



CHATHAM NAVAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

*President Commodore B Bryant CVO Royal Navy
Chairman Commander C Tozer RN (Rtd)*

CNOA Hon Secretary
Postal contact details awaiting review

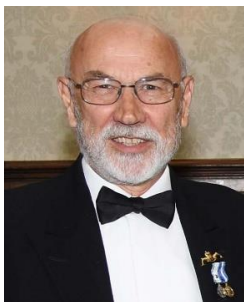
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Newsletter for November 2018

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The next meeting of the Association will be on **Friday the 2nd of November** in the Warfare Room, RSME HQ Brompton Barracks 19.45 for 20.00 when Colin Tozer will speak about another stage of his service career. The evening will then continue with refreshments and fellowship in the Officers Mess.

Chairman's Flag Hoist:



Dear Members,

A very successful committee meeting was held at the end of September onboard HQS Wellington. It was of course a coincidence that this happened to be the monthly curry lunch day and it was nice to enjoy an aperitif on the upper deck first. We were joined by our President who made a significant contribution to the occasion (he paid for the first round of drinks). Apart from routine business, we agreed dates for our AGM and the major functions for next year. These should be listed below. As ever, if you have suggestions for the committee to consider please do let one of us know.

Our last monthly meeting talk was about the ladies who joined the Air Transport Auxiliary during WW2. These ladies, along with many hundreds of male pilots too old for RAF service, delivered thousands of new and repaired aircraft to the front line. A fascinating story indeed. Unfortunately, the evening was spoiled somewhat by long delays at the main gate as we attempted to sign in. Our monthly meetings coincide with the Royal Engineers Association meetings. They regularly have over 60 members attending and this accounts for much of the problem. I agreed with their chairman that we would deconflict by changing to a different Friday. The committee has therefore decided that we shall meet on the 2nd Friday of the month vice the 1st and that this will take effect from February 2019. This should give us plenty of time to make the necessary changes.

Finally, it's Trafalgar Dinner Night on the 26th October. I hope we have a good turnout and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Best Wishes,

Colin

Colin Tozer
Chairman

2018 and 2019 Future Speakers & Events:

26th October: Trafalgar Night Dinner

2nd November: Cdr Tozer – A Choppy Passage in the Royal Navy

7th December: Cmdre Bryant – President's Address

4th January: No meeting due to CNOA & Mess on New Year leave

19th January: 2019 New Year Luncheon

Please note the date changes

8th February: CNOA AGM, to let the new committee plan the rest of the year

8th March: Steve Ware – Coast Watch

12th April: To be announced

10th May: To be announced

14th June: To be announced

28th June: Provisional Ladies & Guest Night

25th October: Provisional Trafalgar Night

Additional events will be included as details become available. As always, we are most grateful to those who comment on or send items for this Newsletter. All such contributions by the 5th of each month please.

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

Appendix 1 - from Lt Cdr Jon Vanns A Choppy Passage in the Royal Navy



Our Chairman has documented his considerable time in the Royal Navy in a sequence of entertaining presentations that show how he fared during his service career in a Royal Navy, and in a world, as it used to be.

On Friday the 2nd of November please join us for an entertaining evening of hearing and seeing something of naval service in times past, but within our own lifetimes. It should be interesting to hear the comments from those in the audience who may have a different recollection of some of the details being presented. This has all the

makings of being an excellent evening with comment and counter comment putting smiles on all present.

Appendix 2 - from MoD Navy Defence Secretary announces Devonport Home Port for new Type 26

All of the Royal Navy's next-generation Type 26 frigates will be homed in Devonport, the Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson announced at the Naval Base today.

The eight Type 26 warships will start being delivered to the Royal Navy from the mid-2020s, heralding yet another new era in the role of a base which has played a central role in the Defence of the UK for hundreds of years – from the Napoleonic wars to the Falklands Conflict.

The 6,900-tonne frigates will be world-class anti-submarine warships and will provide cutting-edge protection for the likes of the UK's nuclear deterrent and the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, with the ability to conduct a whole range of other operations anywhere in the world.



HMS Montrose anchored in Plymouth Sound © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2018

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said "The largest Naval Base in western Europe, Devonport is the lifeblood of Plymouth and is as synonymous with this city as it is with our famous Royal Navy.

Ships have set sail from Devonport's dock to defend our great nation for hundreds of years, and I can reveal that the truly world-class Type 26 frigates will follow in their wake. We are living in increasingly dangerous times, with threats intensifying both on and beneath the water. Plymouth should be in no doubt that it will be right at the heart of Britain's fight for a safer world by homing these formidable warships."

Appendix 3 - from Lt Cdr Ken Sprowles Lest we forget

Bexleyheath and Welling Legion members have honoured the WW1 generation by taking part in a recreation of the historic pilgrimage of 1928 organised by the then British Legion and the British Empire Service League. In 2018 more than 2,200 standard bearers and wreath layers paid tribute to the fallen.

Members of the Bexleyheath and Welling Branch of The Royal British Legion joined thousands of Armed Forces veterans and supporters from across the UK and worldwide in a pilgrimage of remembrance to some of WW1's most poignant sites. The Standards and Members from the Crayford Branch and Sidcup and Footscray Branch were also present representing the whole of the London Borough of Bexley.

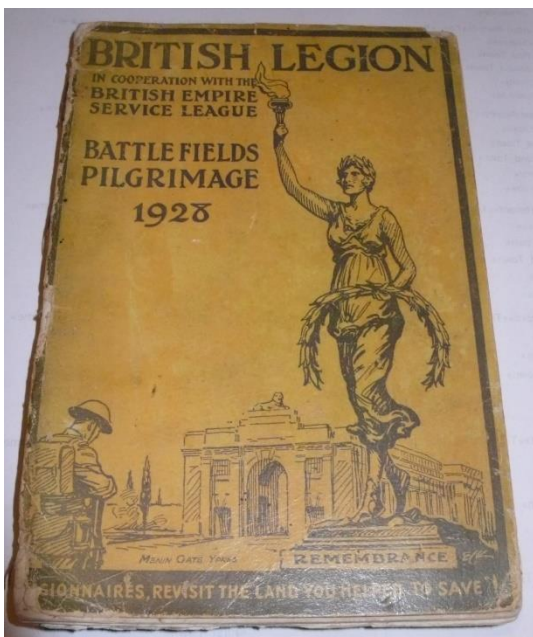
A spectacular two-mile march through Ypres to the Commonwealth War Grave Commission's Menin Gate Memorial, led by 1,100 Standard Bearers, was the culmination of the three day event which

saw the 2,200 participants visit the WW1 trenches, battlefields and cemeteries of France and Belgium.



The Great Pilgrimage 90 Standard Bearers © Copyright Royal British Legion 2018

Mrs Di Sprowles and Mr Ken Sprowles attended the Great Pilgrimage 90 as representatives of Bexleyheath and Welling Branch as a Standard Bearer and wreath layer respectively. Di and Ken Sprowles said “Being part of such an historic event, representing Bexleyheath and Welling in commemorating those that lost their lives in the First World War, was an honour and something we will never forget.”



Each Pilgrim attending the original Pilgrimage in 1928 had their own personalised book that served as joining instructions, billeting details, event guide and hymn book. For those whose loved one(s) had gone to war while they stayed at home, the book contains details and maps of the front lines, the main towns and the many individual campaigns fought on the Western Front.

There is even a section advising on different sizes and types of wreath, plus a price list and order form, enabling a wreath, previously made by ex servicemen in a British Legion workshop in Britain, to be collected from a British Legion depot in France or Belgium so Pilgrims could have a suitable wreath for laying on an individual grave or on a larger war memorial, possibly for one of the fallen who had no known grave.

Bob Gamble, The Royal British Legion’s Head of Commemorative Events, said: “GP90, was the Legion’s biggest membership event in modern history and is a suitable tribute from the members of The Royal British Legion in honour of the First World War generation, echoing the way the British Legion community commemorated the 10th anniversary of the conflict in 1928.”

Appendix 4 – from Seafarers UK

Seafarers UK urges increased focus on fishermen's safety



Seafarers UK has called upon Government to ensure that fishermen's lives are as well protected as the fish that they catch.



Fisherman safety means fisherman sustainability © Copyright Seafarers UK 2018

Seafarers UK's response to DEFRA's Fisheries White Paper: Sustainable Fisheries for Future Generations argues that more must be done to ensure the health, safety and welfare of UK fishermen who risk their lives to put food on our tables.

Fishermen surveyed as part of Seafarers UK's recent Fishing For a Future research and report publication, reported that accidents at sea were commonplace with many having experienced capsized and sinking vessels as well as falling overboard, while over a third reported injuries received as a result of accidents. Others reported an impact on their health as a result of their working conditions.

The research findings are also supported by latest statistics from the Marine Accident Investigations Branch which reveal that five fishermen died in five separate incidents between the months of September and November 2017. While Seafish Industry Authority have identified 535 serious injuries to fishermen in the last 10 years. The unstable work environment of a vessel at sea, moving equipment parts and incidences of unsafe harbour infrastructure ashore are all factors that contribute to a dangerous work environment.

While Seafarers UK has welcomed the Government's inclusion of safety in the White Paper, we believe that the Government's future policy on fisheries management should ensure that fishermen's lives, and their safety at sea, are valued just as much as the future sustainability of fish stocks.

Other recommendations by Seafarers UK in responding to the Fisheries White Paper include:

- Maintenance of a UK-wide standard for fishermen's health, safety and welfare to ensure a commonality of approach in devolved administrations.

- Establishment of a successor to the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) to support small scale low impact inshore fishermen and small fishing ports in making enhancements to vessels, infrastructure and ports; particularly in respect of enhancing safety.

- Developing a coordinated approach to training new entrants to the fishing industry, helping future generations of fishermen to begin their careers in a safe and sustainable manner.

- Enabling the views of small scale, low impact fishermen to be heard during consultation on legislative changes and fisheries management.

- Ensuring proposed changes are financially supported and/or proportionately costed according to their impact on a fisherman's livelihood and his ability to pay.

Seafarers UK's Director General Barry Bryant said "Every day our fishermen are risking their lives to put food on our table. In the midst of such uncertainty and change we must join forces to guarantee that our fishermen, their families and the often remote communities in which they live and work are in a stronger position to face whatever the future may bring."

Seafarers UK is committed to supporting the health, welfare and safety of the fishermen of today and the future. We share the ambition of the Fishing Industry Safety Group and many others that fishing fatalities at sea and in port should be reduced to zero.

Appendix 5 - from someone in the MoD like Sir Humphrey in Yes, Minister

A Bluffers Guide to succeeding in the British Defence Establishment

The following was found on an official MoD Blog Site this year and then very promptly removed. But not before someone noticed it!

Welcome to the Ministry of Defence. Below you will find some helpful introductory advice that will help you succeed as a loyal servant of the Crown.

POLICY and ETIQUETTE:

Here at the MoD, we do not just make decisions, we make strategic decisions. Regular use of the word "strategic" helps us all feel we are part of a broad vision devised by someone who knows what they are doing. It is also important to insert the phrase "world-class" when describing our assets, people and operations. Any public conversation about defence must always begin by "paying tribute to the men and women of our world-class armed forces". Many junior servicemen may be underpaid, rarely see their families and have inadequate accommodation but these regular tributes sustain morale.

There are no insurmountable problems or total cock-ups in UK defence, instead there are challenges and things that may need some more work. If anyone asks you to explain your job, tell them it is to "look across the piece" with a view to "developing a broad suite of capabilities" Be sure to use the word "capability" a lot to describe just about everything.

Mention of our "globally deployed assets", however, thinly spread, is to be encouraged and will go down very well with politicians. If there are two Royal Navy sailors in a rowing boat in the middle of the Pacific it demonstrates our global reach and our enduring commitment to upholding the rules-based order. Similarly, a handful of soldiers camping out in the forests of Estonia demonstrates our solidarity with NATO partners.

Occasionally situations may become more challenging than we would prefer and outputs sub-optimal. Excitable journalists and MPs may demand to know "what the hell is going on?" While retaining a friendly and upbeat tone, try to avoid giving away any actual facts. Operational security and commercial sensitivity are your friends when faced with awkward questions. "We are continually reviewing our requirements" is the best way to respond to specific queries.

THE OPERATIONAL LEXICON:

Ships, submarines, planes, helicopters and tanks are for amateurs, instead, we have platforms. We do not drop bombs anymore, we deliver a strike package (although unfortunately not the sort that can be left with a neighbour if you're out). Please note, the UK military does not have any helicopters, only rotary wing assets. War does not break out, instead, things go kinetic, although the sailors, soldiers and airmen involved are now warfighters. They do not work or fight in foreign lands, but conduct operations in theatre. No longer are they sent to destroy the Queen's enemies but to deliver effects in the battle-space and degrade our adversaries capabilities. Britain has a Tier-1

military and our forces are always equipped with innovative, state-of-the-art kit which provide a step change in capability.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT:

“Cuts” is a crude word used by tabloids and non-civil servants that we do not recognise, instead we continually seek efficiencies and the best value for the taxpayer. We will, of course, be reducing the headcount and removing equipment but this is to help us modernize and become more streamlined. Extensive hypothetical discussion about cyber, unmanned, asymmetric threats and non-state actors is the appropriate focus when we are losing large swathes of conventional capability. Our defence reviews will take many months but we will not be rushed into any hasty decisions, especially in the face of rapidly evolving threats.

Should the decisions of our last review quickly prove flawed, it is obviously because the character of warfare has changed way beyond what we could possibly have predicted. During the review process, you should apply the rules of collective responsibility and all internal strategic planning must remain confidential. However, should your particular interest area be threatened with streamlining, then it may be necessary to reach out to Deborah Haynes, (a well respected UK defence journalist)

All planning is based on the assumption that war will not happen in the next 10 years and any conflict we are involved in will be of our choosing and rely on coalition partners. This assumption is renewed each year, thus eliminating any urgency which would cause discomfort and disruption to the system that has served us so well.

There are no financial black holes in our equipment plan, just affordability risks. Almost every past defence procurement project has been delayed and moved outside its budget envelope, fortunately, this won't happen in future because we are now learning the lessons and acting to inject pace and grip into our programmes. Should the worst happen and Russian tanks are rolling down Whitehall, we will still be able to take comfort from the fact we spend 2% (ish) of GDP on defence and in this regard are a great example to other Europeans.

CAREER TRAJECTORY:

Since you will change jobs every two years, rest assured the consequences of your strategic decision making will not impact on you. To progress in your career you have two choices. Either maintain a reputation as a safe pair of hands, try to keep your head down, putting ticks in the appropriate boxes and focus on tidying up the mess left by your predecessor. Alternatively, make your mark as a bold visionary by implementing a wide range of unnecessary changes to the programme. If you are really a forward-thinker and are willing to submit to our grueling social media training, you may eventually get permission for your own official “Twitter” account. This is on condition that all of your “Tweets” begin with “Really great to see....”

It is advisable to hone your PowerPoint skills and to commit to memory the approximately 20,000 acronyms in everyday use at the MoD. During your time in defence it is vital you invent a few new acronyms of your own. MoD approved Military Acronyms (MAMA) are the lifeblood of the organisation. MAMA's are especially appreciated.

By adopting the advice above you will be quickly embraced into the ways of Main Building and be well on your way to becoming a senior civil servant or a one star.

P.S. Do please try to remember not to leave your laptop on the train.

Appendix 6 – from Lt Cdr Jon Vanns
An Evening of Remembrance – 12th Nov at the Assembly Hall Theatre

AN EVENING OF REMEMBRANCE

Monday 12th November 2018
Assembly Hall Theatre at 7.30pm



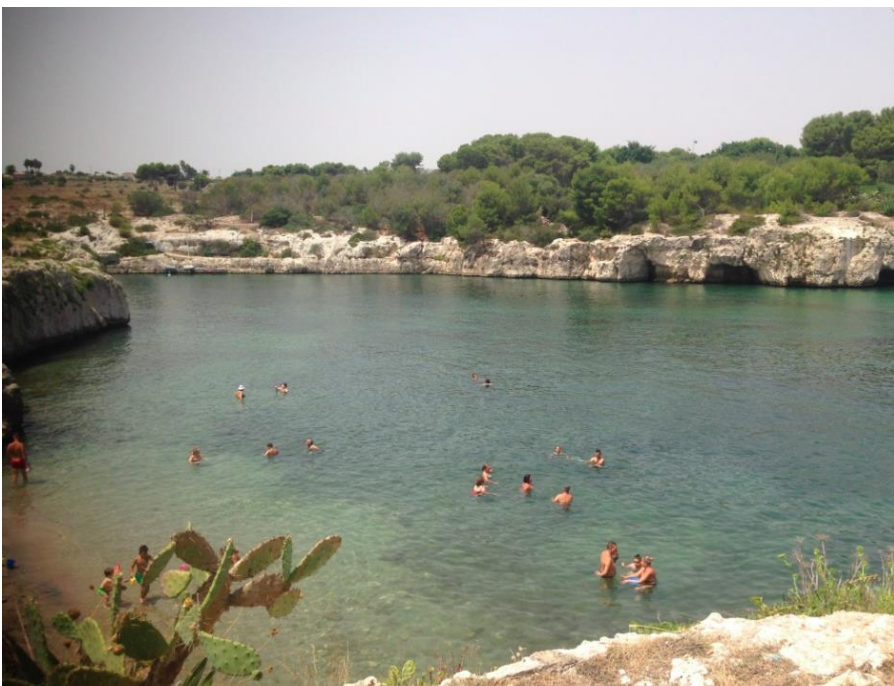
Hosted by the uniformed Youth groups from the town and attended by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent,
in association with the Royal British Legion and TWBC
Guests may wear medals and veterans badges where appropriate.,
Tickets £10 each and obtainable from the Assembly Hall box office or web site.
Profits will be donated to the Poppy Appeal.

Appendix 7 – from Lt Cdr Trevor Pratt
The Exploits of Captain Ginger (11 July – 25 July 2018)

The last leg was passage making to get around the foot of Italy and across to Sicily, now we are here life has settled into a more leisurely pace as we make our way from Catania to Ragusa on the south coast.

Catania is a large port and our marina was located in a rather run-down area of the city some way from the main shopping centre but it grew on us. The local shops were very accommodating and local wine from the barrel into our own containers was very drinkable! We assembled the folding bicycles, located the fruit and veg market and a wonderful fish market where we bought tuna steaks, visited the pedestrianised area and had an evening meal in a typical Sicilian restaurant.

Frances and Suzie joined me here and we set sail across the bay to anchor off Brucoli a popular place for local boats but not many cruising boats to be seen. It was a peaceful spot after the hustle and bustle of Catania and the cool breeze over the deck was pleasant after being in a marina for three days. The town is built on a peninsular with a channel leading to a small harbour and a wonderful place for swimming and snorkelling amongst the rocks.



Brucoli – entrance channel to the small harbour

This was a pleasant spot and we spent a couple of days here buying local produce and enjoying a quiet pace of life. Time to move on however and from here we went to Syracuse which lies in a large natural almost completely enclosed bay, providing protection from all directions.



Syracuse, Sicily

The old town (Ortiga) is built on a peninsular, an island really as it is separated from the mainland by a canal with two bridges.

This is a popular port of call for cruising boats who are herded into an anchorage area by the harbour master or go into the marina, whilst the Town Quay, which is rather splendid seems to be reserved for large expensive motor yachts or small cruise ships. We chose to anchor as it is more comfortable than the heat of the marina, we can also swim off the boat and use the BBQ.

Syracuse is the birth place of Archimedes (scientist, mathematician, astrologer, physicist inventor) and a museum here is dedicated to his work. Perhaps the most famous story, which I am sure you are aware of but is worth re-telling, concerns the Archimedes Principle:

Archimedes has gone down in history as the guy who ran naked through the streets of Syracuse shouting "Eureka!" — or "I have it!" in Greek. The story behind that event was that Archimedes was charged with proving that a new crown made for Hieron, the King of Syracuse, was not pure gold as the goldsmith had claimed. Archimedes thought long and hard but could not find a method for proving that the crown was not solid gold. Soon after, he filled a bathtub and noticed that water spilled over the edge as he got in and he realized that the water displaced by his body was equal to the weight of his body. Knowing that gold was heavier than other metals the crown maker could have substituted, Archimedes had his method to determine that the crown was not pure gold. Forgetting he was undressed, he went running naked down the streets from his home to the king shouting "Eureka!"

The Old Town is collection of old marble paved streets and piazza's dominated by the Cathedral in the biggest piazza of all, Piazza Duomo.



Piazza Duomo

We spent three days here and were befriended by a stallholder in the market place who spoke excellent English and showed us the best place for coffee, the butcher, baker etc so we ate well off tuna fish steaks and beautiful pork chops cut from the bone.

We eventually left our refuge at Syracuse to make our way south to the two little adjacent ports of La Belata and Marzamemi where we anchored between the two, protected by a long sea wall. We took the dinghy into the small harbour with crystal clear water (unlike some) and explored the small holiday town, very much for the Italians. A large square surrounded by restaurants and some wonderful old buildings, probably warehouses in a past life, converted for various uses.



The harbour, La Balata

One day here was sufficient before moving on to Capo Passero on the Portopalo peninsular, the most southerly point of Sicily. Here we anchored between the uninhabited island of Passero and the mainland. A popular holiday spot where it is possible to walk from the mainland to the island at low water although most people take the ferry which plies between the two. The buildings of the old Tuna fishing industry remain, although they are derelict and fallen into disrepair. A path leads from here across the island to the Spanish Fortress built in 1652 which also incorporates the lighthouse. Sadly, the fortress is no longer in use but remains in excellent condition.

On Saturday morning we went to explore the mainland town which appeared as nothing from the sea, a cluster of old fishermen's cottages, a restaurant and small square were all we could see. Once ashore however, the town opens up inland with a pedestrianised main street and a host of shops and restaurants to choose from. In the small square they were setting up a stage and sound system so no doubt we will be entertained to disco music later. On the mainland is also the Castle of Tafuri built in 1933 by Marquis Bruno di Belmonte but never occupied by the family. Recently restored it is now a luxury resort perched on the cliffs overlooking the sea.



Castle Tafuri

On Sunday morning we left our anchorage for a short trip around the headland to the harbour of Porto Palo but when we arrived were quite disappointed. A large inhospitable commercial port where we could anchor in the shelter of the breakwater but little else to offer. Instead of staying we continued our journey west to Pozzallo where we opted to go to a pontoon berth in the small Yacht Club. It was very basic, with no toilets and the only shower an open one on the pontoon but it was a welcome break after eight nights of anchoring to have electricity and plenty of water.

Strong winds were forecast for the next few days so we made an early start the following morning to complete our journey to Ragusa arriving at midday ahead of the strong winds.

Journeys end, after leaving Monfalcone in the Northern Adriatic at the beginning of May, visiting Slovenia, Croatia, Italy and Sicily we have logged 1151 nautical miles. Now it is time to put the boat to bed and return home for a few weeks before starting all over again!

Best wishes,

Trevor

Appendix 8 – from Lt Clifford Mickleburgh DAWN OWL - Journal update for August 2018, part 2B

Thursday, 9th August – Potsdam - one of my favorite places in Germany - is alive with history. We took the obligatory open-top 3 hour bus tour taking in Cecilienhof Palace which played a special role at the end of the Second World War. It was the meeting place of the victorious powers at the Potsdam Conference on how to deal with Germany. It was attended by the triumphant leaders Winston Churchill [later Atlee], Harry Truman and Joseph Stalin. Churchill, in a speech declared that “from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the continent”. This speech was considered one of the opening volleys announcing the beginning of the Cold War. The tour also took in the Glienicker Bridge where the secret agents and secret services used to meet and exchange their spies including Gary Powers from the spy plane incident. We also visited “Sans Souci” [meaning: without worry], which was the weekend palace of Frederick the Great and the New Palace with its mock painted brickwork. It is good to see where so much recent history took place with familiar names and places. It was a beautiful day as well. We left on our return to make for the Captain’s Inn Yachthafen where we again received a warm welcome. We stayed here for 3 days.



Cecilienhof Schloss



Sans Soucci [No worries]



Glienicker Bridge



The Stasi Headquarters

Friday, 10th August - At the Captain’s Inn Yachthafen we were joined by the Thürbach family: Kai, Katrina and children Peter, Luise and Marie. They are a delightful family and related through my twin sister. We had a wonderful day going up through the center of Berlin to the eastern side. Katrina had brought a scrumptious picnic, the weather was glorious and a good day was had by all. It is interesting how different cities look from the river. David was really good with the children and John had long discussions with Kai who is a professor teaching business studies at Köln University. We dropped Kai off in Berlin and continued back to the Captain’s Inn.

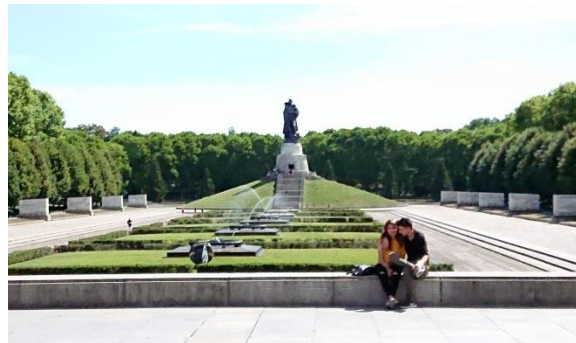


The Reichstag after 1938 was the pseudo-Parliament of the Third Reich

Sunday, 12th August - I was now joined again by another lovely family, again related through my twin sister Celia: Rico, Gudela with their daughter Celia [named after my sister] and her grandfather Otto. This time we went south to Potsdam and anchored for lunch near the Glienicker Bridge enjoying another fine spread and of course, the sunshine. Young Celia was tired and slept below with her mum [recharging her batteries] for two hours. So yet another perfect day. We secured in the middle of Berlin on a “free” mooring with the Reichstag in sight behind us and Friedrichstrasse station in front. The river Spree here is very busy with tourist boats, but it is a great spot to be right in the center of Berlin.

Monday, 13th August - John and David left me over the weekend and Robin, my cousin Valerie’s husband, joined me today. He was travelling by train via Brussels and Köln and his train came in at Berlin Central [Hauptbahnhof]. The station has trains coming and going on six different levels. He had had a traumatic trip but was relieved to have arrived safely.

Tuesday, 14th August - We made an early sightseeing walk taking in the Reichstag, Holocaust Memorial, Brandenburg Gate, Berlin Cathedral, the museum island and back up the river to rejoin **DAWN OWL**. Back on board we made our way upstream through the Mühlendamm schleuse to Treptow Park to visit the Russian Cemetery which I always find very moving.



The Russian Cemetery

After that we made our way downstream through two schleuses to Potsdam, off again on the mandatory 3 hour tour from which I always learn something new. This time it was that Frederick the Great introduced potatoes to the peasants, who were initially reluctant as they ate the leaves and flowers on top and this of course made them very ill !!!



Frederick the Great was buried at Sans Souci with his beloved dogs
[look carefully and you will see potatoes on his grave]



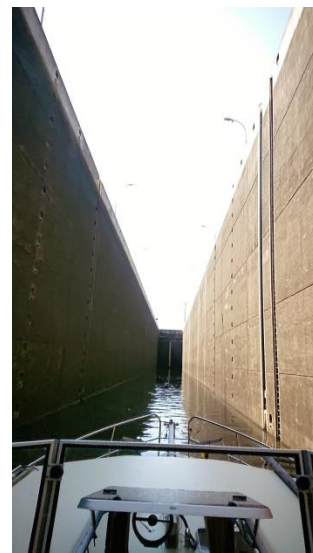
The Brandenburg Gate
[one of them – another at Potsdam]



It looks as though trains, buses, cars and pedestrians all use the same bridge

Wednesday, 15th August - after topping up with water we said farewell to our friends and headed west to Brandenburg. On arrival at Brandenburg we had to wait for the schleuse as commercial craft [the barges] take precedence. We stayed for a brief walk-about and treated ourselves to an ice-cream. It was chilling to note that during the Cold War the Villa at Nuendorfer Straße 89a was of special importance for it was here that the Soviet Military Tribunal met, there were cells beneath the building. Witnesses have described the degrading imprisonment conditions, the nightly interrogations and torture that went on here. We then continued west heading for Genthin. We had one schleuse to go through which I could see boats in already. I called the lock-keeper by VHF and he kindly waited for us. Genthin is just a small town but a good stopping point with supermarkets close by and a free municipal mooring. It was again time for a glass of wine and supper!!

Thursday, 16th August – Today was just a long slog to the Mittellandkanal which runs east – west for 200 miles and has only two schleuses. The first schleuse is the Hohenwarthe with a rise and fall of 18.6m this then leads



The first schleuse is the Hohenwarthe with a rise and fall of 18.6m

on to the Elbe aqueduct which crosses the river and is about 2km long. As you look down you can see the Elbe below with, owing to the drought, insufficient water to make navigation safe. The aqueduct was opened in 2003 and connects the Mittellandkanal with the Elbe-Havel-Kanal [the East with the West]. After a long day we arrived at the Wolfsburg Marina. Wolfsburg is the home of Volkswagen and the purpose of our visit was to visit the factory and see a “Golf” being built. However, we were to be disappointed !

Friday, 17th August – We arrived at Volkswagen for a 09.00 start. We were looking forward to the English speaking tour of the factory, but alas we were told that it no longer operated on a Friday! It was advertised and fully explained in the their “Autostadt Magazine” covering July



1899



1905



1930



1999

through to September. They said it was a printing error, this was the main purpose of our visit. We had to settle for visiting the museum and also the beautiful gardens. The VW range is also available to see in different venues; Lamborghini, Skoda, Audi, Seat, and of course Volkswagen. There were also the car towers, but this was sold out. Over 500 customers each



A revolving flower garden

But what are they ???

[They roam freely]

day arrive at the VW site to collect their new cars. As there was no tour we made our way back to the boat and pressed on towards Hamburg. After Wolfsburg we joined the Elbe-Seitenkanal which was opened in 1976 to provide a link between Hamburg and the Mittellandkanal after the “Iron Curtain” separated East from West. It is about 115km long with Uelzen schleuse 23m and then a Ship-Lift of 37.5m at Sharnebrucke. We spent the night alongside at Bodenteich in the middle of nowhere.



Sharnebrucke Ship-Lift capable of handling 3,000ton barges

Saturday, 18th August – After the Ship-Lift we had one more schleuse where we had a wait of over 30 minutes and then on to Hamburg where we secured in the City Sporthafen giving good access to the City Centre. As a treat we had supper ashore. Alongside was the ‘Amerigo-Vespucci’ an Italian three masted sail training vessel. The vessels main purpose is to integrate military education and maritime studies of the Academy’s Naval Officers. The hull is painted black with two white strips as a reference to the gun decks of the 19th century original ships. She had on board 120 midshipman of the Accademia Navale.



Sunday, 20th August - Up early and a walk to church only to find that the first service didn't start until 11.30, so back on board to kill time. Returned for Mass at the Catholic Church of St Ansgar, the congregation was about 300 and the service went on and on. Back to the boat for lunch and then we went on walk-about. It was a lovely day with much activity going on everywhere.

Monday, 21st August – Robin left today to return home by train. Barney and I went off to the Hamburg International Maritime Museum. The museum was laid out on 9 levels and included Navigation and communication, Sailing ships, the history of naval construction, Military service on board, Navies of the world since 1848, Merchant and passenger shipping, Maritime art and the “big world” of tiny ships. The day was informative and



A ship simulator where visitors, under the eye of a retired Captain and see what it is like driving a container ship into Rotterdam, Singapore or Hamburg

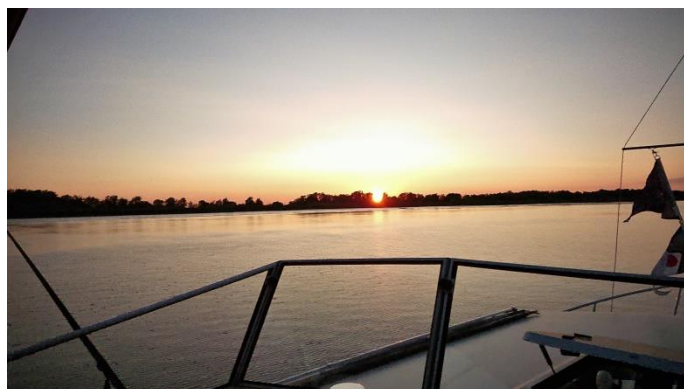
“Queen Mary 2”

Made from approximately 780,000 LEGO bricks

fascinating with scale models of hundreds of ships. There was a scale model of ‘Queen Mary 2’ [‘QM2’] made up of approximately 780,000 LEGO bricks, a ship simulator where you could take the controls of a large container ship and bring her into Rotterdam, Singapore or Hamburg. On another level were large-scale dioramas of Nelson’s important battles: Battle of the Nile, Battle of Copenhagen and the Battle of Trafalgar, models of Bismarck, Graf Spee, HMS Hood, HMS Rodney to name but a few - a day here leaves Greenwich Maritime Museum in the shade!

Tuesday, 22nd August - John Ludgate joined for the second time and late that day we slipped and proceeded down the river Elbe towards the southern North Sea and at dusk we stopped for the night at Glickstadt.

Sunset at Gluckstadt [River Elbe]



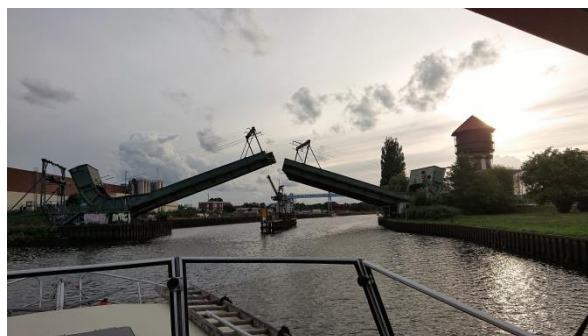
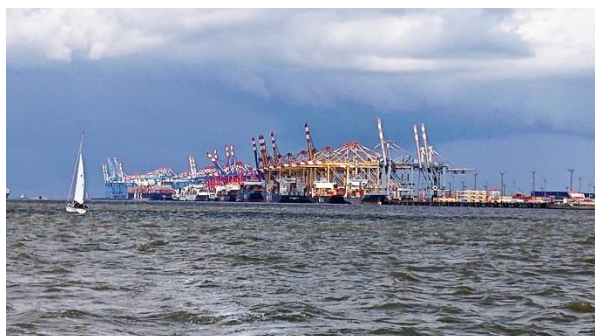
Wednesday, 22nd August - we left Gluckstadt early to continue down the river Elbe past Brunsbüttel and the Kiel Canal, past Cuxhaven. We were again blessed with fine weather and continued north to Helgoland where we arrived early in the evening, Barney had survived for just over ten hours without a pee!!! Helgoland, with its huge red sandstone, towers 61m above the waves. You might recall it is 30 miles north of the German coast and 30 miles west of Denmark. Helgoland, once Danish became a British Colony in 1807. We did a deal with Germany when we exchanged the islands for Zanzibar in 1890. The islands were bombed heavily during World War II by the RAF.

Thursday, 23rd August - In a stiff SW wind we had a pleasant hike around the cliff-top paths of the main island seeing a wealth of wildlife; the smaller island is known as Dune with sandy beaches and a small airport. Helgoland has a long tradition as a spa resort. There are only electric vehicles for the authorities and as no bikes are allowed without a special permit many of the residents operate "foot powered" scooters. We again benefitted from topping up the tanks with duty free fuel at €0.97c per litre.



Helgoland - cliff-top paths of the main island and a wealth of wildlife

Friday, 24th August - To catch the benefit of the tide, we slipped at 06.00 and made our way to Bremmerhaven with a SW F7 which made the crossing a little "lumpy". We had the current for most of the way up the river Weser finally stopping at Oldenburg in the evening. On the way we found a suitable stop for Barney.



Bremmerhaven – a huge container port

A quick call on VHF Ch 73 and a few minutes later the bridge opened and we were through

Saturday, 25th August - we woke up to a damp, miserable morning. We went to a very smart Shopping Mall to buy sufficient food for the weekend and got under-way by 10.30. On leaving we had to stop as the engine water intake was blocked with "mud" - a few minutes later we were on our way west along the Kustentkanal heading for Haren and the German Dutch border. The Kustentkanal is 69km long with a schleuse at the beginning and another at the end. It is fairly straight and mostly lined with trees. The weather didn't warm-up until after lunch and then the weather changed dramatically to monsoon conditions. It rained absolute torrents and then an hour later the sun came out and it was a pleasant autumnal evening. We arrived at the Haren Yacht Club at dusk and although the Harbour Master had gone, there was an information box and late comers could settle with an "honesty" payment.

Sunday, 26th August - We were stymied as the schleus's on the kanal taking us through to the Netherlands [only 14km long] did not operate on a Sunday. We met many kind people in the marina including a Norwegian couple who spoke perfect English. This weekend was a festival weekend and the town was "choc-a-bloc" with a funfair and a carnival atmosphere prevailed. The shops do not normally open on a Sunday, but today they were all open and doing a brisk trade. We learnt that the kanal would be open at 10.00 the next morning and that there would be a convoy to the NL's and one back passing us somewhere in the middle.

Monday, 27th August - and indeed there was a convoy of 9 boats and we were "tail-end-charlie", only two boats could use the small schleuse and we had four to get through and numerous bridges. Having all received our instructions we set off at 10.20 arriving at our destination Ter Apel in the Netherlands 14km and almost 5 hours later - that's boating for you !

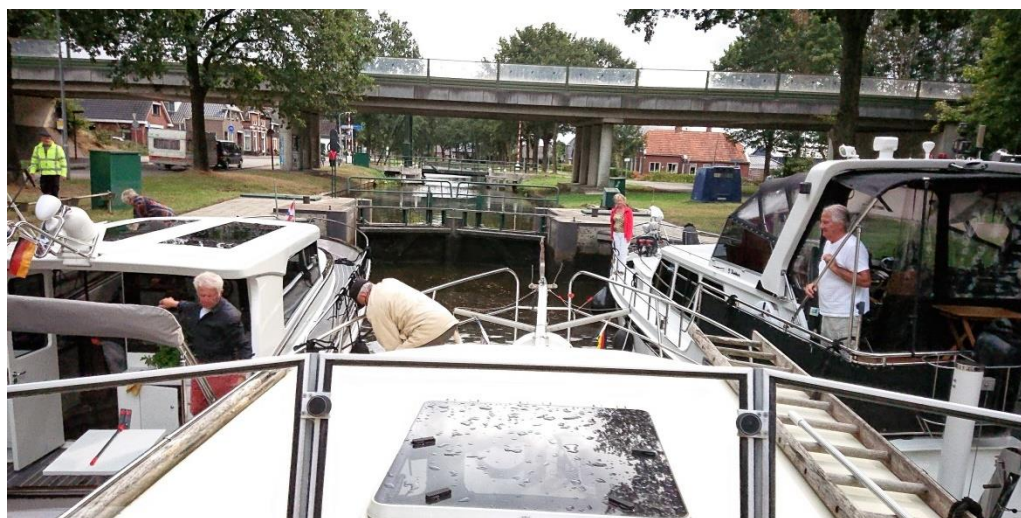


Haren on the German Dutch Border



Finally, back in the Netherlands

At Ter Apel, on the instructions of the lock-keeper, we squeezed into the sluis [Dutch lock] with two other boats and then set off along the Veenvaart [kanal] which was twisting and turning and at one stage I had to take the bimini down to enable us to get under some of the bridges. We eventually stopped at the Compascuumer sluis in the middle of nowhere - our friendly lock-keeper was to return in the morning at 09.00



It was a tight squeeze, but the lock-keeper ensured that we could all fit in the sluis !

Tuesday, 28th August - true to his word he arrived at 08.55 and we were off on the next stage of our adventure. It was obvious that John wouldn't get the train to Schiphol to catch his plane home and so the lock-keeper organized a taxi to meet us at the next village. John caught his train and arrived in good time at Schiphol. In the meantime Barney and I pressed on. There is a speed limit of 6kph and I had 60km to travel. There were many bridges and sluises to pass - the Koppel sluis was a double [like the English flight of locks] which I hadn't experienced on the continent before. The locks operated 09.00 to 12.30 and 13.30 to 17.00. At the end of a very slow day I reached Km 36, at a village called Geesbrug.



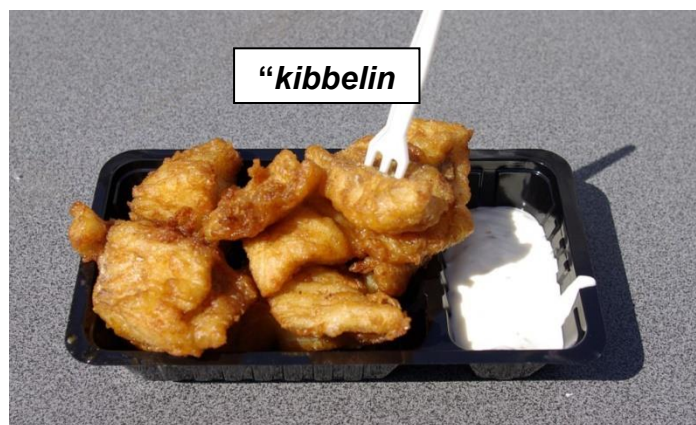
Town Quay - Zwartsluis



Old Dutch Bidders

Wednesday, 29th August – This morning I am in pole position for the bridge and to spot the lights turn from two vertical reds [closed] to one red. The bridge opens at 09.00. I had three sluises to get through and about 15 bridges and they all opened as I approached. From the Hoogeveensvaart I eventually joined the Meppeldiep and on to Meppel, but on arrival there were no suitable moorings and so I made for Zwartsluis a delightful quiet and unspoilt town full of character and with a Town Quay. I dislike marinas - they are like being in a car park - no one talks to you, not my image. The town is also busy building and repairing the barges. The town had a good selection of shops and an upmarket Co-Op. The HM was also very friendly and helpful.

Thursday, 30th August - Another look around Zwartsluis and my next objective was to reach Urk a small town on the IJsselmeer. It was once an island 18 miles off the coast but is now a delightful fishing and shipbuilding town. It is one of the few areas in the Netherlands with a hill. Getting here I was frustrated at the time that it took the bridges and sluise's to open. The Dutch do not always respond to VHF as they are embarrassed that their English is not always good and everyone will hear them. You had to have "eagle eyes" to see the hidden intercom. It didn't help either that the telephone number given was only taking messages. I eventually cracked the



system and arrived safely at Urk. The Dutch Reformed denominations play key roles in the life of this community. The mainstay of the town has always been fishing, shipbuilding and repairing. Religious life is also very important here. Harbour dues are not collected on Sundays and many of its inhabitants can be seen dressed in their traditional costumes. I was, however, able to treat myself to "kibbeling" a Dutch favourite of battered chunks of fish, served normally from a market stall or similar, with a garlic based mayonnaise or tartare sauce - very scrummy and moreish.

Friday, 31st August – I slipped about 10.00 for Lemmer which is about 2 hours away. It was a pleasant morning but with a chill in the air from the NxW breeze. There are two ways into Lemmer, either through the town in which case you pay a toll and you can moor right in the centre of town, or take the commercial route which is what I chose. I then took a beautiful scenic route to Sneek through Sloten, Woudsend, Heeg and Ilyst, picture postcard stuff. I passed



Sloten



Typical Dutch scene



Woudsend



The Waterpoort – Sneek

through two lifting bridges and had to pay a €2.00 toll - the bridge-keeper collects the money in a wooden clog attached to a fishing line. So, the boat is now at Aquanaut in Sneek where the boat was built and they service and maintain it through the winter. It is $\frac{1}{3}$ the price of keeping a boat in the UK.

In summary

This year I have visited Antwerp, Gent, Brugge and Ypres for the Menin Gate and the war cemeteries. I then went to Ostend and up the coast to Vlissingen [Flushing] and through the Port of Antwerp and on through the canals in the north of Belgium. On to Maastricht to Nijmegen to join the annual Dutch Rally. My son James and his family then had the boat for a week. My return took me to Aalsmeer to visit the world's largest flower auction house. Then on through Amsterdam to Edam for the cheese market and then Medemblik to take the steam train to Hoorn and back. Next, north through Friesland and out to Borkum [riddle of the sands territory] and north to Helgoland. East to the river Eider and the Baltic visiting numerous German ports including Peenamünde where the V-bombs came from. Further east to Poland and then to Berlin and Potsdam. Then the journey home via Wolfsburg and the VW factory, Hamburg and again out to Helgoland for duty free fuel. Lumpy trip to Bremmerhaven and west to the German / Dutch border at Haren. Then long small twisty canals to Zwartsluis and Urk. Finally through Lemmer and Sneek for the winter. I have travelled 2,398 miles with good company and the weather was 95% warm, sunny and dry.



Appendix 9 – 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		