



# CNOA

## Chatham Naval Officers' Association



## The CNOA Newsletter for October 2020

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### Contents

Chairman's Flag Hoist

Trafalgar Night Dinner –  
23 October 2020

Future Speakers & Events

Royal Navy leads multi-national  
task group above Arctic Circle

A memory of National Service

China expands its island-building  
strategy into the mid-Pacific

HMS Enterprise on search and  
rescue exercise in Cyprus

Swedish collaboration unveils  
world's largest sail-powered  
car carrier

HMS Albion leads UK task group  
for three-month Mediterranean  
and Black Sea deployment

Unique sail cruise ship under  
construction gets her masts

German World War II cruiser  
discovered off Norway

HMS Truant's war

Dawn Owl Journal

Going to Sea – Part 5

A rare visit from HMS Scott to  
Portsmouth

Lightning jets take off from RAF

Marham to join HMS Queen

Elizabeth for major exercise

CNOA Standing Order Form

CNOA Member Application Form



HMS Mersey © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2020

### HMS MERSEY ACTIVATED TO CONDUCT NATIONAL TASKING.

Royal Navy Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV)  
HMS Mersey sets sail to shadow a Russian  
naval ship through the English Channel.

The Royal Navy carries out Fishery  
Protection duties on behalf of the UK  
Government's Marine Management  
Organisation, inspecting fishing vessels, to  
ensure the long-term sustainability of our  
fisheries is being preserved, while also  
keeping a lookout for any other potentially  
illegal activity taking place at sea.

Shadowing of non-Allied warships and other  
vessels of interest passing through our  
waters is another role being undertaken by  
the OPVs, alongside Fleet Ready Escort  
(FRE) frigates and destroyers.

## Chairman's Flag Hoist:



Dear Fellow members,

Another month has passed and we are now in autumn; the prospect of winter seems daunting. The CNOA's virtual programme is now in place until the year end. I do hope you can join some of our lectures via zoom. Last month's lecture, presented by Dr Martin Watts, was fantastic to the point I continued to research the detail.

After much discussion, the committee has agreed to commemorate Trafalgar Night formally, with guest speaker Admiral Sir James Perowne joining us virtually. Small groups will be invited to join via Details are still being worked out but will follow shortly.

In recent weeks I have conducted the first face-to-face training with cadets from TS Brilliant. It was a joy being back in the harness but very difficult teaching with the necessary restrictions in place.

History continues to be made and August saw the first group of ratings pass out of HMS Dartmouth, BRNC. The surge of new recruits has filled HMS Raleigh so an overflow was needed.

I had the opportunity this month to meet with a good friend and have a socially distance dinner with him and his family. I enjoyed the conversation as he is about to take the role of First Drill for the Royal Marines. As many of you know, I have held several ceremonial roles and was keen to influence his thought process; I also reminded him that I collect military badges and to remember me with his cast offs.

I attended the VJ Day service in Tunbridge Wells with Derek Ireland last month, a small, short but fitting tribute to the town's servicemen and women for whom VE Day was not the end of their war.

Finally, I had the delight of taking my grandchildren out on the boat in the Solent this summer. The picture shows Harry at the helm; he is three years old and loves boats.

Yours Aye,

*Jon*

Jon Vanns  
Lt Cdr (SCC) RNR  
CNOA Chairman



# **Trafalgar Night Dinner, 23 October 2020**

## **From Cdre Barry Bryant CVO, CNOA President**

*Dear CNOA colleagues,*

*Come cheer up, my lads! 'tis to glory we steer,  
To add something more to this wonderful year*

Well, perhaps it hasn't been the most wonderful year so far, but when the nation faced mortal threats of invasion in 1805 and 1940, it was the Royal Navy who had absolute control of the English Channel and thwarted both Napoleon and Hitler. As Lord St Vincent said, *'I do not say the French cannot come, I only say they cannot come by sea!'*

It was of course Nelson's effective destruction of the French and Spanish fleets at Trafalgar that ensured this safety and led indirectly to Napoleon's eventual defeat at Waterloo ten years later, and the Royal Navy has rightly celebrated in late October each year since. Now we face a different enemy, from another foreign source, and there may be more hard times ahead – not least the necessary cancellation of our traditional Trafalgar Night Dinner with its shared history, comradeship, solemn toast and, frankly, pride in our Service. And therefore, like our favourite hero, it's time for innovative tactics!

Therefore, as in 1805, our own 'Band of Brothers' (and a couple of sisters!) on your Committee have devised a 'virtual' Trafalgar Night where we can all eat and drink well, albeit in the comfort of our own homes, but we will then, courtesy of Zoom, be joined by Admiral Sir James Perowne from Windsor Castle for the traditional series of toasts and the Admiral's speech, before a final chorus of Rule Britannia. I fear you'll have to buy your own port!

And so, this is my personal appeal for as many of you as possible to dust off your laptops and your mess kit, do the short Zoom course (guidance will be given!) and let's show that a mere pandemic and a few Government guidelines can't still the spirit of Nelson and his Immortal Memory. As Chatham was the birthplace of HMS VICTORY, let Chatham be the origin of Trafalgar recovery!

Our Chairman's Calling Notice gives you all necessary details at this stage, but please respond favourably if you can and let him and the Committee know that the ship's company are fully behind this hugely positive initiative!

As ever,

*Barry Bryant*

President, Chatham Naval Officers' Association

## **2020 Future Speakers & Events: Subject to revision**

**9 October:** Vanessa Nicholls – Dementia Friends – Virtual Lecture

**23 October:** Trafalgar Night Dinner – Virtual Social – see above

**13 November:** John Johnson-Allen – The loss of the Truculent – Virtual Lecture

**11 December:** Cdre Bryant – President's Address and Virtual Social

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.** Please email [contact@cnoa.org.uk](mailto:contact@cnoa.org.uk) with articles, news items and photographs.

*Derek Ireland* (Hon. Secretary) and *Suzanne Wood* (Newsletter Editor)

Could other CNOA members also provide short presentations based on their own service-related experiences for the CNOA meetings? **Yes, of course they could!** Please let Jon Vanns know or email [contact@cnoa.org.uk](mailto:contact@cnoa.org.uk)

## Royal Navy leads multi-national task group above Arctic Circle From MOD Navy

The Royal Navy has led a multi-national task group of warships and aircraft into the High North for the first time in more than 20 years.

Type 23 frigate HMS Sutherland commanded a task group comprising US Navy Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Ross and Norwegian Fridtjof Nansen-class frigate HNoMS Thor Heyerdahl, supported by RFA Tidespring, on a deployment to the Barents Sea. The operation demonstrated freedom of navigation above the Arctic Circle.



HMS Sutherland in company with RFA Tidespring, USS Ross and HNoMS Thor Heyerdahl. © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2020

The ships undertook integration training to further develop their ability to work together, while asserting the nations' commitment to upholding peace in the region.

The High North is witnessing a change in its security environment and represents a key area of interest for the UK. Recent Russian attempts to control freedom of access and navigation in the region are of concern to the UK and its partners.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: “The UK is the closest neighbour to the Arctic states. In addition to preserving UK interests we have a responsibility to support our Arctic allies such as Norway to preserve the security and stability of the region.

“It is vital to preserve freedom of navigation when melting ice caps are creating new shipping lanes and increasing the risk of states looking to militarise and monopolise international borders.”

More than 1,200 military personnel from four nations took part, including air support from US P-8A Poseidon and Danish Challenger Maritime Patrol Aircraft along with RAF Typhoons and an RAF Voyager refuelling tanker. This multi-domain operation is the first time the UK has operated Typhoons in the High North. RAF aircraft conducted an air defence exercise to improve integration between the air and maritime assets.

It is also the first time the UK has operated so far north alongside Denmark and Norway, both of whom are part of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF). Through groupings such as JEF and NATO, the UK can demonstrate its commitment to peace, security, and freedom of access and navigation in the High North.

These organisations are vital in setting the conditions for international security and it is crucial the UK and its partners play their part in an increasingly unstable world of persistent challenge and competition.



HMS Sutherland and RFA Tidespring in company with USS Ross. © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2020

Norwegian Minister of Defence, Frank Bakke-Jensen said: “Flights, operations at sea, and exercises are important contributions to Norwegian and European security as part of a larger cooperation on the defence of the Alliance.

“In order for allied forces to reinforce the defence of NATO’s northern part, they need to have the knowledge to operate there. For this reason, Norwegian and allied military personnel, groups, aircraft and ships need also to train and exercise in Norway and the High North in peacetime.

He continued: "Training together with US, British and Danish forces strengthens the operational value for both our own and their forces and enables us to operate seamlessly together."

HMS Sutherland led the ships through a demanding series of exercises, testing their abilities to conduct surface and anti-submarine warfare in one of the world's most challenging environments. Conducting routine tasks, such as replenishment at sea, in conditions close to freezing and in unfamiliar waters becomes a vital training exercise to ensure effective integration between allies. The activity was completed in a considered manner that demonstrated each nation's continued determination to ensure stability and security in the High North.

Commander Tom Weaver, Task Group Commander and Commanding Officer of HMS Sutherland, added: "It has been thoroughly rewarding to operate in the High North.

"This operation has been an amazing opportunity to hone the skills of my ship's company not only in this challenging and demanding environment but also to work more closely with key allies in an incredibly important region."

## **A Memory of National Service** **By Lt Cdr Roy Standen**

During my time in HMS Undaunted we were in the Mediterranean during the Suez Crisis and were in Gibraltar docks for a while. I was sent ashore to be PO in charge of the shore patrol. Whilst in the patrol office a call came from the police who had received a complaint from the manager of a very select members' only night club, requesting us to go to the club to remove two ratings who had gate crashed and although they had been treated to two pints of beer to drink and asked to leave quietly they refused to do so.

Bearing in mind that, being an OA, I had no training in Naval Regulating procedures I rather relied upon the two big burly leading patrol ratings assigned to me. We went to the night club, stood in the reception area and discussed our approach to getting them out; the two patrol ratings were all for going in and arresting them and forcing them out. I thought about it and decided to go in alone because I didn't think it right to make a big fuss in front of all the members, who were sitting in the dining area close to the bar where the two ratings were standing. I told the patrol ratings that I would call them if necessary.



I went in and approached the two and politely told them who I was and why the patrol had been called out. They were both quite adamant that they were going to stay and in a quiet voice I said: "Just have a look round at all these posh people here in evening dress; they are not like us, we would be better off somewhere else." They both looked round and to my surprise agreed, so I said drink up and we will go, which they did. The two patrolmen were amazed when we walked out.

During the same period of time an Able Seaman, who shall be nameless, was arrested by two Army Red Caps during a similar event. However, when arrested the AB, who had obviously had too much to drink, put his boot on each of the Red Caps' shiny toe caps and screwing his boot around on their toe caps, said in a loud voice "You're \*\*\*\*\* Army, you have \*\*\*\* all to do with me." He was taken into custody and when lower deck was cleared for defaulters, he was sentenced to two weeks in detention and flown home to serve his time in the then Portsmouth RN Detention Centre.

*Editor: Thanks Roy. Any more amusing anecdotes from our members are always welcome!*

## **China expands its island-building strategy into the mid-Pacific By The Maritime Executive**

The world knows the Republic of Kiribati as a very low-lying nation in the mid-Pacific that is in danger of inundation as the climate changes and sea levels rise.

Much less is known about its strategic location and the attention now being paid to it by Beijing, which has proposed large-scale dredging to reclaim land from lagoons. The aims are to raise the height of atolls and create land for industrial development, including two major ports. The massive works will likely be carried out by the same fleet of dredgers used by China to build artificial islands in its aggressive expansion into the South China Sea and will almost certainly cause the same severe destruction of coral reefs in Kiribati.



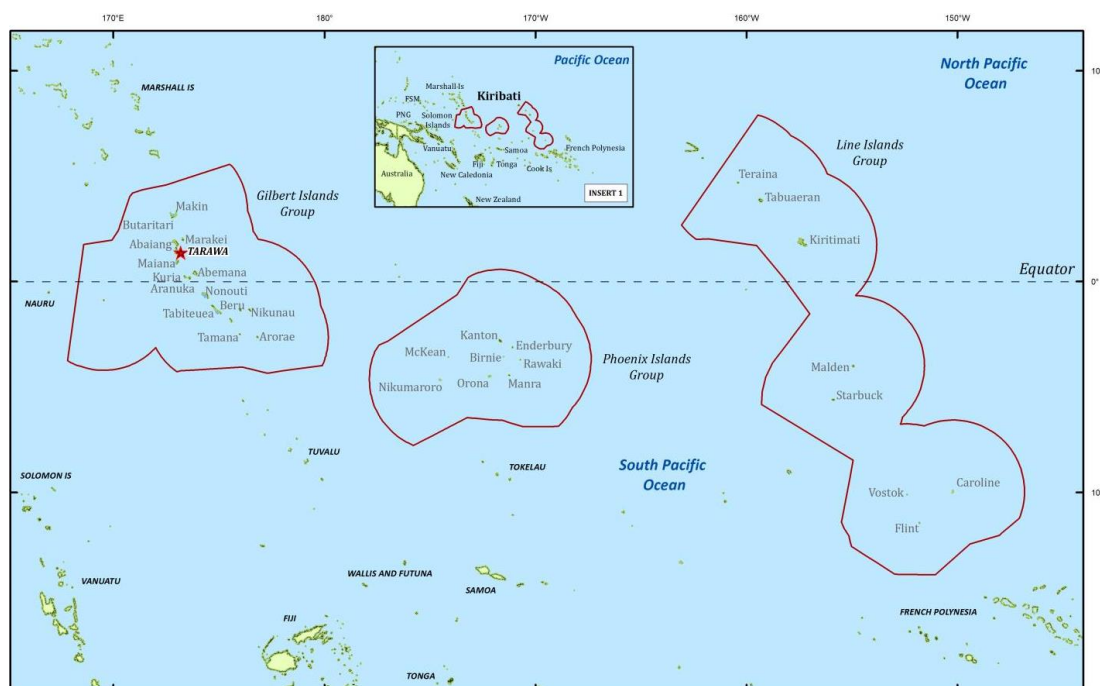
Image courtesy Australian Department of Defence

Kiribati lies at the true geographic centre of the vast Pacific Ocean, straddling both the equator and the 180-degree meridian of longitude and is the only country in the world to span all four hemispheres. Comprising 32 coral atolls and one raised coral island, Kiribati has three distinct island groups – the Gilbert Islands in the west, the Line Islands in the east and the Phoenix Islands in the middle – with separate exclusive economic zones. The combined EEZ covers 3.5 million square kilometres, about half the size of Australia, and hosts some of the largest remaining potentially sustainable stocks of tuna and other migratory fish, as well as deep seabed minerals. The land area of all the islands combined is only 800 square kilometres and the population is about 120,000.

In September 2019, the government of Kiribati switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China, amid accusations of inducements from China. In June this year, the Tobwaan ('Embrace') Kiribati Party (TKP) secured a second four-year term in government, amid accusations of election irregularities by all sides.

The TKP's national development manifesto, the "Kiribati 20-year vision," which looks set to be integrated into China's Belt and Road Initiative, gives highest priority to building two transshipment hubs – major ports in a tiny country that has no economic market for such facilities.

One hub is planned at the capital of Tarawa Atoll in the west, which was the site of the first major amphibious landing by US forces in the push against Japan during World War II. The second is planned at the strategically located Kiritimati ('Christmas') Atoll in the east, directly south of Hawaii and the major US bases there.



Map of Kiribati showing Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) © MACBIO 2013-2018

The atolls of Kiribati have very limited land area and are only a few metres above sea level. Like other low-lying atoll nations, Kiribati is directly threatened by climate change-induced sea-level rise and other impacts that are already occurring. In addition to the transshipment hubs, the 20-year vision proposes large-scale land reclamation. The stated objective is for commercial and industrial development, and ostensibly to raise the atolls as a climate-change adaptation response.

The proposed major island-building and the development of so-called transshipment hubs raise the prospect of Chinese military bases or, at least initially, potential dual-use facilities, being established right across the centre of the Pacific, stretching along the equator for nearly 3,500 kilometres from Tarawa Atoll to Kiritimati Atoll. China also has a mothballed satellite tracking station in Kiribati, which may now be reactivated.

These facilities would give China control over the world's best tuna fishing grounds plus swathes of deep-sea mineral resources, and a presence near the US bases at Hawaii, Kwajalein Atoll, Johnston Atoll and Wake Island. They would also be positioned directly across the major sea lanes between North America, Australia and New Zealand. During World War II, Japan's attempt to block the same lanes were defeated, starting with the Battle of the Coral Sea and then the taking of Guadalcanal in Solomon Islands. Today, China is moving to achieve control over the vital trans-Pacific sea lines of communication under the guise of assisting with economic development and climate change adaptation.

The developments in Kiribati are part of a much larger Pacific-wide Chinese strategy. Another permutation of China's "island-grabbing" in the Pacific is the leasing of the highly strategic Hao Atoll in French Polynesia, ostensibly to develop a \$2-billion-plus fish farm in the atoll lagoon, which is large and deep enough to accommodate an entire naval fleet. Hao Atoll was a significant French base in the 1980s and 1990s, used to support nuclear weapons tests on nearby Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls. It has an airfield, built by the French, with a runway long enough to accommodate large, wide-bodied transport aircraft.

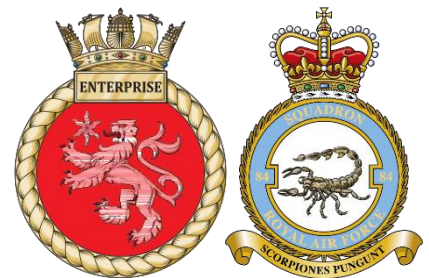
Control of the facility at Hao, along with those proposed in Kiribati and elsewhere across the heart of the Pacific, represents a power-projection capability that is orders of magnitude beyond the old "three island chains" construct applied to China by strategists for decades, and requires an urgent realignment of the strategic response.

*Steve Raaymakers is a veteran practitioner in international development with a focus on environmental security, small island states, oceans governance and integrated marine resource management in the Asia-Pacific. This article appears courtesy of ASPI's The Strategist*

## **HMS Enterprise on search and rescue exercise in Cyprus From MOD Navy**

HMS Enterprise recently worked with Cypriot partners on a search and rescue exercise in the Mediterranean.

The survey ship joined the Joint Rescue and Coordination Centre, the Republic of Cyprus Police Aviation Unit and 84 Squadron from RAF Akrotiri for the annual training.



The training simulates the joint rescue of a missing person at sea and the evacuation of an injured crew member from on board the ship.

HMS Enterprise recently returned to Limassol having been deployed to Beirut after the recent explosion at the port. She worked alongside the Lebanese Navy Hydrographic Service to conduct a survey of approaches to the port.

Once back in Cyprus, she was joined by the British High Commissioner Stephen Lillie and Lieutenant Junior Grade Anastasios Paraskevopoulos from the Joint Rescue and Coordination Centre for the exercise.

Commander Cecil Ladislaus, commanding officer of HMS Enterprise, said: "Having been deployed across the globe this year, the importance of working with our international partners cannot be understated.

"At the start of this year, we needed to conduct a casualty evacuation using helicopter support. This sort of thing could happen to any mariner, anytime, anywhere – it is in our best interests to train and work together like this to ensure that we are ready, should the unexpected occur."

The exercise saw a member of the Cyprus Navy join Enterprise before she sailed off the coast of Limassol. They searched and located the "person" (played by a dummy) missing at sea, before 84 Squadron were called in to winch the dummy to safety in their helicopter. The ship then acted as if a member of their crew needed to be evacuated and again called on 84 Squadron to winch the crew member off the deck.

Speaking after the exercise, Mr Lillie said: “Such exercises are vital for maintaining our search and rescue preparedness and an excellent opportunity to bring our nations together in training.

“We value our long-running cooperation with Cyprus in both search and rescue and crisis response, and we look forward to continuing to work together, including through live exercises, to the benefit of both our countries and the wider region.”

Major General Rob Thomson, Commander British Forces Cyprus, added: “This exercise further strengthens an already close working relationship between our two nations.

“Our crew from RAF Akrotiri’s 84 Squadron have worked successfully alongside their colleagues in the Republic of Cyprus on an almost daily basis, fighting fires during this very busy summer period. To be able to utilise the capabilities of HMS Enterprise whilst [the ship] is moored in Cyprus was also an opportunity too good to miss.”



HMS Enterprise and 84 Squadron during the search and rescue exercise. Image credit SAC Laura Bullas

## **HMS Enterprise's role**

HMS Enterprise is an Echo-class multi-role survey vessel – hydrographic oceanographic (SVHO). Multi-talented and adaptable, she is equally at home mapping and surveying the ocean floor as she is acting as a floating base for our minehunters.

Over the past five years, she has been involved in a diverse span of activities, from detecting mines in the Arabian Gulf to saving lives and disrupting the work of human traffickers as part of the European task group on Operation Sophia.

She has surveyed hundreds of thousands of square miles of ocean floor, filled in as the Falkland Island’s Patrol Vessel and most recently acted as the flagship to Standing NATO Mine Counter-Measures Group 2 in the Mediterranean.

# Swedish collaboration unveils world's largest sail powered car carrier

By The Maritime Executive

As the global shipping industry works to develop a new generation of sustainable ships, a broad range of concepts has been presented. The latest, unveiled in Sweden, looks to use innovative, advanced technologies to once again harness the wind, creating a revolutionary and sustainable category of shipping.



All images courtesy of Wallenius Marine

The initiative is a Swedish collaborative project between Wallenius Marine, KTH (Royal Institute of Technology), and SSPA. It is supported by the Swedish Transport Administration, which is acting as a co-financier. KTH is addressing the challenges within areas such as aerodynamics, sailing mechanics and performance analysis. SSPA is contributing expertise for the development and validation of new testing methods, aerodynamic and hydrodynamic simulation methods, and risk simulation. The collaboration believes that this initiative will create a new generation of sailing vessels for the transportation of commercial cargos.

Called Oceanbird, the concept is for a new class of vessel that they are calling a “pure car and truck carrier” or PCTC, with a capacity to carry 7,000 cars. The concept design is over 650 ft in length and would have a 32,000-ton displacement. The height above the waterline is nearly 350 ft. Primarily powered by the wind, the vessel will have an estimated speed of 10 knots, permitting it to cross the Atlantic in approximately 12 days or 50 percent longer than today’s crossing that takes about eight days.

Wallenius Marine, the pioneer in car transports, inspired the project. “We are proud to present the third iteration of our design, which we have worked with for several years,” said Per Tunell, COO Wallenius Marine. “It is critical that shipping becomes sustainable. Our studies show that wind is the most interesting energy source for ocean transports.”

According to the designers, the technological challenge was creating a vessel where the rigging and hull work together as a single unit to harness the wind in the most efficient way possible. They noted that, although the material is the same, the steel hull of a wind-driven vessel needs to be designed in an entirely different manner to a motor-driven one.

By combining shipbuilding technology with aerodynamics and using computer simulations and physical experiments, the designers have shaped the hull and created the steering technology required for the world's largest sailing vessel.

“Our design features a unique combination where the hull and rigs work together as one unit and has been specifically optimized for sailing the oceans,” said Carl-Johan Söder, PhD, Naval Architect, Wallenius Marine. “With our configuration, the vessel will have an average speed of 10 knots on a typical Atlantic crossing. A North Atlantic crossing with Oceanbird will therefore take around twelve days, compared to the eight days it takes conventional vessels.”

The futuristic sails are like aeroplane wings, using the same level of aerodynamic technology. They are also designed to telescope from a minimum height of 150 ft above the waterline, to permit the ship to pass into harbours, to a maximum of 262 ft, permitting the ship to operate at optimal conditions or reef the sails in high wind conditions. At maximum height, the wing sails would be twice the height of today's largest conventional sailing vessels.



The rigging is made of steel and composite materials and turns 360 degrees to catch the wind in an optimal way. To be able to get in and out of harbours, and to meet international safety requirements, Oceanbird would also be equipped with an auxiliary engine.

“The development project has come very far,” says Richard Jeppsson, VP Commercial & Partnership at Oceanbird. “We have started testing with seven-metre models in open water recently and will continue this fall. The design will be ready for orders in 2021 and we are aiming for a possible launch in 2024.”

Far beyond a concept design, the collaboration believes that Oceanbird demonstrates that the maritime industry can bring about major changes and that zero-emission shipping is possible.

See Wallenius Video at [https://youtu.be/pZVDs4n\\_a0M](https://youtu.be/pZVDs4n_a0M)

## **HMS Albion leads UK task group for three-month Mediterranean and Black Sea deployment** **From MOD Navy**

More than a thousand sailors and Royal Marines have sailed on a three-month mission to the Mediterranean to forge the commando forces of the future.



UK flagship HMS Albion left the UK in early September, heading a force that will visit numerous partner nations across the Mediterranean and Black Sea as the UK's armed forces nurture new friendships and cement traditional alliances.

As underlined by the Secretary of State for Defence, Ben Wallace, speaking aboard the UK's newest ship HMS Tamar, the Royal Navy will be innovative, versatile and ready for persistent global campaigning as it enters the 2020s.

This deployment will see those attributes sharpened as commandos test and develop tactics using innovative new kit and build experience working alongside NATO Allies and regional partners.



HMS Albion © Crown Copyright MoD Navy 2020

While deployed the ships will test the new concepts of the Littoral Strike Group (which replaces the UK's long-standing Amphibious Task Group) and shape the Future Commando Force – the evolution of the Royal Marines into a hi-tech raiding and strike force – both of which are at the heart of the transformation of the Royal Navy.

“This deployment will provide high-readiness, forward-deployed options, provide strategic reassurance to our allies and partners, deter malevolent actors, strengthen NATO, and conduct wide-ranging defence experimentation,” he said.

“We will test cutting-edge technology and innovative concepts such as the Future Commando Force and the Littoral Strike Force concept to ensure our war-fighting edge in an era of constant competition.”

In addition to the ships, the Future Commando Force will be represented by elements from the specialist raiding units of 47 Commando (Plymouth), Royal Marines of 42 Commando (Plymouth) and 40 Commando (Taunton), the intelligence experts of 30 Commando Information Exploitation Group (Plymouth), and Wildcat helicopters from the Commando Helicopter Force at RNAS Yeovilton.

A series of workouts through the autumn will build on cold weather trials and training conducted by the Royal Marines in Norway earlier this year.

The task group will also support NATO's Mediterranean security operation Sea Guardian and conduct exercises in Cyprus – Olympus Warrior and Autonomous Advance Force 3, a test of cutting-edge kit and how it can be exploited by commandos to deal with the very latest of threats.

Activity in the Black Sea will include a series of training exercises and port visits to show the UK's support for regional security and freedom of movement in Black Sea waters.

## Unique sail cruise ship under construction gets her masts By The Maritime Executive



First mast in position on the Sea Cloud Spirit – photo courtesy Sea Cloud Cruises

While much of the cruise industry remains shut down, work is proceeding in Spain on one of the most unique cruise ships currently under construction.

Sea Cloud Cruises of Germany is building a new 453-foot long three-mast full-rigged ship that it expects to enter service by late this year.

Recently, in the lost art of building sailing ships, the 177-foot tall aft mast of the vessel, known as the mizzenmast, was raised into position. One by one, the three masts, already equipped with shrouds and stays are now being erected on the ship. The rigging plan, which calls for a sail area of over 44,000 square feet, was developed by the offices of Polish yacht designer Zygmunt Chorén, who is one of few specialists who still master the art of windjammer construction.

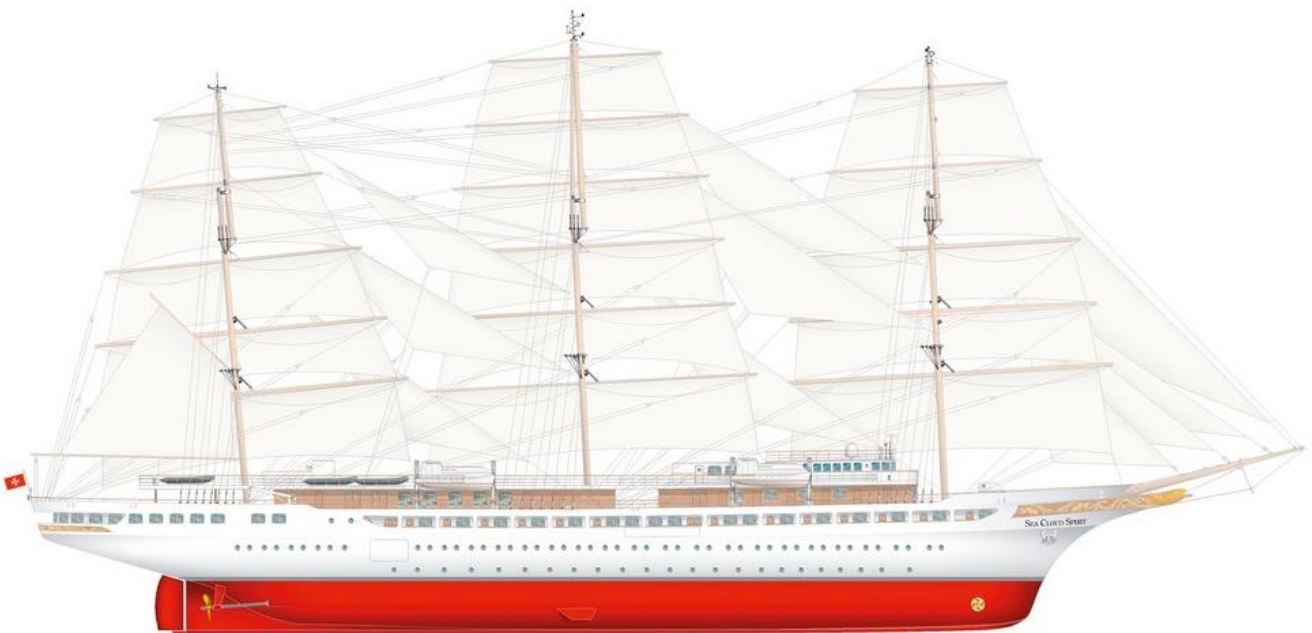
According to the company, raising the aft mast is an important prerequisite for the completion of the new sailing ship, which will be known as the Sea Cloud Spirit. The mizzenmast not only carries the sails but also contains the exhaust system for the ship's engine. "As soon as the shrouds and stays are attached and the mast is aligned, we can start testing the engine," explains Daniel Schafer, Managing Director of the Hamburg shipping company Sea Cloud Cruises.

Construction of the new sailing ship has been more than a 10-year perilous journey. The ship was under construction in 2008, then known as the Sea Cloud Hussar, but the shipyard went bankrupt. For nearly a decade, the hull was caught in the bankruptcy, and only in 2018 was the company able to obtain the hull and resume the project with a new shipyard and design team. The plans call for the ship to accommodate 136 passengers with 69 cabins, including for modern cruising 25 cabins with private balconies, as well as a passenger elevator and a spa.



Mast being prepared for the new Sea Cloud Spirit

The tallest of the ship's three masts will be approximately 187 feet. In addition to sail power, the ship will have two diesel-electric drives with a capacity of 1700 kW each that operate entirely on low-sulphur marine diesel fuel.



Design for the new Sea Cloud Spirit

While work on the Sea Cloud Spirit was delayed due to coronavirus, the company still expects it will be completed in 2020. Founded in 1979, the company began operations with the famed original Sea Cloud, built in 1931 in Germany as the private yacht of American financier Edward F. Hutton and his wife Marjorie Merriweather Post, heiress, American businesswoman, socialite and philanthropist, who created the General Foods company. In 2001, the company introduced its second sailing ship the Sea Cloud II. The ships cruise in the Mediterranean, Canary Islands and the Caribbean.

## German World War II cruiser discovered off Norway By The Maritime Executive

The wreckage of one of Germany's most famous World War II-era vessels, the light cruiser Karlsruhe, was recently found quite by accident in the waters off Norway. While the history of the vessel, which was the only large German ship lost during the Nazi invasion of Norway in 1940 was well known, until now the wreckage of the ship had never been located.

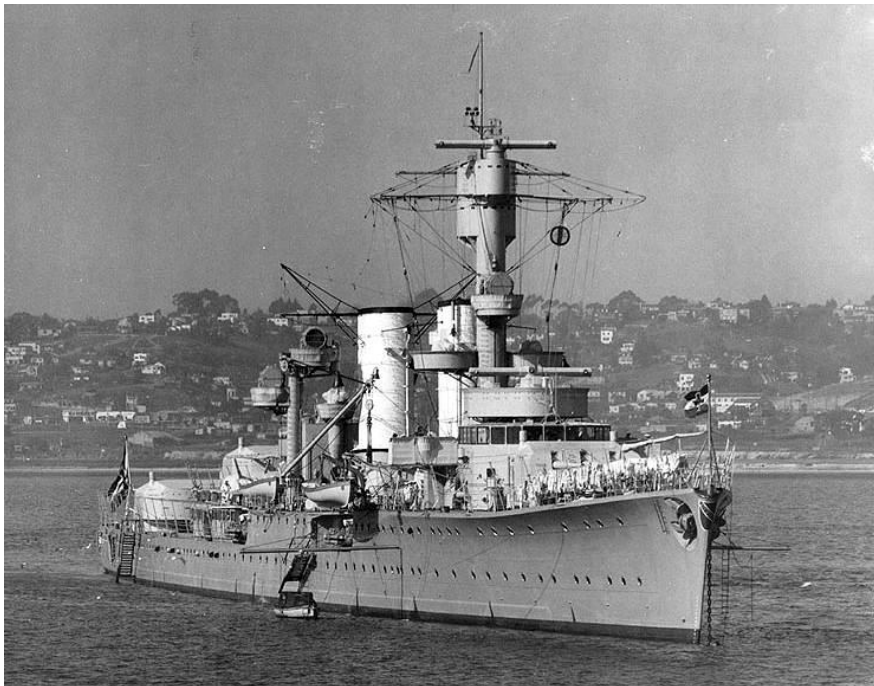


Karlsruhe in San Diego in 1934 - Rear Admiral Samuel Eliot Morison - US Navy photo

According to reports from Norwegian energy company Statnett, during a routine inspection in April 2017 of a power cable running from Norway to Denmark along the seafloor, they noticed the image of a shipwreck. It was approximately 15 metres from the undersea cable and from the images on sonar it appeared to be a large vessel.

Three years later, in June 2020, an expedition got underway aboard the offshore vessel Olympic Taurus to explore the wreck, which was lying approximately 13 nautical miles from Kristiansand in southern Norway. Statnett's senior project engineer Ole Petter Hobberstad working with a team of experts got their first glimpses of the vessel using a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) with multi-beam echo sounders.

"When the ROV results showed us a ship that was torpedoed, we realized it was from the war," Hobberstad says. "As the cannons became visible on the screen, we understood it was a huge warship. We were very excited and surprised that the wreck was so big."



Analysis of the images confirmed that they had located the final resting place of the German light cruiser Karlsruhe approximately 490 metres below the surface resting upright on the seafloor.

"You can find Karlsruhe's fate in history books, but no one has known exactly where the ship sunk," explains Frode Kvalø, archaeologist and researcher at the Norwegian Maritime Museum. "After all these years we finally know where the graveyard to this important warship is."

Karlsruhe 1934 in San Diego - U.S. Naval Historical Centre Photograph

Construction of the Karlsruhe had begun in 1926 with the hull being launched the following year. With Germany's navy severely restricted by the World War I armistice, the vessel along with two sister ships was among the largest and finest ships of the German navy during that era. She was commissioned in 1929.

Measuring 571 feet in length and powered by steam turbines she could achieve speeds of 32 knots. She was manned by 21 officers and 493 sailors. Her primary armaments were nine 150mm/60 guns C/25 in three turrets. The ships had an unusual placement of two aft turrets each offset to one side of the hull.

During the 1930s the Karlsruhe was used primarily as a training vessel for the German navy, making a range of cruises including around-the-world voyages. She was also deployed off Spain during the revolution. In 1938, the ship was sent to a shipyard for a major reconditioning which prepared her for World War II.

The Karlsruhe saw action in the Baltic: she was ordered to carry troops for the invasion of Norway. Sailing from Bremerhaven on 8 April 1940 heading to Kristiansand, she lay off the city waiting for a heavy fog to lift. As she entered the fjord the following day she came under heavy bombardment with the cruiser and the Norwegian guns engaged in the artillery barrage for nearly two hours before the fog again covered the port. The Norwegians surrendered and the Karlsruhe disembarked the troops.

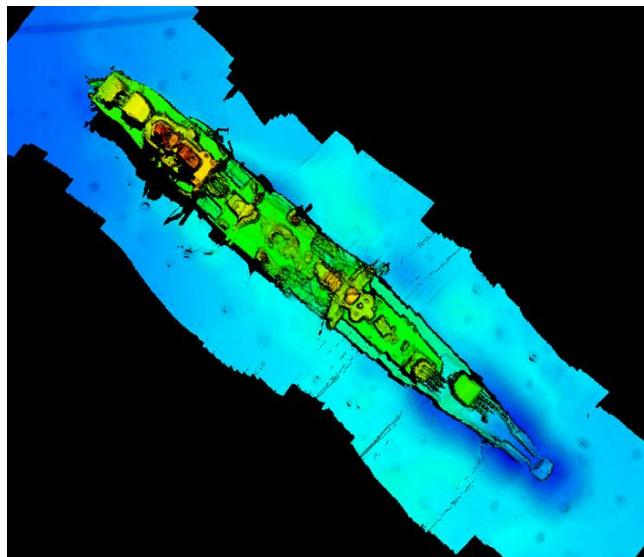
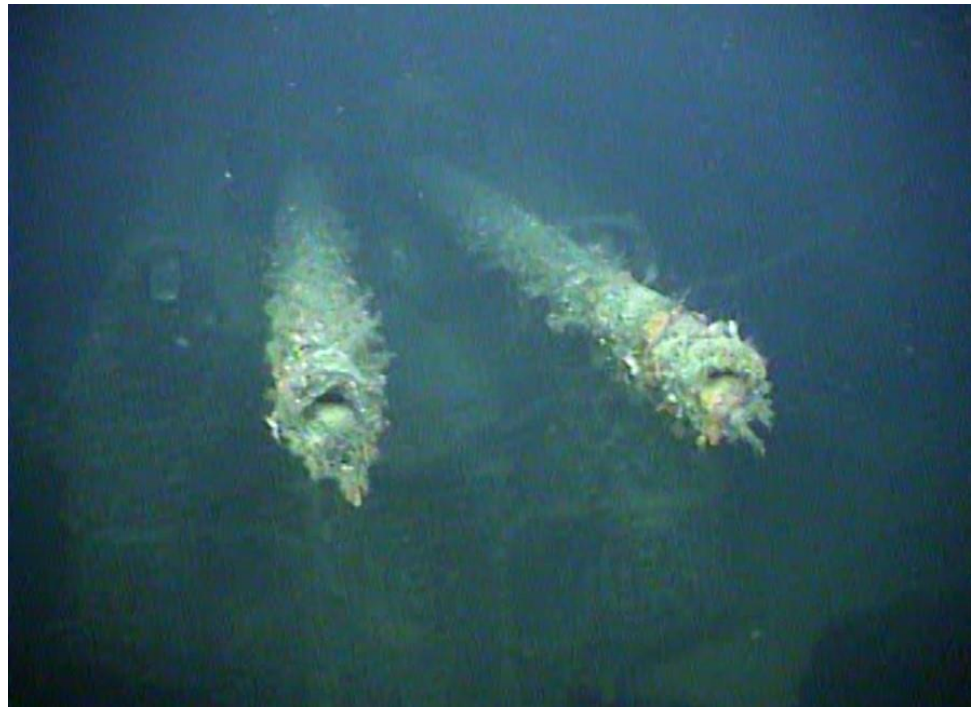


Image from the ROV of the vessel on the seafloor. Image courtesy of Statnett

Karlsruhe then left Kristiansand with three of the torpedo boats as escorts. The British submarine HMS Truant was positioned outside the fjord, and when her crew spotted the German ships, she fired a spread of torpedoes. Karlsruhe zig-zagged to evade the torpedoes, but two still hit the ship: one struck her bow and the other hit amidships. They blasted large holes in the hull and allowed thousands of tons of water to flood the ship. The flooding disabled her engines and electricity generators, which cut off power to the pumps that were trying to keep pace with the progressively worsening flooding. With the pumps shut off, there was no hope to save Karlsruhe, and so her commander, Friedrich Rieve issued the order to abandon her two hours after the attack. The torpedo boat Greif took off her crew and fired two more torpedoes into the ship to ensure that she sank.

Rieve and his executive officer were both severely criticized for failing to take all possible steps to save Karlsruhe in a later investigation into the sinking. The report concluded that, since the ship was still afloat after two hours and two torpedoes were required to sink her, it might have been possible to take her under tow back to Kristiansand or another port. In addition, the forward pumps still had power, and so the flooding could have been slowed enough to permit a return to a safe harbour.



Barrels from the ship's famous guns on three turrets. Image courtesy of Statnett

The images of the vessel on the seafloor are unique according to Kvalø in that the Karlsruhe is sitting upright with her turrets intact. He says that most warships, with a high centre of gravity, typically rolled over when they were sunk.

Statnett's Hobberstad says that he is glad that they finally got the opportunity to investigate the mysterious wreck so close to their cable and could share the news of their discovery with the world.

### **General Characteristics of German light cruiser Karlsruhe**

Class and type:	Königsberg-class cruiser
Displacement:	7,700 long tons (7,800 t)
Length:	174 m (571 ft)
Beam:	15.3 m (50 ft)
Draft:	6.28 m (20.6 ft)
Installed power:	6 × water-tube boilers, 65,000 shaft horsepower (48,000 kW)
Propulsion:	2 × MAN 10-cylinder diesel engines 4 × geared steam turbines, 2 screw propellers
Speed:	32 knots (59 km/h; 37 mph)
Range:	5,700 nm (10,600 km; 6,600 mi) at 19 knots
Complement:	21 officers, 493 enlisted men
Armament:	9 × 15 cm SK C/25 guns 2 × 8.8 cm SK L/45 anti-aircraft guns 12 × 50 cm torpedoes 120 mines
Armour Belt:	50 mm (2 in)
Deck:	40 mm (1.6 in)
Conning tower:	100 mm (3.9 in)

# HMS Truant's War

## By Lt Derek Ireland

HMS Truant was one of the Royal Navy's T-class (or Triton class) diesel-electric submarines designed in the 1930s to replace the O, P, and R classes. Fifty-three members of the class were built just before and during the Second World War, where they played a major role in the Royal Navy's submarine operations.

*Truant* had a relatively active career serving in the main naval theatres of war - Home waters, the Mediterranean and the Pacific Far East.

### Home waters

*Truant's* first major victory came when she torpedoed and damaged the German light cruiser *Karlsruhe* off Kristiansand, Norway, which disabled both engines and power stations. *Karlsruhe* had to be scuttled with two torpedoes by the German torpedo boat *Greif*. *Truant* later attacked the British merchant *Alster*, unaware that it had been recently captured from the Germans, but her torpedoes missed.

She also intercepted the German merchant *Tropic Sea*. *Tropic Sea* had formerly been in Norwegian service but had been captured by the German armed merchant cruiser *Orion* in the South Pacific. As well as 8,000 tons of wheat, she had on board the captain and 22 survivors of the British SS *Haxby*, which had been sunk by the raider, as well as her own Norwegian crew. *Tropic Sea* was scuttled by the German prize crew in the Bay of Biscay. *Truant* embarked the captain and survivors of *Haxby*, and the master of *Tropic Sea* and his wife. Most of the Norwegians were rescued by British flying boats.

*Truant* had a narrow escape when she was attacked by the River-class submarine *Clyde*, who had mistaken her for an enemy submarine. *Clyde's* torpedoes missed.

### Mediterranean

Assigned to the Mediterranean in mid-1940, *Truant* went on to sink a number of enemy ships, including the Italian merchant vessels *Providenza*, *Sebastiano Bianchi* and *Multedo*, the Italian tankers *Bonzo* and *Meteor*, the Italian auxiliary submarine chaser *Vanna*, the Italian passenger/cargo ship *Bengasi* and the German merchantman *Virginia S*.

*Truant* also damaged the small Italian tanker *Prometeo* and the Italian torpedo boat *Alcione*, which was later declared a total loss. She also unsuccessfully attacked the Italian merchant vessels *Utilitas*, *Silvia Tripovich*, *Bainsizza* and *Arborea*, the small Italian tanker *Labour* and the German merchantman *Bellona*.

### Far East

*Truant* was assigned to operate in the Far East, against Japanese shipping in 1942. She was present for the beginning of the Battle of Badung Strait and spotted the Japanese covering force, launching an attack at the light cruiser *Nagara* but scored no hits, although the crew said to have heard two impact noises from dud torpedoes hitting the target. She sunk the Japanese merchant ships *Yae Maru* and *Shunsei Maru* in the Malacca Strait.

She almost sunk a large liner but held off as poorly displayed hospital markings were spotted (possibly the *Hikawa Maru*). A few days after she engaged in a gun battle with the Japanese army cargo ship *Tamon Maru No. 1*, which sank shortly after. This was her final patrol as she started to experience engine trouble.

### Back to home waters

By this point *Truant* needed various repairs and refits, and was sent back to the UK, taking part in several exercises en route. Starting in December 1942 her refit was not finished until May 1943. After this she took part in training exercises, with one sortie to hunt for *Tirpitz*.

She was ordered back to the Far East, but on the way her engine troubles flared up again and she returned home. She did not sortie again, instead being used as a trials ship for 1945, including snorkel tests.

### **Post war**

Truant survived the war and was sold to be broken up for scrap on 19 December 1945. She was wrecked in December 1946 whilst en route to the shipbreakers.

### **Note:**

Of the same class, but of the third group, was HMS Truculent. Truculent was a Chatham based submarine and is remembered every January by the Town of Chatham and the CNOA.

On 12 January 1950, Truculent was returning to Sheerness, having completed trials after a refit at Chatham. In addition to her normal complement, she was carrying an additional 18 dockyard workers.

She was travelling through the Thames Estuary at night. At 19:00, a ship showing three lights appeared ahead in the channel. It was decided that the ship must be stationary, and because Truculent could not pass to the starboard side without running aground, the order was given to turn to port. At once, the situation became clear; the Swedish oil tanker Divina – on passage from Purfleet and bound for Ipswich – came out of the darkness. The extra light indicated that she was carrying explosive material. The two vessels collided, the Divina's bow striking Truculent by the starboard bow hydroplane and remained locked together for a few seconds before the submarine sank.

Fifty-seven of her crew were swept away in the current after a premature escape attempt, 15 survivors were picked up by a boat from the Divina and five by the Dutch ship Almdijk. Most of the crew survived the initial collision and managed to escape, but then perished in the freezing cold mid-winter conditions on the mud islands that litter the Thames Estuary. Sixty-four men died as a result of the collision. Truculent was salvaged on 14 March 1950 and beached at Cheney Spit. The wreck was moved inshore the following day, where 10 bodies were recovered. She was refloated on 23 March and towed into Sheerness Dockyard.

The subsequent inquiry attributed 75% of the blame to Truculent and 25% to Divina.

A virtual lecture entitled 'The loss of Truculent' will be given by Mr John Johnson-Allen on 20 November.

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## **Account of HMS Truant's encounter with German light cruiser Karlsruhe**

### **6 Apr 1940**

HMS Truant (Lt Cdr C.H. Hutchinson, RN) departed from Rosyth for her 6th war patrol. She was ordered to patrol off Kristiansand, Norway.

### **9 Apr 1940**

HMS Truant torpedoed and damaged the German light cruiser **Karlsruhe** (8,350 tons) off Kristiansand, Norway in position 57°55'N, 08°14'E. At 2150 hours the Karlsruhe was scuttled with two torpedoes by the German torpedo boat **Greif**. The other two torpedo boats that were escorting Karlsruhe were **Luchs** and **Seeadler**.

*1833 hours - Sighted a cruiser hull down bearing 326°. Enemy course was 146°.*

*1852 hours - The cruiser was a 'Koln-class'. She was escorted by three torpedo boats, Luchs, Seeadler and Greif. Range was now 4500 yards.*

*1856 hours - Fired a salvo of 10 torpedoes. 3 torpedo explosions were heard thought to be hits (In fact one torpedo hit Karlsruhe in the stern wrecking it and leaving her immobile).*

1900 hours - Returned to periscope depth. Saw one of the escorts approach at high speed. Went to 60 feet and altered course to 90° from the firing course.

1902 hours - 2 Depth charges exploded close. Went to 150 feet. Between this time and 2330 hours Truant was hunted by 2 of the escorts. In all 31 depth charges were dropped. Most of them unpleasantly close. Truant even went to 300 feet to escape damage.

## 12 Apr 1940

HMS Truant ended her 6th war patrol at Rosyth. She is immediately put into a floating dock.

Lt Cdr Christopher Haynes Hutchinson RN later became Rear Admiral C H Hutchinson CB DSO OBE and finished his naval career in July 1961 as Director General of Personal Services and Officer Appointments, Admiralty [HMS President].

Rear Admiral Hutchinson died on 24 December 1990 at Avington, near Winchester, Hampshire.

## Dawn Owl Journal – 28 July to 29 August 2020 By Lt Clifford Mickleburgh



My original plan had been to leave the Netherlands and head east to Germany, Poland and out into the Baltic to Sweden and Denmark but because of the dreaded pandemic [Covid-19] I was unable to get away after Easter and waited to see “if the coast was clear” before I decided to go away for just August. So many of you will be familiar with the places that I am visiting this time and apologies for any duplication. I have friends joining me for most of the trip.

Monday, 28th July - I left very early to catch the 09.00 Stena ferry from Harwich to the Hoek of Holland. I also stopped at Manningtree Station to collect John Ludgate one of my RNR friends who was going to join me for the first two weeks. The ferry, because of the Coronavirus, had very few passengers and crew all had to wear facemasks. We arrived at the Hoek at 17.00 and then had a 2½ hour car journey to Sneek, the centre of boating in Friesland. This is where the boat was built and I have kept her here for the last 5 years.



Making our way out of Sneek



St Piterkerk – Grou

Tuesday, 28th July - after victualling the boat with fresh food we slipped at 12.35 and made our way north to Grou which was formerly a fishing and ship-captains village. The beautiful church of St Piterkerk, whose namesake St Piter was a Frisian saint named after the apostle Peter, patron saint of fisherman. Sneek and Grou are dedicated to boating, both sail and motor. Grou forms part of the Stand-up [mast] route from south to north through the Netherlands.

Wednesday, 29th July - We left Grou and made our way south through the busy waterways in the boat filled centre of Sneek then through the picturesque villages of IJlst and Workum to Hinderloppen with its narrow winding streets. It was a fishing port in the old Zuider Zee, a shallow bay extending inland about 100km and at most 50km wide with an overall depth of about 4 or 5m. The Zuider Zee, after terrible floods, was closed off from the North Sea in 1932 by a major dam and causeway [the Afsluitdijk] over a length of 32km. It now contains the IJsselmeer and the Markermeer which have become fresh water and offer oceans of sailing and boating facilities. The old Hylper harbour is much visited by tourists. It was a former Hanseatic town and prospered through fishing and now hand-painted furniture. There are 11 Commonwealth War Graves remembering airman whose planes were shot down in WW2 who made the ultimate sacrifice



There are big motor Barges...



...and smaller sailing barges



That evening we were able to enjoy Kibbeling, typical Dutch street food consisting of tasty battered chunks of fish, commonly served with a mayonnaise-based garlic sauce, very moreish...

Thursday, 30th July – we slipped from Hindoloppen at 11.00 and crossed the IJsselmeer, about 30km to Medemblik and then locked through and into North Holland through quiet, rural polder farming land and waterways to Middenmeer a tranquil village with good moorings and shops and enjoyed the evening sun. Polders are low-lying land reclaimed from the sea or a river and are protected by dikes and drainage canals. They are also designed as a way to control floods.



The narrow High Street



Middenmeer Haven



Alkmaar canals

Friday, 31st July - next morning we left reasonably early and ventured north near Den Helder, the home port of the Dutch Navy with ferry facilities out to the Waddenzee and the Frisian Islands, Texel being the nearest island. The Waddenzee, you may recall, is at the centre of the Riddle of the Sands by Erskine Childers, a spying mystery set in 1903. We then turned south through farming land and dead straight canals for Alkmaar

famous for cheese and the weekly re-enactment of its cheese market. The town had an air of prosperity and the many waterways were alive with families and young people enjoying their small craft exploring the city's waterways. We moored in the delightful small Gemeente Haven adjacent to the waterside cafes. The very



Alkmaar's Waag building is the hub of the weekly cheese market

friendly and helpful Harbourmaster [a young lady] rides round the town on her bike collecting harbour dues and being very informative and kind.

Saturday, 1st August - we departed mid-morning heading for Amsterdam this time by a new route through Purmerend on the Noordhollandsch Kanal. This was an interesting trip as we came across a type of ferry that I hadn't seen before. The ferry was drawn [winched] across the canal by a wire about 1m to 2m above the water, which, if you didn't know it was there, could cause a serious accident. The ferry captain on reaching the other side drops the wire and changes the signals from red to green. In Purmerend there is a large lock and road bridge with good free moorings each side. We decided to stop and then suddenly we had a red and a green light signifying that the bridge and lock were about to open, so "hey presto" we were off. We continued through. Most of the locks and bridges are centrally operated and a good lock/bridge keeper will see you on CCTV and have the next bridge ready for you as you approach. This formed a very attractive approach to Amsterdam by the Sixhaven marina which is just across the North Sea Canal by free ferry to Amsterdam Central Station.

Sunday, 2nd August – in the morning I took the ferry to Amsterdam Central with the intention of going to Mass, Barney and I were refused entry as I was not a resident and not on the list. Sadly, this was because of the coronavirus pandemic. So a quiet day alongside in Amsterdam, time for a make and mend. This is a term used in the Navy for an "afternoon off" to give sailors time to work on their clothing.



Take care! Ferries between Purmerend and Amsterdam are pulled across by wire about 1.5m above the water. Red and green lights indicate when it is safe to proceed.

Monday, 3rd August - slipped from the new Amsterdam Marina for the Markermeer, the southern end of the

Zuider Zee, and made for Muiden this is home to the prestigious Royal Netherlands Yacht Club [KNZ&RV]. The ex-Queen Beatrix also keeps her barge at Muiden. We passed through the busy lock with onlookers everywhere and once safely through made our way to Weesp on the R Vecht to buy more victuals. On leaving Weesp we made our way down the R Vecht which is a quiet alternative to the Amsterdam-Rijnkanaal [akin to



Muiden Castle is featured in many television features set in the Middle Ages

a busy motorway for the big barges]. The river quietly meanders through farmland with elegant houses which originally were the homes of the Amsterdam merchants. We were caught at one bridge, the bridge keeper apologised saying that he would be back after having his tea. We passed through Breukelen, a small town which gave its name to New York's Brooklyn founded by Dutch settlers. David Beckem's son is also [for some reason] called Brooklyn. We moored the night alongside at Maarsse which is just to the north of Utrecht.

Tuesday, 4th August - today we joined the busy Amsterdam-Rijnkanaal for a short passage to the River Hollandse IJssel through a lock and a “very” narrow open lock. This is a meandering river through lush countryside. The first of three villages was IJsselstein a sleepy dormitory town for Utrecht. Next was Montfoort another delightful province of Utrecht. A small Dutch town arranged along the quayside. Then we had to stop at Oudewater, 2 red lights meant that the bridge was closed, not just the usual 17.30 [for tea], but no until 18.00. We all had time for a stroll and an ice-cream, yes and Barney always has an ice-cream. Oudewater, is also better known as the Heksenwaag [Witches Weighhouse]. In the past, each city had its own weighhouse, where people could have their



We had to wait for an hour while the bridge-keeper had his tea

merchandise weighed before it was sold. However, a few centuries ago, these scales were also used to weigh people who were accused of practising witchcraft. It was believed that witches weighed next to nothing. After all, how could you fly all night on a broomstick to a witches’ sabbath if you didn’t? Oudewater became famous for these weighing tests. Happily there was never an incident in which someone was found to be too light and sentenced to... We now had one lock and one bridge to arrive at Gouda. The river at Gouda is tidal and we arrived at high tide and rafted up alongside another boat with a dog friend for Barney.

Wednesday, 5th August - Gouda is famous the world over for its cheese. Every week there is an enactment in the big square of what used to take place with horse-drawn farmers’ wagons bringing cheeses which are then laid out for the buyers to haggle over. with the slapping of hands the deal is completed. The square is surrounded with numerous cafes and restaurants. Even though we have Covid-19, Gouda was very busy. after a long chat with the harbourmaster we paid our dues and proceeded downriver through the Port of Rotterdam, Dordrecht with its leaning church tower and our next stop Willemstad



A barge being refuelled whilst underway [RAS]

Thursday, 6th August - Willemstad’s character is defined by the star shaped fortifications. I love it because you can tie up to the Town Quay, watch the passers-by and enjoy the Carillon of bells playing from the historic arsenal. There is a beautiful museum housed in the Mauritshuis which was severely damaged by a French bombardment and storms. The former governmental building was restored and used as a military hospital, also called an infirmary. The Mauritshuis was also a military police station. During the Great War, the attic served as a carrier pigeon station for the national government and once more as a hospital. It then became the town hall. With re-organisation it lost its use as the Town Hall. It is now used is now used for weddings, receptions, presentations, symposia in the former splendid council chamber and mayor’s office. The attic houses a wonderful museum displaying working and living in the past.



Even the cattle had to chill out [36°C]!

Slipped later that morning and made our way east up the Hollands Diep, a large tidal waterway with a vast chemical port about 20km inland from the Port of Rotterdam. We continued upriver to the Biesbosch National Park a large tranquil area of freshwater tidal wetlands. The Biesbosch consists of a large network of rivers and smaller and larger creeks with islands. The Biesbosch is an important wetland area for waterfowl, the vegetation is mostly willow forests, wet grasslands and fields of reed. There is extensive flora and fauna. It is especially important for migrating geese. We anchored for a quiet lunch absorbing the peace. There are also numerous mooring places, beach areas and wooded islands where boats can spend many interesting and peaceful days. Our day was completed by meeting up with friends Lloyd and Ruth at Gorinchem [pronounced "Khorekum"] off of the Rivers Waal and Mass, part of the Rhine delta. The remains of its star-shaped ramparts are still intact. There are festivals most weekends during the summer.



Friday, 7th August - we slipped and made our way to the lock with eight other vessels to make our way up the Merwede Canal to the sluis [lock] at Vianen and joined the R Lek [also part of the Rhine Delta. We took the quieter route, the Neder-Rijn, making our way further east towards Arnhem. It was getting late now, we eventually moored in a working boatyard adjacent to Scouting land and sailing centre enjoying a well-deserved restful evening.

Saturday, 8th August - we slipped early and arrived at Arnhem, remembered for the infamous 1944 battle depicted in the film "A Bridge Too Far". We went ashore intending to visit the Eusebius tower, but sadly a technical fault with the lift prevented us enjoying the splendid views all around Arnhem. We did have time to visit the new museum by the Neder Rijn just down river from the John Frost Bridge. Arnhem also has an "up-market" shopping area with a very prosperous air about it. Temperatures were still +34°C. We treated ourselves to tea ashore being served by two delightful young ladies.



Arnhem Bridge - 5pm - The second day - David Sutherland CBE

Sunday, 9th August - we slipped early than usual to make our way down the Gelderse IJssel to Zwolle, a distance of 100km, where John was to catch the train to Schiphol for his flight home. The current flows between 3-5 kph and you must be aware of "Blue Boarding". The normal Rule of the Road is red to red [port to port] but the barges quite often wish to go green to green [starboard to starboard] perhaps to take advantage of a lower current. To indicate this they show a "blue board" on their starboard side with a flashing white light, you ignore it at your peril and also incur the wrath of the bargee. We made good progress taking advantage of the fast-flowing current. Just before Zwolle we stopped at Hattem to buy homemade chocolates, but the shop was shut. We had to settle for an ice-cream instead. On arrival at Zwolle we had to negotiate a lock and then wait for two bridges to open. We secured to a floating pontoon and Barney had to be helped to climb the ladder, he proved very apt at both getting up and jumping down. Zwolle was a busy and lively town and has been an important trading and communications centre since the 12th century. It was also an important member of the Hanseatic League; this was a commercial and defensive confederation of merchants and market towns. Over a period of three centuries the league with its maritime interests stretched from the Baltic to the North Sea.



Hattem Village Square



Zwolle Marina Bridge

Monday, 10th August - There appeared to be no harbourmaster; even though he had a very smart office overlooking the harbour, he was never there. Harbour dues had to be settled electronically, not really my cup of tea. I eventually learned that I was now registered and would receive an invoice at the end of the month, not very satisfactory! Having bought more food, just Barney and I slipped and proceeded downriver to Flevoand located in the centre of the Netherlands where the Zuiderzee was previously located, a very large reclaimed area from the sea. I secured that evening at a very peaceful island called Eekt and Barney was able to go for a long and interesting run both in the evening and the next morning.



Quiet island of Eekt



Historic Amersfoort

Tuesday, 11th August - After Barney's early morning run, we slipped and headed south west between Flevoland and Gelderland to Amersfoort with its defensive walls and double canal ring. I arrived having travelled up the winding and narrow river Eems with many free riverside moorings. It was a fine day with many swimming and enjoying the summer warmth. Amersfoort has a beautiful town centre with both old and new modern buildings with a large shopping complex. It is one of the largest Dutch railway junctions with three stations. I arrived to find the penultimate bridge with "two red lights" indicating that it was out of commission. I had just finished tying up when the "bicycle boat" arrived and as if by magic the bridge opened and I was able to follow her up into the city. I was just completing securing alongside and the heavens opened for nearly two hours!

Wednesday, 12th August - in the morning the monsoon weather and the thunder and lightning of the previous evening had given way to sun and blue skies. I slipped and followed the bicycle boat back down through the bridges heading under the Hollandsbrug into the Markermeer and on through the Muiden sluis to Weesp and the romantic river Vecht looking for a quiet and peaceful mooring for the night. I finished up mooring alongside an American Diner at Nederhorst den Berg, but it proved a quiet mooring



Sunset on the Vecht

Thursday, 13th August – I slipped early and made my way back up the river Vecht to Weesp where I was able to shop at Albert Hine a supermarket like Morrison's. You have to visit the local bakery to take advantage of the scrumptious Almond biscuits. The town dates back to the 14th century and is well known for its historical buildings including forts, mills and 227 monuments.



One of the Weesp lifting bridges



A Weesp windmill

On leaving there was a delay caused by the bridge being stuck as it was so hot. Water had to be sprayed onto it to cool it down. Eventually I was able to make my way to the new Amsterdam marina. I was being joined by Tom Wallace who was travelling from London by Eurostar to Amsterdam Central, because of Covid-19 the train was fairly empty. Barney and I met Tom and we took the free ferry back to the marina. Tom has a 7m junk rigged sailing boat and sails on his own, it was good to have him onboard.

Friday, 14th August - We departed Amsterdam marina for Stavoren. We headed for the Orangesluizen which takes you from the North Sea Canal to the Markermeer, the difference in levels was no more than 20cm [8"] and pressed on to Marken which was formerly a small island in the Zuiderzee. It is now joined to the mainland by a causeway. Marken is full of olde-world charme. The small harbour is surrounded by traditional cottages built on the top of dykes or stilts to prevent flooding. In good weather, like today, children can be seen playing football across the harbour entrance. We enjoyed kibling and then treated ourselves [including Barney] to an ice-cream. We continued north into the IJsselmeer through the Krabbersgat Naviduct [a lock taking us over the road beneath] and headed for the old harbour at Stavoren.

A long time ago a successful, generous and rich merchant lived in Stavoren. When he died the whole town was in mourning for a month. His wife was secretly glad that he had passed away. She was a mean and wicked woman and was intensely disliked by everyone. She was never in the office, she spent her time at



home counting her money. She had everything, but she still wasn't happy. So one day she called all of her Captains together and instructed them to sail to the corners of the world and bring her back the most precious objects they could find. The Captains sailed away, whatever they brought back she could not be satisfied. All the ships returned except one. Finally the last Captain returned by the Baltic coast and loaded the purest grain that anybody had ever laid eyes on. Each grain was perfectly formed full of the godness of life. But when the old lady boarded the ship and saw the grain she was furious. She made them empty the cargo into the harbour. She wouldn't even let the townspeople have the grain which would feed them all for many months. With that the mean lady through her ring into the sea. The Captain cursed her saying "You will regret this one day when you will be begging for a crust of bread!" "Never!" she screamed, "I will never beg!" At exactly that time, black clouds obscured the sun, a terrible storm got up, and it rained for days and days on end.

The town was destroyed by the power of the sea, both she and the people lost everything they had. The old lady had lost everything except the clothes she wore. She was cold and hungry. She started to walk through what remained of the town, but everyone remembered what she had done and refused her even a crust of bread. She was forced to leave the town and beg wherever she could.

Saturday, 15th August - Normally I am away for three months and can have a plan, but this year, as I said earlier Coronavirus has fouled up everything. From now until the end of the month we planned on a day to day basis. Tom had not been to the Netherlands and we left Stavoren for the short trip to Hinderloppen and the rural canals to Sneek through Workum and IJlyst. The weather continued to be good although we had thunder rumbling around that evening for nearly two hours



€5.00 to pass through the sluis at Workum



The Watergate at Sneek

Sunday, 16th August - Sneek pronounced "Snake" and also known as Snits in Friesland is the centre of the boat world in the Netherlands; there are hundreds of boats everywhere. Sneek is well known for the Sneek Regatta Week when the waterways are busier than Piccadilly Circus. At the end of August Sneek is alive with music festivals. There is also a model railway museum, the work of a single collector with more than a thousand engines, carriages and goods wagons. From here we went to Grou and then on to Joure the home of Douwe Egberts coffee, they now have a new production unit. There is also a traditional clock and barometer shop and you can hear the "tick-tok" as you pass by. We enjoyed an ice-cream and a trip on the "electric chain ferry" before leaving for Woudsend where we intended to eat ashore in a restaurant where you could sit and see into the kitchen. There was no room outside and so we sat inside; we were very lucky, within an hour a storm had blown up and there was absolute pandemonium outside as the wind and rain whipped up with the contents of the tables being blown away and the customers fleeing for cover!



Electric ferry at Joure



The graveyard at Joure – note the bell



A typical Friesian Hay Barn where the roof can be raised or lowered



The unfinished leaning Oldehove tower

Monday, 17th August - There was now uncertainty about the weather which would affect where and when we went. As we left for Sneek and Leeuwarden, the provincial capital of Friesland, it was overcast and sunny. During both World Wars Leeuwarden was a centre for the Resistance movement. In the 17th century, a synagogue was built in the city, it was also used by the city's Catholics who were not allowed to build a house of worship of their own because of the Protestant city authorities. The moorings in Leeuwarden are set in a beautiful tree lined park overlooked by the leaning Oldehove tower an unfinished church tower in the medieval centre of the Dutch city; it was never completed due to subsidence. From the top of the tower on a fine day you can see the Frisian Islands. I had postcards to post and we walked for almost an hour looking for an orange letterbox, we even asked a local policeman, but he had no idea where to find one. Whilst looking we came across the local jail where the cells had been turned into hostel accommodation for students and small offices.



Beautiful park moorings with all facilities included

Tuesday, 18th August - Today my friends Peter and Sue Millington should have joined me but had to withdraw at the last minute because of the Covid-19 in the Netherlands and the effects of tat on their return to the UK. Tom had decided to stay for the rest of the trip. As we left Leeuwarden on passage to Franeker we passed an unusual lifting bridge which is known locally as the "Hand of God" and opens sideways. At Franeker we stopped to visit the Planetarium.

Between 1774 and 1781, Eise Eisinga built an accurate scale model of the solar system in his living room. Some thought the end was nigh. Eisinga wanted to use his model to show how the solar system really worked. All the planets, stars, sun and moon in the Planetarium move exactly as they do in reality, and they have been doing this for more than 235 years! All driven by a mechanism made of wooden hoops and disks with more than 6,000 nails serving as gear teeth. Sadly, because of Covid-19 you must book on the internet and there were no tickets for the next 3 days



Known locally as the "Hand of God" - clearance down 3.6m

We continued to Harlingen a major port serving the Friesian Islands off the Dutch coast. The weather forecast was not looking promising, but we had a window for the next two days and we decided to visit Terschelling one of the Dutch Frisien Islands. The Wadden Sea stretches from Den Helder, in the northwest of the Netherlands, past the great river estuaries of Germany to its northern boundary at Skallingen in Denmark along a total coastline of some 500 km [310 mi] and a total area of about 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> [3,900 sq mls]. It forms a shallow body of water with tidal flats and wetlands. It is an important area for both breeding and migrating birds; it is an important habitat for both harbour and grey seals. Harbour porpoises and white-beaked dolphins are the sea's only resident cetaceans. In 2009, the Dutch and German parts of the Wadden Sea were inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List and the Danish part was added in June 2014



Wednesday, 19th August  
– We slipped at 08.00 and made for the sea lock. We were now leaving fresh water for sea water and had to take account of tides. The crossing is not straightforward, you have to keep strictly to the channels as the Wadensea dries out. You also have to keep a good lookout as there are many yachts, fishing boats, ferries and a fast ferry called Tiger which passed us at 36 knots, scary if you are not keeping a good lookout. It was a good, comfortable crossing and we secured alongside by 11.30. We had had the tide and current with us.

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Terschelling is one of 5 islands and is between Vlieland and Ameland. Wadden Islanders are known for their resourcefulness in using anything and everything that washes ashore. With few trees to use for timber, most of the farms and barns are built with masts recovered from shipwrecks. The islands are surrounded by shipwrecks, and even today many containers wash ashore that are blown off the decks of container ships in the North Sea. Earlier this year 257 containers were lost from a container ship, most were recovered.



Friesian Islands – mile upon mile of sand dunes and beaches



The tide goes out a long, long way

During WW2 one of Tom's relatives was shot down over the western end of the island and we went for a long walk along the dunes and beaches in search of the site. Terschelling is also known for the production of cranberries. We were again able to enjoy kibling [you will recall those scrumptious bite size chunks of fish in a coating and served with a garlic sauce].

Thursday, 20th August - we slipped at 09.30 with the wind SW F4 which increased to F5/6 later that morning. The trip back to Harlingen was a "little lumpy". We made our way back through the sea lock and secured back in the marina by 12.40. That afternoon we explored the Port of Harlingen climbing the steps up to the Port Control to enjoy the extensive views. The town is surrounded by canals and bridges. Has many shops and was busy with people eating and drinking alfresco. There are many Dutch sailing barges owned by charities or corporations going out every day exploring the narrow channels of the Waddensea and a big fleet of fishing boats.



From Fishing Boats...



...to Fast Ferries doing 36 knots

Friday, 21st August – Another change of plan, we decided to venture back out into the Waddensea and make our way back via the Kornverderzand Sluis and with the wind now strengthening to SW F6 and the seas becoming lumpy we decided to make for Stavoren and continue our journey through the inland waterways and meers. There are two locks from the Waddensea back into the IJsselmeer [fresh water which] is protected by the Afsluitdijk from the Waddensea [salt water]. The Afsluitdijk is a major dam and causeway. It was constructed between 1927 and 1932 and runs from Den Oever in North Holland province to the village of Zurich in Friesland province, over a length of 32 kilometres and a width of 90 metres, at an initial height of 7.25 metres above sea level.

We made our way through Heeg, the Princess Margaret canal, which gives the big barges access to Germany through Delfzijl. The wind was now gusting SW F7 and it made securing alongside in the rural and exposed moorings difficult.



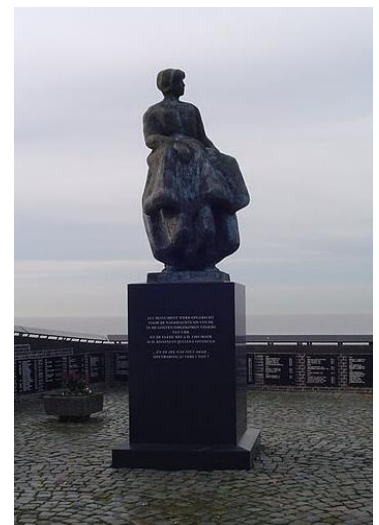
We eventually found a secluded mooring at Sloten, a delightful fortified small town on a miniature scale and discovered “The Peewit” showing a girl standing on the shoulders of a man. She holds a bird in her hand. Under the man’s feet a dishevelled pile of buckets, jerry cans and barrels form the base of the fountain. The universal containers, which water flows in and out of, reflect the fact that our society has abundant access to something which is not so evident elsewhere in the world: water – the source of all life. The bird with the girl is a peewit, a bird species which is threatened in Friesland.

Saturday, 22nd August - We departed from Sloten and still with strong winds made our way to Lemmer where we hoped to stay, but because of the inclement weather no one had left. We did, however, find a mooring near the lock and had time, between showers, to shop. We decided to make our way through the inland canals to Urk. All was going well until we reached a bridge with no name or telephone number and were stuck there for nearly an hour. We eventually

discovered a hidden “buzzer” and then, as if by magic, we had a red and green light and then a green light as the bridge opened. We were underway again!



Can you spot the buzzer?????



At Urk we locked back into the IJsselmeer rising by 5m from the inland canal. Urk was formerly an island 15km offshore, there is a lighthouse located on top of one of the few hills to be found in the Netherlands. By the lighthouse is the fisherman’s monument depicting an anxiously waiting wife surrounded by marble slabs listing those seamen who never returned.

Fresh water can normally be much rougher than sea water; with fresh water small sharp seas build up unlike the longer, more gentle swell, in seawater. Again, because of the strong winds there was little space, but eventually the very kind harbourmaster took me in his “buggy” and showed me a place to moor, it was just a challenge getting there negotiating our way through the mass of boats. It proved an idyllic spot alongside and we enjoyed a pleasant evening.

Sunday, 23rd August – We were one of the few who slipped from Urk that morning and made our way to Kampen. The first ½ hour was a little lumpy but we soon passed under the Kettlemeer Brug, a motorway which closes to allow boats and barges to pass on up the Gelderse-IJssel river. Kampen, the most northerly of the former Hanseatic cities is home to the Kamper Kogge which was a seaworthy cargo ship of the middle ages. Hundreds of cogs navigated the North Sea and the Baltic.



Deep dark brown oak, one mast and a sail. On top of the ship towers a castle that is reminiscent of the Vikings. The Kamper Kogge is not an everyday appearance in this day and age. The Black Lady of Kampen, as she is affectionately called, happens to be the oldest [reconstructed] sailing vessel in the Netherlands. It is an exact reconstruction of an authentic cog from 1340, discovered after the reclamation of the Flevopolders - the former Zuiderzee.

There is also the so-called "New Tower", completed in 1664, which features a cow hanging from the top every summer. The tradition is based on an old story that grazing was available.



"New Tower", which features a cow hanging from the top every summer

We slipped later to make our way to Zwolle and head north but we were distracted by a boat that had broken down and no one seemed to want to help. We towed her alongside into the lock and up the Zwarte Water and left her safely in a marina where they could sort out the problem. We continued north finally stopping at Hasselt a small Hanseatic town which played an important role in the textile industry. Moored ahead of us was a family we had met earlier in Franeker. Last year their Labrador had knocked me over. We also met my very good friends Gerrit and Prisca, we had a good time caching up. Hasselt proved a good stop.



The splendid Kamper Bridge

Monday, 24th August - We left Hasselt and proceeded north towards Dwingeloo a town halfway between Meppel and Assen in the Dutch province of Drenthe. Again we had to make decisions. The forecast was not good and we were running out of time. Barney had to be in Sneek for the vet to complete his Pets Passport by Thursday afternoon to enable him to return to the UK. We passed through Meppel but had to wait ½ hour for a bridge to operate and eventually stopped at Dwingeloo after refuelling. The locks were now also operating shorter hours 09.30 to 16.30 with an hour off for lunch.

The town is known internationally because of the radio telescope of the Dwingeloo Radio Observatory [which at the time of its completion in 1956 was the largest radio telescope in the world], it is located 3 km south of the village.

Tuesday, 25th August – We left Dwingeloo hoping to reach Gorredijk via the "Turfroute". Back in the 16th century, a network of canals was dug, over which peat shippers could transport their freight to Amsterdam and the west. The Turfroute - 75km follows the canals through southeast Friesland, the western region of Drenthe and the tip of Overijssel. It was to prove challenging with its many locks and bridges. Also, for good measure there were small hand-operated footbridges which entailed stopping, getting off, opening the bridge, going through, stopping, closing the bridge and then getting underway again - this took time and was not always easy with the changeable weather including the odd downpour. Pressure was dropping rapidly, not a good sign. We eventually stopped just short of Gorredijk adjacent to a lock.



Wednesday, 26th August – The lock was open, but no lights, and we waited for the lockkeeper to arrive. After an hour we were still in the lock but a local resident came to see us as he was concerned at our delay. I had already called the control centre, initially they didn't know where we were and then they did. A lockkeeper would be with us in 15 minutes. But still no sign. Eventually the kind resident contacted the next lock and the lockkeeper came to our rescue operating both the lock and the footbridges, he was kind and helpful. It was now 12.30, the wind and rain were getting up and we still had to negotiate Gorredijk with its 11 bridges and one lock. A team of two on bikes took us through. Once through we pressed on to Akkrum only to find a low bridge. We had to drop the mast and lower the bimini and just got through. Then another village Aldeboarn with three hand-operated bridges which were operated by a husband and wife team. We eventually secured just west of Akkrum where the Turfroute starts or finishes.

Thursday, 27th August - the weather was beginning to improve a little and we made our way through Akkrum which is half of the twin villages Akkrum-Nes and a favourite recreational centre close to Sneekermeer. We had time to stop alongside for lunch in Grou. We eventually arrived in Sneek in good time for the vet. The last part of the trip had been both a real worry and a challenge.

Friday, 28th August - After stripping the bedding, catching up with the dhobying, cleaning and sorting out the boat we left Sneek for the Hoek of Holland and the overnight Stena ferry to Harwich. On boarding we were advised that we had to provide our journey and contact details. The extensive form was expected to be completed online only on our mobile phone; it was a challenge! If you are returning from abroad you can complete the form, but only online [<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>], 48 hours before arrival in the UK.

Saturday, 29th August - On disembarking at Harwich we were asked by UK Border Control if we had completed our journey and contact details, on giving the correct answer we were allowed to make our way home.

## Going To Sea - Part 5

### By Dr Martin Watts

With the completion, rather prematurely, of our somewhat adventurous lead line training, Otaio, with a large cigar-smoking American pilot on board (was there ever a small one?), completed the short passage to the first of the 3 Gatun Locks, where the abortive attempts to feed the mules were made. I recall the three Locks looking like a giant staircase with cargo ships and a passenger ship (Oriana), descending to the Atlantic side whilst we proceeded in the opposite direction, being lifted 85 feet to the level of the Gatun Lake. In the middle lock we were opposite the Oriana and were asked to salute our fellow P & O ship. There was much blowing of horns and hundreds of passengers looking across and down at us, whilst an announcement was made on Oriana's tannoy, describing us a cadetship with the future generation of P & O officers on board. Unfortunately, the tone of this announcement, coupled with our pride at being NZS through and through, produced the type of salute from us on deck, in our working gear of boots, shorts and skidlid, that was to ensure (much to Danny's dismay), that any future transfer to passenger division was immediately removed as a career option. The best part was having Sid and the Bosun chase us round the deck telling us to behave like gentlemen, whilst also expressing their opinion of P & O passenger ships. This was somewhat ironic as, up until the late 1960s, NZS operated its own passenger ships taking Poms to Aussie and Kiwi (MV Rangitoto and MV Rangitane), but the Bosun, Angus, explained that they were working ships each carrying 450 passengers and with a refrigerated hold capacity of half a million cubic feet – so that was alright then.



Polish training ship at Panama

Courtesies having been exchanged we were sent to shower, change into whites and eat an early dinner so that, as promised, those cadets who were not watchkeeping could sit out on the hatch tops and watch the transit. Otaio went to half ahead through the 23-mile passage of the Gatun Lake, with the sun descending and throwing a steamy orange and yellow light over the tropical rain forest. The humidity, noisy insects, the smell and steady beat of our glorious twin Doxford diesel engines and the chief engineer's snoring, provided an atmospheric accompaniment to this passage. The evening was enhanced by the arrival of some cases of cold beer from the Old Man (apparently, Robin had enjoyed the encounter with the Oriana), and the recently released music of Santana (Oye Como Va, Black Magic Woman) was played through the loudspeakers, by the recently released assistant steward. A magical memory indeed.

After traversing the Gatun Lake we passed Gamboa and entered the awe-inspiring Gaillard cut, an eight-mile-long slice through solid rock. Thousands of workers had dug the cut using dynamite, rock drills and steam shovels, moving over 95 million cubic feet of spoil. This feat of engineering had



Into the Pacific from Balboa

taken 5 years to complete and had cost thousands of lives due to the high temperature, poor working conditions and Yellow Fever. Schoolie pointed out the large brass memorial plaque on the side of the cut, commemorating the construction and the dead and it was a sobering thought to consider the human cost of progress. After the cut Otaio steamed eight miles to Pedro Miguel locks and descended 30 feet to Miraflores Lake before entering the Miraflores Locks that took us down to sea level. The final passage was a seven-mile channel past Panama city to Balboa where we all stood up for our first glance at the Pacific. The contrast with the dull Atlantic was simply astonishing and we were all excited to be leaving the land behind for a proper sea voyage; it would take nearly three weeks to get to our next destination – Pitcairn Island – and few of us realised that, two days out of Panama, after passing traffic converging on the canal, no more sight of ships or land until arrival Pitcairn.

The long passage required adherence to a more involved routine than before, but the glorious weather and long, slow swell of the Pacific seemed to move us from work to holiday mode, a feeling heightened by the fact that we were not at school taking A-levels. Lassitude, however, was not on the menu. After two days, we were informed that we would be taking our steering certificates which required 12 hours on the helm, under instruction from a senior quartermaster – another Angus – whose soft spoken Storwegian voice was programmed to shout and point 'Port' and 'Starboard' at frequent intervals, interspersed with 'Holy Mother of God'. This was complemented by the mate, Ted, who declared that 'blindfolded monkeys' would consume less fuel than us, as he took us to the bridge wing to observe the wake careering over the ocean. Schoolie explained that this is why we did our tickets in the Pacific, as there was plenty of room for manoeuvre and no possibility of an embarrassing display in front of another vessel. I have to say we found this last remark quite odd because, as we were working up to full ahead after Balboa, an evolution that was accompanied by an exponential increase in the consumption of lube oil and technical expletives, we were signalled by several ships of dubious registry as to where we were bound. Apparently, this was routine, due to the lack of charts and navigational ability on the part of the wretches who sailed these wrecks.

One valued part of the Otaio's routine that was improved by the Pacific weather was Sunday Divisions. This may come as a surprise to those of you from the RN but the tradition was well established in NZS cadet ships. In the Pacific these were held on 5 hatch and the Old Man took a short service with off duty officers and petty officers facing the serried ranks of cadets, resplendent in white covered caps, white half sleeve shirts with epaulettes, white shorts, white knee length socks and white shoes. We always ended the service with 'Eternal Father' and we found it surprisingly moving as we sang whilst the ship rolled and the white tops of the waves passed by the stern. After the service, Commander's (Master) rounds took place and both our accommodation and ourselves were subjected to microscopic inspection. Any missed items or speck of dust resulted in the award of unpaid overtime, usually involving the cleaning of something nasty or the painting of the duct keel.

Divisions for me, however, proved to be a source of valuable onboard currency, as I found I had a talent for pressing a set of whites in about two minutes. There were two irons and two ironing boards available for all of us, so it made sense to charge two cans of Tennants per set; I always slept well Sunday evenings.

The Pacific also gave us the best deck sport – Cricket – with semi soft balls and yards of netting to rig all around 4 and 5 hatches. We opened the season with the Officers v Cadets Cup Match on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November, umpired as usual, by Sid, and with eight players in each team. Batting at 8, I was able to make notes and wrote the following account in the Sports pages of our venerable paper:

'We lost the toss and were set to bat first. This was quite a blow as Cookie, (our captain), considered us to be a chasing batting side. Unfortunately, this was not the case as we only managed to knock up 17 runs! Danny was the best contributor with 2 singles and a 6 and out (*lost ball now approaching Cornwall due to global warming - ed.*) Our spirits, at the changeover, were very low and so sent Sio to bowl the first over against the debonair Peter, the Second Mate (*20 years later Peter was Master in P & O ferries and allowed my young daughters on the bridge during a trip to Boulogne*). The first 5 balls were near misses round the ankles at 60 mph, and the sixth sent middle and off flying! From then on it was a 'cakewalk'. Norman grabbed the wickets of the Chief Reefer and Second Engineer, Dave bowled the Staff Captain and Third Engineer, Chris bowled Schoolie and I bowled the Fourth Engineer. This left the Chief Steward, Mick, to make the necessary runs but despite his valiant swings and after a period of retiring hurt – which reduced Sid to tears- he was bowled by Sio. The officers had only made a total of 8.'

It is worth remembering here just how fearsome Sio, the Gilbert and Ellice islander was. Just under six foot and about 18 stone of solid Pacific islander, Sio was a gentle giant with a likeable disposition, always able to laugh at himself. However, when it came to sport, he was a completely changed character. Rugby, cricket or football all meant one thing to him – the destruction of the enemy, and he certainly destroyed the Officers team on that day. As might have been expected, the repercussions of this humiliation were far reaching, a notable example of which was the behaviour of Mick, the Chief Steward, during our afternoon runs around the deck. Mick's office was on the starboard side of the cross alleyway that ran across the after end of the superstructure at upper deck level. These daily runs, being yet another compulsory activity to drain youthful energy, were undertaken by each watch in turn, and involved several laps of the upper and main deck. The distance run could be shortened by diving through the cross-alleyway hatch, creeping past Mick's office and then out through the hatch on the other side. Mick now took exception to this manoeuvre and left his office door curtain open, so that he was able to trip and turn back any recalcitrant athlete showing such a turn of initiative. By writing the name of the foreshortened runner in his notebook, Mick curtailed the miscreant's illicit supply of beer and chocolate. Nevertheless, and by a strange coincidence in accordance with the law of the sea, the excess generated by this stoppage appeared in Mick's ullage account – or so we all thought.

No account of a voyage on a British merchant ship would be complete without a mention of Board of Trade sports. These were conducted every Thursday at sea and involved statutory boat and



We would follow Frank anywhere

emergency drills and, in the fleet, were generally casual affairs sometimes honoured by an entry in the log rather than an actual exercise. Otaio, of course, with its almost unlimited supply of youthful manpower and collection of zealous petty officers, went overboard on BOT Sports (*not to be confused with BT Sports*). Whilst these drills were taken seriously and developed our firefighting, damage control and first aid skills, it soon became apparent that they were also the vehicle for exacting retribution and revenge. For example, our ancient personal firefighting equipment consisted of a smoke hood and mask with a lifeline and a sort of rubberised air pipe that was attached to a large set of foot bellows. Hence, on entering a smoke-filled compartment, the idea was that the cadet on foot pumping duties would pump like mad, and this provided a regular blast of fresh air into the smoke hood and mask;

many of us preferred this to the later self-contained breathing apparatus which just provided air on demand through the mouthpiece. Unfortunately, Sid had the habit of telling the cadet on the bellows that the recipient of this refreshing blast was writing to his girl/casting aspersions on his parenthood/nicking his beer/smoking his tobacco (not whilst wearing a smokehood and mask) and worse. The effect of this motivational speech was to reduce the flow of air, invariably resulting in

a frank exchange of views after the fire was out. Sid then stepped in with wise words before collecting beer and tobacco from the onlookers with whom he had placed bets on the outcome.

Next time – more sports of both kinds, tales of Chippy’s mate and betting on the number of surnames on the mail being delivered to Pitcairn.

## A rare visit from HMS Scott to Portsmouth From MOD Navy



Royal Navy survey ship HMS Scott arrived in Portsmouth on 21 September for a rare visit after spending a record-breaking summer gathering survey data in the North Atlantic.

The Plymouth-based vessel, the largest survey vessel in the fleet, has been scanning the ocean floor over an area roughly the size of Austria using her sophisticated array of sensors. HMS Scott is usually tasked to chart the seafloor overseas to aid the safe navigation for all seafarers around the world.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic she has continued her operational tasking, using UK rather than overseas ports to rotate her crew every six weeks. HMNB Portsmouth provided her with food and fuel ready for her next patrol. This was her first visit to Portsmouth since November 2011.

The ship and her company have had a successful summer, including one six-week patrol on which she collected more data than in any previous stint at sea during her 23-year career. Commanding Officer, Commander James Baker, said: “It’s a pleasure to be back in Portsmouth after such a long time and to reflect on a busy but successful summer at sea.

“As ever, success is built on a team effort, and I could not be prouder of my ship’s company who have worked their socks off to deliver this operational task, despite significant programme changes. The weather has also been unseasonably rough at times, but I’m pleased to say we have made excellent progress.”

HMS Scott’s visit to HMNB Portsmouth allowed the ship to facilitate a number of events. As she approaches her planned out-of-service date in 2022, a number of VIPs were visiting including the Fleet Commander, Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd, and Director Delivery, Rear Admiral Andrew Burns.

It’s not just a rare visit to Portsmouth that will be celebrated; a couple of well-deserved awards were handed out to members of the ship’s company. A Meritorious Service Medal was presented to Warrant Officer Andy Rowbotham for his work in support of the Engineering branch, and another for Lt Charlotte Eddy, the top performing student on the exacting Fleet Navigating Officers’ course earlier this year.



HMS Scott enters Portsmouth Harbour © Crown  
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HMS Scott also conducted a routine watch handover whilst in Portsmouth, sending a third of the crew on leave and receiving a third back onboard before departing for the North Atlantic to continue their tasking.

# Lightning jets take off from RAF Marham to join HMS Queen Elizabeth for major exercise

## From MoD Royal Air Force

F-35B Lightning Jets from the Royal Air Force and United States Marine Corps (USMC) have left RAF Marham to join the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, to take part in Exercise Joint Warrior off the west coast of Scotland.



F35B Lightning jet takes off. © Crown Copyright MoD RAF 2020

The jets from 617 Squadron and USMC's VMFA 211 Squadron have previously been carrying out training from RAF Marham. This exercise will see the jets embark onboard the aircraft carrier for the next stage of the Carrier Strike Group's training programme prior to the carrier's first operational deployment next year.

This exercise follows on from the recent Exercise Point Blank, in which the jets took part and marks a step up in complexity as the pilots and ground crew exercise from HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Commander Mark Sparrow RN, Officer Commanding 617 Squadron, said: "We are looking forward to joining HMS Queen Elizabeth for the next stage of our training and work up ready for our deployment next year.

"This follows the excellent work that both 617 and our colleagues from VMFA-211 Squadron have been doing over the last few weeks along with the invaluable support from 207 Squadron and wider station at RAF Marham to prepare us for this deployment.

"This exercise will see the personnel from the two squadrons integrate with the ship's company and is the next important step to creating a fully integrated Carrier Strike Group ready to deploy next year operationally for the first-time onboard HMS Queen Elizabeth."

Exercise Joint Warrior is a biannual exercise that is run off the west coast of Scotland and is used by NATO, partner nations and all three services as an opportunity to conduct large scale inter-operability training. This will be the first such exercise for HMS Queen Elizabeth.



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## 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](http://cnoa.org.uk)



## CHATHAM NAVAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

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