



CNOA

Chatham Naval Officers' Association



The CNOA Newsletter for June 2019

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Royal Fleet Auxillary Replenishment at Sea Trials © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2019

A photograph taken from a Merlin Mk2, from 814 NAS, of RFA Tideforce (A139), RFA Tidesurge (A138) and RFA Fort Victoria (A387) off the South West Coast. The Tide class tankers were conducting replenishment at sea trials (RAS).

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary has supported the Royal Navy during a history stretching back over 100 years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The next meeting of the Association will be on **Friday the 14th of June** in the Warfare Room, RSME HQ Brompton Barracks 19.45 for 20.00 when the CNOA Parish Notices will be read out and any other messages from CNOA members will be heard. The evening will then continue with refreshments and fellowship in the Officers Mess.

Chairman's Flag Hoist:



Dear Fellow Members,

I can't believe that another month has passed, but here we are. Older, but in my case, not necessarily any wiser!

Recently, this country and the Royal Navy in particular, commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the 'Continuous at Sea Deterrent' (CASD). I say this country, but of course quite a lot of people have little or no idea about the nuclear deterrent and many others strongly oppose its existence as a matter of principle. Witness the people shouting protests at Prince William in London as he entered Westminster Abbey recently for the service of commemoration. I think they

have missed the point. Nuclear weapons are terrible weapons, but having them allows us and our close Allies to deter any mad dictator from using their nuclear weapons against us. It's a MAD policy (where MAD = Mutually Assured Destruction) which seems to have worked so far. Last year, I had an online conversation with a man who believed absolutely that there is no threat to this country. He said that our Armed Forces "go abroad and kill many innocent people" and should be disbanded. Well, at least he had an opinion.

Admiral Sir Philip Jones, the 1st Sea Lord, recently stated: "CASD is the longest sustained military operation ever undertaken by the UK and this 50th anniversary year presents a valuable opportunity to recognise and thank those from the Naval Service and their families, the wider MOD and our many industrial partners who have contributed. As we begin our commemoration of this remarkable milestone, it's fitting that we recognise the extraordinary dedication and professionalism demonstrated by our submariners". "Here, Here."

I hope you find something else of interest in this edition. There should be an application form for Ladies and Guests Night Dinner in Brompton. Please send this off to the Social Sec as soon as you have your guests sorted out.

Finally, we still need an extra member to join the committee. Do help us if you can. It's not onerous.

I look forward to seeing many of you soon,

Yours Aye,

Colin

Colin Tozer
Cdr RN (Rtd)
CNOA Chairman

2019 Future Speakers & Events:

Please note the date changes below to the second Friday of the month

14th June: Parish Notices followed by a social evening

28th June: Ladies & Guest Night

12th July: Martin Watts – The Royal Marines and the war at sea 1939-45

9th August: CNOA Summer leave – No meeting

13th September: Lt Cdr Iain Shephard – ASW in the Royal Navy

11th October: Brian Maplin – Hovercraft

25th October: Trafalgar Night

8th November: Glenn Jones – A war of two halves, the Second Afghan War

13th December: Cmdr Bryant – The President's Address

Additional events will be included as details become available. As always, we are most grateful to those who send items for this Newsletter. **All such contributions by the 5th of each month please.** Could other CNOA members also provide a short presentation for us? Yes, of course they could! Please let Jon Vanns know or email contact@cnoa.org.uk

Derek Ireland (Hon. Secretary) and *Graham Storey* (Newsletter Editor)

Royal Navy submariners take centre stage as nation marks 50 years of submarines delivering nuclear deterrence

From MoD Navy

THE Duke of Cambridge today (Friday 03May2019) led tributes as the nation marked the sacrifices demanded of submariners and their families by the UK's longest military operation, the Royal Navy's 'Continuous at Sea Deterrent' (CASD).

The honorary head of the Royal Navy's Submarine Service joined veterans and serving personnel, families, people who have built and maintained vessels – described as more complex than the Space Shuttle – and naval and political leaders past and present in Westminster Abbey for a 'service of recognition' to mark 50 years of maintaining the nation's nuclear deterrent on unseen and unheralded patrols.



Since April 1969, one British ballistic missile submarine has always been on patrol – collectively more than 350 patrols have been completed – carrying the nation's ultimate weapon as a deterrent to any foe, maintaining the safety and security of the UK and its allies.

It is a mission the Submarine Service expects to perform for another half century with the UK committed to replacing its existing flotilla of four Vanguard-class deterrent submarines – all based at HM Naval Base Clyde in Western Scotland – with four next-generation Dreadnought-class boats, the first of which is currently under construction in Barrow.

And ahead of today's service, the nation's most senior sailor, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip

Jones, revealed that the fourth and final Dreadnought will carry the name HMS King George VI – the very first warship to do so.

The emphasis of today's service, however – as it is throughout the 50th anniversary year – was on the human element of the UK's longest military mission as much as the submarines and the cutting-edge technology which drives them. This was underlined by two of the people addressing the 2,000-strong congregation: Marine engineer Leading Seaman Ed Owen, who has completed two deterrent patrols aboard HMS Victorious and Vengeance, and Isobel Fraser, who has raised a family over 38 years as a naval wife – and 29 deterrent patrols by her husband Stewart. "Being a submariner requires a large personal sacrifice," Ed explained. "On patrol there are no phone calls, no emails and no social media – restrictions on personal freedoms which other people take for granted. "It involves extended separation from my partner, family and friends. During the past 11 months I have spent just eight days with my girlfriend."

The strain on family life was echoed by Mrs Fraser whose husband had missed more Christmases, birthdays, anniversaries, school sports days and parents' evenings than she could remember, "living like a one-parent family" for months at a time. She said the end of each patrol was filled with joy and relief as she and the couple's sons Donald and Callum were reunited – and above all pride. "The pride I felt watching you sail home – knowing you were there," she told the Abbey of her husband's return. "And in our dreams and our hearts and our prayers – you were always there."

Rear Admiral Tim Hodgson, the UK's Director of Submarine Capability, said most Britons were unaware of the huge civilian 'army' behind each deterrent patrol: 30,000 men and women from civil servants through shipwrights, electricians, welders, computer technicians and scientists "ready to answer the call of our country should our most desperate hour come. "The commitment of these many thousands of people should be a source of unrivalled pride for all of us."

The Duke of Cambridge – Honorary Commodore of the Submarine Service – read a passage from the Bible underlining the importance of peacekeeping before joining guests at a reception, chatting with families and thanking crew of all eras for efforts which are otherwise acknowledged only by special pin badges with which deterrent patrol submariners are decorated.

Defence Secretary names new Submarine for CASD Fleet From MoD Navy

Posted 3 May 2019

Defence Secretary Penny Mordaunt has announced the fourth Dreadnought submarine as HMS King George VI ahead of a special service at Westminster Abbey today to recognise the Royal Navy's Continuous at Sea Deterrent (CASD) over the past 50 years.



Above: Concept image of a Dreadnought submarine.
© Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2019

The Defence Secretary has announced the fourth Dreadnought submarine as HMS King George VI ahead of a special service at Westminster Abbey today to recognise the Royal Navy's Continuous at Sea Deterrent (CASD) over the past 50 years.

Since April 1969, a Royal Navy ballistic missile submarine has patrolled every single day, without interruption, providing the nation's deterrent and helping keep the UK and our allies safe. This is the UK's longest sustained military operation ever undertaken and is known as Operation Relentless.

Defence Secretary Penny Mordaunt said: "Operation Relentless has seen generations of

submariners from HMS Resolution to HMS Vengeance on constant watch, for every minute of every day for the last five decades. This is the longest military operation we have ever undertaken and continues right this minute deep under the sea.

"We pay tribute to those incredible crews, their supportive families, the Royal Navy and the thousands of industry experts who will continue to sustain this truly national endeavour for many years to come."

CASD50 provides a chance to not only remember the national endeavour of the past half century but to look to the next-generation of ballistic missile submarines, the Dreadnought class. This will consist of four boats helping to ensure the security of generations to come. The Dreadnought-class are expected to enter service in the early 2030s, helping to maintain Operation Relentless.

Prior to the service at Westminster Abbey, First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Philip Jones, announced that HMS King George VI will now join HMS Dreadnought, Valiant and Warspite as the fourth Dreadnought submarine. HMS King George VI makes history as it will become the first naval vessel to bear that royal title. King George VI had strong naval connections having spent time at the Royal Naval College, Osborne followed by Dartmouth. He then went on to earn a mention in despatches for his service on HMS Collingwood during the Battle of Jutland.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones said: "For half a century, the Royal Navy has always had at least one ballistic missile submarine at sea on patrol, safeguarding the ultimate guarantor of our country's security – and that of our NATO allies too. Today, as we pause to reflect on the significance of this 50-year milestone in our proud history of submarine operations, and the national endeavour that underpins it, we are also looking to our future.

"Today's announcement that the fourth of our future ballistic missile submarine fleet will be named HMS King George VI follows a long tradition of naming capital ships after our country's monarchs; together with her sisters Dreadnought, Valiant and Warspite these submarines represent the cutting edge of underwater capability and will meet the awesome challenge of continuous at sea deterrence into the second half of the 21st century."

It is estimated that around 30,000 people are involved in building and supporting nuclear submarines across the UK. Maintaining this skilled workforce helps to invest millions of pounds into local communities and ensures the UK continues to boast a highly-skilled workforce in this sector.

The Wildcat multi-role helicopter in the Royal Navy From Cdr Colin Tozer

We have within our membership at least 2 distinguished officers who have flown and fought in the Lynx of the Fleet Air Arm. We also have many more who have flown in FAA helicopters as passengers in peace and indeed, during combat operations. Most of these flights will have been 'routine'. Some will have been a little unpleasant and perhaps a bit scary. And some flights will have been downright terrifying! I am a great fan of the Fleet Air Arm. They are truly a real 'Fighting Arm' of the Royal Navy and Royal Navy aircrew have inflicted great damage to our enemies ashore and afloat. We should also of course recognise the amazing work they carry out when conducting humanitarian relief and numerous rescues at sea. Like many others, I owe my life to the skill and

professionalism of a FAA Lynx pilot. We need more of them. So, read on. It's a bit technical in places, but will give you a very good insight into the latest fighting helicopter of the Royal Navy.



In focus: the Wildcat multi role helicopter in service with the Royal Navy

The Wildcat has been in service with the RN since 2016 and is beginning to build up a good record of success in active service. Here we take a look at the development history and the capability of naval variant Wildcat HMA.2

Lynx Heritage

The Westland Lynx HAS.2 formally entered service in September 1976 and 60 aircraft were eventually bought for the RN. It was a giant leap in capability from the very basic Westland Wasp it replaced, being fast, agile and versatile. 24 Lynx were deployed in a baptism of fire during the 1982 Falklands War and using Sea Skua missiles (that had not even been fully qualified for service) knocked out at least 3 Argentine vessels. 4 Lynx were lost on ships that were either hit or sunk but none were lost in combat. The Lynx quickly became valued as a prime weapons system for frigates and destroyers and achieved considerable export success to navies around the world. In 1986 a specially modified Lynx achieved the world helicopter speed record of over 400 Km/h, which still stands today.

54 surviving HAS.2 aircraft were upgraded with better engines to HAS.3 standard along with a purchase of 23 new-build HAS.3 bringing the total to 77 in service with the RN in the mid-1980s. The Lynx played a significant part in the naval battles of the first Gulf War in 1991. **Aircraft from HMS Cardiff, Gloucester, Manchester and Brazen used Sea Skua missiles to destroy 14 Iraqi naval vessels during 21 separate engagements that lasted over 13 hours.** From 1992 existing airframes received a substantial upgrade to HMA.8 standard. The Gem engines were improved, new BERP rotor blades and a composite tail rotor fitted. A radome for Seaspray Mark III 360° radar was fitted to the nose (although the Mk III radar was never actually fitted as an economy measure). New avionics and flotation gear were added and the main elements of this upgrade would see the aircraft serve until its retirement in 2017.



Test-firing the Sea Skua on the Aberporth Range Area, April 2006.

From 'Future Lynx' to Wildcat

There were some who argued the Lynx could have been replaced far more cheaply by either purchasing more Merlins, or by obtaining existing foreign equivalents such as the NH90 or Sikorsky MH-60 Seahawk. These options, which would have been a very mixed blessing in service, would also have been the end for Westland. (Renamed AugustaWestland in 2000 and was subsequently rebranded as Leonardo Helicopters in 2016. British company GKN sold its stake in AugustaWestland in 2004, making the company a wholly Italian-owned subsidiary of Finmeccanica.) Building more Merlins would likely have been done at the Vergiate plant in Italy, leaving 'Future Lynx' as the only realistic way to sustain British jobs and skills at the Yeovil factory, a military-industrial asset no stranger to political controversies.

In 2002 the MoD began the assessment phase Battlefield Light Utility Helicopter (BLUH) and Surface Combatant Maritime Rotorcraft (SCMR) to replace the Lynx in Army and RN service respectively. By 2004 it was clear the BLUH was going to be too expensive and the specification was pared back to a simpler battlefield reconnaissance version which resulted in the more austere Wildcat AH.1 operated by the Army and Joint Helicopter Force today.

The £1Bn contract for Future Lynx helicopters was placed with AugustaWestland in 2006, promising 40 aircraft for the Army and 30 for the Navy. By 2009 the cost of the project had risen to £1.7Bn despite a reduction from the original plan for 70 aircraft down to 62 (28 for the RN, 34 for the Army). In December 2016 the MoD stated that the forecast lifetime cost of the whole AW159 Wildcat aircraft programme, including development, acquisition, training and in-service support is £5.2 billion.

The new aircraft is undoubtedly considerably superior to what it's replacing, but what is often overlooked is that in 2009 the RN had 62 Lynx which are being replaced by just 28 Wildcat. Despite the lesson from the Falklands, Iraq and Afghanistan that you can never have enough helicopters, the total number owned by UK armed forces will have roughly halved between 2009 and 2019.



LEFT: The first Wildcat prototype completes its maiden flight, 12 November 2009. RIGHT: The first naval variant Wildcat designated T13 flies for the first time at the AgustaWestland airfield in Yeovil, 22 November 2010. (Photos: AgustaWestland)

Features

Despite appearing to be very similar, Wildcat comprises 95% new components compared with the RN Lynx HMA.8. However much of the technology had already been developed for the Super Lynx 300 that was exported to several navies. Wildcat also incorporates some of the avionics developed for the Merlin Capability Sustainment Programme (CSP) when it was upgraded to HM2 standard. The newest innovation is the more angular and 'stealthy' light alloy and composite airframe made with fewer parts.

The Wildcat has almost the same dimensions as the Lynx, although does not have a folding tail rotor. RN destroyers and frigates all now have much larger hangars than when the Lynx entered service, being Merlin-capable, with space for up to 2 Wildcats. Key features inherited from the Lynx to aid shipboard operation are the fixed tricycle undercarriage that can withstand hitting the deck at a vertical descent of 3.5m/s. The main rotors can generate negative lift, which together with the deck lock harpoon system designed to engage with the grid in the centre of the flight deck, secure the aircraft tightly to the deck in heavy weather. In the event of ditching, the flotation system automatically inflates 4 airbags which should keep the waterproof fuselage afloat. The airframe and engines are fully marinised with excellent corrosion protection. The Wildcat was designed to be more durable and have a lower maintenance requirement than the Lynx. Currently, it undergoes checks at fixed intervals – after 25, 50, 100, 200 and 300 hours and has generally proven very reliable in service.

With a Maximum Take Off Weight (MTOW) of around 6 tonnes, the Wildcat is heavier, slightly slower at 157 knots and less nimble than the Lynx. 30% of additional engine power and new rotor design is particularly important to improve its performance in hot conditions and high altitudes, one of the problems with the Lynx. When empty the aircraft weighs around 3.3 tonnes enabling it to lift a 2.6-tonne payload of weapons, fuel and crew. Crashworthy seats and an armoured floor considerably improve protection for the crew in an accident or if under fire. Cabin capacity is slightly smaller than the Lynx which had sling-style benches, allowing up to eight people to be crammed in. The new seats reduce passenger capacity to four.

The Seaspray 7400E AESA radar, MX-15Di electro-optical/FLIR camera and avionics make the Wildcat a capable Information, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) platform. The 360° Seaspray radar can track up to 30 targets simultaneously and has far better range and clarity than the legacy radars. The EO camera can identify large ships from up to 80 miles away on a clear

day from a height. The operational potential of this capability is reduced by an economy measure made in 2008. The tactical data link (TDL) that would allow reconnaissance and targeting data to be sent securely to and from the ship was deleted from the Wildcat specification. During the recent documentary about HMS Duncan operating in the Black Sea, we were treated to the spectacle of the aircrew having just landed on the ship rushing to the ops room to allow imagery shot from the helicopter to be downloaded from a laptop. With a mobile phone you can FaceTime grandma on another continent but a Wildcat helicopter cannot pass real-time imagery to its parent ship.



Into service

Work on building the first 'Future Lynx' began at Yeovil in October 2007. By then named the 'Lynx Wildcat', the prototype made its maiden flight in November 2009 (although it is now known as just 'Wildcat'). The first production aircraft delivered to the RN made its maiden flight in January 2013. HMS Lancaster was the first ship to deploy operationally with the Wildcat embarked in March 2015. The last of the 28 aircraft was delivered to the RN in October 2016. Each airframe has a 2,000 hr fatigue life and the aircraft type is intended to remain in service for 30 years.

In May 2009 700W Naval Air Squadron (NAS) was formed to evaluate and conduct trials on the Wildcat, prior to its entry into service. When this task was completed in October 2014 it was merged with 702 (Lynx) NAS to form 825 NAS. 825 generates 4 ship's flights and is also the operational conversion unit for the Wildcat HMA.2 It trains new aircrew and converted former Lynx aircrew and engineers to Wildcat, while also being responsible for tactical and operational development of the aircraft. A 'flight' is an aircraft and typically unit of 9 personnel – the pilot and observer (both officers) usually supported by 7 air engineer technician ratings.

815 NAS is the primary frontline Wildcat unit and consists of an HQ element and can generate up to 12 small ship's flights. The Maritime Interdiction (MI) Flight is also part of 815 NAS – 2 double-manned flights held an exceptionally high readiness to support UK Special Forces. It is available for Counter Narcotics, Counter Piracy and Maritime Counter Terrorism operations. The MI Wildcats may be used to providing top cover or troop insertion/extraction for the Special Boat Service. A 43 Commando Maritime Sniper Team (MST) or SBS Sniper may be embarked for these operations. The two MI Wildcats were used to support two 846 NAS Merlins that delivered special forces to retake the MV Grande Tema when the crew were threatened by stowaways in the Thames Estuary on 21 December 2018.

847 Naval Air Squadron is equipped with the Wildcat AH1, manned by RN and Royal Marine aircrew, its main task is battlefield reconnaissance and is part of the Commando Helicopter Force.

The Wildcat has achieved modest export success. South Korea has bought 8 HMA.2. Faced with a serious threat from North Korean submarines around their coasts there are fitted with dipping sonar and are also equipped with K745 Cheong Sangeo torpedoes and Israeli-made Spike NLOS ER anti-ship missiles. South Korea are pleased with the aircraft but Leonardo has faced unproven claims of bribery surrounding their sale and the Koreans seem willing to hold an open competition with other manufacturers for a second batch of 12 helicopters. The Philippines have also bought 2 Wildcats but the big hope remains that the German Navy will select the aircraft as it plans to replace its 22 ageing Lynx by 2025. A Wildcat flight from 815 NAS deployed with the elderly German frigate Lübeck in 2017, just managing to fit the aircraft in the small hangar.



Conducting winching drills off Portland, December 2017. The Wildcat can be fitted with a Goodrich 44316 rescue hoist – with an 88m cable capable of lifting up to 270Kg.

The fighting Wildcat

The Wildcat HMA.2 has multiple roles including anti-surface and submarine warfare, force protection, transport and ISTAR. In the anti-surface role the primary weapon will be the (FASGW-H) Sea Venom/ANL anti-ship missile, successor to Sea Skua which left RN service at the same time as the Lynx. Sea Venom is designed to be used in complex and cluttered littoral environments and has precise targeting features. Unlike the Sea Skua, the helicopter does not need to stay in position to illuminate the target with its radar until the missile hits, reducing the time it is exposed to counter-attack. However, the Wildcat must still close to within about 20km of the target before launch, placing it within the range of SAM systems carried by some modern small combatants.

Wildcat will carry a completely new class of missile system into RN service. The (FASGW-L) Martlet lightweight Multi-Role Missile (LMM) is designed to be a low-cost way to provide defence against the asymmetric threat from small craft, suicide boats or unmanned surface vehicles. Multiple small targets with minimal radar signature can be dealt with using its laser and infra-red guidance. The MX-15Di EO/IR turret on the aircraft's nose has an Active Laser Generation Unit (ALGU) that transmits a coded laser beam to guide the LMM. The LMM-equipped Wildcat would be an ideal solution to the threat posed by Iranian small boat swarms in the Persian Gulf for example. (We will examine Sea Venom and Martlet in more detail in a future article.)

A £90 million FASGW and Wildcat integration contract was placed with Leonardo in 2014. This includes the development of a new aerodynamic weapons-carriage wing which has two hardpoints

on each side for a combination of missile or torpedo loads. Sea Venom and Martlet are due to enter service with the RN in 2020 but full operating capability will not be until 2024 as there is a long series of testing and tactical development work required first. During 2020 FASGW integration trials using the new weapons wing will include the first live firings in the UK.

Wildcats will not routinely embark on the QEC aircraft carriers but it is planned that a minimum of two Wildcats will be embarked on escort vessels within the Carrier Task Group. Mounting the M3M or GPMG guns they will have a critical force protection role, particularly when entering or leaving harbour and in confined waters. At sea they will be held at readiness to provide protection from small surface threats probably with LMM and Sea Venom fitted.

Wildcat is also designed to drop the Stingray anti-submarine homing torpedo. Stingray is probably the best weapon of its kind in the world but has a limited area it can search, so must be dropped relatively close to the submarine contact. Unlike the Merlin HM.2, which is equipped with dipping sonar and sonobuoys, the Wildcat has no way of confirming a submarine contact itself and must rely on targeting data via radio from its parent ship or another platform. Hunting submarines is demanding and difficult, even in the most favourable conditions and the lack of dipping sonar may restrict the Wildcat's effectiveness in killing submarines. Although obviously not its intended primary role, a Type 45 destroyer, which is already constrained by the detection limitations of a bow-mounted sonar, paired with a Wildcat does not inspire confidence as an independent ASW asset. Fitting a dipping sonar to the Wildcat would greatly increase its ASW capability but it takes up considerable cabin space and adds weight, restricting its effectiveness in its many other roles. The Wildcat has less than half the endurance of the Merlin (about 2 hours 15 minutes v 5 hours) so it is clear the Merlin is the vastly superior submarine hunter while the Wildcat is better suited in the surface search and attack role. If the RN had plenty of helicopters, this would not be a significant issue but the ability to perform in multiple roles becomes important when there are so few assets.



A dummy Sea Venom missile and hermetically sealed Martlet LMMs in their a five-cell launch panner on display at Farnborough. In the anti-surface role, the Wildcat can carry either 4 Sea Venoms or 20 LMM or a mixture of 2 venoms and 10 LMM.

WIST, WTC and WINFRA

The Wildcat Integrated Support & Training (WIST) commenced in In April 2017. This £271million contract with Leonardo will sustain the whole Wildcat fleet for the next 5 years with the provision of spares, technical support and ground-based training for both aircrew and maintainers. This work provides 500 jobs at RNAS Yeovilton, where the Wildcat Training Centre (WTC) and zonal maintenance facilities are located, and at Leonardo's Yeovil factory. The WTC has two Indra Full-Motion Flight Simulators (FMFS), a Flight Training Device (FTD) and Cockpit Procedures Trainer

(CPT). The facility is run by a mixed team of 11 Army, Navy and civilian instructors. There are also 2 airframes used to teach mechanical and avionics systems to engineers.

In July 2017 the DIO completed the Wildcat Infrastructure (WINFRA) programme at RNAS Yeovilton to support the Wildcat in-service with the RN and Army. 4 major projects with a value of between £8 million and £52 million included the construction of new training and office facilities, squadron buildings and living accommodation. Several hangars were refurbished and Yeovilton is now a modern and ideal home for the Wildcat force.

Wildcat in action

Since entering service in 2015 the aircraft has been deployed in a variety of theatres. Typically the Wildcat has been favoured over the Merlin for Type 45s and Type 23s on long deployments to the Gulf or Pacific. A Wildcat has also been embarked on Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels stationed in the Caribbean, ready to respond to natural disasters or conduct anti-narcotics patrols. [Operation Ruman](#) in the wake of hurricane Irma, saw Wildcats from HMS Ocean and RFA Mounts Bay worked hard in disaster relief operations in 2017. In September 2017 while operating for RFA Mounts Bay, 216 Flight rescued a mother and her two children stranded on the upturned hull of a boat capsized by Hurricane Maria. A Wildcat HMA.2 based on HMS Monmouth made the first landing by this aircraft type on HMS Queen Elizabeth during September 2018 and provided force protection for the [Westlant18 deployment](#). A Wildcat is currently deployed on HMS Dragon in the Gulf and has played a significant role in the 4 major drugs seizures made by the ship (so far) during this deployment on maritime security operations.

When Martlet and Sea Venom are fully operational the RN will gain a significant punch, particularly important for defending the carrier battle group but transport, ISTAR and SAR operations will be the staple missions for these aircraft. Wildcat has only just begun to show its worth and will doubtless be flying and in almost daily use for the next 25 years or more.



Two Wildcat of 815 NAS return to RNAS Yeovilton November 2017. Their deployment saw them operating with the US Coastguard, RFA Wave Knight and RFA Mounts Bay. They conducted British Overseas Territories Defence Engagement, Counter Narcotics and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

Places currently available for the 2019 CNOA Guest Night

From Cdr David Houston



Chatham Naval Officers' Association

Event: Ladies and Guest Night Dinner - 2019

Venue: Royal Engineers Officers' Mess Brompton Barracks

Date: Friday 28th June 2019 Time: 1915 hrs For: 2000 hrs

Dress: 2B (or 2BW) Mess Undress or Black tie Dinner Suit, miniature medals and neck decorations

Ladies: Long Skirt/dress preferred

(Please print names.)	First Name	Rank/ Title	Car No.	Accom Req	(A) Veg (B) Celiac (C) Soft Drinks
Member's Name					

Guest Name/s					

Dinner Cost per Head: £ 49.00. (Wine included and served by staff at the Table, as are soft drinks for those not taking wine at the meal)

Accommodation - Cost pp including Bed & Breakfast: approximately £20 Yes / No

Members wishing to have accommodation will need to pay the mess directly. Reception will take an imprint of your credit card to cover all costs over and above the dinner itself.

Cheque enclosed for the sum of: £ Payable to: CNOA

Signed

Date:

Please return this form together with cheque to: Commander David Houston,

Landway House, Northfleet Green, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 9PN Tel: 07719378993

No later than 7th June 2019. However the List will be closed if the permitted numbers are achieved prior to that date

Brian Bissell to abseil from building for charity, yet again!

From The Lord Mayor of London's Appeal 2019

One of our members, Brian Bissell, has a track record of raising money for charities by choosing high buildings with perfectly good staircases and then choosing to abseil back to ground level. Please help Brian by clicking on <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/brian-bissell> for more details.

Book your places on the 2019 P&O Cross Channel Ferry Trip From John Fullagar

Join us for a mid-week channel crossing aboard the P&O Ferry PRIDE OF KENT on Wednesday 19th June 2019. Check-in time at Dover Docks is mid-day for the 12-55Hrs sailing to Calais.

Note: Check-in closes 30 minutes before departure.

Once onboard sit back and relax in the Club Lounge and enjoy a complimentary glass of champagne. Complimentary tea and coffee are also available. The menu for your meal on the return sailing will be available once we are onboard.

Bridge visits have been arranged for those who are interested on the outbound leg, this is dependent on the weather, and the captain's discretion.

Order your duty free wines, beers and spirits in the onboard shop and your order will be delivered to your car during the vessel's turn-round in the Port of Calais.

Lunch will be served in the ships restaurant while sailing back to Dover

ETA at Dover 16-30 Approx.

Please PRINT names and car details for every person travelling.

Forename	Surname	Vehicle	
		Make	Registration No.

Application forms and cheques should be sent to: John Fullagar, 27 Hunters Way, Darland, Gillingham, Kent ME7 3BS (07780266643) e-mail johnfullagar47@hotmail.co.uk

Seafarers UK – Funding to increase and diversify port-based services across the UK

From Seafarers UK



Seafarers UK has awarded a £110,000 grant to Mission to Seafarers to increase and diversify port-based services for seafarers across the UK.



Funding will be used to increase the number of young people (25-45) and female volunteers, as well as those from different ethnic and religious backgrounds to help better address the needs of an increasingly diverse seafaring community.

The funding will also help to increase the number of ship visits conducted by Mission to Seafarers' port chaplains every month and provide greater access to 24-hour facilities in key ports, allowing an additional 5,000 seafarers to receive support from the Mission each year, in Wales, the Humber and Scotland.

Canon Andrew Wright, Secretary General of Mission to Seafarers, said: "We are hugely grateful to Seafarers UK for their generosity and continued support of our work here at the Mission. This vital funding will be used to enrich the quality of the support we provide by diversifying our support network to better align with the needs of men and women we serve. By enhancing our service provision across the UK, we hope that seafarers arriving on our shores will feel truly at home, and will be able to communicate with and relate to the people there to support them."

Forgotten Few – A Book Review From Fg Off Graham Storey



You may have heard that there was a shortage of fighter pilots to defend the UK even before the Battle of Britain started, the shortage was certainly emphasised in the 1969 film of the same name. But where were the additional fighter pilots to be found? Long before fighter pilots arrived from elsewhere in the world to join the Royal Air Force, there were other trained fighter pilots already flying the Blackburn Roc, the Gloster Sea Gladiator and the Fairey Fulmar, the front-line fighter aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm. And those Naval fliers responded to the call to defend British airspace.

A book called "Forgotten Few – Naval Fighter Pilots in the Battle of Britain" has just been published and is being sold to support the excellent work of NAVY WINGS, a charity dedicated to bringing together flying historic naval aircraft, people and the stories associated with flying from warships at sea, and so inspire future generations and create a focus for remembrance.

Following much research from many sources, the book provides page by page biographies of the Naval fighter pilots who served in the skies at the time of the Battle of Britain. Its contents include:

"Richard Gardner was an heir to the Yardley cosmetics firm but volunteered for the Air Branch of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1939. He was sent to Gravesend to learn to fly at a civilian school with the acting rank of Leading Seaman."

“Royal Marine Ronnie Hay’s attachment to the Fleet Air Arm began on 6 March 1939 with an appointment to No. 23 Elementary & Reserve Flying Training School at Rochester in Kent.”

“Sub-Lieutenant William Beggs saw service on the Maidstone – Canterbury patrol line during August, claiming a Junkers Ju 88 as a probable and a confirmed Bf Me 109E before being shot down over the coast, he crash landed at Shorncliffe and was declared non effective sick for several weeks before joining another Squadron.”

The Naval pilots sometimes operated within complete Naval Air Squadrons and sometimes they were individually integrated within RAF Squadrons. It is thought provoking to read how many of those Naval pilots after serving during the Battle of Britain returned to the Fleet Air Arm but did not return home due to aircraft carriers being sunk, aircraft being shot down, fatal deck landings and flying accidents. These Naval pilots should be remembered whenever “The Few” and the “Battle of Britain” are mentioned.

Available from:

<https://navywingsflightstore.org/products/forgotten-few-naval-fighter-pilots-in-the-battle-of-britain-by-paul-beaver>

The Newsletter Editor has only 8 CNOA Newsletters left to go! From The Newsletter Editor

After editing the February 2020 edition of the CNOA Newsletter, and doing it for more than seven years, I need to pass the role to another willing CNOA member. This will allow me to deliver some additional marketing work for a couple of “good cause” organisations who really do need some help in visibility, fund raising and attracting more supporters.

The new CNOA Newsletter Editor may not have all the digital skills needed right now but for the right person there is time for the new CNOA Newsletter Editor to acquire the necessary skills and they can be very useful for years to come in many other activities, could even be life enhancing. One’s children and grandchildren may even think but never say “How did you do that?, Respect.”

Few would deny that much of UK society is going digital. If you think online tax returns to HMRC and vehicle licencing are game changers, before then farmers were required to do their livestock census online each December. So, do you want to learn and practice some more digital skills?

Most members will have use of the Internet with a full sized screen (very useful when designing the Newsletter pages). Building the CNOA Newsletter using a phone screen could be interesting. Having access to an up to date licence for Microsoft Word would also be good as it allows the Newsletter to be built in Word but sent out as a smaller and secure .pdf file.

Building on the digital basics that most have, the right person will be introduced to some very useful information sources (ever wondered where the CNOA Newsletter images and news items come from, you just have to know who to ask). The distribution list is held securely on the web, the Hon Sec helps to keep it up to date and the Newsletter distribution is easy and fast powered by one of the best known names in consumer IT.

The website www.cnoa.org.uk is based on some older web technologies and well before the end of 2019 help will be given to have it used with some much newer “user friendly” tools that have only been available to the public for a couple of years. It’s another skill that opens many other doors.

Some members receive emailed news items/holiday reports in all sorts of different formats that can send the cursor (sorry, the Mouse pointer) all over the place and the PC seems to have a mind of its own. Fear not, the right person will be shown how to easily “bleach” anything that arrives by email or is taken from a website so it behaves itself while being used to build the CNOA Newsletter.

Interested to know a bit more? Just click on contact@cnoa.org.uk Could even be life enhancing.

A final 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

President: Commodore Barry Bryant CVO RN

Chairman: Cdr Colin Tozer RN (Rtd)

APPLICATION FOR FULL 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				
<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 style="text-align: right;">SIGNED.....</p>				
PRESENT OCCUPATION				
PROPOSERS NAME	PROPOSERS SIGNATURE	HOW LONG KNOWN		
SECONDEES NAME	SECONDEES SIGNATURE	HOW LONG KNOWN		