



HMS Bulwark Albion & Centaur Association

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the xmas issue which as promised is the biggest one that I have produced to date. As the R08 is now in its twentieth year I thought it appropriate to include some items from the 1981 issues including “Rusty B” paying off.

A special thank you to Pete Childes for his supply of witty ditties. One of our earliest members Steve Reed (9) has also sent an article, thanks Steve lets hope it encourages more of our members to write in.

If you have sent me material particularly photographs which I have not used yet please be patient I will be using it all in time. With the photographs in particular I am attempting to find a printer capable of good reproduction but at a reasonable rate if anyone can recommend a firm please let me know.

Finally, our numbers are increasing at a very rapid rate, due to the efforts of Colin Taylor and Cheyenne Brody in writing to local newspapers the country and of course Leigh Easton with the website, thanks to all of you.

Please note my new email address.

Deadline for Spring issue 1st March 2002

Mike Noonan 31 Worsley Street Southsea Hants PO4 9PR

Tel:02392 341381 e-mail:- michael.noonan1@ntlworld.com

IN MEMORIUM

Siggy Kirk (531) 13th July 2001

LRO(G) Bulwark 1963 – 65

“Siggy was a very experienced LRO by the time I served with him on Bulwark. Those of us in his watch counted ourselves fortunate, he went to great lengths to teach us the intricacies of morse circuits. On the upper deck he led the aerial party and taught us how to rig the copper wire aerials between the hockey sticks. The flight deck party never could lower the sticks simultaneously consequently the wires had to be retrieved from the sea and restrung. He was an ideal sea dad and a good run ashore oppo, always making sure we got back onboard safely. On leaving the Navy Siggy was social secretary of Newark RNA and a keen fund raiser for the local sea cadets.-tj

Peter Robertson (1337) 2nd August 2001

Robby served on Bulwark twice and Centaur once.

His first time on Bulwark 1960 –61 was as a POAF with 848 Sqn subsequently returning to the ship as a Chief Air Fitter from 1969 to 1972.

Robby also served on Centaur in 1965 as a POAF with 892 Sqn

Howard(Joe) Instance Lt Cdr(G) 28th August 2001.

Joe was Gunnery Officer on Bulwarks first commission.

Although not a member,(he said that he was involved in so many other associations), Joe was always interested in the association and asked me how we were getting on every time we met. Joining the Navy as a boy seaman in 1933 he was a leading seaman serving on Royal Oak when she was torpedoed in Scapa Flow. Joe retired from the Navy soon after leaving Bulwark to take up a successful second career in teaching. –

mn

R I P

SHIP to SHORE

*Signals from the
“Island”*

News News News

Trafalgar Night

Thank-you for an excellent turnout at the Trafalgar Night Social on Saturday 20th October 2001. The members and guests attending (110) prove it pays to advertise. Unfortunately Shep Wholley could not attend as planned, as he had to sail early for a cruise engagement. We hope this to be rectified at the AGM Social if he is available. Everyone appeared to enjoy themselves, although the venue did not allow some to hear or see the entertainment very well. This should be rectified next year for the AGM Social and we hope to repeat the Trafalgar Night event next year with the possibility of a formal dinner.

Membership Cards

Further apologies for the lack of membership cards, this is still in hand (I promise!) watch this space.

“Tiffs” Club

Due to financial pressures the RNEB “Tiffs Club” in Southsea, has been forced to close. This is very unfortunate as we held Country Membership (the cost of which cannot be recovered). The club was used at the last AGM Social and other events; another place with cheap beer gone!

www.bulwarkassoc.plus.com

Please note new website address. Have a look and tell us what you think...

Sec says...

Firstly, a warm welcome to all our new members and to Mike Bridges, our new historian (seconded until AGM). Mike has been organising the visit to the launch of the new HMS Bulwark in November. The visit has taken a lot of work by all the committee and all members who showed an interest are attending; see you all there. For those members who are unaware of the launch, a party of 60 members and our President will be representing the Association at Barrow-in-Furness on Thursday 15th November.

The update of our member database is proceeding but 30% of you have not returned your member info forms. Please dig them out, send them in or write separately with ship, rate/rank and commission details. For newer members in the last six months this does not apply. These details will appear in the new membership list (unless you have requested any information to be omitted).

Please send in items for inclusion in the AGM 2002 Agenda to arrive no later than January 31st, the agenda will appear in the Spring RO8. As a reminder the AGM/Social is on Saturday 20th April 2002, time and venue to be confirmed. Please book your accommodation now!

Our Chairman, Frank Jones has unfortunately decided to resign for business and personal reasons . Frank will be attending the AGM and will be available to answer any questions in person. The committee has given Frank their full support throughout and hope that the wider membership will endorse this support and continue to welcome Frank as loyal member. Our monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Prison Officers Club, HMP Kingston, Portsmouth all members are welcome. Please contact me if you are attending so entry can be arranged.

LOST PALS LOST PALS LOST PALS

Some more enquiries for you.....

E. Young ELMN1(O) Bulwark 1969-71
by Peter Robertson (1337)

“Father Jim” Padre Far East Fleet 1965-66
“Ting” O’Neill CPO(Ck) Albion 1964-66
by Doug Macey (1355)

Barry Baker CPO Bulwark Early 60’s
by Relative

Brian Daley Ordnance Artificer Bulwark 1957 or so
by Relative

Any replies to the Secretary please.....

Associations

Looking for lost Associations.....

HMS Fearless Association?
by Terry McNally in Australia

Anyone help?.....

And Finally.....

**I ask all members to join with me in thanking our outgoing
Chairman Frank Jones for his unstinting efforts over the past
couple of years and wish him well. Thanks Frank.**

Please be aware I have had a little trouble (as Frank Spencer would say!) with my e-mail with madasafish.com, if you think I have been a bit long in replying please contact me via

JTIP@aol.com

I am sorting this one out.....

I hope to see you all at the next AGM in April.....AR.

Yours Aye.....Sec

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & SOCIAL

This will be held on Saturday 20th April 2002.

Following the success of this years AGM the same format has been arranged i.e. AGM at lunchtime followed by a social in the evening.

The venue for the AGM will be HMS Nelson Victory club, followed in the evening by a social, once again in the club.

Tim Holt, our social sec hopes Shep Wooley will make it this time.

There will also be a duo, buffet and of course raffle.

As those of you who attended the Trafalgar night social will know the lower bar does not lend itself to cabaret acts due to its layout, therefore we will be in the upper bar where hopefully everyone will be in a position to hear the acts much better. The very reasonable bar prices will be the same.

Tim has been very active organising this event , all we need now is for as many of you as possible to turn up and enjoy yourselves.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of the
HMS BULWARK, ALBION & CENTAUR ASSOCIATION

1. VICE-CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME
2. MINUTES OF THE AGM 2001
3. REPORTS
4. ELECTION OF OFFICER'S & COMMITTEE
5. AGM MINUTES PUBLICATION
6. COMMUNICATIONS
7. SOCIAL EVENTS
8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
9. CLOSING REMARKS

New Members

| | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|-------|---|
| 1515 | Rick Irvine Albion 72-73 | MEM | 38 Primrose Court Rosyth Fife KY11 2TE |
| 1516 | James(Scouse)Mannion Centaur 53-55 | LM(E) | 4 North Street Morecambe Lancs LA4 5LR |
| 1517 | Anthony Nevitt Albion 1971 | LME | School House 64 Park Lane Guisborough TS14 6NT |

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|-------------|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1518 | Molly Noonan(Assoc) | | The Editors wife |
| 1519 | Ronald Whitham | | 11 Ashdene Grove |
| | Bulwark 59 – 61 | EM1 | Pontefract WF8 2PW |
| 1520 | Brian French | | 16 Sweettooth Lane |
| | Bulwark 1956 | NAMO2 | Sandbach |
| | Albion 58-59 | NAMO1 | Cheshire CW11 1BE |
| 1521 | Philip Reading | | 14 The Spinney |
| | Centaur 1964-65 | NAM(O) | Leamington Spa CV32 6ED |
| 1522 | Ronald Edwards | | |
| | Centaur 1953-55 | Shipwright 2nd Class | |
| 1523 | Neil McCart | | 17 Wymans Lane Swindon Village |
| | Albion 1962-64 | JM(E) | Cheltenham GL51 9QA |
| 1524 | David Richards | | 29 Telham Avenue |
| | Centaur 1955-56 | Cook(S) | Ramsgate CT12 6EF |
| 1525 | Campbell(Fred) Burnett | | 10 Eskdale Close Horndean |
| | Centaur 1960-63 | LRO(G) | Waterlooville P08 0DJ |
| 1526 | Ray Mc Elwain | | 16 Highfield Road Maltby |
| | Centaur 1955 | NAM(E)1 806sqn | YO17 7BX |
| 1527 | Frank Curran | | 12 Barnton Drive Dumfries |
| | Centaur 1960-61 | L/Wtr | DG1 4HZ |
| 1528 | Patrick(Jock)Downie | | 10 Belville St Greenock |
| | Centaur 58 – 60 | ME1 | Renfrewshire PA15 4UW |
| 1529 | Douglas Beeby | | 18 Cavanna Close Bridgemaary |
| | Centaur 1960-63 | L/PO Wrtr | Gosport PO13 0PE |
| 1530 | James Smith | | 18 Anderson Avenue |
| | Albion 1955-57 | ME1 | Aberdeen AB24 4LS |
| 1531 | Alan Cobb | | High Combe South Stoke |
| | 1960-62 | Lt Cdr(E) | Bath BA2 7DL |

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|-------------|---|---|--|
| 1532 | Peter Willimont Centaur First Commission | FAA | 4 Cowley Close Benhall Cheltenham GL51 6NP |
| 1533 | Bob Styants Bulwark 1957-58 | POM(E) | 10 Whitton Bank Narrow Lane Birmingham B62 9PL |
| 1534 | Brian Shattock Bulwark 1967-68 | Commander | Morningwell Cottage Piddletrenthide DT2 7QZ |
| 1535 | John Pullen Associate Member | | 86 Wyatts Lane Northwood Isle of Wight PO31 8PY |
| 1536 | John Brown Bulwark 1959-61 | Capt RM(ASO) | 48 Alameda Road Waterlooville PO7 5HE |
| 1537 | Gerald Jones Bulwark 1967-69 | OS/AB | 48 Caerau Lane Caerau Cardiff CF5 5HQ |
| 1538 | Ted Jones Centaur 1954-55 Albion 1958-59 | EM(A)1 806 Sqn 804 Sqn | 7 Joseph Scott Gardens Broxburn W.Loathian EH52 5RU |
| 1539 | Eric(Rommel)East Albion 1959-60 | NAM 815 Sqn | 7 Abingdon Way Trentham Stoke on Trent ST4 8DX |
| 1540 | Tony Gunstone | | 18 Kings Stone Ave |
| 1541 | Desmond Bluett Bulwark 1967 | Surg Commander | Beech End Sunningdale Berks SL5 9PW |
| 1542 | Brian Akehurst Albion 56-57 | M(E)2 | 15 Beechlands Court Montpelier Rd, E Preston Littlehampton BN16 1JZ |
| 1543 | Peter Ardley Centaur 61 – 62 | A.B. | 93 Norfolk Crescent Sidcup DA15 8HN |
| 1544 | Peter Mackenzie Bulwark 67-69 | A.B. | 4 Brickhill Farm Pepperstock Luton LU1 4LW |

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|-------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| 1545 | Robin(Slinger)Wood Centaur 1959 | ERA4(PO) | 17 Benarty Avenue Lochgelly Fife KY5 9EF |
| 1546 | Peter Cryer Albion 1954 | L/A(E)849 C Flt | Flat 1 Woodhall Pk Northowram Halifax HX3 7RU |
| 1547 | Kenneth Hobday Centaur 54-55 | EM1(air) 806 Sqn | 51 Pillar Ave Brixham S Devon TQ5 8LF |
| 1548 | Paul Goodlet Bulwark 60-62 | Lt RM(42 Cdo) | East Whatley Farm Winsham Chard Somerset TA20 4JS |
| 1549 | Edward Postin Centaur 59-60 | Cpl RM Det | 119 Joseph Luckman Rd Bedworth CV12 8BJ |
| 1550 | Harry Maddock Albion 56 – 57 | NA1-AH3 | 217 Hoo Marina Park Vicarage Lane Hoo Rochester Kent ME3 9TH |
| 1551 | Patrick Hepherd Bulwark 60-63 | Lt Cdr | 23 Court Barton Ilminster Somerset TA19 0DU |
| 1552 | HWE Hollins Albion 60-61 | Commander | |
| 1553 | Thomas(Tom) Brock Bulwark 59–61 | Lt (Ord Eng) | 9 Carbeile Rd, Torpoint Cornwall PL11 2EB |
| 1554 | William (Jack/George) Heatherington Bulwark 65-66 Albion 67-69 | RM Det | |
| 1555 | Allan Clifford Albion 54-57 Centaur | P.O. S/Lt | Rosemary Cottage High St Queen Camel Somerset BA22 7NE |
| 1556 | Stuart Wood Albion 56-57 | Ldg Cook(O) | 11 Hermitage Gardens Waterlooville PO7 7PR |
| 1557 | Thomas Paxton Centaur 1959 | EM (A) | 4 Kingsway Hayling Island Hants PO11 0LZ |

Albion 1960 849 Sqn D Flt
Centaur 63 – 65 AED
Bulwark 69 LEM(A) 845 Sqn

1558 Peter Revell 17 St Oswalds Cl, Sowerby
Albion 54- 57 EM1 Thirsk n Yorks YO7 1JX

1559 Kenneth Steadman 25 Wood St, Bedworth
Centaur 63-65 NAM(O) 892 Sqn CV12 8AY
Bulwark 66-67 845 Sqn Aircrew
Albion 69 & 71 LAM(O) 848 Sqn

1560 Robert Large 3 Hawkewell Estate Old Stratford
Albion 68 – 70 ERA App3 Milton Keynes MK19 6AP

1561 Michael(Tug) Wilson “Fairfield” Kirkton of Mailer Road
Bulwark 71 – 73 Mech3 – Mech 1 Craigend Perth PH2 0SS

1562 Colin(Ginger) Apps 57 Wellesey Close Ash Vale
Centaur 63 – 65 Cook Aldershot GU12 5SP

1563 Thomas(Tug)Wilson 26 Macauley Road
Bulwark 63 – 68 Bmbdr 95 FOU CDO RA Hartlepool TS25 4NF

1564 Herbert Parker
Centaur 1954

1565 David(Henry)Cooper 30 Norland View Bolton Brow
Albion 68 – 71 NA Sowerby Bridge Halifax HX6 2BB

1566 David Angell 89A Victoria Road Summertown
Albion 54 – 55 LM(E) Oxford OX2 7QG

1567 Bob Chapman 33 Victoria Park Road
Bulwark 74 – 76 CPO (CA) Torquay TQ1 3QJ

1568 Max Kohler Nuthurst Copse Lane Walburton
Bulwark 1960 Lt(ME) Arundel West Sussex BN18 0OH

1569 Michael MacAndrew Flat 17 High Trees 90 Epsom Rd,
Bulwark 59 – 61 ME2 Sutton Surrey SM3 9ES

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|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1570 | David Burke | | “Shalom” Peddles Lane |
| | Bulwark 1956 | Lt 849 Sqn | Charlton Makrell |
| | Albion 56 | Lt 849 Sqn | Somerton |
| | Centaur 61 | Lt Cdr 824 Sqn | Somerset TA11 6AQ |
| | Albion 62 | Lt Cdr 846 Sqn | |
| | Albion 68 | Cdr Air | |
| 1571 | Arthur(Jimmy)Green | | Norwood Rd, Thorntree |
| | Bulwark 71 – 72 | AB | Middlesborough TS3 9NW |
| 1572 | Charley Fellowes | | 27 Sadler Road Keresly |
| | Bulwark 74 – 76 | POEL | Coventry CV6 2JY |
| 1573 | Alfred(Scouse)Edwards | | 9 Pendennis Crescent Hindley |
| | Bulwark 61 – 65 | ME2 – A/LME | Green Wigan WN2 4NA |
| 1574 | Malcolm Johns | | “Tangle Wood” 2 Greenhill |
| | Albion 67 – 70 | Lt Cdr(DMEO) | Neston Corsham SN13 9RN |
| 1575 | JohnWard | | 47 Duke Street Arnold |
| | Albion 60 – 64 | | Nottingham NG5 6GP |
| 1576 | John Stevenson | | 24 Dargai Street Clayton |
| | Albion 64 – 66 | Cook (O) | Mnachester M11 4PN |
| 1577 | John Walters | | |
| | Albion 65 – 67 | Cdr(Supply Officer) | |
| 1578 | Fred(Sandy)Saunders | | “Bergen” Barra’s Lane Vale |
| | Albion 54 – 56 | ME1 | Guernsey GY6 8EU |
| 1579 | Frank Holden | | 10 Marine Drive Torpoint |
| | Albion 66-68 | LME | Cornwall PL11 2EH |
| 1580 | Ian Thompson | | 30 Dale Street Upshaw Moor |
| | Centaur 58 – 60 | AB(QA2) | Durham DH7 7PE |
| 1581 | David(Mick)Jagger | | 67 Neuk Crescent Houston |
| | Centaur 65-66 | ME2 | Renfrewshire PA6 7OJ |

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| 1582 | Michael(Pusser)Hill Albion 67 – 68 S/Lt (S) | “Fairleigh” 151 London Road Waterlooville PO7 7SL |
| 1583 | Alan Rushton Bulwark 72-74 MEM | 5 Willow Herb Walk Wymondham NR18 0XU |
| 1584 | Christopher Howell Albion 70 – 73 LRO(T)/CY | 47 Birch Park Coalway Coleford Glos GL16 7RU |
| 1585 | David(Taff)Davies Centaur 55 – 56 Cpl RM | 21 Gelli Fron Gelli RCT S.Wales CF41 7NS |
| 1586 | Harry Wilson Centaur 1959 Jnr NA Centaur 64 – 65 LA 849 Sqn | 54 Cardigan Road Haverfordwest Pembrokeshire SA61 2QN |
| 1587 | Charles(Taff)Hopkins Albion/Bulwark/Centaur RM 1964 – 65 – 66 | The Lodge Cywernyfed Three Cocks Brecon Powys LD3 0SG |
| 1588 | Richard(Derek)Bamford Albion 67 – 68 Lt Cdr – 1st Lt | Greenway Cottage Kington Magna Gillingham Dorset SP8 5EQ |
| 1589 | Clifford(Garth)Baddock Bulwark 1972 MEM | 8 Downview Road Ferring Worthing BN12 6QR |
| 1590 | Don Bird Bulwark 72- 74 CMA/FCMA | 45 Hallow Road Worcester WR2 6BX |
| 1591 | William Boote Albion 56 – 57 AB | 13 Brookfield Bayston Hill Shrewsbury SY3 0LQ |
| 1592 | Victor Horsley Bulwark 57 – 58 Steward | 8 Vawers Close Haverforwest SA61 2RU |
| 1593 | Michael(Mick) Penn Bulwark 75 – 76 PO/CPO | 1 Church Street Ilchester Somerset BA22 8LJ |
| 1594 | Eric Poynton Bulwark 56 – 58 Lt(E) | 60 High Street Great Waking Southend on Sea SS3 0EQ |

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| 1595 | Stephen Mudd Bulwark 66 – 67 | Steward | 25 Crofton Avenue Yeovil BA21 4DL |
| 1596 | John(Robbie)Robson Albion 58 – 59 | JS to OS | 24 Glebe Gardens Easington Saltburn N. Yorks TS13 4NN |
| 1597 | Alan Pearson Bulwark 1967 | MEM1 | 22 Laburnum Gardens Wear Valley View Estate Willington Crook DL15 0DB |
| 1598 | Ray Thomas Albion 1954 | POME | 1 Marlborough Close Crown Hill Llantwit Fardre Nr Pontypridd S.Wales CF38 2NP |
| 1599 | David Bath Bulwark 65-67 Bulwark 80-81 | SA(V) CPO(CA) | 12 Cromer Road Millbrook Southampton SO16 9HT |
| 1600 | John Kennedy Albion 55-58 | JS to AB | 9 Applecross Avenue Gorse Covert Birchwood Nr Warrington WA3 6UK |
| 1601 | Roger Swithinbank Albion 59-61 | Lt(E) | 8 Durham Gardens Waterlooville PO7 7BB |
| 1602 | Richard Bridges Centaur 61 Albion 67-68 Bulwark 72 | Midshipman Lt Lt Cdr 848 Sqn | Gears Mill Shaftesbury Dorset SP7 0LT |
| 1603 | William(Bob) Short Bulwark 69 – 72 | CPO(CA) | 1 Miles Court St Marys Meadow Wingham, Nr. Canterbury CT3 1DW |
| 1604 | John(George)Sexton Bulwark 65 – 66 Bulwark 71 – 73 | Mech 1 Ch Mech | 36 Oakland Glen Oakwood Park Walton Le Dale PR5 4LS |
| 1605 | Brian(Griff)Griffiens Centaur? 72-77, 78-79 | PO(FC1) | 41 Queen Elizabeth Close Oswestry SY11 2UH |

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| 1606 | John(Bill)Cotton Centaur? 64-65 | LEM | 86 Matlock Road Chaddesden Derby DE21 4QE |
| 1607 | Guy Ledguard Albion 65-66 | RO2 | 80 Havilland Rd, Thornaby Stockton on Tees TS17 9JL |
| 1608 | Al Woollard Centaur 58 – 60 | LME | 8 Founders Road Hoddeston Herts EN11 0EJ |
| 1609 | Edward McAllister Associate | | |
| 1610 | Rita Nicholls Associate | | Flat 7 Chelston Court Grosvenor Rd Wanstead E11 2ER |
| 1611 | Harry Burstow Bulwark 57-58 | CREA | 5 Coombe Farm Ave Fareham PO16 0TR |
| 1612 | John Finlay Bulwark 53-55 | POREL | |
| 1613 | Don Blease Bulwark 1958 | L/APM 801 Sqn | 2 Boothbed Lane Goostrey Nr Crewe CW4 8NA |
| 1614 | David Moorey Centaur 63-65 | AB | 3 Cygnet Road Lordswood Chatham ME5 8SA |
| 1615 | John Adcock Bulwark 67-69 | L/A(Flt Deck Party) | 4 Hawthorn Way Threemilestone Truro Cornwall TR3 6TU |
| 1616 | Anthony(Bagsy)Baker Centaur 58-60 | Cook(S) | Flat 37 Stewart Court Millwey Rise Axminster EX13 5HS |
| 1617 | David(Geordie)Bunting Bulwark, Centaur 61-62 Albion 1962 | Marine 42 Cdo Marine 41 Cdo | 26 Carnoustie Wentworth Park Est Ouston Chester Le Street Co.Durham DH2 1JS |
| 1618 | John Collis Bulwark 54-58 | Stoker to LME | 143 Rodway Road Tilehurst Reading RG30 6EL |

- 1619 John Davis 44 Hartford End Pitsea
Centaur 1954-55 NA (810 Sqn) Essex SS13 3EQ
- 1620 Derek Bridge 39 Sirimankalajarn Road
Bulwark 57-59 L/Writer T.Suthep A.Muang Chain Mai
50200 Thailand
- 1621 Roger(Speedy)Hunt "Cornerways" 37 Main Road
Centaur 58-60 ME1 Ratcliffe Culey Atherstone CV9 3NY
- 1622 Ronald(Bob)Killick "Longroyd" Corham Way
Centaur 60-61 Lt(SD) East Horsley Surrey KT24 5BH
- 1623 Bob Lowe 33 Main Street Wolston
Albion 62-65 RO1(G) Coventry CV8 3HH
- 1624 Dave May 28 Westways Bedhampton
Albion 1960 L/Cook(S) Havant PO9 3LN
- 1625 Warwick Ormandy Shaun Cottage Beausale
Centaur 1956 Lt(811 Sqn) Warwick CV35 7PA
- 1626 Don Pay 15 Rockley Road Luton
Bulwark 1958 NA(AH III) Beds LU1 5RW
Centaur 1959 849 Sqn D flight
- 1627 Ian Pritchard 33 Manor Rd Dawley Telford
Bulwark 56-57 JS/OS Shropshire TF4 3EA
- 1628 George Thacker 8 Mount Cottages Old Common Rd
Associate – Indomitable 51-52 NA(E) Cobham Surrey KT11 1BZ
Theseus 1952 820 Sqn Warrior 1954 811 Sqn
- 1629 William Taylor 25 Burseldon Road Purbrook
Bulwark 65-67 CEM1/LCEM Waterlooville PO7 5NJ
- 1630 John(Whacker)Payne 29 Grange Rd Street
Centaur 60-63 RO2(G) Somerset BA16 0AY

Please note all members details are copied straight from your completed forms ,if anything is missing it is because it was not included on the form. Also all ranks are given as on the ship(s) at the time.

**Will the following members please confirm their e-mail addresses with Leigh Easton at bulwarks@lineone.net :-
308 Clive Reynolds, 384 John Cotton, 803 Brian Walden, 927 Dave Pinder, 1236 Antony Hooper, 1281 Barry Shipman,**

**Please note Tim Holt our social secs telephone number is :-
Home 02392 789484 Work 02392 877858**

Your letters

From Christine Sandman :-

“My Father Robert Worrall Jarvis served in Bulwark as a PO Steward from 1st Dec 1963 until 17th Oct 1965.

**My Father died 3 years ago, I would love to hear from anyone who remembers him. Christines address is – 26 Thornham Road Twydall Gillingham Kent ME8 6SG tel: 01634 233232
Email goat888@hotmail.com**

Can Anyone Help

**Dave Armitage ex RM Corporal of the hanger handling party 1955-57 is completing a painting of the ship as she was at Suez in 1956. Dave is looking for photographs, photostats, or information particularly of the flight deck and the starboard side and is happy to meet any cost involved. Daves address is :-
36 Stratford Avenue Whipton Exeter Devon EX4 8ES**

Ned Parkinson wonders if there is anyone interested in copying some Bulwark videos he has, possibly with a view to editing them and selling them in the slop room.

Ned also has back editions of the RO8 over the past twenty years.

Anyone interested please contact Ned direct at parkinson_ned@yahoo.co.uk or 15 Ridgeway Close Paulsgrove Portsmouth Hants PO6 4LT 02392 383641

The Tiffies Club

I regret to have to say that the club closed down on the 30th September.

The building is up for sale and will probably be converted into a block of flats.

This came out of the blue to most of us here in Pompey.

Apparently the society(RNBES) is based in Plymouth and I understand there has been a dispute over ownership going on for some time.

The club maintain the building was paid for by Pompey division tiffs in the 1930s and 40s however they do not have the paperwork to back up their ownership claims.

Having sought legal advice they find there is not enough money in the kitty to fight the claim and also maintain the building.

Within a few days of hearing this I was surprised to hear the Province of Natal Hotel, better known as the Hotel for the Royal Navy in Weymouth, no doubt known to many of our members is also being closed down by their “guvnors,” the King Georges Fund for Sailors(KGFS).

Lack of support seems to be the problem as the RN has pulled out of the Portland/Weymouth area and apparently naval association members are not supporting the hotel sufficiently either,(their words not mine).

So in the space of two months we have lost two establishments well known on the naval scene of yesteryear but sadly in the world of today there seems no place for them.

Your letters

This letter was actually sent to NED and he has passed it on for general interest.

From J Kevin Cairns (1212)

“In response to your request in the R08 for information regarding the model of HMS BULWARK, I offer the following information.

The company was not Dinky but Triang Minic.

Between 1958 and 1965 Triang Minic mass produced a limited range of model toys in die cast hard metal. They were 1/1200th scale or 100 feet = 1 inch.

The series included Bulwark, Vanguard, a couple of tugs and the passenger liners Canberra and Queen Mary.

The ships had glide wheels mounted in about 1mm thick boot topping flat bottoms which gave the models the waterline scale height. Some were re-issued in the late 1970s early 80s by Hornby Rovex.

Somehow I acquired a rather battered Bulwark without its mast or bottom and its paintwork in need of restoration.

Because of the hardness of the metal the moulding is still sound and shows Bulwark as she would have appeared as a new fixed wing carrier including her angled deck.

Small details like her radar outfit were not included in the moulding and her anti aircraft guns are rather crudely represented.”

From Antony Gooch (Goochy) (1401)

“I served on Albion 1958-59 her third commission and over 70,000 miles steamed.

We were alongside in Freemantle and just because I had been a naughty boy I had 7 days no.11s.

Whilst my mates were ashore on a Saturday afternoon I was over the ships side in the netting giving the ship a coat of paint. Having run out of paint I was told by the duty PO “Tex “ Jarman to get some more from the paint locker, which I proceeded to do out of the drum.

Back at work painting away a voice suddenly shouted “What the hell are you doing Gooch” looking down was the OOW sitting in the ships’ whaler. “Painting sir” I replied.

“Stop” was the reply “It’s the wrong colour”.

It turned out that I had started using Pussers Battle Grey paint. I ended up with my cap on the quarterdeck.

Because the paint was not dry I had to go over on Sunday to correct it (paint again).

My Commanding Officer Captain A B Cole came into our mess and said to me “I hope you have the right colour now AB Gooch” and he was laughing.

“Yes sir” I replied. Because he was grateful for me turning to on Sunday morning he squashed the remainder of my punishment, what a gentleman.

I am the only man to paint one of Her Majestys Ships the wrong colour.

p.s. It was not mentioned in the ships paying off journal I wonder why?.”

Maritime Books

This is run by Mike Crichley one of our members.

Mike runs a website www.navybooks.com well worth a look for that xmas present, plenty of bargains to be had.

Centaur Book

Neil McCart (1523) the author, has written to say the last few copies of his book which covers the story of the ship from keel

laying through to the scrapyard, are available from him at the special offer price of £15.95 post- free. If you are interested Neils' address is 17 Wymans Lane Cheltenham Glos. GL51 9QA Telephone 01242 580290.

Neil also mentions the Albion book has sold out and there are no plans at time of writing to reprint.

Bulwark books are still available from Bob Cowan our Treasurer/Slop Room manager, see under slop room.

A new member Bob Styants (1533) has accomplished what a lot of us always intend to do but never get around to it. He has written and privately published a book of his time in the RN 1948-70. Beginning with his first ship "Implacable" he takes the reader down memory lane with many ships names along the way. By the time Bob joined Bulwark in 1957 he was a POME and the next twentyone months are described in a great deal of detail including most of the run ashores around the world. A very readable book, and an absolute bargain at the special price to our members of £5 which includes p+p.

For a copy write to Bob at 10 Whitton Bank Narrow Lane Halesowen Birmingham B62 9PL

TEL: 0121 427 6021 email: RSTYANTS@aol.com

Yet another book giving a fascinating account of lower deck life during WWII has been written by Harry Hargreaves. Joining at Ganges in 193 and leaving as a Chief Yeoman of Signals in 1948 (he then joined the RCN eventually retiring as a Lt Cdr) He pulls no punches with a very readable story which includes both the good and the other side of naval life. A young S/Lt Prince Philip served with him at one stage.

Harry gives us an insight into HRH, he was apparently a very efficient and popular officer.

Unfortunately the book can only be ordered and then downloaded by e-mail. A £2 fee which he will donate to the Canadian Poppy Appeal is also required.

E-mail address harry@rideau.net

Did You Know ?

In the film “Sink the Bismark” the carrier scenes were shot on Centaur in April 1959. The only two remaining Swordfish were used to make the film, one of which was flown by Peter Twiss the test pilot. He had broken the world airspeed record a few years beforehand. *Has anyone a story to share with us of the occasion?*

The following is an extract of an article from the first issue.

“During 1979 Bulwark sailed from Portsmouth to work up in her new role – that of an anti submarine warfare carrier (CVS).

From 1954 to 1958 she was a fixed wing carrier. After refit in Portsmouth she emerged in 1960 as a Commando Carrier, in which role she was to serve for the next 16 years. During this time she spent quite a lot of time operating in the Far East from East Africa to Aden aswell as spending long periods operating off the Borneo coast during the confrontation.

In 1976 she was placed in a state of preservation: this was unfortunate because the BBC had approached the Admiralty To film the “Sailor” series onboard, so Ark Royal became a star instead.

In January 1978 it was decided to bring Bulwark out of preservation to see the state of serviceability of her equipment having been laid up for two years. However NATO were now faced with another pressing task in addition to that of landing commando forces in a flank area. For some years western defence experts have been alarmed at the rate of build up of Warsaw pack submarine forces and more especially those of the Soviet Navy which threaten the Atlantic and beyond. Therefore the decision was taken to fit Bulwark out in a primarily CVS role to join her half sister Hermes in a maritime (NATO) assigned task.

“Flexibility” is the NAO watchword today, so it was decided to keep the amphibious capability as a secondary option. In the CVS role the ships’ first line weapons system is a squadron Sea King HAS Mk2 A/S helicopters. The possibility of operating 16 Sea Kings enables the ship to keep a viable ASW screen operating.

So what of the future? The MOD will not have spent, especially in these hard times, considerable sums of money bringing Bulwark forward for just a few years service. Although she is perhaps too old to operate into the late 1980s, she really shouldn’t have to because the new Invincible class should be there to take over the CVS role at least.

Without doubt we can look forward to seeing the “IncredibleHulk” as Bulwark in now known, at sea for at least another few years.

During the period October 1954 – June 1956 the ships’ company of Bulwark consumed about 6,000 gallons of spirits.

The next article was originally sent in by Mick Pounds the then Fleet Chief Stoker onboard Bulwark.

“Bulwark entered 1981 recovering from her second major fire within a year, but ready for a busy year.

Unfortunately the ships’ program was altered when it was announced that Bulwark would be paying off six months earlier than planned. This came as a big shock to the entire crew, many of whom had started making plans for the four months visit to the states.

Shrugging off this big disappointment the “Rusty B” sailed on 16th January for a shake down period in the Irish Sea. The A/S role started in earnest when we reached the West Coast of Scotland.

From Scotland we sailed south to Gibraltar, exercising on the way such things as board and tow, and damage control.

For many onboard this was their first visit to Gib. The reason for this was the great number of MEM(M)s and MEM(L)s plus officers under training that we have onboard.

The first visit to Gib was only for four days but was a welcome break after the cold weather and stormy seas we had encountered since leaving Portsmouth.

On 4th February we sailed from Gib to take part in a NATO exercise which took place partly in the Atlantic and partly in the Med. February 12th saw us back in Gib alongside the mole.

Before leaving Gib for the last time Divisions were held on the flight deck, everyone being entertained by the Bulwark volunteer band.

Monday 23rd February turned out to be a hot and sunny day, a fitting day for Bulwark to sail from Gib for the last time with paying off pendant flying, band playing, ships' company at procedure Alpha and the tugs shooting off their water cannons: we left the Rock in style.

After two days at sea we arrived at Lisbon. Here unfortunately, the sun has so far failed to shine. We leave Lisbon on Monday 2nd March and sail to our next role as a Commando carrier. Thus role will see us off Norway where no doubt we will have snow and cold weather.

Monday 23rd March we anchor off Plymouth and de-ammunition ship.

The sad day will be 27th March when "Rusty B" enters Portsmouth for the last time."

I well remember de-ammunitioning the ship at C buoy Plymouth Sound, at the time I was serving in RMAS Throsk, we followed the ship back to Pompey to offload the ammo at Pompey, I never did figure that one out... ed

How Times Change

With Ocean already in commission. Albion and Bulwark fitting out we are on track for a substantial amphibious capability once again.

I thought this was a good time to include the following article from 1981. It also follows on from Mick Pounds article.

MARINES LOSE SEA SCOPE

“The amphibious assault yesterday of some 750 men of 42 Cdo RM and Royal Artillery gunners on defences in the Tromso area of Northern Norway is likely to have been the last exercise of its kind for many of those taking part.

The decision to pay off the Commando carrier Bulwark at the end of this month, six months earlier than planned means a drastic cut in the navy’s amphibious forces.

Bulwark is not to be replaced, this will leave only Hermes which has just completed a £42 million pound refit to operate a squadron of Sea Harriers. The Royal Marines are not sanguine about the amount of time each year the ship will available for amphibious exercises.

The only other amphibious ship in commission the assault ship Intrepid can usually be allocated only for about seven weeks each year for amphibious exercises as she is employed as sea training ship for Dartmouth Midshipman. In any case she has no hanger and her flight deck can only take four helicopters.

Bulwarks retirement means that links between the Royal Marines and their supporting Army gunners and the Royal Navy will inevitably be weakened since in future exercises increasing use will have to be made of chartered cross-channel car ferries and civilian manned landing ships of the RFA.

With many young marines serving for only three years some are completing their service with the corps without having

been to sea in a warship, something that senior officers greatly regret.

The effects on the Army of Bulwarks paying off will be even greater since service with the light batteries attached to the four RM Commandos is much sought after among the gunners because of the opportunity for travel to places overseas not normally visited by the Army.

Hopes are now being pinned on the Governments; plan to make a British contribution to a NATO rapid deployment force since this must call for amphibious ships.

Although the new carrier Invincible and her sister still being built could at a pinch carry 1,000 marines for a short period, these ships are not designed to carry all the equipment required by a Commando without sacrificing their ability to operate Sea Harrier fighters and A/S helicopters.”

For the record Invincibles’ final deployment prior to paying off for long refit a few months ago was to Norway in this very role. She entered Pompey with the amphibious warfare badge on her funnel, and as we go to press Illustrious is fulfilling the same role with 40 Cdo in operations against the Taliban.

BULWARK MAKES HER LAST VOYAGE FROM THE FIRST R08

“The carrier BULWARK arrived Portsmouth yesterday for the last time. She was escorted by a flotilla of her own small landing craft and other vessels.

Also in the escort were the Navy’s last Swordfish biplane and a Sea Fury propellor driven fighter as well as a large flight of helicopters.

As the ship drew nearer to the harbour the watching crowds on the waterfront thickened, while the ships’ superstructure was crowded with Sons Fathers and Brothers of the crew far in excess of the 100 expected would make the overnight voyage from Plymouth.

Across the stern gun platform members of the senior rate mess had rigged a huge length of canvas which was inscribed “FOR SALE, APPLY WITHIN”. From the foremast the huge paying off pendant floated overhead.

On the flight deck the ships’ volunteer band of officers and sailors were reinforced by a Royal Marines band.

Their repertoire included “The Rusty B” song which is the ships’ own theme tune and whose final lines aptly summed up the feeling of most of the ships company;-

**And we say to Captain Symons
Good on yer sport
But get the big Rusty Bastard
Back to her home port”**

*** * * * ***

A TRUE STORY - Honest

Whilst taxiing down the runway the crew of a US Air flight to Fort Lauderdale made a wrong turn and came face to face with a United Airlines 727.

The irate ground controller (a female) lashed out at the US Aircrew screaming “US Air 2771, where are you going? I told you to turn right on Charlie taxiway; you turned right on Delta taxiway. Stop right there. I know it’s difficult to tell the difference between C’s and D’s but get it right”.

Continuing her lashing to the embarrassed crew, she was now shouting hysterically. “God you have screwed everything up, it will take forever to sort this out. You stay right there and don’t move until I tell you.

You can expect progressive taxi instructions in about half an hour and I want you to go exactly where I tell you, when I tell you, and how I tell you, have you got that US Air 2771?

Naturally the ground control frequency went terribly silent until an unknown male pilot voice broke the silence and asked, “Wasn’t I married to you once”?

*** * * * ***

A tourist walked into a pet shop and was looking at the animals on display.

Whilst he was there another customer walked in and said to the shopkeeper “I’ll have a leading monkey please”

The shopkeeper nodded went over to a cage at the side of the shop and took out a monkey.

He fitted a collar and leash, handed it to the customer saying “That’ll be £5,000”. The customer paid and walked out with his monkey. Startled the customer walked over to the shopkeeper and said “That was a very expensive monkey, why did he cost so much”.

The shopkeeper answered “Ah, that monkey can manage staff, supervise shifts, run a messdeck, and organise runs ashore. Well worth the money”.

The tourist looked at the monkey in another cage.

“That ones even more expensive what does he do”

“Oh, that ones a senior rate monkey, it can manage departments, carry out technical work, operate computers and organise anything. All the really useful stuff said the shopkeeper.

The tourist looked around for a little longer and saw a third” monkey in a cage of its own.

The price tag around its neck read £50,000. He gasped to the shopkeeper, “That one costs more than all the others put together ! What on earth does it do”

The shopkeeper replied “Well, I have’nt actually seen it do anything yet but the other monkeys call him sir.”

CHINESE LETTERS

The following is published in HMS Ganges Association magazine and sent in by Captain Murray Dunlop RN Rtd the President.

Those of you who have served on the China Station will remember with some amusement Chinese attempts at English. At least they made the effort which is more than could be said for 99% of British personnel when it came to Cantonese. If the Chinese wanted the best results they would pay a few dollars to a “street scribe” who would write the letter for them. However they were not always available, and anyone of the Engineering specialisation who is ICE trained and who can translate this will qualify for a pint from me. The punctuation, or lack of it, is as the original.

*Sir, I feel when the No.2 spare engine run some times get noisy at the fly wheel that side after I found out the trouble of the camshaft gear drive teeth wheel in 4th May, 1956 because I move the teeth wheel by hands can swinging then I took off the control volve(sic) get 4000 learance of the teeth wheel internal but the diameter of the camshaft only one and half inches I am very sorry Sir to tell you of inside the key for not enough clearance to get the wheel out if take off the shaft it will take off diesel fuel pump lubrication oil pump water tank and the pipes everything Sir will you please instruct me use which way to do is right.
From Tao. O. C.W.S. Duty ERA Lam Hing Wing.*

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

Spotted in the Centaur Fourth Commission book
Only One Statistic

We have flown more, eaten more, drunk more, been better at sport, steamed more miles, spent more days at sea, seen more action, made ourselves good news in more places, worked harder and played harder than – *was good for us*

The sharp eyed amongst you will have noticed that our membership secretary Leigh Easton was a Pongo, one of the Royal Artillery NGS fraternity. Leigh has put pen to paper, this is the first of several articles on his recollections.

"Right" said the Sergeant

"Interviews for Potential Officers - Be at the Battery Office for 1030 hours".

"Why do you want to be an officer?" said the first 2nd Lieutenant

"Why not" I replied

"What school did you go to " said the other 2nd Lieutenant

"The High School" I replied

"Is that a public school?"

"Yes" (Since the public went to it I took it to be a public school)

"Which newspaper do you read"

"The Glasgow Herald" I said with trepidation.

We had debated the night before which was the paper read by officers. "The Daily Telegraph" got the majority vote. However, my answer seemed to stop them dead.

"That will be all" said the first 2nd Lieutenant.

I saluted and marched out.

Angel (he was no angel) came round that night with the 2nd Lieutenant's recommendations. It was his turn for fatigues, he had been cleaning out the Battery Office.

"Sorry - you haven't a hope. They say you should get your chance at WOSB, but don't reckon you're suitable."

They could be right I thought.

Passing out parade. Up at 0500. All kit immaculately boxed in rectangles. Equipment laid out as per the approved photograph. Final hut inspection. Out on parade, inspection, march past. Night out with the NCOs in Whitchurch, and that was it. Gunners at last. We all assembled at WOSB, Barton Stacey.

A pep talk to begin with, very pleasant surroundings, private rooms and nice meals.

First of all we had to give 5 minute lectures. I talked about hitch-hiking in Germany. It went down like a lead balloon. Then it was the initiative tests. It was my turn to lead the squad. Poles, planks, ropes and a barrel to get across a high fence, without touching it. Everything was just that bit short. Somehow we managed to swing the barrel over, using two poles lashed together and then got almost all men and materials over using a plank. Considerable agility was required. Unfortunately getting the remaining man across presented difficulties. We managed it - just, by reversing our tactics. "That was lucky " commented the major.

Next the interview with the Brigadier. I sat down in an armchair and found that I was staring up at an angle of 45 degrees.

He was very friendly.

"Now tell me, why exactly do you want to be an Officer"

"I want to lead the men". I thought this would be an improvement on my previous attempt.

As I went out I had a look at the chair - the legs had been sawn down.

Result - Fail. I went back and demanded an answer. I got it - "We do not want nervous officers".

Back at 68 Training Regiment I was interviewed again.

"I've just the thing for a chap like you " said the major "Flying off aircraft carriers, coming ashore from submarines, postings to the Far East".

"That's for me" I said.

The Bulleid Pacific thrashed the rails as the driver opened the regulator of his locomotive departing from Waterloo. Perhaps I should have joined the sappers - at least I would have learned

how to drive a locomotive at Longmoor. However here I was heading for JSAWC at Poole and the English Riviera, where the sun comes soonest.

Met by driver and a Rolls Royce Champ this time and whisked off to the camp at Hamworthy. This is more like I thought.

The course at 95 AORRA for BIII AOPA lasted six months. We certainly needed the time. Naval gunfire procedure, Army gunfire procedure, Morse at 18 wpm, driving instruction, physical training, LCT landings, smoke puffers below the model target when it was not your turn to control the firing, griddle and slidex, voice procedure, battery charging and cutting aerials to the right length to match the transmission frequency. Live shoots at Larkhill and map reading exercises between Shapwick and Hinton Parva.

The Driving instruction was superb. Engines, mechanics, electrics, snorkel attachment and waterproofing were all included. Bombardier Vickery took it most of the time. His "piece de resistance" was to wait till we were 30 yards past a traffic sign and then ask what it was. If you missed it you had to march back at the double and find out. Reversing with trailers attached into parking spots was not the easiest of tasks but apparently this was included in the Army test.

Most of the time we were able to head for Corfe Castle - absolutely nothing to do with the cream teas served there. "Whose getting driving instruction there" I had the temerity to ask as we passed an empty Land Rover with L plates drawn up on the verge at the side of a cornfield.

"Bovington" came the reply.

"That's a bit odd" I continued.

"They've got women there" came the reply.

"You're all detailed off for an exercise" said 2nd Lt. Jones.

It was my turn to lead the section. Starting from Dean Hill we had to make our way to South Haven Point without being

intercepted by HQ troop who were lying in wait for us. I looked at the map.

HQ troop would sit on the road and man the Studland Bay coast. I took my lot through the middle. It went fine till the marsh water came up to our shoulders. A slight deflection had put us into Little Sea. Eventually we made it - unfortunately by the time we got to the ferry (unintercepted) everyone else had long since disappeared.

The Land Rover came to a grinding halt on the open level crossing on the railway track to Lower Hamworthy. Three of us were in the back, with one of our number driving under tuition by Bombardier Vickery. I could hear the steam engine bearing down, it now started to shriek urgently - I peered out the side window - good grief - this was not a good position.

Bombardier Vickery shouted "Press the clutch".

We rolled back down from the level crossing. The goods train trundled by still shrieking merrily.

The driving tests arrived. I cannot remember how the level crossing driver got on but I managed to fail. I enquired why? "Before I pass anyone, I have to be sure that they are safe on the road" replied Captain Chambers.

I passed next time round.

The social side at Poole was exciting - especially the Saturday nights dances at Rockley Sands Caravan Site. We went in late and scooped up the beer that the holidaymakers had left.

Another highlight was my 21st birthday party at Hamworthy Labour Club, although I must confess I don't remember too much about it. My first Chinese meal was at a restaurant in Bournemouth. Pete Norton - where are you now? Kiu Ying in Old Christchurch Road? We went to see Pete's family at Ludgershall - his Dad had started as a farrier in the Artillery -

fascinating when one thought of a horse team with limber and gun traversing cross country. Another world.

LCT Exercise. We scrambled aboard. It was not a proper LCT but was a 30 foot motor cruiser of some description. We roared off into Poole Harbour, bows up, white wake streaming in our rear, all of us on the main deck, laden down with our 96 lbs of kit - wireless set, lead acetate battery etc. Opposite the Sandbanks/Studland ferry the engine petered out. We drifted. The ferry skipper was not amused. Eventually the Marine coxswain got the engine restarted. Crises over. We turned into Studland beach to make our amphibious assault. The launch slowed. Gunner White leaped over the side as per the movies. Unfortunately his foot engaged in the 6" high deckwire which went round the sides of the motor cruiser. The wireless on his back pulled him under. Fortuitously the boat then grounded and we were able to bring him round. The holidaymakers on the beach certainly had something to talk about.

The Annual Inspection by the Brigadier was due. Everything had to be bulled up - particularly the Land Rovers and Trailers. I entered into the spirit of things and painted all the exhaust pipes silver.

"What idiot did that " A rhetorical question from the CO to 2nd Lt Jones. I kept quiet, discretion being the better part of valour. It looked impressive - unfortunately when the engines were started it rapidly disappeared. Still the Brigadier seemed impressed.

Then there was the incident of the COs Standard Vanguard. Gunner McWilliams was Australian and had joined 95 AORRA from the SAS Regt. He kept quiet about exactly why he had left SAS, but regaled us with stories of the Outback and how he had refused to carry Joseph Locke's baggage in Wagga Wagga. He had now reached the dizzy heights of COs driver in HQ troop.

He had met this posh young thing at Rockley Sands on Saturday night and decided to take her out to dinner (regulars were highly paid) in Bournemouth. Transport was no problem, the CO never used the car on a Saturday night. A successful evening then ensued by all accounts, with the minor exception that for some obscure reason the CO suddenly had need of his car. The guard were turned out for the cars return. I never heard what happened after that - I suspect there was a new COs driver.

Pre-para in North Wales. We climbed Cader Idris.

"Right" said the Bombardier "Abseil Down".

We stood motionless. This was not the normal. Everywhere else we had a demo first. It looked bloody dangerous to me. In fact I've never climbed any mountain since.

"You there - get that rope around you".

Fortunately it wasn't me. The gunner tied a most unnautical knot around himself and started down. It was dangerous.

"Get back here " shouted the Bombardier.

"Anyone know how to do this"

Ex- boy soldier Gunner Thurston stepped forward, expertly wound the rope around himself and dropped the first few feet.

"Right" said the Bombardier

"Fogs coming down - back to camp"

I heaved a sigh of relief.

River crossings next. We strung the rope across this river.

We got a demo this time.

"You're next"

Keen as mustard I leapt onto the rope, cocked my right ankle over it, with my left leg dangling and proceeded hand over hand. At least I knew how to do this. The Bombardier grabbed the rope from the far side and swung it to and fro. I went straight in. I came up gasping and suddenly realised that my

"Mickey Mouse" boots were rapidly filling with water. I've never swam faster or better since.

Finally it was down to the beach at Barmouth, lined up in two facing lines, and throwing a telegraph pole from line to line. At least I could cope with this.

Para Course - Aldershot - "The Home of the British Army" it said.

The food was magnificent. In fact I think its the best feeding I've had. Tree walks, scrambling nets, wooden barricades, tunnels, intelligence tests all ensued.

We were out for a three mile run. One soldier decided to run round a somewhat large deep puddle.

"Halt"

"Get back here all of you"

"Get Down" to the individual concerned.

"Right - over him" and we all ran over him as he lay in the puddle.

Two minutes in the boxing ring. We were all sat round in the gym.

Suddenly it was my turn. Boxing gloves on. Bell rang. I was on the deck - I never saw what hit me - the other guy knew what he was doing.

Gym. Final test. Huge effort to clear the vaulting horse and climb the ropes. Great I thought.

Lined up in the barrack room for results. The Corporal was reading out the failed candidates only. He actually passed me, but returned. I enquired why -

To be continued

CHRISTMAS IN HONKERS

By Pete Childes (72)

**The following happened whilst I was on Bulwark 1966-67
Christmas Eve – NCOs bar – Victoria Barracks – Hong Kong
Not a pongo in sight, just two groups of matelots.**

**At the far end of the bar a group of dabtoes, they were
celebrating a successful days tram spotting, they had collected
every tram number plus two fast blacks and a rickshaw.**

**The other group were killick stokers, we had just returned
from scaling the North face of the peak (without ropes).**

**On reaching the summit we were amazed to find a café and a
cable car terminus.**

**As it was Christmas the bar was festooned with bunting, some
of the bunting stretched from each corner of the room and was
secured to large tropical fans that hung from the deckhead.**

**As the evening wore on and the San Mig started to take effect
things started to liven up.**

**A young dabto found a broom from somewhere (tools of the
trade), he placed it in a large tropical fish tank that was in the
bar and proceeded to thrash the broom from one end of the
tank to the other. This motion got faster and faster which
created great tidal waves, the oggin was by then slopping over
the sides of the tank and great sandstorms formed at the
bottom. Great guffaws all around.**

**A killick stoker then decided that it was “full watch below”
and flashed up all the tropical fans in the twinkling of an eye.
All the bunting was ripped off the walls and wrapped around
each fan. More guffaws.**

**Luckily for us just as things started to quieten down slightly, a
drunken young pongo staggered into the bar. Everyons
attention was now drawn towards the squaddie.**

**When he finally reached the bar the barman refused to serve
him, the barman soon changed his mind when a representative**

from the stokers branch and one from the seamans branch gave him two options, either serve the lad or get filled in.

The barmans reply was “just the one pint sir”

The pongo then lurched to a jukebox that was close to where we were sitting. He put his money into the jukebox punched in the numbers for his selection, but no music.

He tried his selection again but silence.

Luckily for the pongo one of our killick stokers informed us that he was an expert of wurlitzer juke boxes. He advice was “kick seven bells out if oppo”. Very sound advice we thought.

The pongo obliged by first shaking the music box, then he proceeded to kick hell out of it. Wonderful entertainment.

Close to the juke box were french windows that opened onto a balcony. More sound advice was offered “If I were you I would trundle the juke box onto the balcony and give it the old heave ho.”

This the pongo did, he pushed it onto the balcony, but unfortunately for us he was prevented from hurling it off by some guard rails, he tried his best to lift the juke box over the guard rails but it was too heavy.

Some of the seaman must have been ex field gunners because they shouted “two six heave”, and “put your back into it you lazy sod”. We all admired his endeavour.

Then our luck ran out, two burly soldiers sporting red caps were spotted running towards the building.

As one, all the matelots turned inward towards their tables and carried on polite conversation.

The young pongo was caught red handed (no one had warned him)

As he was being escorted out of the bar, he was pleading his innocence. He even tried to blame us the ungrateful sod, after all the help we had given him.

Merry Christmas young pongo and mind your fingers.”

ARMED FORCES PENSION ACTION GROUP

The following report has been sent in by Steve Reed (9)

Armed Forces Pension Action Group A.G.M.

Thursday 28 June 2001.

This will be a short report outlining the main and important details. This was the second A.G.M. I have attended and as before I was very impressed with how the Group is organized and run. The meeting was held at the Pittville PumpRoom in Cheltenham the reason for this was the cost of hiring the hall was a quarter of the cost of last years venue. Holly Richmond and Richmonds Solicitors also Phil Taffs and the Steering Committee are very cost conscious and I can assure you that your money is being well looked after and spent very wisely. Some members at the meeting expressed concern at the lack of information being sent to us this again is the policy of the Committee not to waste money on postage and only send info when absolutely necessary. If you have the means to receive Email then send your address to Richmonds and you will again be helping to keep our bills down.

At the time of the meeting we had 1461 fully paid up members, that's about 1200 more than last year all due to the recruiting campaign (mainly Matelot driven) also some articles in The Daily Mail and the Pompey Evening News. The Mail is now backing our cause and a journalist called Matt Kovaks was at the meeting seems he is going to put something in the newspaper this week, also The Sun has also been in contact with the Group. The membership list is still not yet closed and the committee would like us all to try and put the word out and get another thousand members before Christmas. Don't forget the more people on the train the cheaper the ticket. Due to all the extra members joining last year the Committee are not

going to ask us for any more money this year but as a precaution they asked for a mandate that should anything unforeseen happen they can come to us and ask for a sum not to exceed £50, this was carried by the floor.

When you are sent the minutes of the meeting you will also be given the name of the Minister for Veterans I think it's some Jock called Dr. Lewis Moonie but don't quote me on that one wait till you get your info. Holly would also like us all to write to our M.Ps she will outline this also in her letter to you. Now we all know that it's a waste of time bending the ear of most Politicians they are only social climbers and in it only for the good living, getting away from the missus during the week and the cheap beer and grub in the House of Commons bar! She is suggesting we write short letters to them, don't ask all the questions in one go so when they reply you can bang off another letter to them and make them answer again. This way we will raise the profile of the Group and also get the message across to some of them. I believe that we do already have some of them in our corner but of course we can use as many as we can get.

A lot of research has been going on over the past year on our behalf with a young solicitor up in London permanently searching old records for information about service pensions. Our case is now with the Barristers and when they get back to us some info can be passed to the Insurance Company who can then set the cost of our cover in the High Court, again Holly stressed that we will not go to court without insurance cover. Our Q.C. in court will be Robert Hepple Q.C.

There were three positions available on the Steering Committee due to one death, one resignation (a founder member needing a rest) and one member moving abroad. They had no problems getting nominations from the floor and all three posts were filled.

Again we were informed that the Royal British Legion are not interested in our cause, the thing to do if you are a RBL

member is to go to the branch meeting and stir things up a bit that's what I intend to do.

Also they had an inquiry from the Officers Pension Group about our case, Phil Taffs said that liasing with them would have no advantage for us at all so Sir was told to politely get stuffed!

The Committee feels that the Q.Cs will get back to us before Christmas and if we have a go situation then they will call a General Meeting A.S.A.P

The meeting lasted over two and half-hours and was very informative. As usual there was the mandatory stupid question asker (most likely a Crabfat he looked like it big soup strainer under his nose) It was getting on for four and those that had a long way to travel and also those with dodgy bladders (most of us) were getting restless. "Any more for any other business. as I want to close the meeting" It's like a cue to them, up he pops and asks something that we were told about an hour earlier. There's always one! Maybe he's the same one that keeps writing to the Solicitors and has cost us £350 in replies before they nailed him and told him that anything he wanted to know to phone or Email Phil Taffs or a committee member for answers.

Let me leave you with a thought, if we can get another 1000 members Phil feels that it will cover the cost of our insurance premium. I'm going to go on our local BBC radio station again and also write to the letters page of the West Sussex County Times last time it trawled up loads of people.

Well folks I think that's about it hope I've covered everything.

Best wishes for now, Regards Aye Steve.

Following on from Steves' article I have received the official statement from Richmonds :-

"Richmonds Solicitors issued on behalf of a member of the HM Armed Forces Pension Group in the Bristol Employment Tribunal in September 1999. The case is being against the

Ministry of Defence for non-payment of pensions. Our action focuses on attempting to recover compensation for those people who served in the Navy, Army or Air Force during the years 1949-1975, although some members were serving prior to this date. This is explained further in our notes of eligibility.

There are currently over 1,500 members of the group and this continues to climb as a result of articles and letters appearing in both national and provincial papers. The group has members from all of the forces and is open to all those who after serving went on to be employed in either the civil service, various Government departments (i.e. the police force, prison service) or in private industry. We will sub dividing the group according to the various criteria and slightly different arguments will be used for each individual group. There is no minimum time that must have been served in the group. The group has a steering committee which is comprised of ex service personnel.

There is a membership fee of £235 paid by each member. This can be paid by one single payment or by installments. Further fees may be incurred as agreed in conjunction with the steering committee and the group at either specially convened meetings or at the AGM.

We have recently withdrawn from issuing the case in the Employment Tribunal and will now be issuing in the High Court. At present we are obtaining insurance cover which will need to be in place before we issue in the High Court in order to protect members against the other side's costs.

We have not given out an official figure of the chances of success in this action. At this stage of proceedings we cannot do so. Furthermore, it is difficult for us to put a date on when this matter is likely to be concluded. At present it is a case of supporting your fellow ex-forces contemporaries against the Government of the day.

At Richmonds we are extremely busy coordinating the ever-increasing membership of the group, whilst also conducting the legal work needed to take the case forward. In particular, we seek assistance from members with regard of any documentation they may hold relating to their time in the armed forces and also any information they may be able to give us.

**If you have any queries please contact Richmonds at :-
There is also a website - [www. afpg.org.uk](http://www.afpg.org.uk)**

*** * * * ***

**A WINTERS TALE
by Pete Childe (72)**

Round about Christmas time 1959, I and a gang of stokers found ourselves in a place called Frat-ton. It was that cold a brass monkey passed us looking for a welder. We found a welcoming pub and encamped in the main bar. As the evening wore on and many pints of Brickwoods were sank, most of us had visited the heads at sometime during the evening, not so one stokey boy. By the time he decided to go he was well oiled. The route to the heads was through the main bar to a door that opened into a smaller room “the snug”. The door to the heads was on the far side. The drunken stoker opened the door to the snug, but instead of crossing the room he veered sharp left. This brought him to face an open coal fire with a wooden surround. You’ve guessed it, in the customary matelot stance, his left fore arm resting along the mantelpiece his head resting on his fore arm, he proceeded to extinguish the fire.

He then gave a little shudder, broke wind, and muttered that's better.

You could have head a pin drop in that snug, except for the sound of hissing steam from the fire place and the sound of three old dears, choking on their milk stouts.

* * * * *

POMPEY RUN

(Also sent in by Pete Childes it goes to the tune Lilly Marlene)

**Walking thro the dockyard
Passed the Victoree
With a bunch of stokers
Off the Rusty B
Heading for the Lennox
And the Fleece
Ten pints of scrumpy
Then big eats**

Chorus

**What a run ashore boys
What a run ashore**

**First stop is the Home Club
For a pint or two
Then onto the Standard
To see old Ruby doo
Shipwrights and Lennox
A few in the old Sussex**

Chorus

**What a run ashore boys
What a run ashore**

**Onwards to the Fleece
Then to the Mucky Duck**

**Over to the Yorkshire Grey
To see what we can trap
Balmoral, Wheelbarrow, and Seahorse
Then to the Fez Bar
And John Garr of course**

Chorus

**What a run ashore boys
What a run ashore**

**Heads are starting spinning
Guts are playing up
Think I had better make tracks
Before my ring comes up
Flag down a fast black
“Dockyard please”
Ten pints of scrumpy on his back seat**

Chorus

**What a run ashore boys
What a run ashore**

**Stagger up the gangway
Duty pig is there
“Had a good run ashore stokes ?”
“Very quiet sir”
Rolling around the messdeck
All lights on
Shake my winger
And feel his bum**

Chorus

**What a run ashore boys
What a run ashore**

**No more runs in Pompey
No more Golden Fleece
No more big eats at Aggies**

**Or oggies on the street
No more Ranch House
And “sign me in”
No more short time
Or all nights in
Chorus
What a run ashore boys
What a run ashore**

Apart from the Home Club, the (Royal) Standard(complete with Ruby, and the Mucky Duck(White Swan) are the only pubs/bars mentioned which has survived so far unscathed.

* * * * *

KNOT GUILTY

“Times” said the stranger who was sharing my table in the bar of the Golden Rivet, “have changed”.

I nodded briefly, my mind on other things.

“It’s not like it used to be” persisted the stranger.

“Everything’s going to the dogs. The Country the beer and the Navy, especially the Navy”.

“You sound very indignant” I said. “Why is everything going to the dogs?”

“The Navy is going to the dogs”.

“You did say everything” I reminded him, “ never mind we’ll concentrate on the Navy.

“How is it going to the dogs?”

“How? I’ll tell you. Did you see that young RP in here a minute ago? What do you think he ordered?

A grapefruit and tonic water, that’s what. Stroll on”.

I clicked my tongue sympathetically.

“These new clear submarines and things are all very well,” said the stranger “but it’s beer that keeps the Navy going. Once the Navy stops drinking beer it becomes like one of them South American Navies where theres more Admirals than ODs. I knew a feller once – Dusty Rhodes – AB – no badges – who could drink himself stupid and sober up again all in an hour. Poor old Dusty, whenever there was trouble he’d be in it. He was a crow”.

My face must have betrayed my ignorance of Naval parlance. “Crow” repeated the stranger. “Crow, fowl, pelican. It’s all the same. A crow is a sailor who attracts trouble like a dog attracts fleas. Dusty was never out of it. He was a character all right but NOT a bad character. There wasn’t another man on the old Insufferable who knew more about seamanship than he did, and when it came to muster bags, Dusty had the neatest layout in the ship.

Let him get ashore though and he was a different man. He belonged to the Senior Service and was ready and willing to prove it to any passing Pongo or Brylcreem boy”.

“Well” continued the stranger “the time I am telling you about the Insufferable was in Malta and we were due for Admirals inspection the next day. The whole ship had been in a panic for a week getting scrubbed and polished. One of the most hated things about Amiral’s inspection was the old routine of his nibs picking out a bod here and there and saying “Hammock or Bag”. That meant that the unlucky characters selected had to muster their bags or hammocks on the upper deck and Gawd help those who had anything missing. Our skipper who knew the old boy very well used to take the precaution of sending all Liverpool ratings on leave on these occasions.

On the night before the inspection me and Dusty decided on a quiet run to the old Klydyke in Floriana. It was a sort of super pub with a band and lots of foreign judies dancing and singing. When we got to the Klondyke there was a big German blonde

singing Tiptoe through the tulips mit me. Dusty nudged me, we sat down. “ I would feel sorry for any tulips SHE tiptoed through,” he said waving a greeting to Wacker Payne and Slinger Woods who were seated at the next table.

“Hey waiter, two crushed tulips” “Saire” queried the humorless barman.

“Two Youngers, and chop chop “ said Dusty.

Even a German blonde has to finish singing sometime, and in accordance with the custom of the house she looked around for victims. She selected me and Dusty. “You like my song sailor?” she asked, easing her fat beam into a vacant chair.

“Smashing” said Dusty” sing it again”. The fraulein preened. “For you alone I vill de song sing again” she said. “But first can I der drink have?”

“Sure you can have a drink. Have anything you like. Have the best in the place”.

The waiter brought her a glass of something-pale green and then hung around the table.

“All right Joe beat it,” said Dusty. “We’ll call you if we want anything.

But the waiter was rooted.

“The ladys’ drink saire “ he said.

“What about it “ says Dusty.

“Two shillings please. You said the lady could have a drink”.

“So she can. She can drink the place dry if she want to but I didn’t say I would pay for it”

The blonde could not believe her ears, but when she realised what was happening she upped with her handbag and fetched Dusty a clout that set his teeth rattling. The waiter seconded the motion by clobbering me with his tray. Slinger and Wacker at the next table didn’t know what was going on but they DID know the honour of the Navy was at stake and that a couple of shipmates were being assaulted so they sailed into a couple of Marines who happened to be passing.

In those days – before the Navy went to the dogs – news of a fight spread rapidly and before you could say “up spirits” every matelot in the area had reached the Klondyke. Before that fight ended Mister, I counted the 1st Battle Squadron, the 3rd Cruiser Squadron and the 4th Destroyer Flotilla all on our side. On the other side were half the Marines of the Med Fleet, a platoon of the Black Watch and Blondie. Things were really hotting up when some killjoy sent for the Patrol.

“Come on Dusty the patrols’ coming”

“Where’s me cap” groaned Dusty.

“Never mind you’re perishing cap, do you want to spend the rest of the night in the jug, let’s get out of here”. We dragged him, still grumbling about his cap into a gharri and drove to Charlie Zammits – clean beds – were we battened him down for the night.

Charlie woke us at six with a cup of tea. I leaned over and tapped Dusty on one of his bruises.

“Wakey Wakey lash up and stow” I said, “We’ve got to be onboard by seven “.

He dragged himself to the mirror and surveyed his head; it had more lumps than a plate of pusser’s burgoo. “Where’s me cap? “ he said.

“The last time I saw your cap the blonde singer was clobbering a Scottish Corporal with it” said Wacker. “I don’t suppose theres anything left now of it now” Dusty groaned, “I’ve got to find me cap its Admirals inspection today, where’s me cap?”

An idea formed in my mind. “Take it easy Dusty”, I have a spare cap ribbon in my locker It’ll see you through. “Cap ribbon? I can’t go to divisions with a cap ribbon tied around me head, I’ve got to have a cap”. I was already halfway into the next room where a bunch of seven bell leave men from the Ramilles were snoring their heads off. I took a cap from a chair by one of the beds and gave it to Dusty. We got onboard alright, Dusty holding his head down so that the OOW

wouldn't not his ribbons cap. We were cleaning for divisions when the DO came to the messdeck.

“Last minute instructions men “ he said. “Pay attention, all divisions except the foretop will take off their caps at the inspection, the foretop will keep their caps on. Make sure your chinstays are in order”. Dusty glanced inside his looted cap. “Just my luck” he groaned “no chinstay, how the ...

At that moment the bugle sounded. “Quick Dusty, take the tape from your no.3 jumper and tie it on top of your head”. He grabbed the tape, centred it under his chin and tied the ends between the bumps on his head. He then put his cap on and looked as smart a seaman gunner as ever paraded for inspection.

Everything would have been alright but the DO let us down. He got into a flap when the Admiral reached us and forgot his orders.

“Foretop division shun, off caps” he yelled.

Poor old Dusty tried hard to grab the tape as he took off his cap but he missed.

There he was, first man of the front rank, bareheaded except for a length of blue tape that circled his chin and ended in a knot on top of his head.

The Admiral gazed unbelievably at the strange spectacle, for a moment he was speechless then came the explosion.

“Captain” he yelled. “Commander come and look at this, look at it I say. I have been 40 years in the Navy and I have never seen the like before, look at it all of you, a perfect example of a Blackwall hitch. Splice the mainbrace, make and mend for the whole ship's company.”

Although the above appeared in an early R08 it was actually written by Jack Eaton and originally appeared in the now (sadly) defunct Communicator magazine.

SUEZ

Incredibly it all happened fifty five years ago, with both Albion and Bulwark involved, Mike Bridges our historian has written a very good article which I had intended to include with this issue, however regrettably we have run out of space.

I will include the whole article in the spring issue.

Mike would also like to hear from as many members as possible on their memories and any particular incidents that happened whilst you were serving on any of the ships.

Mike is particularly interested in Suez. If you were there and have a tale to tell please let Mike know at 12 Froxfield Gardens Portchester PO16 8DN or 02392 386866 email mike66024@aol.com

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***Your Committee Wish You All
A Very Happy Christmas
And A Prosperous New Year***

