle of Britain

Please see below the very interesting article forwarded by Shipmate Pete 'Chiv' Chivers, who is the PRO at RNA Stowmarket concerning the connection between Stowmarket and the FAA and Battle of Britain.

I read with interest the article sent in by Shipmate Ian Cameron of the St Neots Branch, published in the November edition of Semaphore, about the (overlooked) part the Fleet Air Arm played in the Battle of Britain and thought you may be interested in the link Stowmarket has with both the FAA and the Battle of Britain. Acting Sub Lieutenant Francis Alan Smith RN.

Sub Lieutenant Smith was born 24th June 1920 in Barrow-in-Furness and moved to Stowmarket with his family before the Second World War, where he attended the local County Grammar School. After leaving he worked as a trainee with the Eastern Electricity Company and joined the FAA on 3rd July 1939. He trained at HMS Frobisher and St. Vincent and on 9th October went to 14 EFTS Castle Bromwich, moving to 7 FTS Peterborough on 11th December.

Awarded his wings on 17th March 1940, Sub Lieutenant Smith completed the course on 26th May and went on loan to the RAF in mid-June. He converted to Hurricanes at 7 OTU Hawarden and on 2nd July joined 145 Squadron at Tangmere in West Sussex.

On 8th August 1940, Sub Lieutenant Smith found himself taking part in protecting Convoy CW9 codenamed 'Peewit' by the RAF, which consisted of approximately 25 merchant ships and Royal Navy escort. The convoy had departed Southend in darkness and made its way through the Straits of Dover en route to Swanage in Dorset.

At first light the convoy came under attack from German torpedo boats and a total of 300 JU87's and 150 Bf109s.

41 Squadron from Catterick (Spitfires), 64 Squadron Kenley (Spitfires), 65 Squadron Hornchurch (Spitfires) and 610 Squadron Biggin Hill (Spitfires) were scrambled to intercept the German formation. The torpedo boats sank three ships and damaged another three before full light of the morning, though the RAF managed to meet the Luftwaffe onslaught before they reached the convoy.

With the onset of low cloud and the defences of the Royal Navy and the Spitfires that circled above the 70,000-ton convoy "Peewit" continued its journey.

Further down the coast, the convoy ran into better weather, the low cloud had dispersed, and the waters of the Channel were bathed in brilliant sunshine. As the convoy was just off the Isle of Wight it was again attacked by Stuka and Bf109 Squadrons with orders to attack and destroy "Peewit", with the Ju87's causing severe damage to the large convoy.

Fighter Command picked up the action and immediately sent 145 Squadron Westthampnett/Tangmere (Hurricanes), 257 Squadron Northolt (Hurricanes), 609 Squadron Middle Wallop (Spitfires) and 238 Squadron Middle Wallop (Hurricanes) to meet the Luftwaffe. By the time that the RAF fighters arrived, the Stukas were low on fuel and ammunition and had to return to their bases, but in the ensuing dogfight that followed between the Bf109's and the Spitfires and Hurricanes of the RAF was intense.

Many of the Bf109's started to return to base due to low fuel and ammunition. But by this time at about 1630hrs, more than 89 Ju87 Stukas had arrived on the scene that were escorted by 70 Bf109's and Me110's to destroy "Peewit". With some aircraft of 145 Squadron returning to base

to refuel and rearm, they were again scrambled along with 43 squadron Tangmere (Hurricanes) and headed back to engage the reassembled Stukas and fighters.

For the Merchant Navy, they were being constantly bombarded almost at will by the Ju87's as the dogfight between Bf109's, Spitfires and Hurricanes played out above them. Debris from the convoy scattered the Channel for miles, burnt out hulks of the merchantmen bellowing palls of thick black smoke that could be seen for miles. Further explosions came from the ships as they were left to die where they were, life jackets bobbed up and down in the chilly waters and many men, clinging to pieces of debris, life jackets and life rafts tried desperately to avoid the many slicks of burning oil that lay on the surface.

Finally, the Germans headed back to their bases. In defending "Pewit", the RAF had lost 13 Hurricanes, five others suffered damage including one that was to make a forced landing. Only one Spitfire was destroyed while two others sustained damage. Of the merchant ships that had left Southend in darkness, only 4 reached their destination.

It was 145 Squadron from Westhampnett in the Tangmere Sector that suffered the worst for the day, with five pilots killed. Sadly, the losses included Sub Lieutenant Smith who was reported 'Missing' at 1645, with his Hurricane, P3545, crashing into the sea.

Not only is Francis remembered on the Fleet Air Arm Memorial at Lee-on-Solent, but each year on Battle of Britain Day, here in Stowmarket, our branch join with Stowmarket Royal Air Force Association at our Parish Church to remember 'The Few', including those of the Fleet Air Arm who defended this nations skies in its darkest hours.

17. ★ Branches – Importance of contact

With many areas subject to Tier 3 and Tier 2 C19 regulations it is once again essential that as an organisation we take responsibility and 'look-out' and assist isolated shipmates. Central Office will act for HQ Role members, but it is imperative that Branches keep in contact and meeting up when the opportunity presents itself ... Secretaries are encouraged to write or email each individual member, it will do wonders for their morale. The General Secretary is happy to assist with the cost of stationery and a stamp as he is aware that not all Shipmates are on the 'Tinternet' or worldwide 'thing-a-me'.....

If you need any assistance, then please give the HELPLINE a call on 07542 680082.

Regrettably, we are still currently unable to have Central Office full manned due to C19 restrictions so consequently, not everyone is working in the office at any one time. So during Office Hours contact the central Office team on the email addresses and mobile numbers below. It would really assist and be appreciated, if in the first instance you make contact by email

General Secretary	Bill@royalnavalassoc.com	07547 904410
Finance	Michelle@royalnavalassoc.com	07542 679819
Membership Support	Nigel@royalnavalassoc.com	07542 680082
Events/Semaphore Circular	Andy@royalnavalassoc.com	07889 761934
Communications	comms@royalnavalassoc.com	07860 705712

(Charlie Darlington)

You can still leave a message on the office admin phone however, it will be a lot quicker sending an email direct to the individuals above.

18. ★ China Fleet Club C19 Update

After the recent Government announcement concerning 'Tiers' The China Fleet Club are delighted to inform Shipmates that they will be open from 02 December, within Tier One confines. The commitment to keeping you safe continues with all social distancing and safety measures in place.

Key highlights are as follows;

- All Health Club will re-open as before lockdown and the Aqua spa remains a 45 minute bookable activity. In addition to casual swimming, we have now introduced bookable swimming lanes (Medium & Fast lanes) at set times on weekday afternoons and evenings.
- Our Gym remains open and we have introduced more screening between machines to enable us to increase capacity and avoid disappointment.
- Our Golf Course, Shop and Driving Range is open as normal with no restrictions
- Exercise classes continue as normal
- Our Brasserie will be closing at 10.30pm (last food orders at 9pm and last drinks orders 10pm). We have introduced additional screening to accommodate more tables
- Our Lounge Bar will open from Wednesday 2nd December, daily 11am-5pm, hot and cold drinks and the Brasserie menu will be available
- Our Cabin & Adventure Golf will re-open with new winter opening hours (9am-8pm, 7 days per week)
- Our hotel, Barn Spa, woodland trail and outdoor play equipment will be open as normal and our fun zone facility will remain closed.
- The rule of six will be in force across the Club facilities and face coverings must be worn in public areas as before. Please ensure that you follow all social distancing guidelines, use handwashing and sanitising stations provided, follow any one way system in place and follow any departmental guidelines.
- Our shower facilities remain open however we continue to encourage you to turn up 'beach ready' and shower at home where possible
- As per government guidance, if you live in Devon, please adhere to tier 2 restrictions when using your Club.



We are all really looking forward to welcoming you back to the club next week, look out for our newsletter with an array of festive events lined up to get you all in the Christmas spirit.

Dean Bennett, Managing Director

RNA Longcast

2020	
05 Dec	National Council Meeting – Zoom
21 Dec	Extra Special Zoom Conference - 1400
25 Dec	Christmas Day
26 Dec	Boxing Day
2021	
06 Feb	Area 5 AGM and Quarterly – 1400 - Venue to be announced
12 Feb	Motions for Conference - Deadline
12 Feb	FAC
13 Feb	AMC
05 Mar	National Council
Apr TBC	RAF v Navy Rugby – The Stoop, Twickenham
02 – 05 Apr	Easter Bank Holiday
16 Apr	Open Day
23 Apr TBC	Welfare Seminar - Venue to be announced
03 May	May Bank Holiday
14/15/16 May	Battle of the Atlantic Commemorations – Londonderry
14 May	Open Day
15 May	Armed Forces Day - Scarborough
May TBC	Inter Services T20 Cricket - Lords
31 May	World Uckers Championship – Venue to be announced
31 May	Late May Bank Holiday
May/June TBC	Official Opening of Central Office - Portsmouth
Jun TBC	HMS Collingwood Open/Field Gun Day
11 Jun	National Council / AMC / FAC / SOC Meetings
12 June	National Conference - Nottingham
25 Jun	Open Day
23 Jul	Open Day
Aug	AMC / FAC
30 Aug	August Bank Holiday
11 Sep	AMC / FAC/ National Council
12 Sep	Naval Veterans Biennial Parade - Whitehall
12 Nov	FAC
13 Nov	AMC
14 Nov	Remembrance Sunday
04 Dec	National Council
25 Dec	Christmas Day
26 Dec	Boxing Day
27 Dec	Christmas Holiday
28 Dec	Boxing Day Holiday

D'ye hear there'.....

News from around the Areas and Branches.....

This Month Featuring.....

[RNA St Helens](#)
[RNA Uttoxeter](#)
[RNA Aylesbury](#)
[RNA Folkestone](#)
[RNA Eastbourne](#)
[RNA Ferndown](#)
[RNA Stowmarket](#)
[RNA Hanworth](#)
[RNA Area 12](#)
[RNA Birmingham](#)
[RNA City of Edinburgh](#)
[RNA Margate](#)
[RNA City of Newport](#)
[RNA Falmouth](#)
[RNA Reigate](#)
[RNA Christchurch](#)
[RNA St Neots](#)
[RNA Norwich](#)
[RNA Letchworth](#)
[British Ex Services Association Brisbane](#)

RNA St Helens Branch

St Helens Branch commemorated the Fallen by parading the branch Standard and laying a wreath at the War Memorial.

(Incidentally the memorial bears the names of Ops Man, S/M Andy Christie's grand uncles the Carney brothers who died in action during WW1)



RNA Uttoxeter Branch

Uttoxeter Shipmates gathered social distanced at the Town Hall where they meet the Mayor Councillor Sue McGarry who presented branch Shipmate Mike Bell with the Cyril Martin Tankard. The Cyril Martin Tankard is presented annually to a shipmate who has contributed significantly to the branch.

Shipmate Mike is the Branch Hon Sec who has gone above and beyond during the C19 pandemic to ensure members were contacted individually by him on the phone or by personal visits. S/M Mike also represented the branch at a number of funerals.

BZ Shipmate



RNA Aylesbury No 1 Branch

Aylesbury No.1 Branch Shipmates, Chairman, S/M Tom Spurrier and Secretary, S/M Ron Hale. Laid wreaths on behalf of Shipmates.



RNA Folkestone Branch



Folkestone Branch Chairman, S/M Gerry Allen and Standard Bearer S/M Steve Shaw attended a short ceremony at the Machine Gun Corps (MCG - Cavalry) War Memorial in Folkestone on Armistice Day 11th November.

This memorial commemorates those men of the mounted Machine Gun Corps (Cavalry) that died in World War 1 and has just been given Grade II listed status.

RNA Eastbourne Branch

Thanks to Branch Hon Sec Shipmate Bill Whaley forward the article below concerning 2020 remembrance.

On the 11th November 2020 the "Last Post" rang out at the War Memorial Houses in Victoria Drive. Residents (all Service Veterans and their families) stood for the two minutes silence in their Tribute to the Fallen. Neighbours and close residents attended the short remembrance tribute where the Standards of the Eastbourne Branch of the Royal Naval Association and the South Atlantic Medal Association 1982 (SAMA82) were paraded. Wreaths were laid on behalf of Eastbourne Council by Councillor Amanda Morris and on behalf of SAMA82 by Bill Whaley (resident of Eastbourne War Memorial Houses).



The photo shows RNA Chairman and Standard Bearer John Wicking, RNA Eastbourne and SAMA82 Member Bill Whaley and SAMA82 South East Standard Bearer Robin Turk at the Eastbourne War Memorial Houses.

RNA Ferndown Branch

RNA Ferndown Hon Sec reports that although the branch were unable to hold the customary Remembrance Service due to Covid-19 restrictions, wreaths were laid by Vice Chairman Shipmate Bob Stanyard for RNA, Vice President Shipmate Gareth Peaston for Merchant Navy, and Shipmate Norman Drake for RAF, and Club President Ken Hanley at St Leonards and St Ives Ex Services Club, Ferndown Branch HQ, on Armistice Day, Wednesday 11 November at 11am.



RNA Stowmarket Branch

Please see below an article written by Pete Chivers the Branch PRO which featured in the local 'In Sight' magazine and his report on Stowmarket remembers

On Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day, along with many other Shipmates around the country, Shipmates of Stowmarket RNA remembered those who have lost their lives in conflicts and wars here in the heart of Suffolk.

Having followed the advice both nationally and locally regarding participation in Services of Remembrance, at Stowmarket's Memorial Gates on the 8th, our Branch Chairman, Shipmate Olga Anderson laid a wreath on behalf of the local MP and our patron, Jo Churchill, and Shipmate Pete Chivers laid wreaths on behalf of the Branch and the South Atlantic Medal

Association. We were also delighted to welcome this year Lieutenant Commander Lee Holloway, CEO of the Officers Association, who laid a wreath on behalf of the OA.

Shipmates from the Branch were also present at Services held in Old Newton (Shipmate Andy Tween), Needham Market (Shipmate Peter Down) and Bury St Edmunds (Shipmate Pete Layland).

The picture shows Branch Standard Bearer, Shipmate Gary Dade at the Memorial Gates (erected in 1920), poppy crosses placed at the Gates in memory of those Stowmarket sailors who lost their lives during WW2, Lt Cdr Lee Holloway (head bowed) alongside Shipmate Pete Chivers laying their wreaths, the wreath laid on behalf of the crew of HMS Vengeance in Bury St Edmunds, who have the Freedom of the Borough, and in the middle,



the grave of Assistant Paymaster Thomas Woodward, who died March 1918 whilst serving on board HMS Pekin in Immingham, and was laid to rest in his home town of Stowmarket.

Stowmarket Community Article

A sense of Community is something that we all hold dear, and no more so than in the Royal Navy. It plays a major role in a sailors life throughout their naval career, particularly when they serve on the smallest of vessels or the largest of aircraft carriers – in good times or bad. It means sharing responsibility, having a common goal, looking after the well-being of shipmates and when the time is right, celebrating together. It's not perfect, and nobody professes it is, but without having a strong sense of community, the ship and crew isn't effective.

This sense of belonging extends to the families and loved ones of sailors, particularly at this time of year when a father, mother, son or daughter is serving at sea during Christmas. Neighbours will call neighbours to make sure they are okay and offer a friendly voice of support if needed. Nobody, whether at sea or at home need think they're alone. They're not.

Stowmarket RNA is a part of that community because we are a part of the Royal Navy Family. And as everyone does their best in these continuing uncertain times, we continue to offer an opportunity for our shipmates to still enjoy the naval community spirit that thrives amongst our ranks as they go about their daily lives within the community of Stowmarket, of which we are proud to be a part of.

Each and every shipmate wishes you all a Safe Christmas, and we hope a happy one with your family if that is possible in these most testing of times. We will continue to look optimistically towards a New Year when the community in which we live can once again thrive, of which Stowmarket RNA will be a part.

Merry Christmas and Stay Safe.

RNA Hanworth Branch

RNA Hanworth held a revised service at the Memorial in the Club's garden at Hanworth.

Over thirty Shipmates and members along with the general public. Wreaths were laid on behalf of the RNA, Submariners, Fleet Air Arm & Coastal Forces.

A tot was issued to the memory of "Absent Friends" concluding a convivial event.



RNA Area 12

Thanks to East Antrim Hon Secretary for letting us know that Area 12 Standard was represented by Shipmate Peter Corry from East Antrim Branch, at the N. I. R.B.L. virtual Remembrance Service and stood at his doorstep bearing the Standard on Remembrance Sunday.

I have posted the link for the RBL service. Standards are mustered near the end of the programme.

<https://youtu.be/vnqajar5S1s>

BZ Shipmate Peter.



RNA Birmingham Central Branch



Branch Secretary Trevor Dean reports that on Monday 02 November, 5 members of Birmingham Central Branch paid our respects at the Naval Service Memorial, at the National Arboretum.

A wreath was laid, and a 2 minute silence was held. Two Standards, RNA & Burton Submariners Association, were in attendance along with Branch Shipmates including; S/Ms Trevor Dean, Kathleen Dean, John Carter, Christine Carter, & George Barbrook.

RNA City of Edinburgh Branch

Thanks to City of Edinburgh Chairman, S/M Stephen Elliot for forwarding the article below.



'Remembrance is something that unites every one of us across the country and normally as a branch we would have representatives at the opening of the Garden of Remembrance in Edinburgh, the National Remembrance Sunday Service and the service that is held on Armistice Day itself. We decided as a branch that 2020 with all its challenges wasn't going to stop us paying our respects and remembering those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice as well as Shipmates from our branch who have 'crossed the bar'.

Our Secretary S/M Bob Cumming picked up the 'baton' and ordered the crosses and then respectfully wrote the names of our former

Shipmates on each cross, the 'baton' or crosses were then passed to S/M's Bill Young and Karen Elliot who volunteered to attend the Garden of Remembrance to pay their respects on behalf of the branch and lay the crosses in the Royal Navy (RN) section, both Bill and Karen found this to be a very moving experience.

As can be seen from the photograph the RN section is almost full and we hope as a branch that this is something that will become an important part of our branch calendar.



Chairman Steve Elliot also laid a wreath on behalf of the branch at, as you can see in the photos at the Stone of Remembrance, City Chambers, Edinburgh on Remembrance Sunday 2020.



RNA Margate Branch

On 11th November every year Margate RNA branch muster at the grave of an unknown sailor buried in St Johns cemetery, lay a wreath and say a prayer. This year only a few turned up including the Mayor and Mayoress but due to the high incidence of COVID-19 in Thanet that was to be expected.

The grave is separated from the local war graves which are mainly airmen who were killed in action or accidents at nearby RAF Manston.



There are also the graves of Germans who were shot down, up until 1952 there were some French buried there, but their bodies were taken back to France for reburial.

Standard Bearer Shipmate Richard Hillier and members of the unknown sailors grave in Margate cemetery.

RNA City of Newport (Gwent) Branch

Our thanks to Shipmate Phil Mountain for forwarding the very interesting article below;

In lieu of the usual Remembrance Day commemorations, Shipmates (and cousins) Mike Wakefield and Phil Mountain from the City of Newport (Gwent) Branch lay memorials to the twenty-eight Royal Navy sailors, three Royal Marines and eleven Merchant Navy crew buried in CWGC plots in Saint Woolos Cemetery, Newport.

Most died on active duty of wounds, during air raids, through accident or illness (including the post-Great War flu epidemic). Buried alongside them are six French matelots from the First World War, a Portuguese sailor and a Dutch stoker from WWII.



Photo to the left - Mike pays respects to Able Seaman Henry Hayes who died in 1917 aboard HMS Lowestoft. This *Town*-class light cruiser was launched in 1913; Mike served on its *Rothersay*-class successor.

Photo to the right - Remembering Ordinary Seaman William Sullivan who died in 1917 aged eighteen while stationed at HMS Pembroke where Phil did his Part II training and killick's course.





This is the section of the cemetery where the French sailors are buried. This plot holds a double internment:
Gunner Emile Gerbier and
Seaman
Jean Baptiste Barbinziza,

'Mort Pour La France'.



Merci pour l'article mais amis.....

(Courtesy Del and Rodney Trotter...)

RNA Falmouth Branch

We are very grateful to Falmouth Branch Chairman, S/M Mick Stevens forwarding the article below and keeping us up to date with all the branches news.

Like all Associations, clubs and organisations the Falmouth Royal Naval Association has been coping through the pandemic, the loss of face to face meetings has robbed some of our more vulnerable Shipmates of the opportunity to meet with their friends and socialise, of days out and lunches and of gathering to remember those made the Ultimate Sacrifice.

In the months since March and the first Lockdown the Branch has lost three Shipmates, Shipmate John Low in March, Shipmate Alan Polley in April and Shipmate Sir James Jungius in October we remember them and all who have 'Crossed The Bar', unable to attend their funeral services we will remember them in our own way when next we meet face to face. We have also had new members join, Shipmates we have yet to meet, welcome, we look forward to catching up with you in the near future.

The Branch has continued to function, a monthly newsletter is distributed to all members, e-mails, telephone calls, Zoom meetings, and house visits keep us all in touch and supporting each other and help is only a telephone call away.



Starting with the St Nazaire Commemoration Service way back in March the Falmouth Royal Naval Association has worked with the Town Council to ensure that Services of Remembrance, under the prevailing guidelines, have gone ahead. These events included VE Day, VJ day where the Branch identified over 125 names from the Falmouth Book of Remembrance, each was given a named Poppy Cross and these were placed in Falmouth's new Garden of Remembrance, First Poppy Laying, Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day.

Another highlight this year was to see the Falmouth Royal Naval Association House Flag

being flown from the Municipal Building on Trafalgar Day, October 21st, a great honour. The Chairman also managed to fit in a visit to HMS Tamar, the Royal Navys latest and 'greenest' warship during its time alongside Falmouth Docks, he says; *"its the only ship I have visted in seventeen years that has made me wish I was still in the Service"*. The Branch hopes to forge stronger links with Cornwall's warship in the coming months.

As we approach the Christmas period where people can feel more alone than usual we would ask that Branch Members, Shipmates, Veterans and all in the community continue to look after each other, help is never more than a phone call way.

Anyone interested in joining the Falmouth Royal Naval Association should in the first instance contact the Secretary at secretaryfalmouthrna@outlook.com, you will be assured of a warm welcome.

The photo collage: Top Left - VJ Day, The Falmouth WWII Fallen Cross, Top Right - Falmouth RNA House Flag on Trafalgar Day, Bottom Left - Shipmate Mick Stevens, Chairman (L) & Shipmate Stev Eva, Town Mayor (R) visiting HMS Tamar, Bottom Right - Canon Bill Sturt-White conducts the Remembrance Day Service

RNA Reigate Branch

2020 has not been the best of years, however this current climate has not stopped Reigate from our duties.

From the beginning of lockdown, we set up our "Oppo check" and our younger members kept in contact with our older members. Monthly Zoom meetings are the norm now, but highly enjoyable.

For VE & VJ days, we stood on our doorsteps. During the brief period of the easing of restrictions, we were able to make good our promise to the Amethyst Association and carry out a reduced ceremony at the grave of Lt Cdr John Kerans RN.



In October, we heard that, due to the Corona virus, the local British Legion would not be able to man a poppy stand in our local shopping centre, which they have done every year since it was built in 1992. The branch stepped forward. "Let us run it for you". our offer was accepted. We had run the poppy Appeal for 10 days until the second lockdown put an end to our efforts. In that short space of time, the total we raised for the poppy appeal was over £20,000. (See what happens when the senior service takes charge?).



Remembrance Sunday saw us revert to standing outside our homes at 11am, some even blasted out "Last Post" through loudspeakers for our neighbours.

Our bond with each other has remained strong and have even increased our membership!
2021 cannot come soon enough when we can meet up and enjoy a tot (or two) together again.

RNA Christchurch Branch

Christchurch Branch shipmates have been busy during the Remembrance and Armistice days period.

S/Ms Brain Prince and Christie Payne and branch shipmates attended a Remembrance ceremony at Purwell Cross Memorial Stone and laid a wreath.



RNA St Neots Branch

St Neots Shipmates were busy over the Remembrance period.



S/M Jayne 'Dusty' Miller, Branch Standard Bearer Tony Webley and S/M Maureen Ridley were present as was S/M John Lee as standard bearer for the Royal British legion at the St Neots War Memorial service. S/M Peter Plant, a senior member, recited the 98 names on the Memorial plus that of Cpl Alex Guy MC. The Lord Lieutenant's Deputy the Rt Hon Lord Lansley CBE PC DL represented the Queen.

S/M Keith Ridley was also present and, in his capacity as President of the St Neots Royal British Legion branch, was also responsible for organising wreath-laying ceremonies and services around the surrounding area.

Social distancing was observed and in line with current guidelines the names of those who attended were taken.

S/M John Gibbs laid the wreath at **Eynesbury war memorial**. It was a solemn ceremony in that, apart from John, S/M Roy Lodge (with back to camera) after laying the

St Neots Branch wreath and paying respects at **Eaton Socon**.

Roy was encouraged that members of the public who turned up either stayed in family bubbles or maintained social distancing there was the Vicar and only two other wreath-layers.

S/M Ian Cameron laid the St Neots Branch wreath at **Cambourne church**. Cambourne, a township near St Neots, has no war memorial so the usual parade was not allowed under the Covid-19 restrictions.



The church therefore tastefully decorated all its windows with their own wreaths and poppies in the manner of the window above.

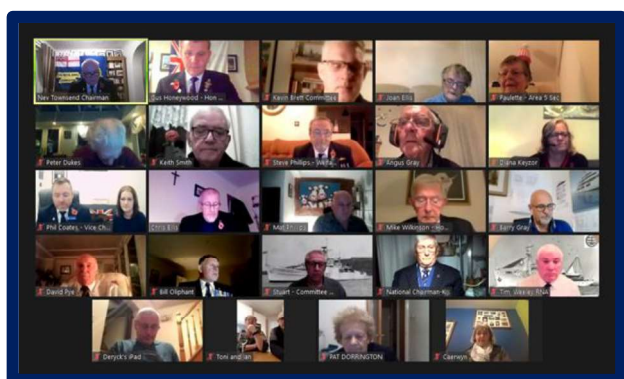
RNA Norwich Branch

Despite the latest set of restrictions imposed at the beginning of November, Norwich Branch have been reasonably busy prior to and going into the latest lockdown.

Although unable to host our usual Trafalgar Night Dinner, the opportunity was still taken to remember and celebrate the occasion using Zoom and the normal formalities were observed with the Loyal Toast and The Immortal Memory being observed, before the reading of Nelsons Prayer, written on the morning of 21 October 1805.

Pickle Night was also observed on 6 November, again using Zoom, and following the Loyal Toast and a toast to the Royal Naval Association, the three despatches were read out as delivered by Lt John Lapenotiere to Admiralty Secretary, William Marsden of the Admiralty Board at approx. 0100 on the morning of 6 November 1805.

Moving to Remembrance Sunday, and Shipmates were encouraged to observe the two minutes silence on their doorstep, and although the parade in Norwich had been cancelled, organisations were invited to lay a wreath at the war memorial during Remembrance Sunday and the Branch Chairman, S/M Nev Townsend was joined by Branch Vice Chairman, S/M Phil Coates in representing the Branch in laying the wreath. (Picture 1 above)



Before concluding formal Branch activity for the month, Zoom was again called on to host the November Branch Meeting and Branch Rededication. The event was also attended by the National Chairman and General Secretary, as well as the Area 5 Chairman and Secretary and Shipmates were able to tune in from as far away as Italy. On completion of the Branch Meeting all present observed an extremely informative presentation by the General Secretary. (Picture 2)

Although we are not sure what the next couple of months will have in store, the Branch continues to use the online facilities that are available to them, and in addition to hosting their Committee and Branch Meetings, will also be hosting two virtual tots in December.

RNA Letchworth Branch

1st Garden City, Letchworth Branch had their annual trip to the RMC or Home Club as it always is to me, in October. Still under Covid 19 rules, 11 of us enjoyed a four day visit to Pompey enjoying the delights of the Dockyard, Portchester Castle, Spinnaker Tower and the shops. We very kindly let Central Office of the list this time.

The RMC welcomed us as usual with safety precautions in place to keep us safe in our little bubbles of 6.

However, due to the first and now second lockdown the RMC is suffering very badly and we promised to remind all shipmates that they are still there as the best Naval accommodation in Portsmouth, from December 2nd. Especially for reunions.

The whole of our three-night, four day stay cost as little as £138.75 per. person for Bed, Breakfast and Dinner, with the RMC membership or RNA discount. (Booked direct, not through accommodation companies online as they lose a large part of the booking)

As someone recently reminded me you could stay in the local boring Premier Inn for as little as £35 per. night. But you would have to add on to that your Breakfast, Dinner and parking. And you wouldn't get the use of a pool or gym. Nor that wonderful ambience of being in a Naval setting that the RMC still gives me even after 72 years.

It would be very sad to lose this wonderful hotel with its Naval connection through lack of us supporting it.

British Ex Service Association Brisbane

Trafalgar Night Report from Queensland..... (Land of the Faux AFL Grand Final!)
(As submitted by Shipmates Karen Truman and Colin Roberts)

On October 21st this year, Members of British Ex Services Association (BESA) here in Brisbane attended our Trafalgar Night Dinner hosted at The Anchor by the Bay pub (I kid you not). The function was attended by 12 members of the group (we have around 400 members here spread over the larger Brisbane / Gold Coast / Sunshine Coast and beyond region). Unfortunately, we had to invite Pongos and Crabs but we educated them in the ways of the R.N.

The meal consisted of Salmon en crouete (some Frenchie thing), Beef Wellington, carved at the table and apple crumble. Port was passed in the traditional manner around the table and the toasts were given with correct etiquette. Officers and Senior Rates of the Senior Service remained seated for the Loyal toast whilst the urks stood, and the toast to 'the Immortal One' Horatio Nelson was observed in complete silence.

Copious ales were drunk (they have UK beers and cider in this pub here) and the evening was ended with us all pulling up bollards and spinning dits till the wee hours (which was hard as I was on shift at 06 dubs)

I've attached a phot of us and before anyone says anything, we left putting the flags up to the colonials, who managed to get the union flag upside down. We're looking to get this done as a regular thing each year now (this was our first, duly organised by myself and a cadet subby) so if anyone manages to get out of the disease ridden cesspit that is Melbourne by this time next year and is up this way, this is the place to come.



[Roy Lovell](#)
[Dennis Stephenson](#)
[William Kempson](#)
[Pat Whiley](#)
[Alan Robinson](#)
[Duncan Knight](#)
[Jim Burrow](#)
[Don Stockley](#)
[Tony Sparkes](#)

Roy Lovell - Chard Branch

It is with great sadness and heavy heart that Chard Chairman has to report the 'Crossing of the bar' of our dear and beloved founder member and President of Chard Branch, Shipmate Roy Lovell, who passed away on Friday 30th October 2020 after a short illness.

Roy was instrumental in enquiring of the RNA Headquarters, some 33 years ago, into the possibility of forming a branch within Chard and because Roy made the initial enquiry into the opening of an RNA branch he was 'volunteered' by RNA HQ as Secretary of the new branch.

Roy served the branch as Secretary for 28 years, giving unstinted support to all its members and the branch in general, only relinquishing the role to provide his wife (Ros) with additional support due to ill health.



In September 2017 Roy was voted in by the Committee as RNA Chard Branch President, and in the October of that year was honoured to welcome many shipmates from Area 4 to the Chard Branch 30th anniversary celebrations.

Shipmate Roy Lovell will be sorely missed by all shipmates and friends within RNA Chard Branch, and members of the Chard local community, being born and bred in Chard, Somerset.

Pat Whiley - Norwich Branch

Norwich Branch are sad to announce that Shipmate Pat Whiley crossed the bar on 25th November 2020 aged 79.

Pat Whiley left the Royal Navy as a Leading Seaman; having served between 1956 - 1968 onboard HMS Ganges, HMS Vernon, HMS Alamein, HMS Vanguard, HMS Bulwark, HMS St Angelo, HMS Zest, HMS Aurora and HMS Victory

Pat was originally a member from 1984 to 1989; leaving due to his work and TA commitments, before rejoining in 2002, and subsequently served as Branch Chairman and Branch Social Secretary and was made a Life Member in 2018.

He will be much missed.

William Kempson – RNA Folkestone

It is with great sadness that the Branch reports that Shipmate William crossed the bar on Wednesday 4th November 2020 aged 83 years.



He was a highly respected member of the Branch which he joined on 25th October 2002 and had served on the Committee since 2006 as Social Secretary.

Bill commenced his sea service by working as a purser, he then joined the Royal Navy for National Service 1955 – 1957. Afterwards he joined RNR between 1957 – 1978 attaining the rank of Lt.Cdr.RNR.

Bill will be greatly missed by everyone, he was a true gentleman and during his term as Social Secretary he arranged all Trafalgar Dinners and many other activities which were greatly appreciated by all who attended. He was also a keen supporter of the RNLI and the Kent Marine Cadets attending their annual summer camps.

Dennis Stephenson - Rosyth and West Fife

It is with great sadness that Rosyth and West Fife Branch report the very sudden crossing the bar of shipmate and life member Dennis Stephenson.

He will be much missed.

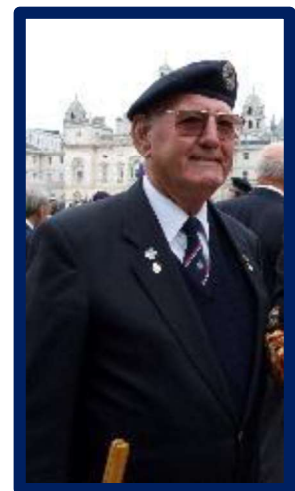
Alan Robinson – Greenford Branch

The National Ceremonial Advisor, S/M Bob Coburn has forwarded the article below concerning S/M Alan Robinson who was known nationally as a former National Standard Bearer.

It was with great sadness that I received a message from his wife Yvonne, that Alan had crossed the bar on Sunday 15th November 2020.

I first met Alan as he judged the National Standard Bearers competition in 2002 in Portsmouth. Alan was the NSB in 1990, 1992 and 1994 and was National Council Member for Area 1 in 1992-1994. Then he became National Ceremonial Officer, with a great bearing on Parade (his presence could be felt as well as heard).

As I progressed through the ranks to NSB, Alan was always ready with any advice and help if required. He would always encourage any up and coming standard bearers. The only time I felt sorry for Alan was at his last National Conference in Plymouth, when it was so wet, that for the first time he had to cancel the Parade on the Sunday, which was the day he handed the Pace Stick to Michael Kieran. His famous saying "it never rains on my Parade" let him down that day.



The best piece of advice Alan gave me was 'ask how many verses of the National Anthem were to be played', this stemmed from when as NSB, he received the new National Standard from Princess Anne at the Albert Hall, after Dipping for the Queen, 'Carried' after one verse, only to hear them playing the second verse. Of course, Alan being Alan he laughed it off.

Fair winds and calm waters shipmate, I and many more will miss you greatly.

Jim Burrow – RNA Brighlingsea

Don Stockingly – RNA Brightlingsea

“**WHERE THE ***** **** IS BRIGHTINGSEA?**” said the crew of Motor Torpedo Boat (MTB) 766, on which Shipmate Jim Burrow was serving in 1944. He had been aboard her for patrols in the North Sea, escorting sailing barges as they travelled along the coast, and on a secret mission to Norway.



Entering Brightlingsea (when we were HMS Nemo) he was to await her refit nearby. He noticed the steam train coming into the town with just one coach and, like the other crew, he wondered just where he had ended up.

Well, he ended up meeting Mary on VE Night, 8th May 1945. They married and - **WAIT FOR IT** – eventually bore a son on Christmas Day. Jim's real name was actually Joseph so he and Mary almost made history! Their son's name? Chris!

Jim joined our branch in 1993, its founding year, destined to become our President.

Shipmate Don Stockley was one of our affiliated members, a Royal Artillery veteran. Like most of we Auxiliary Members (plug!) he became an essential part of our branch's backbone. A kind, cheerful and outgoing man, he always gave of himself to those in need and could always be relied upon to be where and when he was most needed. Arguably our most popular member, he will be greatly missed.

Both were to have their funerals just one day apart, on 19th and 18th November, respectively. We were honoured to see them off with Standards and a Guard of Honour. We remember them fondly and with gratitude and we wish them fair winds ahead.

The photo shows President Jim Burrow (L) and S/m Don Stockley (R) taken by Jim's son Chris on Anzac Day 2016.

Duncan Knight - Chichester Branch

Captain Duncan Dalziel Knight RN (rtd) DSC a veteran, believed to be the Royal Navy's last surviving officer to have served throughout World War Two, died peacefully 8 November having survived to celebrate his 100th birthday in October.

The Captain had an esteemed 38-year career with the Royal Navy, having joined as an Officer Cadet at the age of 14. He was serving at sea from the South Africa station when war was declared in 1939 and battled for five years. Between 1940 and 1942, Capt. Knight served in the destroyer HMS Hesperus in the Western Approaches and the north Atlantic. It was while defending Atlantic convoy HG78 that his ship rammed and sank U-93 in January 1942 and subsequently the then Lieutenant Knight was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for 'skill and enterprise in action against enemy submarines'.

In July 1943, while serving as the First Lieutenant in the Hunt-class destroyer HMS Goathland, he was then Mentioned in Despatches for 'outstanding leadership, skill and determination in intercepting an enemy convoy'.

Having served in the north Atlantic during the early stages of the war, he was transferred to the Far East. Between 1945 and 1946, he was Flag Lieutenant and squadron communications officer in the 5th Cruiser Squadron of the British Pacific Fleet. He was present for the surrender of the Japanese in Tokyo Bay in August 1945 - marking the end of the Second World War.

In his final appointment, as Senior British Officer and Assistant Chief of Staff Communications Knight was appointed Commodore at NATO's Allied Forces Southern Europe in Naples. He served 38 years and left the Royal Navy in 1972.

On retirement he accepted the post of Private Secretary to Lord Mayor of London before becoming General Administrator of Trinity College of Music – a post he held until 1985.

Captain Knight's naval service of almost 40 years took him from pre-war service in the peace time Navy into the NATO world of the 1970's. At the age of 100 he was still an active and alert member of the greater naval community in his role as Vice-President of the Chichester Branch of the Royal Naval Association. At his recent 100th birthday celebration he was presented with a framed letter from the First Sea Lord, Admiral Tony Radakin. In his letter, Adm Radakin wrote: 'We owe a great debt to those such as you who served throughout that conflict and afterwards. Your actions both in war and in peace were in the finest traditions of the Royal Navy and are an inspiration to us all.'

Duncan was beloved father of Michael, Venetia and Lucinda, grandfather, and great-grandfather. he was predeceased by his wife, Flavia, and one of his grandsons, Nick.

Tony Sparks – Royal Navy

Central Office received the email below from Mr Steve Woodbridge informing shipmates that Tony Sparks had crossed the bar on 18 November 2020.

Tony's dob is 16/07/56 at Tameside General Hospital in Greater Manchester. He served as an LREM from October 71 to January 79. His last ship being HMS Naiad. He then joined Derbyshire Constabulary in February 79 serving until August 2005. He lived most of his life in Glossop, Derbyshire. His last address was on Ebenezer Street, Whitfield, Glossop. Steve says he has contacted Derbyshire Constabulary in order that former colleagues in the force may be notified and asks if any former Navy colleagues to pass on the sad news.



Market Harborough Branch, Vice Chairman, Marcus Middleton lays a wreath on behalf of the Branch



S/M Steve Elliot - Chairman City of Edinburgh 'Last post' at front door



S/M George Wylie Portsmouth Branch



S/Ms Ken Satterthwaite and Ron Hale take 1 salute in Aylesbury



RNA Basildon Chairman S/M Trevor Dunne and S/M Mike Byrne at Pitsea remembrance service



Phil Stansbie parading St Helens Branch



Torpoint and Rame Branch Commemoration



Ferndown S/Ms Bob Stanyard and Gareth Peaston at West Moors



*S/M Harriet Rowling RNA
Reigate VJ Day*



*S/M Neil Smith and son on
Remembrance Day*



S/M 'Stumpy' Harvey (Reigate Branch)

UK Holiday Group /CONA Holiday Service

- Variety of special deals for both Groups and Individuals. 1% of turnover thorough CONA Holiday Service is returned to the RNA <https://royal-naval-association.co.uk/members/offers/members-cona-holidays-service/>

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard



- RNA member entry just £10 plus four guest at £10 each provides access to the all attractions including the Submarine Museum, RM Museum and Explosion!.

Legal Services



Free 30 minute legal advice with Coffin Mew.
armedforces@coffinmew.co.uk 0800 827168

Breakdown Service



- RAC Breakdown and recovery service
asec@arno.org.uk or 0207 4025231



Organisers of Reunions should be aware the CONA Travel will match or better any other 'like for like' Reunion/Group Trips bookings so why not give them an opportunity to impress you.
0844 264 2122 conatravelservices@justforgroups.co.uk



- Discounts on a large range of new Cars www.motorfinity.uk/rna

The 'Shortcast' Editors Note

Due to the current Coronavirus situation Shipmates should contact the individual Association to ensure that the reunion is still going ahead.

Please forward any reunions for 2021 and I will publish them here

Note from the CONA (Conference of Naval Associations) Secretary -

I would be very grateful if organisers of reunions would oblige me by obtaining a quote from the CONA Travel Service, who will not be beaten on like for like price. CONA Travel Service donate 1% of their CONA business back into the Conference totalling to date £2,700 which provides funds to assist members Associations. Oh, and by the way, their service is first class as well.

(Stop Press – for those that are unaware sadly IOW Tours has announced they have gone out of business and closed.)

	Please check go to link for RN Shipmates.co.uk for a comprehensive list of further reunions. www.rnshipmates.co.uk	
2021		
7/10 May	The HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association will hold their 42nd Annual Reunion & AGM at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea from 7th to 10th May 2021. Please contact Secretary Denis Askham for more details. askhamd3@gmail.com	Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association

Swinging the Lamp – December 2020

The RNA is grateful to the Author, Lt Cdr Lawrie Phillips TD, RD, RNR for allowing us to publish a selection from the RN Day by Day. If you would like to read more it can be purchased from - The History Press and is priced £60 ISBN 978 0 7509 8266 5



Date	Year	Entry
1st	1954	Old royal yacht <i>Victoria and Albert</i> , launched at Pembroke Dockyard 9 May 1899, left Portsmouth under tow for breakers.
2nd	1941	Battleship HMS <i>Prince of Wales</i> and battlecruiser HMS <i>Repulse</i> arrived in Singapore to form the core of the new Eastern Fleet. 'In the streets the news soon spread among the Asiatic population. " <i>Kapal perang besar sudah datang</i> " ("Big warships have arrived"), reported Malay cardrivers waiting in the car parks. It was the news for which European and Asiatic alike had been waiting.' – <i>The Times</i> , 3 December 1941. The two capital ships were sunk by Japanese air attack eight days later.
3rd	1945	The first carrier-deck landing and take-off by a jet aircraft; Lt-Cdr Eric 'Winkle' Brown RNVR (later Captain, CBE, DSC, AFC, RN) flying a Sea Vampire from RNAS Ford, Sussex, on the new light fleet carrier <i>Ocean</i> , Capt Caspar John RN, off the Isle of Wight. The aircraft, LZ551/G, is preserved at the FAA Museum, Yeovilton.
4th	1812	<i>HMS Victory</i> entered Portsmouth for the last time. Dry-docked in 1922.
5th	1804	Rank of sub-lieutenant established by Order in Council, because of shortage of Second Masters. Disappeared after 1815 but revived in 1863 with single .-in stripe, which caused some confusion.
6th	1956	The end of mandatory death penalty for naval offences, other than assisting an enemy, included in recommendations by a Parliamentary Select Committee on the Naval Discipline Act. The report proposed the first major changes in the established code of naval discipline since the NDA of 1866 which was based on Articles of War passed by parliament in 1661. All officers would be eligible to sit on courts martial, hitherto restricted to executive (seamen) officers. Mutiny defined for the first time: 'a combination between two or more persons subject to service law or between persons, two at least of whom are subject to service law, to overthrow or resist lawful authority in Her Majesty's forces.
7th	1941	Japanese naval air attack on US Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii and British base at Hong Kong.
8th	1968	Closing ceremony of <i>St Vincent</i> , boys' training establishment at Gosport.
9th	1914	Commissioning of <i>Ark Royal</i> , purchased for conversion to seaplane carrier.
10th	1747	Relative ranks between officers of the Navy and the Army approved by King George II.

11 th	1953	WRNS new-entry training establishment at Burghfield near Reading since July 1945, commissioned as <i>Dauntless</i> . Paid off 14 August 1981 and training transferred to <i>Raleigh</i> .
12 th	1888	Establishment of two Schools of Signalling, one in Devonport Barracks and the other in Portsmouth, originally in <i>Duke of Wellington</i> but eventually in <i>Victory</i> .
13 th	1980	Cdr Harry Pursey RN died aged 89; the first naval officer promoted from the lower deck to become a MP (Kingston-upon-Hull 1945–70).
14 th	1985	<i>HMS Caledonia</i> ceased to operate as a Training Establishment for MEA apprentices and training task transferred to <i>HMS Sultan</i> . Paid off and became annex to <i>Cochrane</i> on 17 December 1985.
15 th	1913	<i>HMS Tiger</i> , battlecruiser, launched at John Brown's. The Royal Navy's last coal-burning capital ship to remain in the operational fleet, paying off in 1931.
16 th	1957	The submarine <i>Thorough</i> , Lt-Cdr R.C.H. Mason RN, returned to <i>Dolphin</i> becoming the f i r s t submarine to circumnavigate the world. The boat had sailed from Portsmouth in October 1949 for Australia where she served eight years
17 th	1939	German pocket battleship <i>Admiral Graf Spee</i> scuttled by her crew off Montevideo following the Battle of the River Plate.
18 th	1677	Qualifying examination introduced for lieutenants, RN.
19 th	2002	First RFA Officers' Course passed out of Britannia RN College, Dartmouth.
20 th	1963	Ceremonial at Colours and Sunset . Henceforth, men hoisting and hauling down the Colours are to keep their caps on.
21 st	1983	<i>HMS Fisgard</i> , Artificers' Training Establishment, Torpoint, training ceased. The last class of direct artificers to be trained at HMS <i>Fisgard</i> entered 6 March 1983.
22 nd	1916	War Cabinet directed the establishment of a Fifth Sea Lord to be responsible for naval air services, 'contrary to the considered views of the Admiralty'.
23 rd	1940	An 'immense explosion' near Unicorn Gate, Portsmouth Dockyard, possibly caused by a crashing German aircraft with a full bomb load, destroyed several nearby streets. 'The dockyard wall held but there were 40 men in the yard wounded' – Admiral Sir William James, C-in-C Portsmouth.
24 th	1777	Capt Cook discovered Christmas Island.
25 th	1991	The Red Flag was hauled down at the Kremlin in Moscow; end of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.
26 th	1842	Second and Third Class Engineers given similar uniform to First but with subtly different buttons at the collar.
27 th	1994	Rear-Admiral Godfrey Place, who gained his VC for the X-craft attack on <i>Tirpitz</i> in 1943, died aged 73. After two years of captivity he trained as a pilot and served in the carrier <i>Glory</i> during the Korean War.
28 th	1922	<i>HMS Rodney</i> and <i>HMS Nelson</i> laid down. Nicknamed the Cherry Trees because they were cut down by Washington (naval) Treaty. Only British battleships to carry main armament in triple turrets and only

		British ships to mount 16-in guns.
29 th	1860	<i>HMS Warrior</i> , first British seagoing ironclad, launched at Blackwall. Became tender to <i>Vernon</i> , reduced to fuelling hulk at Pembroke Dock and subsequently restored at Hartlepool. Returned to Portsmouth as ' <i>Warrior 1860</i> ' on 16 June 1987.
30 th	1943	long-lived warship. Light fleet carrier <i>HMS Venerable</i> launched at Cammell Laird, Birkenhead. She was commissioned on 17 January 1945 and joined the British Pacific Fleet and engaged Japanese forces off Hong Kong two weeks after VJ-Day. Paid off 1947 and sold to Dutch government. Served as Hr Ms <i>Karel Doorman</i> until sold to Argentina in 1968. As the <i>Venticinco de Mayo</i> , with Super Etendard embarked, she was a factor in the Falklands War in 1982 but was kept out of harm's way. Still in service fifty years after first commissioning.
31 st	1983	The RN Oil Fuel Depots at Falmouth and Pembroke Dock closed.

2021 Diaries

The 2021 diary will be available as the diary part only, price - £5.

Diary with the NEW dark blue crested cover and address book, price - £8

This year the address book is also available too. – free, just ask for one!

Orders should be sent to the address below and accompanied either by a cheque or card details.

To: Royal Naval Association,
Bld 1/087 Scott Road
HM Naval Base
Portsmouth
PO1 3LU

Order form

From:Branch/ Member

Please provide **2021 RNA insert Diaries @£5.00**each £

Please provide **2021 Diaries with Cover @£8.00**each £

Please provide **Address Book inserts @ £1.00** each £

TOTAL £.....

Deliver the order to S/M.....

Address.....

.....

..... Post Code:.....

Find enclosed a cheque to the value of - £made out to The Royal Naval Association

Or charge to my Credit Card/Debit Card; the details of which are:

Card in the name of

Credit Card/Debit Card Number.....

Valid From: Expires

Three Digit Security Code (where applicable)

Contact telephone number

Card holder's address of different from delivery address

Address.....

.....

..... Post Code:.....