

Issue 75 Autumn / Winter 2023

Ahoy There

OUR Reunion and AGM in Liverpool last September was a great success. Unfortunately the fall I suffered there, leaving me with a dislocated and fractured right arm, made life difficult for me and has resulted in the very late appearance of this RNPA Newsletter.

Now, after 14 years - and 56 editions - I have vacated the editor's chair. Anyone wishing to take on this interesting challenge should contact me or a member of the committee.

* Ian Hooper's Reunion/AGM comments - page 7

* Dave Morris passed away on December 26th – obituary on pages 11 & 12

* Memorial details page 2

Hilary King

KING'S TOT TIME TOAST TO 'BRILLIANT YOTTIES'

by Ray Pogson

It's not every day of the week you are the rum bosun and a newly-crowned King draws his tot! But that was the role Mike Gilbert found himself in during a nostalgic visit to the former royal yacht Britannia by His Majesty King Charles III as part of a special events week in Scotland shortly after the coronation.

Mike was one of a 50-strong party of 'yotties' – former crew-members of the Royal Yacht – invited onboard Britannia to welcome the King and join in the celebrations.

Mike, 78, happily took on the much-lamented role of rum bosun along with Paul 'Bish' Jenkins, the pair being the only yotties present who drew their tot on Friday, July 31st 1970 - the final time rum was issued to sailors on a daily basis and known throughout the Royal Navy as Black Tot Day.

"I can smell rum anywhere," joked the King as he approached Mike, and following the Loyal Toast, proposed by Britannia Trust chief executive Bob Downie, King Charles said: "I want to make another toast. To all the marvellous old yotties who keep it all going. You are brilliant if I may say so."

The King's royal seal of approval for the excellent work done by the yotties was acknowledged with a rousing



Mike puts a shine on Britannia's Bell

three cheers from the delighted team of ageing sailors who watched with approval as he downed the remainder of his tot.

Mike who served on Britannia from October 1967 to September 1970, having relieved L/Air Dave Morris, had last spoken with the then Prince Charles at a Royal Yacht reunion held in Buckingham Palace's Great Hall in March 2017.

"We chatted about the plight of HMS Bronington, the Ton-class minesweeper the Prince commanded for most of 1976 and which had sunk at her moorings in Birkenhead." said Mike, who was accompanied at the palace by his wife Mary.

Yotties give up one week a year without pay to paint, polish and help maintain Britannia in pristine condition at her berth in Leith's Ocean Terminal near Edinburgh, where she is on permanent display to the public.

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Memorial Service For Dave Morris

The memorial service for Dave Morris will take place at 11.30hrs Thursday 14th March 2024 at St Georges Church St George's Walk Waterlooville PO7 7EH, and the Wake at Cowplain Social Club 54 London Road Cowplain. PO8 8EN

YOU NAME IT - LIVERPOOL'S GOT IT!

'Lively' Liverpool was the setting for this year's RNPA annual reunion and AGM, and the Merseyside destination proved a very popular choice.

A number of members and guests attending had not been to the maritime city before and were keen to explore the 2008 European Capital of Culture.

Social secretary Danny du Feu's choice of the Liner Hotel, just a short stroll from Lime Street Railway station, proved another big plus as quite a few members 'let the train take the strain' and made the journey to Merseyside by rail.

The usual buzz around the city was super-charged in May when Liverpool hosted the razzmatazz that is the Eurovision Song Contest on behalf of war-torn Ukraine's capital Kiev, drawing praise and thanks from around the world for the stunning spectacle. Liverpool likes a party!



Brian Richardson, Tony Maris, Joan Roberts, Jonathan Robbins



Hilary King, Tony Maris, Jonathan Robbins, Brian Cartwright, Ray and Angela Pogsor



Pete Bunting, Ian & Carol Hooper, Bridget Bunting

MONKEY BUSINESS WAS ALL PART OF THE REUNION FUN

For the first time in his life someone put words into Danny du Feu's mouth and made a monkey out of him – but it was all in a good cause. Reunion organiser Danny was going along with a request from local comedian Tony Roscoe, who provided the entertainment on Friday evening following a meet and greet get-together and buffet meal in the Liner Hotel's Pacific Lounge. Wearing a chimpanzee's mask and playing it for laughs Danny mouthed Tony's patter in an Oscar-nominated performance loudly applauded by members and guests.



Danny du Feu, left gets in on Tony's act.

YOU NAME IT - LIVERPOOL'S GOT IT - continued

The tented Eurovision Village and fan zone at the pier head was close to Liverpool's famous 'Three Graces', which over the weekend became a must see for RNPA members and guests. This superb waterside architectural panorama – the Port of Liverpool Building, the Cunard Building and the much-loved Royal Liver Building– is an iconic image of the city instantly recognised the world over.

The pier head is also the jumping off spot for the city's ferry operation brought to national prominence when 1960's group Gerry and the Pacemakers had a Top 10 hit with Ferry 'Cross The Mersey. Crossing the river, some of the fastest tidal water in the UK, is a 10- minute treat enjoyed by sailing to either Birkenhead or Seacombe ferry terminal at Wallasey. In their hey day, a few years before Gerry became a stellar figure in Merseybeat folklore, the non-stop ferries were carrying 30 million passengers a year. The majority were city workers, living in the dormitory enclaves of Birkenhead, Wallasey, New Brighton and the Wirral. The best view of the 'Three Graces' is from the river.

Also close to the pier head and attracting visitors is the hugely popular Albert Dock complex, renovated in recent years and now housing the Tate Liverpool art gallery and museum, a number of hotels and restaurants plus Merseyside Maritime Museum and others exhibitions highlighting international slavery, as well as the story of the city's very own fab four – the Beatles. A variety of boats and yachts are moored in the Albert Dock basin.

Adjacent to the Albert Dock is the Queen's Dock. Here a purpose-built office complex constructed in the early 1990s to house the government's customs and excise's VAT collection officers was quickly christened 'the Vatican' by the locals. They like a comedian in Liverpool. Local legend and funny man Ken Dodd loved the city so much he never left.

Members and guests interested in the spiritual side of the city headed for Hope Street, at either end of which stand cathedrals celebrating Anglican and Catholic faith in the city. The neo-Gothic Anglican cathedral is the largest cathedral in Britain, took over 70 years from inception to completion and was designed by a precocious 22 year-old Giles Gilbert Scott.

Meanwhile, the Roman Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King opened in 1967 and is famous for its Lutyens crypt and a large amount of stained glass. When the local comedians saw it was circular with a round bell tower topped by 16 flying buttresses giving it a tent-like appearance, plus the fact that it was built by Irish workmen, they immediately christened it 'Paddy's wigwam'!

Hope Street is also home to the Philharmonic Hall and the city's internationally renowned Philharmonic Orchestra, the popular Everyman Theatre and a number of restaurants and cafes offering a wide choice of multicultural dishes and drinks.

On the Saturday morning two RNPA groups visited the Western Approaches Museum for a guided visit. The recently opened top secret underground bunker was manned by Royal Naval personnel during World War Two. They were tasked with keeping allied convoys safe while winning the Battle of the Atlantic and

defeating Germany's U-boat wolf packs. The refurbished war rooms are exactly as they were in August 1945 when the doors closed for the final time on the cessation of hostilities.

The city's two Hop-on, Hop-off bus routes take in many of the memorable locations associated with the Beatles' story including Penny Lane, Strawberry Fields and the Cavern Club. And visitors who like their football can choose between a tour of Liverpool Football Club's Anfield stadium or watching premiership rivals Everton's impressive new stadium rising high above the banks of the Mersey at Vauxhall's Bramley-Moore Dock.

With a never ending choice of things to do, including enjoying a drink in the architectural gem that is the Philharmonic pub, viewing William Frederick Yeames' 'And When Did You Last See Your Father?' painting at the excellent Walker Art Gallery or enjoying many other visitor attractions not mentioned. It's no wonder that people attending the reunion told us there was not enough time available to see half of what they planned. Yes, 'lively' Liverpool has it in spades!



Western Approaches Museum



Alex Ferguson, Tony Darbyshire and Roger Ryan

MUSEUM A LIVING LINK TO THE PAST by Jonathan H Robbins

Our visit to the Western Approaches Museum, a place dug deep into the ground beneath Liverpool and almost in sight of those famous Liver Birds, surprised me. As one of my uncles had survived being an ERA on the Arctic Convoys, I had expected to find the museum interesting and it is. Not only is it interesting and well worth a visit but I had not anticipated that many of the exhibits would be so evocative and memory jogging. Learning about the foresight of those who had designed, and then in great secrecy, built this underground structure dug deep into the ground was another surprise. This is a building that still merges into a street of similar buildings, all of which are almost in sight of those famous Liver Birds. Today the museum marks its presence with a small number of flags over the entrance. In this discrete building decisions were made, charted and relayed to the vessels and men whose actions changed the outcome of the war in the Atlantic. It is not just the displays, or the feeling that those WRNS and the others who served their country in this network of passages and rooms during the war, had only left the buildings a day or two before. If you have served on a warship, then there is an affinity with this place and with it a sense of belonging that evokes both a now distant past and a continuity of shared experience.

For me this visit was a bridge that brought to the surface long forgotten memories of the ships, people and events I experienced during my service in our 'Grey Funnel Line'. I joined HMS Ganges in 1962, as a Junior Assistant Cook. At that time many of the instructors at Ganges had served during the Second World War as well as Korea and elsewhere. Their attitudes were formed by their experiences, so boys of fifteen like me were inducted into a Royal Navy that had its disciplines and expectations rooted in the 1930's and the war years. Watching the film 'The Cruel Sea' does its best to provide a sense of the period and reminds us that this was both same Navy and at the same time, a very different Navy, to that pictured in the recent documentaries by the BBC.

My first seagoing draft was to HMS Defender, a Daring Class destroyer designed in the war years and launched in 1950. Service on HMS Decoy and HMS Delight followed. These previous Daring Class destroyers are just a step away from those of the period that the museum introduces us to. So if you were in the 'Andrew' before (perhaps) 1970; then whatever ships you were drafted to, and whether you like it or not, are an ex-'Phot' like me, then you are a link to the past and a repository of memories that should be recorded.

WRENS AT FOREFRONT OF ATLANTIC BATTLE.



Bridget and Pete Bunting and Val Darbyshire in the middle.

Saturday morning saw some members head for the recently refurbished Western Approaches Museum, which is housed in its original building on Rumford Street, not far from the Pier Head. In the World War 11 command centre there they relived the fight to protect allied convoys and win the 'Battle of the Atlantic' against the might of Admiral Doenitz 's U-boat wolf packs. Special recognition is given to the efforts of the team of Wrens - some 800 during the time the command centre was in operation - who made a vital contribution by not only designing the tactics to take on and sink the U-boats but also training the individual ship commanders to implement them.



Saturday's Gala Dinner

Saturday's Gala Dinner was held in the Britannic Suite where chairman Julie Richardson welcomed members and guests who were later treated to a tot during 'up spirits' before joining in the Loyal Toast. The Pacific Lounge was the venue on the Sunday morning for the RNPA's AGM where Danny told members that Covid had prevented Mike and Jean Keeling and Chris and Sue Dalby from attending and that 90-year-old Roy Penny had been taken into hospital which meant his four-strong party also had to be cancelled at the last minute. These and other late call offs resulted in the number of people actually attending falling from 52 to 36.

Also taking a fall as she left the Pacific Lounge following the Gala Dinner was Newsletter editor Hilary King, who dislocated and fractured her right arm while successfully ensuring the bottle of sloe gin she had won earlier in the raffle did not shatter. "I didn't want the bottle to break so I ended up face first eating the carpet dislocating and fracturing my shoulder", said a badly bruised Hilary. "It took them three goes to get it back in."

Hilary spent the whole of Sunday in a local hospital waiting to be treated, accompanied by Val Darbyshire who stayed by her side through the day until almost mid-night.

Val's care of Hilary was praised by fellow members when they heard of her commitment, while a modest Val commented: "Hilary was a friend in need so I don't think I did anything special. But I did feel guilty at missing the AGM"

Saturday's Gala Dinner Liverpool Reunion



Mike Beard, Julie Richardson, Alex & Ingrid Ferguson



Paul & Sue Parrack, Mike and Mary Gilbert and Angela Pogson



Pat Sanders, Brian Cartwright, Joan Roberts.



Ian and Carol Hooper, Bridget and Pete Bunting



Joan Roberts, Annie Holmes, Pat Sanders, Glynis Shaw, Pauline & Spike Lee, Carol & Ian Hooper.



Annie Holmes, Joan Roberts, Glynis Shaw.

Hi All,

Once again we had a very good reunion, and my thanks go to Danny for all his hard work in making it a success. Although the weather wasn't too kind, I think we all had a good time.

One of the highlights for me was Danny's impromptu ventriloquist's dummy performance on the Friday night...even the comedian couldn't keep a straight face! The visit to the Western Approaches museum on the Saturday morning was quite poignant for me as my father served four years on a Destroyer during the war, mostly on the North Atlantic convoys. The ship's company were credited with the sinking of 5 U boats.

Although not as well attended as in other years, the gala dinner went very well, the food was very good, and the company very enjoyable as always. The disco in the evening went well, with most people dancing at some stage.

We had quite a comprehensive AGM on the Sunday morning and here are a few points to note. Both Val and Hilary will be standing down from their roles on the committee as treasurer and membership secretary, and Newsletter Editor respectively. This leaves two vacancies on the committee that we need to fill. If anyone is interested in taking up any of these positions, please contact me at ihoops@btinternet.com. It is your association, so please get involved so we can continue to be successful.

The venue for next year's reunion will be Bristol, and Danny will start the planning shortly.

I have had a meeting with the events team at the National Memorial Arboretum and a date has been made available for us next year. I have made a booking for one of the meeting rooms for Sunday, May 19th 2024. A circular will be sent around outlining the plan for the day and the costs involved. Weather permitting, it should be an enjoyable day so please sign up if you can. Two of my volunteer colleagues have offered to give up their spare time to lead the guided walks with me. This will allow for smaller groups and a better experience. Wishing you and your families a happy Christmas and New Year.

Ian Hooper. Secretary

RNPA Social Evening Aboard HMS Victory

Saturday 10th June 2023



RNPA Remembrance Sunday March Past at the Cenotaph 2023

Once again with an immense sense of pride that I mention the immaculate turn out that the RNPA Cenotaph Marchers' platoon, showed on Remembrance Sunday this year, as the 25th Platoon in the Navy Column. We were on target to be 22 strong this year, but due to illnesses, urgent operations and a mainline British Rail early morning train breaking down with no replacement, ours and other Associations numbers were slightly reduced.

It was a pleasant mild day this year, with five minutes of light drizzle. After years of being in alphabetical order, this time we were positioned within the Fleet Air Arm contingent in the Navy column to march down Whitehall and present the RNPA wreath at the Cenotaph.

Again, this year we had no Officer to lead the Platoon so I asked Ex-CPO Alan Ferguson to lead from the front. It was reported by people in the crowd that our appearance and marching looked excellent.

I expect HRH Princess Anne liked the look of us as well, when she took the salute when we marched past the Royal dais, as it is recorded on BBC television. Mr Dimbleby was also heard to mention us as one of the platoons within the FAA contingent.

Due to the restrictions on getting to the FAA Memorial we didn't return to Horse Guards but carried on marching onto the Mall to arrive at the FAA Memorial adjacent to the MOD Building.

After a short service, where one of our longest serving members laid a wreath on behalf of the RNPA, all of us got together for a group photo and then made our way to the 'Tom Cribb Pub', near Leicester Square, where we were welcomed again by veterans from the 'Ton Class Minesweepers' and Bomber Command, and Ark Royal Association. After the Loyal and several other 'Toasts,' All of the Veterans, guests and locals mustered outside the Pub for an informal group photo, as seen in the accompanying photos. Things quietened down and as per tradition, we visited our second venue nearby where the 'Fallen Heroes Trad Jazz Band', kept us entertained until late with great numbers interspersed with wartime songs, finally finishing off with a roof lifting rendition of 'God Save the King'.

If you would like to join us all next year please get in touch, - I can promise you a truly moving experience.

By Danny du Feu

Cenotaph March Representative

Email: ddf.photography@gmail.com; 07711 083465



Back Row L- R Alan Ferguson, Mike Beard, Steve Bell, Dean Wagstaff.

Front Row L-R Wilf Francis, Ted Tierney, Ric Burch, Tony Maris, Joan Roberts, Richard Thompson,
8 Danny du Feu.

RNPA Remembrance Sunday March Past at the Cenotaph 2023 - continued



L to R Michael Gilbert, Mike Beard, Richard Thompson, Ric Burch, Danny with wreath Julie Richardson, Ted Tierney Alex Ferguson



Five star Olga



Olga, holding her gold award certificate, pictured with the mayor councillor Greg

Clear the lower deck. Outside the Tom Cribb Pub

As the month of September drew to a close, you could be sure of one thing... Olga Price had made her annual visit to Llandudno's Town Hall to meet the mayor.

For keen gardener Olga, wife of RNPA member Dave Price, the mayor might be a different person but her reason for being there is a case of business as usual.

And this year the mayor, councillor Greg Robbins, congratulated Olga on her green-fingered prowess before presenting a gold award to her as a winner in the Llandudno In Bloom residential category.

Olga's efforts have resulted in five gold awards in six years, the five-star performance being interrupted by the Covid pandemic in 2020 when the competition was cancelled. But what has pleased Olga the most about her treasured front garden is the growing number of people who stop for a chat and comment on her blossoming blooms.

"It is noticeable how many more people these days stop and admire my garden," said Olga. "I spend quite a bit of time weeding but end up discussing the various plants with passers-by."

Last year Olga was accompanied to the presentation ceremony by her daughter Victoria, who was over in the UK from Christchurch, New Zealand, for a family holiday.

During her working career Olga was a popular figure in the North Wales resort where she worked as a district nurse.

And news of her continuing gardening success in retirement has made the front pages in Barbados, her childhood home in the Caribbean.

Milking the applause... Jamie's photograph gets a second showing.



A photograph taken by former phot branch member Alex 'Jamie' Jamieson 33 years ago has won some new admirers 17 years after his untimely death.

Described as a feelgood photograph of yachts racing on the River Tay, the caption in the Dundee Courier said "...you can almost smell the sea air and feel the sun."

Alex died of a heart attack aged 64 in 2005 and, with the help of the Maritime Volunteer Service, his ashes were scattered in the Tay estuary on a day much like the one which featured in his photograph - sun-dappled and with dolphins making spectacular leaps in the wind-blown waves.

Alex, who was a member of No 6 course Phot 111s together with Bill McRobbie (deceased), Duncan 'Blood' Reid, Mike Lay and Ray Pogson under instructor 'Taff' Evers in July 1958, served for 21 years in the RN before establishing himself as a freelance photographer in the Dundee and Tayside area, though a career change later took him into the world of reflexology.

Mike Gilbert, who lives with his wife Mary in Dunfermline, and who had taken over from Alex at FOSNI PR unit, Pitreavie in 1980, spotted the picture the Dundee Courier credited to a 'master' photographer and contacted Ray Pogson, knowing the two men were friends.

Ray then penned a short profile of his friend - who was with him through basic training at HMS Gamecock near Nuneaton, and Phot 111s course at HMS Peregrine, Ford near Arundel in Sussex during 1958 - and sent it to the newspaper, which subsequently published it.

He wrote: "You recently published a photograph of yachts racing on the sun-kissed waters of the River Tay, thought to be taken some 33 years ago by Carnoustie 'master' photographer Alex Jamieson.

Alex certainly was a very accomplished cameraman, having qualified as a Royal Naval photographer at the RN School of Photography, HMS Peregrine at Ford near Arundel, Sussex in 1958, and subsequently completing two further intensive courses during a 21-year career spent photographing all aspects of life in the senior service both at sea on aircraft carriers and numerous shore establishments.

He was in charge of the photographic section on HMS Ark Royal when the highly popular 'Sailor' television programme was made, and can be seen singing We Are Sailing with the ship's choir.

Alex was originally from Dundee but later made his home in Carnoustie, a golfing fanatic who wanted to be close to the challenging course. He had a quick wit and generally faced the world with a smile on his face. He was a life-long supporter of Dundee United, a patriotic Scotsman and a good friend to this sassenach.

Farewell to Shipmates. TOP PHOTOGRAPHER SNAPPED UP A BEM



Dave Morris

A PHOTOGRAPHER who spearheaded the developing role of news gathering in the navy in the 1960/70s, and who promoted news-worthy aspects of service life appearing on television and in national newspapers with award-winning photography, has died in Portsmouth aged 84.

Royal navy cameraman David Frank Morris BEM, passed away on Tuesday 26th of December in the city's Queen Alexandra's Hospital where he was being treated for both dementia and depression.

Always 'Dave' to his fellow photos, he was one of the most accomplished and creative members ever to serve in the photographic branch, and was awarded the BEM for his input into improving the curriculum of the navy PR course he believed was not fit for purpose.

Born in the Dorset village of Charlton, Dave spent his formative years in nearby Ashmore and was educated at Shaftesbury Grammar School. His interest in photography started early, and while still a youngster he was earning pocket money by selling prints he produced of weddings, football teams and even local prize-winning cattle.

Dave considered several career choices including an apprenticeship as a royal navy artificer, but once he learned that photography was an option, he was determined to become a naval photographer.

He joined the navy in 1956 aged 17, and went to HMS Gamecock, the Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) near Nuneaton where he came top of his class in basic seamanship and airmanship. He was selected to train as a photographer. RNPA member Nigel Craft came second. The two men were then drafted to the Royal Naval School of Photography at HMS Peregrine, RNAS Ford near Arundel in Sussex to join No 25 Phot 11s Course, and they qualified as photographers under the tutelage of popular civilian instructor Jack Barber. Coming top of the course meant Dave had the choice of where to begin his photographic career and, understandably, he picked the phot section at HMS Heron, RNAS Yeovilton in the west country. However, he finished up at nearby RAF Merryfield where an off-shoot phot section had been sited as Heron's runways were being extended to meet NATO standards, the work being undertaken was generally thought to be so they could accommodate the USA's B52 bombers.

An accident while riding his Ariel 350 NH motorbike left him with a badly fractured leg and four months' recuperation in Taunton hospital.

His next move was to Chatham to join HMS Vidal, the first in a new class of survey ships. After commissioning she crossed the Atlantic and headed for the West Indies, a dream destination for the crew. Dave was in his element as it allowed him to fly round the islands in the ship's S51 Dragonfly helicopter taking rabbit shots with the twin-mounted F24 cameras.

After a year in the West Indies and South America the Vidal limped back across the Atlantic at four knots, and taking 34 days due to engine problems and stopping to take water dips.

During his leave in August 1960 he married his fiancée Jean, and at the same time returned to RNAS Ford tasked with helping to close down the RN Photographic and Trials Unit (RNPTU).

The section at Merryfield was a Nissan hut and was being run by petty officer 'Pinhead' Smalley. He left all the jobs to Dave who welcomed the experience gained.

An accident while riding his Ariel 350 NH motorbike left him with a badly fractured leg and four months' recuperation in Taunton hospital.

He then joined the Fleet Photographic Unit at Fraser Gunnery Range, Eastney, where he worked with cine guru Charlie Robinson who was producing an instructional film on the GMPG machine gun for the Royal Marines. Much to Dave's delight the two men got the opportunity to fire the gun on the Hythe Ranges near Dover. He was also involved in a series of HS300 trials on HMS Hermes on behalf of REA Bedford while

the carrier was operating in the Mediterranean, working with Johnny Orme filming bolting Gannets at 300 FPS.

The highlight of this period was a job shooting film and stills aboard HMS Ashanti, a new Tribal class frigate - but which could have had serious consequences. Dave was booked for a helicopter ride but missed it as he was busy taking stills, and the Wasp chopper was lost.

He completed his Phot 1s at Whitecroft House, HMS Daedalus, Lee-on-Solent before heading to Singapore with wife Jean and their one year-old son Steve for a two-year married accompanied draft, working from the phot section at HMS Simbang.

Almost immediately he was flying around Sarawak by helicopter taking photographs of military operations at Nanga Gaat, a forward operating base for British and Commonwealth troops during the Borneo Conflict, and chasing Indonesian kumpits (boats) while shooting cine-film for Movietone News. yacht HMS Britannia, where he spent two years photographing numerous VIPs and prominent world leaders who visited the ship.. Members of the royal family were regularly in his view-finder, including HM the Queen Mother liked and had used as that year's Christmas card The ship also visited Expo 67 in Montreal, Canada, whilst completing a world cruise.

On his return to the UK Dave picked up his petty officer's rate and a draft to DPRN in London for an introduction to naval public relations. He later described the course as 'a joke' but rectified the situation by helping to devise a more intensive and practical training programme which was subsequently used by all three UK armed services. He received his BEM at a ceremony held aboard Lord Nelson's flag ship HMS Victory.

Dave was the last individual photographer to win the Peregrine Trophy - in 1968 - before the rules were changed to make it a competition open to sea-going ships and shore-based sections irrespective of size. With wife Jean in attendance he was presented with the trophy and a Rolleiflex camera by Admiral John Frewin.

With his heart set on being made a fleet chief petty officer he left the world of navy public relations to take over as regulating chief and senior instructor at the School of Photography based at HMS Excellent, Whale Island, but a P7R medical rating following earlier mental health problems meant this was not possible.

Dave's naval career ended in 1977 when he was medically discharged. He immediately received job offers from several London-based national newspapers but decided on a new challenge as senior press photographer with the Portsmouth Evening News that lasted 20 years.

He enjoyed riding a variety of motorbikes which, over the years, enabled him to travel over-night to the far reaches of Scotland's north-west coast where he climbed or scrambled up a number of 3,000-ft high Munros. He also camped and took part in caving.

A skilled aero model maker, Dave built and flew a collection of impressive model aeroplanes, often enlisting messmates to help with the launch while he handled the control wires.

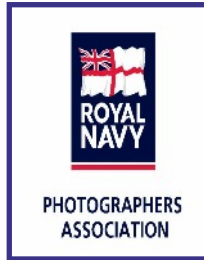
When ever possible he took to the air with Roger Smith, his close navy friend of 55 years. Roger owned and flew several types of Cessna aircraft on photographic sorties for a number of companies. On one trip the two men found it amusing to be taking aerial pictures of RAF Cosford - home of the Joint Services School of Photography - where any one of the navy photographers present could have done the job.

Roger, a former PO seaman and a keen photographer, was the proud recipient of Dave's prize Rolleiflex camera - and was the last person to visit him before he died.

Fellow phots remember Dave as an enthusiastic individual who worked hard to capture the perfect picture, and who was always prepared to help and advise younger members making their way in branch.

He is survived by his son Steve, grandson Ben and grand-daughter Lucy. His wife Jean underwent a transplant operation after suffering kidney failure but died from cancer in 1998.

By Ray Pogson



National Memorial Arboretum

19th May 2024.

Hi All.

I have made a booking at the NMA for Sunday 19th May 2024. For a one day social. Please support this event if you are able as it promises to be an enjoyable experience.

The plan is as follows:

- 10.30. Tea and Coffee.
- 10.45. Introduction to the National Memorial Arboretum.
- 11.15. - 13.00. Guided walks.
- 13.20. approx. Wreath Laying at the Fleet Air Arm memorial.
- 13.50. approx. Buffet Lunch

Free Time.

The cost will be £25. Per person.

If you would like to attend, please email me at: ihoops@btinternet.com asap to book your place.

Car parking costs £4. If you book in advance via the website or £6. On the day.

Here are a few suggestions for accommodation within an 8 mile radius.

- Riverside Hotel. Branston.
- Best Western Lichfield City Centre.
- Premier Inn. Fradley (Lichfield North)
- Premier Inn. Branston
- Premier Inn. Lichfield City Centre.
- George and Dragon. Alrewas.
- Shoulder of Mutton. Barton-Under-Needwood.
- Hilton. St Georges Park. Burton On Trent.

The Arboretum is continually changing, we now have 414 memorials on site and adding more all the time. The area covers 150 acres at present and another 70 acres has just come into our possession. We are raising funds to develop this area at the moment, hopefully to be open within the next five years. If you haven't visited recently you will certainly see some changes.

Regards Ian Hooper.