

Issue 60 Christmas 2019



Well that was a very busy year and most enjoyable celebrating 100 years of naval photography, hope you all had a good time here's looking forward to next year.

The committee had a meeting in London in early December and it was agreed that the reunion next year 2020 will be in Edinburgh on the weekend 9th 10th & 11th October. Ray Whitehouse your social secretary will organise this event with further details and cost with the Easter Newsletter.

This issue has full details of the Remembrance Sunday organised by Danny on pages 3, 4 & 5, well done everyone who took part you looked impressive .

Ray Pogson has written about 'The Class of '58 – HMS Peregrine ' pages 6,7, 8 & 9 thank you Ray - I will look forward to you all being inspired to write your own stories and sending them in.

Wishing you all a very
Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

Hilary & Steve King



Angela McLeod, Glynis Shaw
& Janet Pierpoint



Photo Hilary King



Photo by Phot L/Phot Joe Cater from the FPU(E)

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Farewell to Shipmate - Colin Hembrow



Front row 2nd from left Colin Hembrow

Hist597

Sad news Colin Hembrow has crossed the Bar, serving between Nov 1948 and May 1956 he did his basic training at Royal Arthur Corsham and sea training on HMS Illustrious. He completed his airmanship at RNAS Culdrose and was on Phot 2 course No 7 C.S. (above) on 2nd June 1950. Colin served at RNAS Daedalus, HMS Illustrious, RNAS Brawdy, HMS Newcastle in the far east and last RNAS Yeovilton.

Married father of 4 worked as photographer and printer at the Western Mail before moving to Treherbert in the Rhondda Valley, he then managed a printing firm in Cardiff for over 30 years after this closed he work at another print firm for 5 years before he retired. Colin was married for 49 years and nursed his wife who died in 2003, he remained active and extremely agile and got on with his life. He was extremely proud when his son Gregory joined the Navy and became a Chief Petty Officer who retired aged 50 in 2007, they enjoyed many hours relating different stories to each other about the navy. He was diagnosed with Lung Cancer at 78 but that didn't stop him after his treatment was told he was in remission, that was 10 years ago. He adopted a stray cat, whom he adored. On 7th November he went into hospital where passed away 4 days later surrounded by his family.

Remembrance Sunday 2019

Dear All,

It is again that I mention with a massive sense of pride that I felt at the immaculate turn out that the RNPA marchers displayed at the Remembrance Sunday this year, at the front of the Navy Column. This message is to ALL this years marchers, and those who unfortunately couldn't make it, plus those wishing to join us next year.

Ian Wrightson, who led from the front and the rest of the Platoon were extremely professional in the way they conducted themselves and afterwards people commented on how smart we were, to that end, Drill Practice for next year has been cancelled! Ha! Ha!

It is also with a great disappointment that we did not appear or even receive a mention on TV after all the efforts, of Jan, Ray and myself had put into making this a special year, 'Our 100th'.

So it's a special thank you to L/Phot Joe Cater for capturing us all on Horse Guards, - thanks Joe!

After Xmas I will be compiling the List of Marchers for 2020, but in the meantime, those of you who would like to purchase a RN Photographic Branch Wall Shield (see attachment) please get in contact with me.

AGAIN, A BIG THANK YOU TO YOU ALL

Best for now,

Danny



Photo Sheila Hopley



Danny du Feu laying the poppy wreath watched by members of the RNPA
Photos Hilary & Steve King



L-R:

Richard Thompson, Ric Burch, Julie Richardson, Danny du Feu, Maurice Brailey, Ian Wrightson, Paul Hopley, Bob Stanyard, Cath Kelly, Stuart Wood, Phil Everitt, Ray Whitehouse, Joan Roberts, Wilf Francis, Ian Hooper, Maggie Pugh, Roger Forbes, Angela McLeod, Glynis Shaw, Alan Ferguson, June Smith, Mike Gilbert, Janet Pierpoint, Vince Richards, Crissie Proudley

Absent from photo: Brian Jackson, John Siviter, & Ted Tierney 27 marched in all.
Photos Hilary King

Parade complete must be Tot Time in The Tom Cribb PH - Cheers!



Danny presents the Landlord of The Tom Cribb PH with RNPA Sheild.



Steve & Hilary King, Roger Forbes, Bob Stanyard, Sheila & Paul Hopley, Pam Forbes, Rebecca Freeman, Slinger Wood



Ian Wrightson, Alan Ferguson, Mike Gilbert, Cath Kelly, Ian Hooper & Paul Hopley



Ian Wrightson, Alan Ferguson Mike Gilbert, Ray Whitehouse & Bob Stanyard.

'Thank you for your Service!'

Once upon a dark, cold, Remembrance Sunday evening near Carnaby Street in Central London in 2019, three footsore RNPA Marchers were trying to find somewhere to eat. Shortly they came upon an Inn, where they were welcomed into an upstairs restaurant and ordered meals and a bottle of red wine between them.

During the meal, fellow diners from an adjacent table, who had finished their meal, paused from leaving the restaurant to say, in American accents, 'Thank you for your Service', to which the Marchers thanked them for their kindness.

On finishing their meal, the marchers were about to ask for the bill, when a family on the next table also thanked them for their service., and added that they had bought them a bottle of red wine which the waitress brought over to the table.

The Marchers, even more taken aback, thanked the family and asked where they were from. The gentleman answered that he was from Canada and his wife from Australia.

Mike Gilbert, Ian Hooper and Danny du Feu again thanked the family and returned to the O'Neals Pub where 'The Fallen Hero's' Jazz Band were playing till late.

Thank You for Your Service!



Danny du Feu - Cenotaph March Representative



HMS Queen Elizabeth sailed back into Portsmouth passing her sister ship HMS Prince of Wales **5**

The Class of '58 – HMS Peregrine

SIXTY ONE years... that was the interval between Mike Lay and Paul Parrack first visiting Yapton's Maypole Inn in 1958, and enjoying a pint together in the popular watering hole more recently as they reminisced about their initial photographic training at nearby HMS Peregrine.

Enjoying the stroll down memory lane with them was Ray Pogson who had travelled down from South Yorkshire to stay with Paul and his wife Sue in Havant so he could join the party of RNPA members and guests on their visit to the new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth in Portsmouth.

The trio were back in the RNAS Ford area for a day as a personal celebration to mark the Photographic Branch's 100th Anniversary having earlier had lunch in the Arun View pub in Littlehampton ('Chopper') and briefly visiting the site of the former RN School of Photography, now much changed by the development of various business premises in recent years.



Mike, left, Ray, centre, and Paul drink to 61 years of friendship in the Maypole Inn.



PO Phot Taff Ayres explains the basics of press photography to Bill McRobbie, left, Ray Pogson, Duncan Reid and Mike Lay . Photo – Alex Jamieson

The Maypole Inn survives while many of the local pubs popular with HMS Peregrine-based sailors for a run ashore 60 years ago are long gone, including the Shoulder of Mutton and Cucumbers - fondly known in the 1950's as 'The Meat and Two Veg.'

Mike and Ray were part of No 6 Phot 111's Course along with Duncan 'Blood' Reid, Bill McRobbie and Alex Jamieson (the latter two both deceased). Their basic 12-week course, instructed by PO David 'Taff' Ayers, began in July 1958.

Paul arrived at Ford a few weeks later to join No 7 Phot 111's Course under CPO Ken Smith and PO Ayers. Fellow trainees included Ian 'Jock' Paterson, Michael 'Spike' Lee, Michael Brookes, John 'Andy' Andrews and Robert 'Bob' Gregory.

In a break from the classroom and with the aim of showing the would-be photographers what life was like aboard ship, PO Ayers took No 6 Course on a visit to HMS Victorious which had just completed a £20 million rebuild programme in Portsmouth, making her the most up to date aircraft carrier in the world. A tour of the Victorious' impressive phot section on two deck included an introduction to section CPO 'Taff' Roberts and his team including Ted Towers, Nigel Craft, Steve Potten, Ian 'Soapy' Watson and Bill 'Paddy' Porter, who were later to become shipmates and good friends. HMS Victorious' photographic officer was Lt Cdr Freddie Rogers.

The visit also linked the them to one of the darkest hours of naval aviation. For the following day, September 25, Victorious sailed into the English Channel to pick up her front-line squadrons including 803 Squadron's Scimitar aircraft. Camera crews and press photographers from around the world were on board to capture the event, but tragedy struck during the first land-on when an arrestor wire failed and squadron CO Cdr John Russell's aircraft rolled over the side of the ship and plunged into the sea. Despite desperate attempts by the SAR helicopter aircrewman to help him, the aircraft sank and Cdr Russell was lost. (A 1 min 14 sec Pathe News film of the tragedy is available on Youtube.)

Mike, now serving in HMS Ark Royal, and Paul and Ray, then in HMS Victorious, met up again in Malta in November 1960 and enjoyed a few runs ashore including one of the biggest ever impromptu branch get togethers when photographers from the two carriers plus those from the large RNAS Hal Far section and other visiting ships including HMS Hermes descended on Jimmy Dowdall's bar in Burzibbuga for an evening of revelry. The inter-ship relay swimming competition late in the evening seemed a good idea until the participants ran into the jellyfish!

Ark Royal made the visit to the George Cross Island even more memorable and set a precedent by launching Scimitar aircraft whilst at anchor adjacent to Victorious in Grand Harbour the aircraft making the short flight ashore to Hal Far.

The three friends later worked together at the Fleet Photographic Unit, Fraser Gunnery Range, Eastney, during 1965/66 and also met briefly at RNAS Lossiemouth while Mike and Paul were completing the aerial photography segment of their Phot 1's course.

Choosing to remain in the Royal Navy at the end of their initial nine-year engagement and having been promoted to Petty Officer, Paul and Mike both successfully completed the Special Duties Officers Course to gain their commissions – later being designated (X) (AV) (Executive Branch, Aviation Specialist) officers. Both men, subsequently, had a series of interesting and challenging roles as their careers progressed.

Paul's appointments included Bombing Range Controller, CO of the Joint Services Photographic School, First Lieutenant of HMS Cochrane and HMS Ark Royal's Photographic Officer while the carrier was operating in the United States and West Indies' waters.

One of Mike's early appointments took him to Faslane HM Naval Base Clyde, as Base Photographic Officer, where his main role was as a Sea Rider with Captain Submarine Sea Training, and which began a five-year association with the submarine service that later took him to HMS Dolphin and then Devonport. "In total I went to sea in more than 40 submarines including all UK boats, as well as Australian, Canadian, Dutch, Brazilian and Chilean," said Mike.

He was later appointed Portland Base Photographic Officer, and simultaneously, as Public Relations Officer for the Air Station while also joining the staff of Flag Officer Sea Training.

"But my best job during my 33 years' service was with the Royal Marines before I was commissioned," said Mike. "The fact that CPO Phot Eddie Moss had requested to be removed from the Green Beret commando course upset the Marines and made it hell for the photographers who followed him. A particular corporal in charge of training made it very tough going at Lympstone. However, I completed the course, was awarded a Green Beret, and joined 3 Commando Brigade in Singapore.

"The Brigade's remit was to look after the UK's interests from east of Suez to mid Pacific. A mix of two commandos, a Royal Engineer battalion, Royal Artillery battalion, SBS unit and air squadron, all of which were air portable, made it a very flexible unit. I worked for the Intelligence Section which was staffed with RM and Intelligence Corps personnel. My boss, a Marine major was also the Brigade's PRO, and as a consequence, my work was split between PR duties and operational field work. Our area of operations stretched from Ethiopia to New Zealand, and involved regularly travelling to Japan, Australia and New Zealand."

Washington DC was the location for Paul's number one assignment and an opportunity to work twice with US President Jimmy Carter. "I'm not sure I had a job title at the US Navy Photo Centre where I worked in the Motion Picture and Video Department," said Paul. "The film crews were made up of a mix of civilian and service personnel or occasionally USN reservists doing their annual "service. A memorable film I produced as manager/director was a recruiting film encouraging sailors to volunteer for the Presidential Honor Guard. This involved following a volunteer all through the training, culminating in him being inspected by President Carter. We shot

everything on 35mm cine cameras and then this film was transferred onto 2-inch video tapes for editing in house.

"I was also involved in another film with President Carter at the CIA HQ in Langley for the installation ceremony of Admiral Stansfield Turner as Director of Central Intelligence. We were making a fairly dull film of construction taking place but the upside was that much of the filming was taking place in San Diego and then Hawaii, where I managed to capsize my sailboat in Pearl Harbour.

"The great thing about this USN appointment was being able to have my family with me, and while there our youngest daughter was born in the US Navy Hospital Bethesda." said Paul. As this is the hospital used by US Presidents, I thought it would be okay for us."

But the job that epitomised their role as a newly commissioned officers was the Fleet Air Arm's *raison d'être* - launching high-powered jet aircraft from an aircraft carrier.

"On paper the most responsible job I had was as CO of the Joint Services Phot School, though in reality the responsibility as a Sub Lt FDO4 launching aircraft off the bow catapult of HMS Eagle, and acting as Divisional Officer for thirty or so aircraft handler reprobates was greater." said Paul.



An AEW Gannet is launched from HMS Ark Royal's bow catapult by FDO4 Mike Lay

Mike's stint as FDO4 on the bow catapult came on Eagle's sister ship HMS Ark Royal. "The Air Group totalled more than 40 aircraft including Buccaneers, McDonnell Phantoms, AEW Gannets and Sea King helicopters. During recoveries I worked with the crash crew." said Mike. "It was the best three ring circus the Navy ever ran.

"By far the most impressive aircraft was the Phantom. They were big aircraft and coming onto the catapult they looked ominous, especially when they double extended the nose oleo to raise the forward section to twice its normal height. As soon as the pilot was ready to launch, I checked all signals and then dropped the flag. Six seconds later the Phantom hurtled past barely six feet away. By then you were grasping a deck ring for self-preservation as the immense jet blast hit you.

"If daylight take-offs were impressive then Phantom night launches were awesome," said Mike. "As the pilot selected his after-burners, purple diamond-shaped flame emerged from the aircraft's engines before turning into 15-foot long brilliant orange flame that lit up the whole flight deck."

"For much of my time on Ark Royal we operated in the Western Atlantic, often near Puerto Rico and its weapon ranges. Early morning in the Caribbean with dolphins and swordfish leaping everywhere while aromas from the bakery flat below the bow catapult wafted up onto the deck made it almost the perfect job."

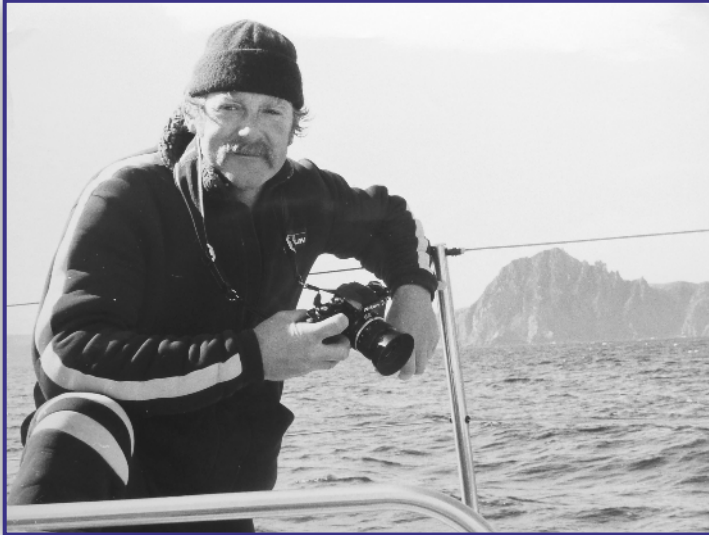
"But if the Caribbean was blissful then the north of Norway in February was utter misery. Waiting for aircraft to land-on at night was an endurance test. Snow and ice built up on you, and the slightest movement sent slithers of the freezing stuff down your neck."

"For a little light relief on the deck, midshipmen shadowing flight deck officers weren't warned about the Phantom's jet blast, and if they stood too close to you at launch time, they were not there seconds later but lying in a crumpled heap 10 feet away. They never stood too close a second time."

Ray left the Navy in 1968 to join the technical publications department at Vickers Shipbuilding in Barrow-in-Furness, before moving to Samuel Fox Steels near Sheffield as a reporter/photographer on the company's Fox News newspaper. He was later appointed editor of the Forges, Foundries

and Engineering edition of Steel News before joining brewers Whitbread East Pennines in 1985 as public relations officer based in Sheffield where he was also responsible for producing the East Pennines Post newspaper for company employees

In 1977 and 1978 Ray spent a week in HMS Vernon at both the start and finish of the second Whitbread Round The World Yacht Race photographing the crews and yachts as they prepared for the 27,000-mile voyage and their successful return to Portsmouth eight months later. "I met up with ex-CPO Phot Dave Morris who was then working for The Portsmouth Evening News, and we photographed several of the yachts as they ran up the Solent under spinnaker in very heavy weather from Sir Max Aitken's power cruiser Blue Max." said Ray. "The gale-force conditions allied to a big spring tide gave some of the yachts a hairy ride as they headed for the finishing line on their run home from Rio de Janeiro."



Cape Horn to port - the realisation of a childhood dream for Ray Pogson

Captivated by the 'buzz' the event generated Ray managed to secure a berth as deck-crew and cameraman for the third race in 1981 aboard the 81-ft British entry FCF Challenger skippered by ex-Navy officer Leslie Williams.

"I celebrated my 40th birthday on the far side of the world in Auckland, New Zealand and achieved a childhood dream by rounding Cape Horn under sail on January 15 1982. We were close in to the Horn in bright sunshine and really good sailing conditions, and I photographed the crew on deck as they crowded round a Royal Navy rum tub and raising a tot of Pusser's Rum to mark the occasion." said Ray.

"Our final stop-over in Mar del Plata coincided with the Argentinians putting their flag up on Grytviken, a British Overseas Territory, and when Antarctic Survey vessel HMS Endurance came into port for a 10-day courtesy visit a sergeant of Marines accurately forecast that there would be hell to pay down there. As we eventually arrived back into home waters under jury rig, having lost our 103-foot mast near the Azores, we saw a number of Task Force frigates heading south to the Falklands at speed."

Ray left Whitbread shortly after the completion of the race to set up his own Public Relations company Enterprise PR, and until his retirement in 2002 produced internal company newspapers for a variety of companies including Bachelors Foods, Manpower Services and confectioners Geo Bassett & Co as well as providing news reporting and photographic services to a range of clients including Whitbread.

As they finished their pints in the Maypole Inn having reflected on their time together in the Navy, Paul summed it up accurately: "I really think the best years were the early ones, especially in Victorious going to the far east, Protector during a visit to Antarctica and even good old Fraser Gunnery Range. Being young then had something to do with it, and it is telling that the guys I have kept in contact with from Navy times are all friends I first made as a Naval Airman."



Stand easy at the Fleet Photo Unit, Fraser Gunnery Range for Paul Parrack, left, Ray Pogson and Ian Hyden



If anyone would like the above Plaque they are £50 each and can either the blue background or green.

Please contact: Danny du Feu 07711083465 email: ddf.photography@gmail.com

From Steve King your Membership Secretary

Your Subs are due in January - fees are Single - £15 and Joint - £20
If you do not have a bank standing order please make cheque's out to RNPA and send to me.
I still have a few 100 year Pin badges they are £4 each.

Merry Christmas from your Committee

