

Issue 61 Spring 2020

Ahoy There

We hope this newsletter finds you all healthy and in good spirits and you are all doing the jobs you should have done last year. Our greenhouse is bubbling away and the list is growing longer for Steve.

This newsletter is a mixture with one or two ditties. It would be great if you could sent some in for the next issue as we haven't got anything. Ray Whitehouse has an up date on reunion on page 3 but its like everything else everything it's up in the air at the moment. On pages 4 & 5 we thought you might like to see our latest submarine HMS Audacious.

We have just received the sad news that Bill Porter from Northern Ireland has crossed the Bar, Anne and her family are in our thoughts.(See page 2)

Take care everyone and keep the chins up and enjoy your Easter.

Hilary & Steve King

Important to keep cheerful.

I heard a Dr. on TV this morning saying in this time of Corona virus staying at home we should focus on "inner peace".

To achieve this we should always finish things we start and we all could use more calm in our lives.

I looked through the house to find things I'd started and hadn't finished

so I finished off a bottle of Merlot,
a bottle of Shiraz,
a bottle of Chardonnay,
a bodle of Baileys,
a butle of wum,
tha mainder of Valiumun srciptuns,
an a box a chocletz.
Yu haf no idr how feckin fablus I feel rite now.
Sned this to all who need inner piss.
An telum u luvum.
And two hash yer wands,
stafe day avrybobby!!!

Happy Easter



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Farewell to Shipmates



RNPA member Bill Porter, who was a member of the photographic section during HMS Victorious's first commission in 1958, has died in his home city of Belfast aged 80.

Bill had only recently given up working as an attendant at the city's Northern Ireland War Memorial, a museum dedicated to the country's involvement in the Second World War.

He had been suffering from respiratory problems which affected his mobility. His death is not related to the Coronavirus epidemic.

Bill is survived by wife Anne and four children: Sharon, who lives in Australia, Derek, Angela and Liam, and six grandchildren.

2 A full appreciation of his career will appear in the next edition of the RNPA Newsletter.

Dear RNPA member/ex-RN Phot,

In my last communication regarding this year's reunion in Scotland I promised that I would writing again in early April providing you details of the weekend's programme, social activities, travel & accommodation arrangements together and all the relevant costs.

I regret that due to these unforeseen and interesting times that we now live in this will not be possible.

I had planned to visit Edinburgh this week to finalise my research into everything the city has to offer, decide on the programme and make the necessary bookings etc. The committee then planned to meet and go through the arrangement etc and sign everything off.

Due to restrictions being imposed on businesses, meetings and travel I have had to cancel those arrangement. I was still prepared to go up the last week but there was little point when the people I was due to meet started cancelling the arrangements.

I have discussed the situation with the committee and it has therefore been decided that we will continue to hold the the option we have with the hotel for the dates in October but will suspend making any further arrangements, confirm bookings or sign contracts until we get a much better idea of what the situation will be like in two to three months time.

There is of course the possibility that we may have to postpone or cancel the reunion for this year if things do drag on as they are...however, ever being the eternal optimist I am hopeful that this will not be the case. Rest assured I will be watching the the situation closely.

In the meantime..."Keep Safe, Stay Calm & Carry On"

Regards Ray

Leicester Tigers supported the Armed Forces Covenant

Leicester Tigers supported the Armed Forces Covenant which will be officially marked at half-time during the club's Gallagher Premiership match against Wasps.

Tigers took on local rivals Wasps on Saturday, February 15 and the club welcomed a number of armed forces officials in a half-time presentation during the fixture.



What is the Armed Forces Covenant?

The Covenant includes a commitment to supporting armed services personnel, reservists, veterans and military families alongside career opportunities, employee support and charity funding

The covenant focuses on helping members of the armed forces community have the same access to government and commercial services and products as any other citizen.

This support is provided in a number of areas including:

Education and family well-being

Establishing a home and pursuing a career

Access to healthcare

Financial assistance

Discounted services

Phil Everett

Royal Navy's £1.6billion nuclear-powered submarine HMS Audacious

A £1.6billion nuclear-powered submarine dubbed the 'most capable ever built' for the Royal Navy has been pictured setting sail for the first time.

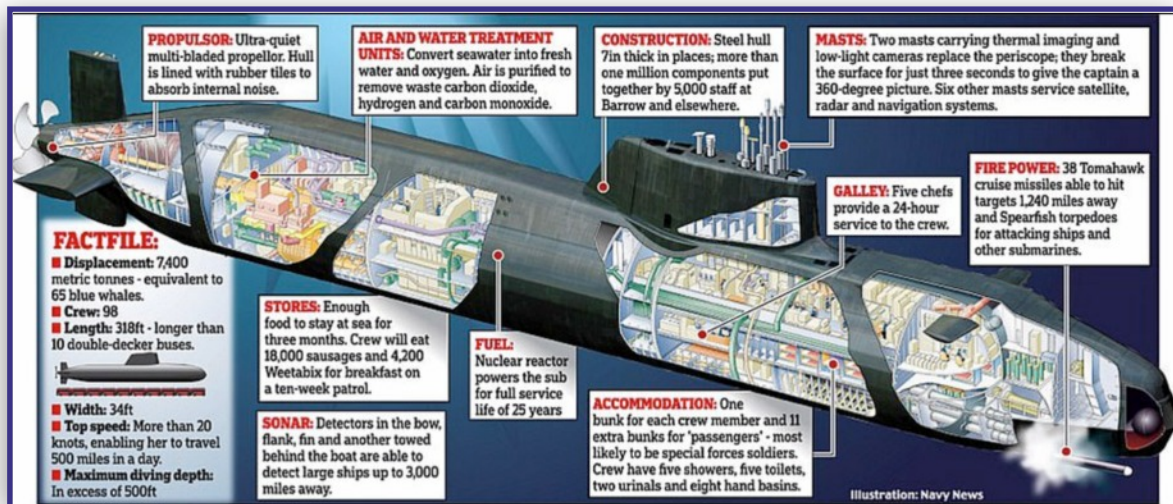
HMS Audacious, one of seven Astute-class attack subs being built by BAE Systems, departed Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, on Tuesday for its maiden journey.

The ultra-advanced warship, said to 'set a new standard in weapons load and stealth', is armed with spearfish heavy torpedoes and Tomahawk cruise missiles.

Around 39,000 state-of-the-art anti-acoustic tiles make the colossal 320ft, 7,400 tonne sub move through the water without making any more noise than a baby dolphin.



Royal Navy's £1.6billion nuclear-powered submarine HMS Audacious



RNAS Culdrose Covid 19 Response

08 April 2020

One hundred and twenty Royal Navy sailors from RNAS Culdrose are preparing to step up and help the community in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

The sailors, from across the Cornish air station, have been busy getting their kit together and making sure their training is up to date. They are on notice to respond as they continue their normal duties – Culdrose continues to provide helicopters and personnel for its defence responsibilities.



Staff at the medical centre have advised the teams on how to correctly put on and take off masks, aprons and gloves to avoid contamination. They have also produced training videos on these safety procedures to avoid unnecessary social contact as they continue their briefings.

These teams are in addition to the air and ground crews of Culdrose's 820 Naval Air Squadron, which has three of its Merlin Mk2 helicopters on notice to deploy as air ambulances in support of the NHS across the south west.

As always, the Royal Navy is ready to respond to whatever is required of us, totally reliable in a time of crisis and utterly committed to everything that we do

Commander Martin Barlow

Commander Martin Barlow, the air station's executive officer, said: "This is all part of a wider commitment on behalf of the military to support the invaluable work of the NHS as they save lives during the coronavirus pandemic. As an air station, we have taken steps to prepare our personnel to meet any challenge required of them.

"As always, the Royal Navy is ready to respond to whatever is required of us, totally reliable in a time of crisis and utterly committed to everything that we do."

Meanwhile, 53 sailors from Culdrose's 1700 Naval Air Squadron, including aircraft handlers, flight deck officers, medical and catering staff, have just left on board RFA Argus for the Caribbean.

They will work alongside their Royal Fleet Auxiliary colleagues and helicopters from RNAS Yeovilton to supply hurricane and coronavirus support to the UK's overseas territories.

RNPA Wall Shields

Dear Members,

I have just received the second batch of RNPA Wall Shields and have managed to obtain a better rate by buying them slightly more in bulk.

It was agreed last year that the shield should depict the 100 years since the branch was formed, - this has been achieved, and the centre painted **Navy Blue** in colour.

However, there are amongst you die hard traditionalists who suggested we provide a choice of the centre being painted **FAA Green** in colour, - this has been done and they are both depicted in the image attached.

I feel there are many of you who would like to purchase these fine, Hand Crafted mementos of your service in the RN Photographic Branch, and to that end I have a limited number of both colours in stock.

Needless to say, if the uptake is favourable, I will be able to purchase further batches.

As I volunteered to take up the mantle of creating this fine memento, I have had to purchase the shields at my own expense, so I am very keen to obtain the cost back.

The shields and postage are at cost price, ie:

RNPA Wall Shield - £46.00

Postage & Packing - £ 5.00

Please get in contact with your requirements

Yours Aye,

Danny du Feu

RNPA Exhibitions & Displays Coordinator

07711 083465



RNPA Remembrance Sunday Cenotaph Marching 2020

Hi Everyone,

I hope you are ALL well and managing to Keep Safe in these challenging times!

I am sending this message to you all in order that you may start thinking about whether you would like to join the band of RNPA Marchers at the Cenotaph Marching this year.

I have been in contact with the Events Team at the Royal British Legion and although things are a little up in the air at the moment, they will be contacting Association Representatives in due course for numbers of veterans wishing to march this year.

To that end I will be contacting former marchers and the new recruits shortly for their confirmation to attend this memorable weekend. If you are thinking of joining us, please contact me and I will send you all the information you require, and will ask in return for the particular details the RBL need for ID on the day.

Till then, Keep Safe & Carry On!

Danny du Feu

RNPA Cenotaph Marching Representative

07711 083465

Things Historic

Mike Lay's remarks, in the last newsletter, about launching a Phantom at night reminded me of my time as an FDO and later as Phot O in Ark Royal. When we were in the States we were told that the Americans rotated their launching officers every six months. I don't know how true this was but standing there with a Phantom on full afterburner certainly vibrated your insides and it always felt like more than six seconds.

Near night launch from the waist cat on Ark Royal



Spotted at the Great Dorset Steam fair last year among a display of old farm and horticultural tools. The stall holder had no idea where it came from and admitted that it did not fit into his display but just thought it might be of interest to someone.

The lamp dates from around 1870, has a paraffin wick lamp and red and yellow filters. Light intensity is controlled by raising or lowering the hinged front.



Ruby Cardinal Darkroom Lamp

Our Honorary Associate Member
John Cunningham Celebrated his 90th Birthday



Congratulations John (Paddy) you are looking good on it.
The next one is Roy Penny whose 90th is in July.

Ode to a Matelot

I was drinking in a Bar when a girl caught my eye
She had a ring through her nose and a tatt on her thigh.
I asked her name and she said "I'm called Gwen"
She smelt like a horse and she danced like a wren.

She said "Come on Jack are you game for a laff"
So we jumped in a fast black and went back to her gaff.
Her house was in Torpoint and on the front door
Was a crest from each ship that had been there before.

I said to her "Gwen that's impressive to see"
As it looked like she'd been on twelve more ships than me.
It smelt like the mess after a good run ashore
With lanyards and cap Tallies all over the floor.

She walked to the window and sat on the ledge
I slid my hand in her knicks and felt meat and two veg
I tried to get out but she got hold of my leg
It was then I knew Gwen was an ex killick Reg

I ran out of the door and into the street
With my kecks round my ankles and nowt on me feet.
Thank God I'd escaped and gave praise to the Lord
Got big eats, a taxi and went back onboard.

So if you're ever in Guzz and bump into Gwen
Just remember she's really a Reggy called Ben.

Anon

RNAS Ford HMS Peregrine circa 1956

The crewroom for ship's flight was an old WW2 wooden shack with a coal burning pillar-box stove to provide some much needed heat in winter. Working on piston engines with petrol dripping down your hands and arms was apt to get a bit chilly, especially out on the hard-standing with the wind, and often rain, whipping around you. To the extent that at times it could take quite a few moments to put down one spanner in order to pick up the next.

There was seldom any actual coal for the burner but usually Jack could find flammable alternatives, wood, oily rags, yesterday's newspaper... Pusser provided plenty of rag for working on aero engines and airframe components, and it was found by trial and error that oily rags were probably the best fuel and that by judicious use of the flap of the ash clearance port at the bottom of the pillar-box and the flap of the fuel re-filling port at the top to regulate airflow, with oily or aviation turbine fuel (AVTur) soaked rags quite a lot of heat could be generated.

Once we had this stove going properly and the flaps set to maximum efficiency, the stove-pipe 'funnel' of the stove would start to glow red... Starting at the cast iron fitting for the smoke stack some joker had chalked rings about every two inches (Remember those ? Inches ?) going up this pipe marked off as a 'Temperature Gauge', indicated by the height that the red glow reached. These rings were labelled thus: -

Warm, Warmer, Nice, Hot, Red Hot, White Hot, Shit Hot, Clear the Crewroom !

RNAS Culdrose

HMS Seahawk late 1959 or early 1960

We were involved in a NATO exercise, my squadron Starboard 1 & 2 were closed up at the squadron hangar, Port 1 & 2 were 'On loan' to the Ship's Flight.

I was Port 1 and in the duty crewroom. We had just finished 'turning round' (refuelled, checked air pressure, hydraulic fluid levels, did the pre-flight checks etc.) six Hawker Hunters from the German Air Force, which had landed about 45 minutes ago.

The pilots were in the wardroom having lunch, so we were waiting their return so that we could get 'em airborne again without delay.

The line chief came bursting into the crewroom and, panting, gasping for air, asked in a desperate tone "Does anyone here Sprichen sie Deutsch ?". One lad, a national serviceman, who'd been to university and was therefore a cut above the rest of us, jumped up and said "Ja, ich spreche fließend Deutsch". The line chief, now fully recovered said "Thank gawd for that... we need someone to clean out the schitzen housen".

Never volunteer !

RN Recruiting Office

July 1954. RN Recruiting Office London, I thought it was in the Charing Cross area but I can't find one there now... Well, 64 years on, what d'ya expect !

There were about a dozen of us, sat there waiting for some sort of test.

It turned out to be a practical test for colour perception.

A CPO was explaining that we would each have to look through an eyepiece protruding from one of the walls, it looked like sawn-off eyepiece from a telescope. All we had to do was sing out the colour of the light as it changed.

"The light will be RED, GREEN or WHITE... First one up... You" ! Pointing to the nearest chap...

9 This chap stands up to the eyepiece, looks through it and calls out in a nice clear voice "BLUE" !