



Photographers
Association

NEWSLETTER



Spring 2026 Issue

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Newsletter. Thank you to all who have contributed articles and photographs, a nice eclectic mix.

Alan Ferguson, RNPA Newsletter Editor.

Forthcoming Reunions

At the last AGM it was agreed that the reunions this year would be more informal. With that in mind there are two now planned:

Mini Reunion Isle of Wight, 17th to 19th July

Our Chair, Julie, is arranging a get together on the Isle of Wight where Brian and her live in Ryde. A number of people have already shown an interest with many descending on Julie's place. There is a flyer at the end of this newsletter giving more details but in brief there is planned:

- A Friday evening meal at a restaurant in Ryde
- Visit Osbourne House on Saturday
- BBQ at Julie & Brian's on Saturday evening, the main event!

As Julie says this is planned to be a relaxing get together with the flexibility for those attending to do as much as they like.

Those interested please contact Julie on jmrichardson59@gmail.com

RAF Cosford and Telford Area Reunion – 2nd to 4th October

For our 107th Reunion, instead of a formal Gala Dinner function this reunion is to be a more relaxed event with a Private Dining meal on the Saturday evening at the Park House Hotel in Shifnal. The Park House Hotel has agreed to a group B&B rate for Fri 3rd and Sat 4th October of £120 per night (2 people sharing). To book contact the hotel, Tel: 01952 460 128 or [The Park House Hotel](#) quoting Group ID 16839. Please let me (Alan Ferguson) know when you have booked.

We will look at using that venue for a relaxed Private Dining meal on the Saturday evening. This will be charged separately at £30 per person and will mean non-resident members can attend

too. Can those interested please do a bank transfer to Alan Ferguson, Sort Code 09-01-32 (Santander) A/C 12112406 as this will help me monitor numbers and co-ordinate the event.

Again, there is a flyer at the end of this newsletter giving more detail but in brief the plans are:

- A Friday evening meet and greet at the Newport Royal Naval Association where our Vice Chair, Pete Bunting, is President.
- Saturday morning, a visit to the Defence School of Photography
- Saturday afternoon, a visit to the RAF Museum with guided tours of the exhibits. Note, lunch can be had at the Museum Café.
- Saturday evening, informal Private Dining meal at the Park House Hotel
- Sunday, option of visiting Ironbridge and the Blist Hill Victorian Town (now under the National Trust)

Pete Bunting (pete_bunting@hotmail.com) and Alan Ferguson (alan.ferguson_7@virgin.net) are organising this reunion so please let them know if you are interested in joining us for the weekend.

Cenotaph Marching 2026, Sunday 8th November



This year will be the 11th year the RNPA has marched as a platoon during the Cenotaph Ceremony, held on Remembrance Sunday each year.

We have managed to keep up numbers even though some of us have had to call on the NHS to fix things. We are hoping that all that join us this year, are so enthralled by their getting together with other Ex- Phots, that they continue to join the RNPA Marchers in the years to come. We had a few new people join us last year and they thought the day was a fantastic and emotional experience.



1 The 2019 Group by the FAA Memorial

I would also like to call on all Ex Phots and those that have recently become members of the RNPA, to come and join us.

After the formal parts of the Ceremony, fellow marchers, meet up at the Tom Cribb Pub in Piccadilly, which has adopted the RNPA, along with a few from Bomber Command, Ton Class minesweepers and HMS Ark Royal. After the Loyal Toasts there is a welcomed hot buffet laid on for all, and later, entertainment by the 'Fallen Heroes' Jazz band.



Lastly, if there are any marchers who need Berets, Beret badges or Blazer badges, please get in touch with me soonest, as I have a small stock of beret badges which includes JRs, SNR rates and Officers.

Please let me know soon, if you can join us, as I have been contacted by the RBL for numbers. I will then inform the RBL that you wish to march and they will then contact you direct for your service details. All those that send in your names should receive E Passes in late October.

I look forward to meeting up with you all on the day

Danny du Feu

Cenotaph Marching Coordinator

07711 083465

Looking back on Yeovilton Photographic Section

A post on the [Royal Navy Photographers Facebook](#) page by PO(Phot) May Luke and their reference to “clearing out the old photographic section” as it is due to be demolished prompted me to ask members of their memories of that Photographic Section.

WO2 (Phot) Coban gave us a bit more detail about the current situation. As we all know the Photographic Branch being a lot smaller than we remember it, currently around 45 and as such there is no need for the large photographic section. Photographers are more flexibly with desks closer to the centre of the base organisations. Currently the posting for Yeovilton is one Leading Photographer based in the command building alongside the units command structure and PRO and a PO (Phot) based with the Commando Helicopter Squadron (CHF) working with their PRO. Military Real Estate note no money has been spent on the old Phot Section for a long time and it is going to be demolished for another hanger.



To start the memories off here is a group photograph taken on the 1990s, thank you to Dean Wagstaff for this.



Rear: Dean Wagstaff, John Lowther, Mark Hopkin, Dinger Bell
Middle: Kev Preece (PO), Sandy Sanders (Chief)
Bottom: Scouse `O'Shaugnassy, Lisa Spratling, Tony Leather.

When based at RM Poole with Dave Titchner we would sometimes gatecrash the Yeovilton Phot Section dos. Here is a group photo from one such do in 1981.



Memories from Brian (Ben) Cartwright



The last three years of my time in the RN were spent as CPO Phot at Yeovilton.

I helped to arrange an exhibition of photographs taken by the staff at the photographic section HMS Heron.

The exhibition was on display at a local historic house, Brympton d'Evercy and was opened by the Mayor of Yeovil. The photograph shows myself pointing out details to ex RN Phot Bill Huggett.





The star, Gary Newman, flew his own aircraft, a Harvard Mk IIB, into Yeovilton for a visit. Before his departure this photograph was taken showing Gary Newman with myself and Leading Wren (Phot) Fiona McKenzie.

One of the numerous visitors to HMS Heron was the star David Essex. This image shows him with Wren (Phot) Jan Green.



Each image below was taken at an RNAS Yeovilton Air Day where the Concorde took paying passengers on a short flight. The runway was long enough to have Concorde land and take off. The Swordfish, from the Historic Flight, based at Yeovilton made a flypast, showing, with Concorde, the old and the new. Before I left the Royal Navy I was fortunate in having a flight in this aircraft.



3 Cdo Bde Air Squadron with their Lynx helicopters flew to the French mountain flying school at Saillagouse in the Pyrenees for training in snow and mountain flying. I accompanied the squadron on one of their early trips, plenty of deep snow, the next year there was very little snow!



Small Reunion in Plymouth

By Julie Richardson

Recently Audrey Bazeley (nee Dickson) and I, travelled to Plymouth to visit our long-standing friend Caroline Coombes (nee Williams) for the weekend.

We had all reconnected at last year's Photographers Reunion in Southsea, it being 40 odd years since the three of us had been together!

I joined up with Caroline in July 78 along with Karen Woods, and after enduring 6 weeks of basic training (no men, no booze) we were all drafted to HMS Excellent for our photographic training. Caroline and I were both then sent to the FPU for another couple of years where we were let out with expensive equipment to



photographically record, events, groups, portraits, presentations with varying degrees of success. We also seemed to spend a great deal of time asleep in the darkroom, having spent a lunchtime in the infamous Hole in the Wall!

Audrey soon joined us having completed her phot training on the next Babies course, then the fun really began! Audrey and I moved out to Southsea into a freezing maisonette, Caroline would have joined us, but she had already been snapped up by a PO Photographer who shall remain nameless. There followed much fun and many shenanigans, which we revisited during our recent get-together in Plymouth. Oh, the carelessness of youth.



I'm sure no one forgets us cycling to work and then getting changed in full view of anyone who may be in the mess at the time, as there were no changing rooms!



Anyway, Caroline was the perfect hostess, much wine and Prosecco was drunk, we never stopped talking, covering all subjects, births, marriages, photographic faux pas and even religion!

Audrey had never been to Plymouth, and I had not visited for about 30 years! We visited a Beryl Cooke exhibition, many amusing pictures, then a museum where we learnt about the harbour's history, Plymouth Gin (of course) great cocktails, the Hoe, and even travelled over to Cornwall on the Cremyll Ferry from the Royal William Yard, just to get the sea time in!



We had a great time and we're planning more get togethers in the future. Caroline is planning to join us at the Isle of Wight reunion, and both are coming to Telford.

None of us had really changed, apart from a few wrinkles, more aches and pains and Audrey has 2 new knees!

Hasselblad 2000FC & Vinten F95 Aerial Camera Memories

By Mike Gilbert

The introduction of Hasselblad 6x6cm film format camera naval kits appeared in the late 60's with 35mm SLR Pentax kits issued to photographic sections and ships. The updating of navy issue camera equipment was a huge step forward thanks to our very own photographic office at Head of Aircraft Department Navy (HAD-N) in London. Bringing into service the top quality 6x6cm (2 ¼ square) medium format Hasselblad C/M camera kits with standard 80mm and 50mm lenses and the ship issue 150mm kits supplied to the fleet for intelligence photography.

Following the 5x4 inch and larger film format equipment used for many years, updating was firstly with medium format roll film and the Rollieflex f3.5 twin lens camera came as standard issue to Naval Photographic Sections with additional Mamiya C330 and Koni Omega medium format roll film camera kits (with maximum shutter speed of 1/500sec). Standardising of roll film (120/220) cameras for general use was a leap forward with the navy's introduction of the expensive Hasselblad system in considerable numbers.

The Swedish camera manufacturer Victor Hasselblad developed the medium format camera technology originally from a captured WW2 German aerial camera. The Swedish Air Force ordered large numbers of the aerial cameras from Hasselblad during WW2 which helped Victor to develop the medium format single lens reflex camera commercially after the war. Later with high quality German optics he produced cameras used by professional photographers worldwide and, ultimately, NASA's Apollo moon landing project.

In 1977 whilst serving on the aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal (R09) with its fast Phantom and Buccaneer jets launching from two steam catapults photographing them at high speeds posed a problem in stopping movement so as to give sharp images.

Our Photographic Officer Rod Safe, who recently crossed the bar, looked at this problem and we decided to jointly purchase the newly available Hasselblad 2000FC with its delicate focal plane titanium shutter curtain with shutter speeds up to 1/2000 sec, the fastest 6 x 6 cm film camera available at the time.



The 2000FC body was compatible with most Hasselblad lenses and accessories. We purchased the black trim 2000FC body, metered 45 degree pentaprism and two A12 film magazines together with a black C series 80mm F2.8 Carl Zeiss Planar lens, so we could use all shutter speeds to 1/500 sec for flash photography as well (Note: the 2000FC back shutter only had a maximum flash sync of 1/90 sec).

Early on in our ownership damage was done to the delicate back titanium shutter curtain with the magazine edge of changing film backs. In those days Hasselblad UK had an office and repair shop in Wembley. I remember taking a Hasselblad camera for repair before, whilst serving at DPRN, and meeting another Hasselblad owner, singer John Denver, who was there too as he had a problem with his camera.



High speed shutter trials cameras were used by the Navy with the Vinten HS300 35mm cine camera but for low level aerial photography the Vinten F95 17mm film aerial camera was in common use in many types of RN and RAF aircraft for many years until digital. At 4 or 8 frames a second a 1/2000sec shutter speed the 4 or 12 inch F2 and F3.5 Taylor Hobson lenses were able to produce sharp stereo pair three-dimensional images for photo interpreter analysis with Photo Recon aircraft flying low and fast. With a hundred-foot roll of 70mm film in magazine loaded, 500 x 2¼ negative images are produced after

processing in the dedicated large load 70mm spiral reel for processing in round plastic tanks in the normal way using Kodak D-19 developer and special 17mm drying machine where speed is the priority. The RAF would have used continuous processing machines back at base.

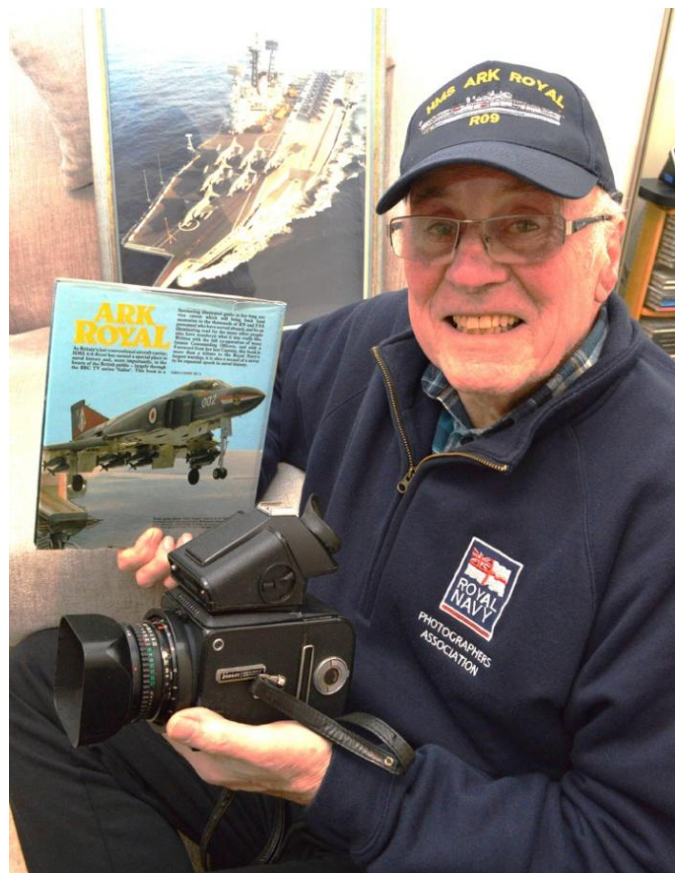
If we had served with training at Royal Naval School of Photography (RNSAP), RNAS Lossiemouth, before 1972 we would have been familiar with the cameras and film processing and the difficulty of winding the 70mm film onto the big spirals. The Buccaneer bomb bay photo crate could hold six F95 cameras, fan of three, port and starboard obliques and forward facer, luckily recce sorties rarely used all the camera positions.



It is a tribute to Lt Cdr Rod Safe that his forward thinking enabled us on the Ark in 1977/78 to get some sharp images of flight deck action using the Hasselblad 2000FC and the loaned modified on board F95 aerial camera. I found colour negative C-41 negative processing we undertook on board was reliable as was my E-4 processing in 120 spirals, but it was slow going with lots of films to process.

On decommissioning I bought Rod's half share so have owned the 2000FC ever since, using the camera on occasional weddings and groups. It has not been used for a few years as digital has completely taken over a couple of decades ago. With two PX28 batteries for the shutter electronics and prism meter the camera works perfectly. With 120 film processing and printing not being economical and superior high pixelation cameras available it will soon be sold to an enthusiast.

My next little article will be on how it was in the dark room.



Ben Cartwright's article on Bird Photography

I am fortunate in living less than 100yards from Anton Lake, the source of the river Anton, here in Andover. Weather permitting, I walk around the lake every day looking for something to photograph.

The Heron images were on the river which flows beside the lake. The Blackbird was in a tree beside the lake. We currently have two female Kingfishers at the lake and sometimes I manage to get an acceptable photograph.



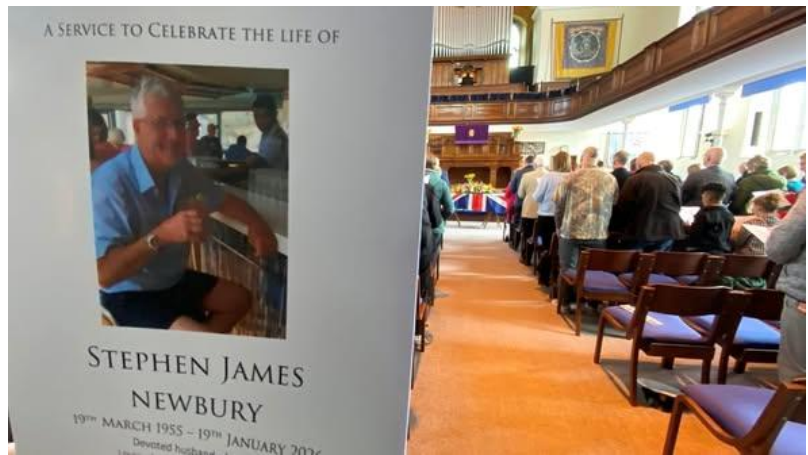
Crossed the Bar – Steve Newbury

(Contributions and memories from ex WO Phot Steve Hobden, Bernie Pettersen, Wheelie Barrow and extracts from Steve's daughter Laura's eulogy).

On the 19 January 2026 we heard the sad news that Steve Newbury had passed away. Steve was a stalwart of Culdrose Photographic Section during my time there in charge and we had kept in touch, meeting up for a coffee occasionally. In recent years Steve had been suffering from Early Onset Dementia which had gradually worsened to a point which meant that he had been hospitalised just before Christmas. He was made as comfortable as possible and passed away peacefully with his family at the bedside.



His Celebration of Life service was held on Thursday, 12th February 2026 at Porthleven Methodist Church, Cornwall attended by over 130 people. Photographers attending included Bernie Pettersen, Paul "Wheelie" Barrow (representing the current members of the branch) Sandie Swain, Tom Suddes and Steve Hobden. Besides the Photos there were lots of old faces from the



Aircrewman and Aircraft Handler branches as well as numerous civilian friends, reflecting the widespread respect for Steve in both the RN and the local community.



His daughter Laura read a truly heartfelt life story portraying his life, from birth (19 March 1955), in Tanzania, Africa, through childhood. From joining the Royal Navy in 1974 at HMS Ganges and his earlier days as an Aircraft Handler and finding his ambition in skills, on joining the world of the RN Photographic Branch in 1978 at JSOP (Photo G 42 – *thank you to Des Ashton for the course photo*) and his many globally recognised achievements in his photographic imagery. He left the Royal Navy in 1996 and spent more time with his family, wife Verna and children Laura and Martin.

A message has been received from WO2 Owen Cooban, passing on condolences to the family of Steve, on behalf of the Royal Naval Photographic Branch.

On completion of the Celebration of Life service, all retired to Steve’s well-known local, The Harbour, in his village of Porthleven. Where over 130 people had chance to toast his memory and regale many many stories. With so many cards and messages: Verna and family have asked that Bernie personally pass on their thanks to many, which he has done.



RAF Cosford JSOP _ Photo G 42 1978
 Back; LA(H) Steve Newbury - LAC Ralf ? - LS Buster Brown
 Front; NA(H) Nigel Gordon - Lt Keston Kumwembe
 POOEL Des Ashton - RO1 Ash Amliwalah.



Sadly, Steve’s sister was unable to attend and a live video was streamed for her.
 Celebration of Life Link: <https://livestreaming.co.uk/stevenewbury/#stream>

Your Committee:

RNPA Committee 2026			
Chair	Julie Richardson	07884 007244	jmrichardson59@gmail.com
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Useful Links:

RNPA Website: www.rnpa.org.uk

Royal Navy Photographers: [Royal Navy Photographers | Facebook](#)

Ex RN Phots Camera Club: [Ex RN Phots Camera Club | Facebook](#)



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RNPA Mini Reunion Isle of Wight, 17th to 19th July

Hi all, looking forward to our Mini Reunion based on the Isle of Wight. If you've never been before, or not for some years, the Isle is a fabulous place to visit, with loads to see and do!

Its 26miles long and 14 miles wide, so everything is in easy reach, and easy to get over either via Hovercraft, Catamaran or the 3 ferry routes, Lymington, Southampton or Ryde.

The weekend will be based round a BBQ at my house in Ryde on the Saturday, and a meal out together (also in Ryde) on the Friday Evening.

I'm also proposing a visit to Osborne House on the Saturday, during the day.

But all of it is flexible, you can attend as much or as little as you want.

As for places to stay there is a Premier Inn in Ryde, plus various Hotels such as Yelfs, Ryde Castle and the Esplanade, plus many Airbnb's in the area.

If camping is more your style, there are many campsites, plus I may have room for a camper or 2 on my drive, and also room for tents in the Garden.

It should be a fun, relaxed get together with much merriment and laughter.

Bring your bathers, we do have a hot tub and the sea, should be warm enough by then!

If you would like to attend please contact me on jmrichardson59@gmail.com.



Thank you, Julie R





Photographers Association

RNPA 107th Reunion RAF Cosford and Telford Area 2nd to 4th October 2026

This year's main reunion will be a more informal event with no formal Gala Dinner or AGM. As agreed at the last AGM this will be a more relaxed get together.

With both myself (Alan Ferguson) and Pete Bunting living locally we have agreed to organise this year's reunion.

The Park House Hotel in Shifnal has agreed to a group B&B rate for Fri 2nd and Sat 3rd October of £120 per night (2 people sharing). To book contact the hotel, Tel: 01952 460 128 or The Park House Hotel quoting Group ID 16839. Please let me know when you have booked.



We will look at using that venue for a relaxed Private Dining meal on the Saturday evening. This will be charged separately at £30 per person and will mean non-resident members can attend too. Can those interested please do a bank transfer to: Alan Ferguson, Sort Code 09-01-32 (Santander) A/C 12112406 as I will be co-ordinating the event.

The schedule for the weekend:

Friday 2nd October

- Meet and Greet at the Royal Navy Association Newport, where Pete is President

Saturday 3rd October

- 10:30 Visit to the Defence School of Photography, RAF Cosford
- PM – Visit and Guided Tours of the RAF Museum
- Evening – Private Dining meal, Park House Hotel, Shifnal

Sunday 4th October

- Options to visit Ironbridge and/or the Blist Hill Victorian Village (now under the National Trust)



For further information and to let us know if you are interested in joining us for the weekend contact Alan Ferguson (alan.ferguson_7@virgin.net) or Pete Bunting (pete_bunting@hotmail.com)