



CNOA

Chatham Naval Officers' Association



The CNOA Newsletter for January 2022

Email: contact@cnoa.org.uk

Website: www.cnoa.org.uk

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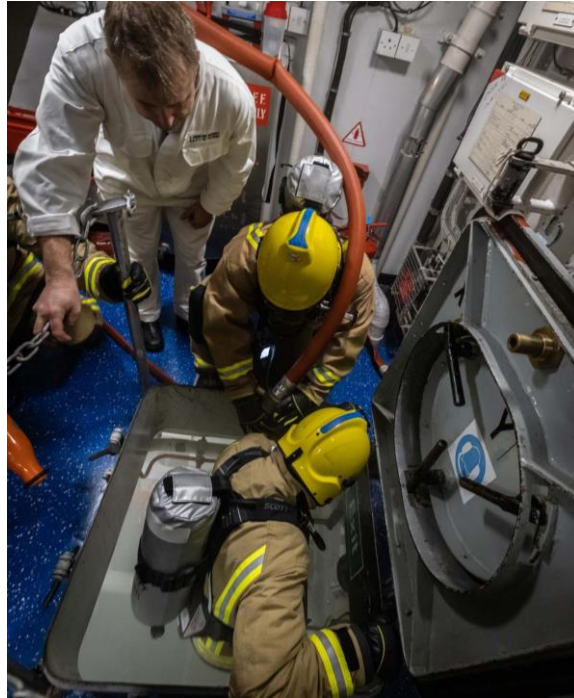
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CNOA Standing Order Form

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HMS Portland's crew training. © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2021

HMS PORTLAND IS A FIGHTING FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH AFTER COMPLETING 8-MONTH REGENERATION

HMS Portland is ready to take her place on the front line of naval operations once again.

Eight months after emerging from a major refit in her home base of Devonport – and four and a half years after her last deployment – the second youngest frigate in the Royal Navy has passed her sternest test to date.

Beyond delivering another Type 23 frigate to the front-line fleet – the entire class of 12 ships has undergone or is undergoing the upgrade, which includes installing the Artisan 3D radar and replacing the aged Sea Wolf missile system with the new Sea Ceptor – Portland's completion of Operational Sea Training marks the first test of a new crewing model being trialled on the ship.

Chairman's Flag Hoist

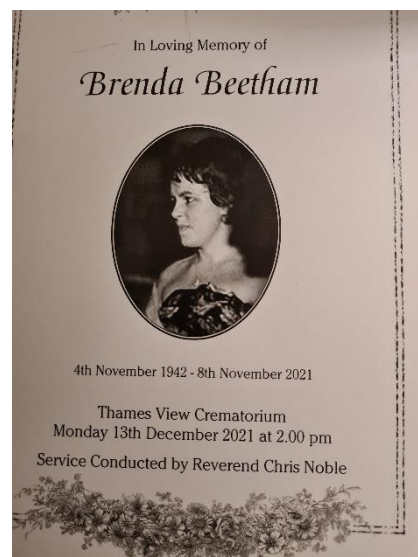


Dear Fellow members,

On 10th December we held our last meeting of 2021. Pictured below are those who attended splicing the main brace, thanks to our President, Cdre Bryant.

A reminder that we will meet virtually in January; the advertised lecture about the Royal Naval Division in WW1 is unfortunately cancelled but we'll find a good alternative. In Feb we have our AGM and I ask again for you to consider if you can support the Association by joining the committee, in particular we are looking for a Newsletter Editor, a Social Secretary and Merchandise Manager to hold the stock of CNOA ties, scarfs and badges.

On Sunday 10th December, the President, Tracey and I attended the drum presentation to TS Brilliant where the twelve new memorial drums were blessed by Rev David Houston RNR and passed to cadets of the unit's band. One has an inscription of CNOA for our donation in memory of Derek Ireland. On Monday 13th several members attended Brenda Beetham's funeral at Gravesend Crematorium.



2022 will be another challenging year for us, with us needing to recruit new members and raise money for our chosen charities. We have now held two meetings face to face; thanks to the RSME, these have worked well with members pre-testing, being distanced at lectures, and wearing masks when moving around. I am confident we are offering a safe environment for members still concerned about attending.

2022 offers some new events, including a tour of the Battle of Britain Museum on 15th July, thanks to Andy Simpson. The event will be limited to 30 people. We also hope to mark 11 11 22, which falls on a meeting Friday, with a service by our chaplains.

Yours Aye,

Jon

Jon Vanns
Lt Cdr (SCC) RNR
CNOA Chairman



Future Speakers & Events

Subject to revision

14 January	TBA – virtual talk
11 February	AGM
11 March	Peter Hubbard OBE – EOD
8 April	Barry Duffield – Chatham Dockyard – slide show
14 May	Col Tony Holding – CCF
10 June	Guy Bartlett – Donald Campbell
8 July	Cdr Greg Young – update on HMS President and Medway Division
12 August	Summer leave – no meeting
9 September	Roy Malkin – development of celestial navigation from Odysseus to Trident
14 October	TBA
11 November	TBA
9 December	Christmas social with our President

Additional events will be included as details become available.

As always, we are most grateful to those who send items for this Newsletter. Please email contact@cnoa.org.uk with articles, news items and photographs.

Suzanne Wood (Newsletter Editor)

HMS Kent is home from Navy's key mission of 2021 From MoD Navy

HMS Kent arrived back home in Portsmouth on 10 December. The frigate has been a constant guardian of the Carrier Strike Group 21, one of six vessels that formed a ring of steel around UK flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth.



HMS Kent arrives back in Portsmouth © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2021

Kent spent seven and a half months away from home - 224 days or 32 weeks – with the task group.

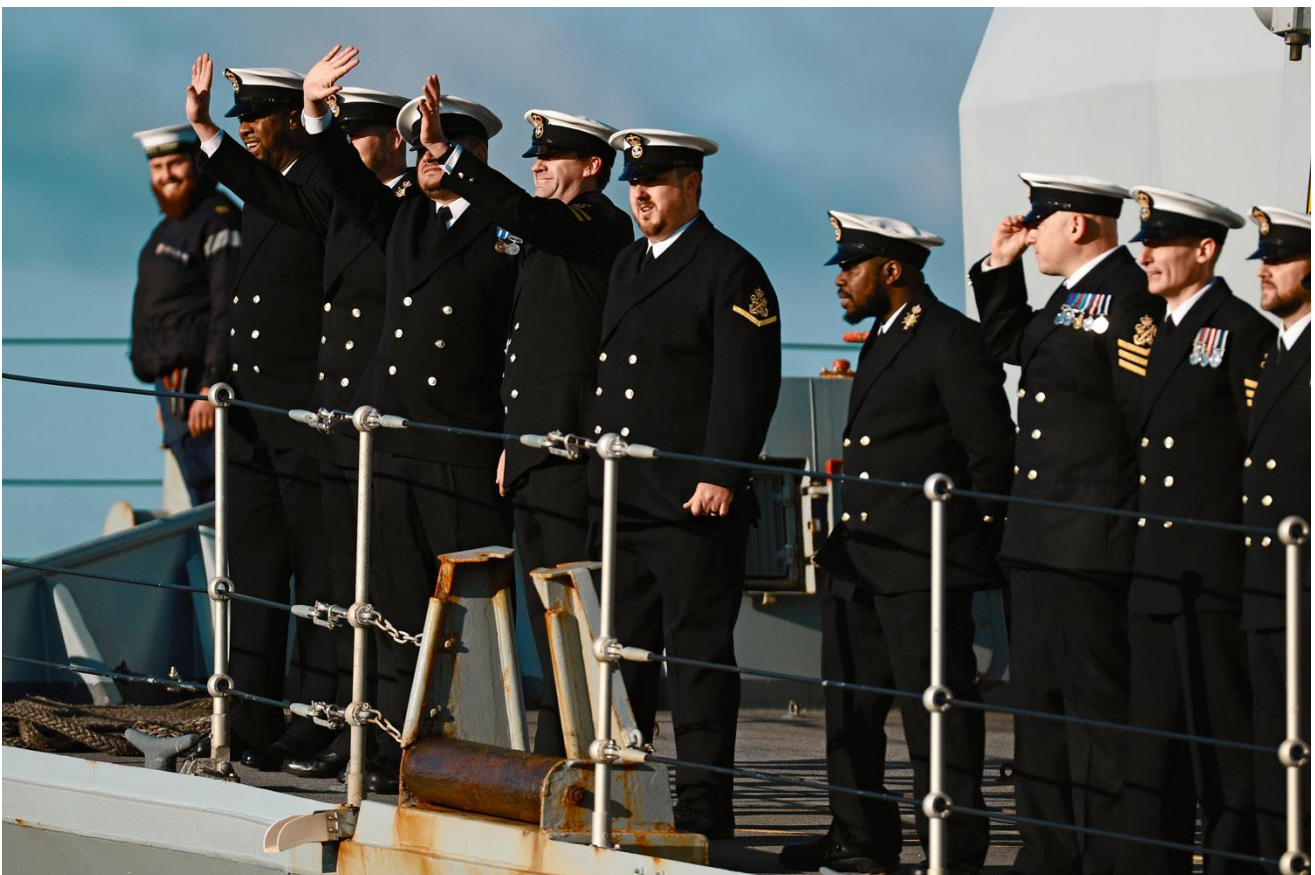
Her principal role, with HMS Richmond, and the helicopters of 820 Naval Air Squadron operating from the flight deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth, was to track any potential underwater threats to the force as it passed from the Atlantic, through the Mediterranean and into the Indian and Pacific Oceans. They did so – tracking submarines on multiple occasions.

A short while after the carrier arrived back at Portsmouth Naval Base, HMS Kent joined her, welcomed by several hundred friends and family.

HMS Kent's participation in the Navy's most important peacetime deployment in a generation has:

- Taken her through 15 different seas and oceans in both hemispheres.
- Take her to ten ports across four continents.
- Seen her work with 17 other navies.
- Take on fuel and supplies on the move on 20 occasions.
- Seen off 13,000 sausages and over 39,000 eggs.
- Forced her sailors and marines to forward/rewind clocks on 25 occasions as they passed through time zones.
- Added 48,525 nautical miles to her odometer – which would take her around the world more than twice.

In addition, the ship's Wildcat helicopter – callsign Shepherd and normally based with 815 Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset – flew 239 hours and 15 minutes of sorties (45 minutes shy of ten whole days airborne).



The ship's company arriving in Portsmouth © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2021

And the Royal Marines team from 42 Commando – specialists in board and search operations to stop piracy/drug trafficking/smuggling – administered more than 12,000 Lateral Flow Tests to keep the frigate safe from Covid-19.

“Despite the challenges of operating in a Covid world, Kent’s ship’s company have excelled themselves throughout 2021,” said Lieutenant Commander Matthew Court, the frigate’s Executive Officer.

“From Greece to Guam, the team have bought out the very best in each other: safaris in Kenya, the Bangladesh Navy band and Miss Kent aside, I couldn’t have asked for a better bunch of sailors to deploy with. *Invicta* – We are invincible.”

Though the pandemic has limited the opportunities of the 200 men and women on board to experience some of the countries visited as they would do in normal circumstances, the crew were able to head out on safari in Kenya when the ship called in at Mombasa on the return leg of the deployment.

“After completing trade training at HMS Sultan, this has been my first ship and first



Debbie Dawkins from London waiting for her son, Alex Dawkins-
© Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2021

deployment where I have started to put what I learnt into practice,” said Marine Engineering Technician Josh Gayton.

“With a deployment as long and as busy as this, it has been challenging physically and mentally with constant training along the way.

“However there has also been the opportunity to visit some great countries including Guam and also Kenya, where I was able to take part in a safari which was also the highlight of the deployment.”

Throughout sailors made their own entertainment, from the traditional Crossing the Line ceremony to mark passing over the Equator, to five opportunities to swim with only the ocean floor thousands of feet beneath them by jumping in from the sides of the frigate (known as hands to bathe).

The chefs prepared more than 130,000 meals while away, including staging 96 ‘themed dinners’ aboard to add a little variety to the menu.

And the ship’s physical training instructor made sure that all that lovely food didn’t pile on the pounds by running 480 fitness circuits to burn the calories.

Another fitness drive – a circuit every hour for 12 hours led by Petty Officer Potter Grant – raised £1,500 for the charity MIND.

And a further £1,231 was raised for Forces charity SSAFA when the medical team ran 100 kilometres continuously around the upper deck.

Britain's new polar research vessel docks in Antarctica for first time

By The Maritime Executive

Britain's new polar research vessel, the RRS Sir David Attenborough, docked in Antarctica on 17 December, a week after reaching the region on its maiden voyage. The much-maligned vessel, which received numerous reports in the media due to cost overruns and construction delays, departed the UK in mid-November and will be conducting its research and resupply mission, not returning home until June 2022.

The vessel, which gained international attention when the public voted to name her Boaty McBoatface, was handed over to the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) late in 2020. She spent the last year undergoing additional outfitting and training for its crew as well as correcting some technical issues that appeared during the tests. After departing Harwich on 16 November and a brief stop in Portsmouth, she completed a three-and-a-half week transit to the Falkland Islands before officially entering Antarctica on 13 December.

"The ship is a state-of-the-art research and logistics vessel, enabled by world-class infrastructure, that has been delivered by an amazing team of professional and technical experts from BAS and our industry partners," says Jon Ager, Programme Director (AIMP), for the British Antarctic Survey which is operating the vessel.

Her first call in Antarctica is at Rothera Research Station, the UK's largest Antarctic research station. She is transporting station personnel, food, fuel, and cargo for the resupply of Britain's research programs.



Docked at the Rothera Research Station (William Clark photo courtesy of BAS)

The RRS Sir David Attenborough's arrival at Rothera Research Station also marks the first time the new purpose-built wharf has been used to berth the ship. The wharf, which measures more than 240 feet, was completed in 2020 by the Antarctic Infrastructure Modernization (AIMP). It enables Britain's new polar research ship to berth safely and helps the station run more efficiently with a new crane to launch small science boats, a personnel gangway, and a floating pontoon to deploy scientific instruments.

The RRS Sir David Attenborough's arrival also marks the start of the new construction season with activity on the Discovery Building for the third year in a row, a new state of the art science and operations facility for Rothera Research Station. Due to the harsh, cold Antarctic environment, construction can only take place during the Antarctic summer months. Over fifty members of a specialist construction team arrived in November and will work until April on erecting the main steel structure, installation of ground floor pre-cast concrete slabs, ground drainage, and site-wide services.



Fun moment during the three-and-a-half week trip from the UK to the Antarctic (Jenna Plank photo courtesy of BAS)

“Everyone on board is thrilled to arrive at Rothera for the first time,” said Will Whatley, Captain of the RRS Sir David Attenborough. “This is a really exciting and proud moment for us, and another huge milestone to have achieved. As we’ve travelled further South, we’ve had the chance to put the ship through its paces in Antarctic conditions and I’m pleased to report the ship has performed really well.”

After calling at Rothera, the RRS Sir David Attenborough will continue its mission South, making calls at Signy, King Edward Point, and Bird Island research stations, and heading to the Stange Ice Front for its ice trials.

Bonus Royal Navy Christmas video for those viewing this on a computer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGyvtgXJ6Pg>

CNOA visit to the Battle of Britain Memorial Courtesy of Wg Cdr Andrew Simpson



Battle of Britain Memorial, New Dover Road, Capel-le-Ferne, Folkestone, CT18 7JJ

Friday 15th July 2022
Starts at 1400

Cost £5 per head paid on the day, maximum number is 30 on a first come basis

A private tour courtesy of Andy Simpson

Followed by a gathering at the Valliant Sailor

RSVP by 1st June 2022 to jonvanns@aol.com with Member's name and number of guests

January Luncheon - postponed From Martin Watts

Dear Fellow Members,

On behalf of the Chairman and Committee, I write to advise that, due to the current Covid-19 uncertainty, our January lunch at Bearsted Golf Club has been rescheduled for 12th March 2022. Jon will be in contact those who have already booked and paid.

May I also take this opportunity to wish all CNOA members, their families and friends, a safe and happy Christmas, and let us look forward to 2022 and meeting again.

Yours aye,

Martin

Dr. Martin Watts
Hon Sec CNOA

Royal Navy looks to drones to deliver lightweight supplies at sea From MoD Navy

The Navy's crucial support arm is looking at using drones to deliver mail drops and other supplies to ships in the middle of the ocean.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) – whose ships and sailors have supported Royal Navy operations since 1905 with fuel, food, spare parts, ammunition and other supplies – is looking into the possibility of crewless aircraft performing some of the more routine, lighter duties.



The classic image of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary is of a tanker sailing parallel with a warship and either pumping fuel into its tanks via a hose, or transferring supplies in crates and on pallets on a jackstay line slung between the two vessels. But helicopters are also used extensively to move loads around the fleet, typically in large nets carried beneath the aircraft.

During the recent Carrier Strike Group deployment supporting HMS Queen Elizabeth's mission to the Pacific and back, supply ship RFA Fort Victoria shipped nearly 900 loads to the carrier and other ships in the task group, encompassing food and drink, general stores, spare parts, medical supplies, mail and parts for F-35 stealth fighters and Merlin and Wildcat helicopters – over 354 tonnes of supplies in all – while tanker RFA Tidespring carried out 67 'vertical replenishments' as they are known.

While some loads are too heavy for current small-scale drones to transport, seven out of ten resupply missions involve the transfer of loads up to 100lbs/45kg, so the head of the RFA, Commodore David Eagles, wants to see if the work is 'dronable'.



A US Navy drone delivers spare parts to at sea © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2021

Using drones would save time, money and sailors, and free up helicopters for other duties.

The US Navy's Naval Air Systems Command is experimenting with unmanned aircraft moving relatively lightweight supplies – up to 25lbs/11kg – between ships, but over distances which could be greater than 200 miles.

Trials over the summer successfully proved this concept by delivering a small cargo for repairs between a warship and an auxiliary of the Military Sealift Command – the US Navy's equivalent of the RFA.

Royal Marines have tested re-supply by drone both on the battlefield and on the beachhead, using autonomous systems, from Malloy Aeronautics Ltd, to ferry up to 150lbs/68kg supplies; including ammunition, blood and Bergen backpacks to troops in the line from either ships offshore or bases to the rear.



A drone delivers medical supplies to Royal Marines on exercise in the field © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2021

“The RFA is looking very closely at the Military Sealift Command and the opportunities around using drones to make deliveries at sea,” said Commodore Eagles.

The RFA Commodore regularly confers with his counterpart in the MSC, Rear Admiral Michael Wettlaufer, which conducted the summer trials; and he has asked his liaison team to follow their progress and share some lessons of the Royal Navy's own trials with similar systems.

The RFA ends 2021 on something of a high after rising to all the challenges made of it this year – notably sustaining the carrier group half-way around the world in the middle of a pandemic which impacted moving supplies and personnel.

Its ships delivered more than 65 million litres of fuel to vessels from six nations, as well as 16 million litres of aviation fuel, thousands of litres of fresh water and other goods.



RFA Tiderace conducts a double RAS with HMS Lancaster and Westminster in the Baltic © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2021

Tanker RFA Wave Knight delivered aid to volcano hit St Vincent, supported US-led relief efforts off Haiti in the wake of the summer's devastating earthquake and, in conjunction with the US Coast Guard, has seized 2½ tonnes of cocaine in five busts spread across the autumn.

Amphibious ship RFA Mounts Bay is assigned to the Royal Marines' new Arctic-focused Littoral Response Group (North) and will also serve as the testbed for ongoing autonomous trials by the commandos.

And RFA Lyme Bay replaced her sister Cardigan Bay in the Gulf as the command ship for UK (and, when required, allied) minehunters, continuing a mission going back nearly 15 years.

"My message at the end of 2021 is resolutely positive – we have achieved what was asked of us this year," said Commodore Eagles. "Our people and their families have delivered so much. We are in an extremely positive place going into 2022."

RAF Typhoon destroys terrorist drone in Syria

From MoD Navy

A RAF Typhoon has shot down a small hostile drone in Syria which posed a threat to Coalition forces in the area.

This unprecedented event was the first operational air to air engagement conducted by a RAF Typhoon, and also the first RAF air to air missile firing during Operation SHADER – the UK's contribution to the Global Coalition against Daesh.

Ben Wallace, Defence Secretary, said: "This strike is an impressive demonstration of the RAF's ability to take out hostile targets in the air which pose a threat to our forces. We continue to do everything we can alongside our Coalition partners to stamp out the terrorist threat and protect our personnel and our partners."

The engagement took place on 14th December, when the drone activity was detected above the At Tanf Coalition base in Syria.

Two RAF Typhoon FGR4s from RAF Akrotiri were conducting a regular patrol over Syria and Iraq, as part of Operation SHADER when they were tasked to investigate. On arrival in the At Tanf area, the pilots identified a small hostile drone and succeeded in eliminating the threat during an air-to-air engagement with an Advanced Short Range Air to Air Missile.



Typhoon taking off in the sunset. © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2021

This comes several weeks after the RAF successfully eliminated a known terrorist threat in Syria using a remotely piloted Reaper armed with Hellfire missiles.

The Global Coalition against Daesh has liberated 8 million people across 110,000 square km, from Daesh tyranny in Iraq and Syria. Nevertheless, Daesh is still a threat. The UK remains firmly committed to working with our Coalition partners on further degrading the terrorist group.



**CHATHAM NAVAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION
STANDING ORDER FORM
FOR ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

I wish to make my annual subscription payments by standing order to the Chatham Naval Officers' Association.

Please complete this form and return it to the Hon Treasurer:
Lieutenant Jan Dean RNR, 79A Cherry Avenue, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7OU.

Do NOT send this form to the bank.

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Name of your Bank: _____

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To my bank: I request you to pay Barclays Bank, 24 Lowfield Street, Dartford, DA1 1HD, Sort Code 20.25.42, for the credit of The Chatham Naval Officers Association, Account Number 93932702, the regular sum of:

£ _____ Annually

Amount in words: _____

Starting on: ____/____/____

And continuing until* ____/____/____

Or until I give notice in writing*

Signature: _____

Date: _____

A note from the CNOA Hon. Secretary

If you enjoy the CNOA activities, why not extend an invitation to a like-minded serving or retired officer? or ask them to look at cnoa.org.uk



CHATHAM NAVAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

SURNAME		FORENAMES		DATE	
HOME ADDRESS Tel. No: E Mail Address:			BUSINESS ADDRESS Tel. No: E Mail Address:		
RANK	TYPE OF COMMISSION		SPECIALISATION / AWARDS & QUALIFICATIONS		
BRIEF CAREER DETAILS					
<hr/> <p>General Data Protection Regulation: I agree that all the above details may be maintained and kept by the CNOA and RSME for the purposes of membership records and security. I agree / do not agree (delete as applicable) to my details being published in a membership booklet.</p> <p>SIGNED.....</p>					
PRESENT OCCUPATION					
PROPOSER'S NAME		PROPOSER'S SIGNATURE		HOW LONG KNOWN	
SECONDER'S NAME		SECONDER'S SIGNATURE		HOW LONG KNOWN	