

MINEWARFARE AND DIVING



VOLUME 6

NUMBER 2

NOVEMBER 1995

Official Use Only



**MCM1 TACKLE
BLUE HARRIER**

**FAREWELL
FROM
COMMODORE MOORE**

**AMPHIBIOUS OPS
EXPLAINED**

MINEWARFARE AND DIVING



THE MAGAZINE OF THE
MINEWARFARE AND DIVING COMMUNITY

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 2

NOVEMBER 1995

CONTENTS

Foreword by Cdr P. J. Gale	1
AS1076 - "Arcturus" The First 25000 Hours	2
Formal opening of Coniston Building HMS Dryad	2
Mo(o)re News from Southwell	3
Reminiscences of a Naval (Hard Hat) Diver	4
PCDU Commendation	5
Operation Pike 3/95	6
Amphibious Warfare - "The MCM"	9
Life on Fish (Doing Time)	11
Superintendent of Diving - Haul Down Message	13
The Mermaid Factor	14
Minewarfare Section Telephone Numbers	15
Divers Golf 1995	16
Blue Harrier 95	17
Letters to the Editor	21
Obituaries	25
CST(MWV) and the Small Ships	
Operational Training Staff	27
On Call Force Group 16 Deployment	28
The Short Career of a Retiring Commodore	31
Recollection	34
Readers Responses Page	36
Challenge and Reply X	Inside back cover
Big Mine Challenge XI	Back Cover
Editorial	Back Cover

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Commander Pat Gale RN

Diving training ceased to be a Department of SMOPS on 1 September 1995, when the Defence Diving School formed. The DDS is a joint service school that combines both Royal Navy and Royal Engineers diving training and is commanded in rotation by a Commander RN and a Lieutenant Colonel RE and I am the lucky one to have been selected to be the first Commanding Officer.

The school is a direct command FOTR establishment with its own BLB. We are situated at Horsea island in new, purpose built buildings with an outpost in HMS EXCELLENT that includes a new jetty for our diving training boats and replaces the water front we had at Gunwharf. In all it is a superb facility and centre of excellence that must rank among the best there is.

Despite being a joint service school, the concept of joint training with interchangeability of instructors and common teaching is not generally viable because of our differing requirements and equipments. Compressed air diving training, however may possibly lend itself to some areas of commonality, and this will be explored and developed. Rationalisations have been made in the support areas such as maintenance, transport, secretarial and administration and course planning.

The DDS is an exciting new school with considerable potential and the opportunity for each service to learn from the other, particularly in the field of underwater engineering. Do stop by and visit our new Establishment - I am sure you will be impressed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Gale'.

AS1076 - "Arcturus" The First 25000 Hours

By Lt. Cdr A. Blakey RN.

Following the section's relocation to HMS DRYAD in March of this year, we found ourselves gathered together on the 15th of June to celebrate another milestone in the honourable history of the Minewarfare section, namely the achievement of 25,000 training hours for the AS 1076 trainer from its "Launch" in 1982. (To counter the scurrilous rumour that the figures were subject to creative accounting in order to get a slap up meal in Southsea with MS and T, and it was not that you thought time lasted twice as long in the trainer, it really did take us that long to turn you into MWOs, MHDs and Operators). Mr Kevin Butcher from the sea systems sales division of Marconi Simulation and Training, is shown presenting the commemorative plaque to CDR Charlie Wilson (CDR MW) before the Marconi and section trainer staff.

The celebrations continued into the evening when the trainer staff and their wives were kindly entertained at L'Escargot's' in Southsea. An excellent night out appreciated by all.

It was particularly pleasing to receive this award as, when the move to DRYAD was first mooted, most people were of the opinion that the trainer would disintegrate at the first attempt to lift and shift. A fate/malady akin to that found among the more senior brethren at the mention of the words, "Sea Draft". But, Arcturus was of course designed to be mobile and could be dismantled to move from site to site - and so it has proved, though I don't think that the use of several sledgehammers, combined with the upwards exertions of a mobile crane and the lateral exertions of a forklift truck to achieve the dismantling process, was part of the original approved procedure. I could be wrong, but I thought it was the original sections that were supposed to be reassembled, but it is churlish to nitpick.

Similarly, any description of the subtle use of the sledgehammer and metal cutting equipment required to fit the trainer onto the specially prepared, scientifically measured and professionally positioned concrete plinths that will be its home for the next 25000 hours, would only appear unnecessarily critical.

Joking apart, the team responsible for the relocation to DRYAD are to be congratulated on a most successful move that saw the trainer decommissioned, disassembled, moved, reassembled and fully operational 5 days ahead of schedule.



As a result of their hard work the trainer staff were able to recommence the training programme on time.

As with all units, nothing stands still and work continues on the trainer to improve the service we provide to our students. By the end of the year, work to fully integrate Navpac within the trainer will be complete as will the upgrade on the mine models package to add more realism to the training. Also progressing is the addition of MAS to the trainer and the possibility of improving the debriefing facility has been discussed. All projects agree that Arcturus will continue to provide valuable training for another 25000 hours.

FORMAL OPENING OF CONISTON BUILDING, HMS DRYAD

By CPO (MW)(O) Neil Hodges

Commodore R C Moore, Commodore Minor War Vessels, Minewarfare and Diving, officially opened Coniston Building HMS DRYAD, the new site of Minewarfare training, on 18 May 1995. The move ends 72 years of shore-based Torpedo and Minewarfare training at HMS Vernon (more recently HMS Nelson (Gunwarf)), but brings Minewarfare into the mainstream of warfare training at SMOPS.

In considering a new name for the Minewarfare school, it was felt that the tradition of naming buildings after old ships would be apt. The name Coniston comes from the first of class of coastal mineweepers, the 'Ton' class which were designed to meet the threat of the "Modern mine" in the 1950s. Built in March 1953 at J I Thorneycroft, Southampton, HMS Coniston was named after a village in Cumbria and served for 16 years before finally decommissioning in 1970. However, the name will live on in HMS DRYAD as the home of Minewarfare training. Appropriately, members of the Ton Class association were on hand to witness the event and to present Commander Charlie Wilson, the new Commander Minewarfare, with a number of artefacts for permanent display within the building.



MO(O)RE NEWS FROM SOUTHWELL

By Lt. Cdr Rob Hoole

Sorry about the headline but somewhere near this article should be a photograph taken when our own WO(MW)(O) "Pony" MOORE was presented with the clasp to his LS & GC medal by Commodore Richard MOORE (COMMW) during his recent visit to Portland.

Moving Out

"DRA Southwell" has been renamed "MOD(PE) Southwell" and most DRA personnel have moved to Winfrith, a few miles east of Weymouth. By the time you read this, FOST will have moved to Plymouth, and Portland Naval Base including DRA (North) will have closed. Although the Naval Air Station should stay open until 1998/9, the remnants of the old HMS OSPREY (up the hill in the Naval Base) including the JRs' messes, the chapel and the medical centre are being re-located in the high-rise blocks opposite the Sports Centre. The VERNON Building on the breakwater at Bincleaves, having survived the demise of the Portland Clearance Diving Team by two years, has now been relinquished by the SMOPS Diving School as well.

More Changes

The future of the Mine Countermeasures, Diving & EOD Group (MCMD) is now clearer but I realise that the following explanation will mean more to some than others. The post of our former boss, the Director General Underwater Weapons (Navy) (DGUW(N)), lapsed in April 95 when the last incumbent retired. For the time being, AD/MCMD and his group remain part of the MOD Procurement Executive (PE) under the Director of Underwater Weapons (DUW) (formerly Director Torpedoes and Weapons (DTW as part of Director General Submarines' (DGSM's) organisation. *With me so far?* Our signal address changed on June 95 from SSC PORTLAND to MOD UK PE PORTLAND - please include it together with NAVSPCOMD PORTLAND on all MW and Diving OPDEFs. By the end of 1995, it is intended that a slimmer MCMD Group following DCS cuts, together with all of its projects except Hunt Midlife Update (HMLU), will transfer to the Naval Support Command (NSC) where it will continue to provide "cradle to grave" support as part of the Directorate of Equipments and Systems (Weapons Engineering) (DES(WE)). This will preserve the small number of MCM and Diving equipment specialists as a single viable team instead of being split between the PE and the NSC where their valuable expertise would probably be lost. Five of the staff, however, will join the DGSS MCM Platform Group in the PE to continue work on underwater weapons aspects of HMLU. Since some of these individuals are currently involved with Sonar 2093, the changeover is unlikely before 2093 has gained Fleet Weapons Acceptance. *Still with me?* The MCMD Group will remain in its present offices until August 96 when it will probably move to Egdon Hall in Weymouth. Eventually it will co-locate with the rest of the NSC and the PE at Abbey Wood near Bristol. Other changes in the MCMD Group include replacing the current Lt Cdr and CPO(D) Naval Diving Applicator team with a WO(D). Details of the new organisation will be promulgated when confirmed. *Well done. You can relax again now.*

Project News

HUNT Midlife Update - ST(S) 7072 (ISD 2001). Ferranti Naval Systems (Portsmouth) won the role of Integration Contractor for the HMLU Feasibility Study (FS) which is planned to complete in April 96. HMLU should be thought of as a Combat System Upgrade because, notwithstanding normal obsolescence upgrades, only the Combat System will be addressed. The aim of the FS is to specify a practicable and affordable combat system and provide costed options for the Staff Requirement. It is hoped to identify suitable technology



available off-the-shelf, or in need of only minor changes, and thus obviate the need for a Project Definition (PD) phase. Specific equipments are therefore being studied but only to determine the best (in terms of performance and cost) generically feasible option to be opted. Various threats and scenarios have been formulated against which to test the capability of possible options which include:

Minehunting Sonar

VDS, or hull mount with/without supplementary minehunting ROV array? Wide band?

Mine Disposal System

ROV like RCMDS2 or One Shot Disposal System? Autonomous guidance? Separate tracking or incorporated in CMS? What sort of warhead? Separate ID vehicle required?

Mechanical Sweep

Include, or discard to accommodate other equipments?

Combined Influence Sweep

The Case for Sweeping? Combined Influence Sweeping System (CISS). Clip-on or organic? Remotely operated? What influences and how should they be provided? Performance monitoring?

Combat Management System

What functionality required? Multi-function consoles or bespoke hardware?

Combat Support System

What functionality required? Generic Combat Support System (GCSS) or bespoke?

Position Control System

How can we make the best use of available means of propulsion?

Sonar 2093 - SR(S) 7697. Apart from Towed Body Location System (TBLS) tracking of RCMDS2 vehicles, all Sea Acceptance Trials (Fleet) (SAT(F)) have now been demonstrated successfully. The outstanding trial is programmed for July 95 after which it is intended to apply for Fleet Weapons Acceptance (FWA). However, there are likely to be aspects of Availability, Reliability and Maintainability

continued overleaf

MO(O)RE NEWS FROM SOUTHWELL

(ARM) and support which require some refinements. A programme to address these items will be agreed before submission for FWA. Good performance and reliability has been reported from recent out of area exercises.

RCMDS2 - SR(S) 7545. SAT(F) awaits completion of deep water trials of the live and exercise MDC variants and the cutters. More trials are programmed for November 95 provided water space can be allocated.

MTSS - MER(S) 5/78. All MTSS systems have been delivered and some have already seen action in various MCM exercises at home and abroad. Work continues in order to improve processing speed, refine operation and complete the WPA module.

RSDB - MER(S) 7/90 ISD Sep 97. This system will be operated by the Hydrographic Office (HO) for the benefit of MCM. Initially, the exchange of contact and environmental data between MCMVs and the HO will be via MTSS. Eventually, it is hoped to provide a more direct route for data, including video and sonar imagery (side scan and sector scan) between the HO and ships, plus improved onboard data display. We are currently assessing tenders from companies bidding for the contract.

Other Work

In the meantime, work continues with other longstanding projects such as MSSA1, MS14 Loop, RCMDS1, 193M (Mod 1), Mine Avoidance Sonar (MAS), Versatile Exercise Mine System (VEMS) Mks 1 & 2, and mine replicas. We are also active in international collaborative and information exchange groups include the NATO Minewarfare Working Party (MWWP), NATO Information Exchange Group 3 (IEG3), and NATO Project Group 22 (PG22), UK/US Information Exchange Programme B61/71 (IEP B61/71), The US/UK/CAN/AUS/NZ Technical Cooperation Panel (TTCP), the Anglo/Swedish Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Anglo/French/Netherlands Cooperation Panel (AFNCP).

And Finally

That rounds up events at Southwell on the Minewarfare front. I offer my usual invitation to contact or visit me if I can be of assistance. (Tel: Southwell Ext. 3160 or (01305) 863160). We are always interested in feedback, particularly after exercises, on the performance of any of our products. As always, remember that S2022 action achieves results but ensure you provide all the relevant details. *Can I go home now?*



Reminiscences of a Naval (Hard Hat) Diver By Doug Warth

Having joined the Royal Navy just prior to the 2nd World War I soon realised that I must select a career other than a Heavy & Light Anti Aircraft Seaman Gunner.

The heavy gun battery aboard HMS Ganges consisted of twelve 6" guns pointing seaward and were crewed by nine seaman to each gun. The manning drills were detailed in a such a manner that each seaman of the guns crew had to know the 'working drill' of each nine positions, thus enabling the guns to continue firing, in the event that any seaman gunner was killed or wounded in the line of fire.

When action stations sounded, all hell was let loose; the noise of commands, the loading of the guns, the speed of the seaman gunners changing positions around the battery, (was to me and surely many others) frightening and mind blowing. My chance to get out of the gunnery action came when the ship I was serving on received an Admiralty Directive that there was an urgent need for Salvage Divers who must be young with good physique, fit and strong, determined to overcome eventualities under harsh conditions.

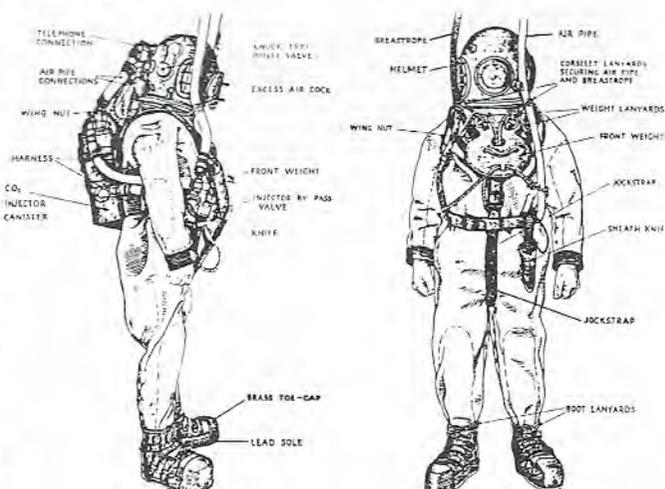
I applied immediately and was drafted back to the United Kingdom where upon I was given a stringent medical examination and promptly sent to the Naval Diving School situated within The Naval Gunnery Branch, Whale Island, Portsmouth. I shuddered and wondered 'What the hell has diving got to do with the notorious Whale Island?', where the dreaded G.I.'s (gunnery instructors, the Gestapo as known to us lesser-beings) were stationed.

The dive school was situated right on the waterfront and apart from having to attend daily divisions and march past on the massive parade ground; myself and 18 other volunteer divers were briefed on the course of events that included being kitted out with submarine woollen sweaters, long woollen stockings and allotted a heavy canvas dive suit complete with brass helmet, corselet, divers boots, waist belt, knife, breast rope, lead weights and underwater tools for emergency repairs to ships hulls, propellers, shafts and housings. Then we were all promptly absorbed into the theory of a Naval Diver.

The theory over and done with, we were soon initiated into practical diving procedures and engaged in actual salvage

operations of downed aircraft, sunken wrecks, clearing of shipping lanes and demolition of underwater obstructions. Although the work was challenging and demanding I was at last at peace with myself and far away from the noise and confusion I had endured during the actions, I will never forget. Having completed the five month dive course and overcoming poor visibility, heavy and cumbersome dive suits and work procedures under extremely cold conditions it had prepared me for future assignments, diving in various parts of the world, with mates that have 'like' spirit and qualities which bond one to another.

Having kept myself in touch with the dive scene since retiring from the Navy in 1963, diving from hookah gear and working as a decky for my tow abalone diver mates, has kept me interested and enthusiastic enough to take up scuba diving and successfully completing the PADI Open Water certificate course at the Merimbula Divers Lodge, NSW in January 1994. My instructor Brendon Purdon (thoroughly professional) had set the scene for me to experience some procedures hither-to-unknown to me and making comparisons of my diving experiences of some 50 years ago; my how diving has progressed and prospered and I feel very privileged to still be able to enjoy the wonders that are becoming accessible all around our shores.



PCDU COMMENDATION

By Lt. Cdr J C B Chapple

The Plymouth Clearance Diving Unit has recently received a commendation from the Commander in Chief Fleet in recognition of its Diving and Explosive Ordnance Disposal work during 1994/95. The copy of the commendation is self-explanatory and it is considered appropriate for this to be reproduced in full in the next edition of MADMAG. The commendation was presented to PCDU by Admiral Sir Benjamin Bathurst GCB ADC, First Sea Lord, on 9 June 95.




**COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S
COMMENDATION**

PLYMOUTH CLEARANCE DIVING UNIT

During 1994 the Plymouth Clearance Diving Unit responded to 232 Diving tasks and 280 Explosive Ordnance Disposal tasks within their area of operations, from the River Dee to Swanage, making it the busiest year since current records began and certainly since the early 1970s. The EOD operations completed by the Unit resulted in the safe disposal of major items of maritime ordnance, numerous shells - including live chemical munitions - and many thousands of assorted items of unexploded ordnance and pyrotechnic stores. The nature of this highly specialised work frequently exposed PCDU personnel to significant individual risk and required a considerable team effort to overcome the many complex problems associated with bomb disposal. The total number of Improvised Explosive Device Disposal and Conventional Munition Disposal tasks were the highest of any Royal Navy Clearance Diving Unit during the year and this remarkable level of activity has continued into 1995.

The Diving and EOD tasks encompassed a wide variety of both routine and extraordinary incidents. Of particular note were the continued work to clear disused MOD firing ranges around the coasts of Wales and Southwest England, the 19 occasions on which assistance was rendered to fishing vessels and the 50 per cent increase in underwater engineering tasks in support of Ships and Submarines of the Fleet. Much of the diving was achieved in severe conditions including marginal sea states, limited or nil underwater visibility and high bacteriological pollution. In addition to these directed tasks the PCDU became the first RN Area Clearance Diving Unit to participate in a major NATO Exercise, RESOLUTE RESPONSE 94, and also took a leading part in the biennial submarine escape exercise, SMASHEX 94.

I commend all members of the Plymouth Clearance Diving Unit for their sustained and continued professionalism, exemplary dedication and style in which they consistently achieved outstanding results in the face of demanding, and often dangerous, conditions. The standards set have been exceptional, with much of their work conducted in the public eye, and the contribution of all Service and civilian staff is in the highest traditions of the Royal Navy.

Royal Warrants



*Plymouth Clearance
Diving Unit 1994*

*Plymouth Clearance
Diving Unit 1995*



OPERATION PIKE 3/95

The unofficial view from HMS Ledbury (or - How the World's most boring mine warfare tasking can suddenly become far too exciting for it's own good!) (or - Alice in Ledburyland)

H M Ships BERKELEY, BROCKLESBY, BRIDPORT and LEDBURY conducted Operation PIKE 3/95 in the CLYDE Subordinate Sea Areas during the period 12-24 June 1995. MCM1 (Commander Richard BELL-DAVIES, Royal Navy) had TACON of OP PIKE, although Commander BRADSHAW, Royal Naval Reserve (Ex-MCM3) acted as the MCMTA Commander. Support was provided by FSU02 (whenever the Pubs were closed for long enough!)

Priorities for the Operation were:

- 1) Route Surveys of the area
- 2) Mine Warfare and General Weapon Training
- 3) Public Relations with the Local Community
- 4) Mine Recovery

The Standing Oporder for Operation PIKE states that "PIKE offers a good opportunity to settle into the Defence Watch system". As LEDBURY had completed BOST, Exercise BLUE HARRIER and JMC 952 in the 2 previous months, the prospect of another 2 weeks of water rationing (no washing machine, one shower per day, etc) filled our little hearts with joy - NOT! (N.B. The Oporder also states that "though necessary, PIKE can be seen as unrewarding and monotonous". Never?

WEAPON TRAINING

The Route Survey tasking was broken up by numerous Weapon Training serials to maintain morale. Each ship conducted at least one DIVEX, one GUNEX 601 (Surface Shoot), one period of Machinery Breakdown Drills and attempted a live Mine Disposal Charge (MDC) Firing - although due to adverse environmental conditions not all Live MDC Firing attempts were successful. The weapon training highlight was undoubtedly the ADEX 324/SPLASHEX with 19 Squadron RAF. The Crabs sent 2 Hawks up to join us from RAF VALLEY (ANGLESEY) to "beat us up", on 2 separate occasions, for 20 - 30 minutes prior to firing at a towed target. Contrary to all previous rumours about the accuracy of the RAF, the Hawks from VALLEY proved unerringly accurate. As Jeff WILSON commented on Jonah LOMU et al "Glad they're on our side!".

The Weapon Training period proved to be a popular one for visits, with Commodore MOORE (COMMW), Captain Du VIVIER (COS to FOSNNI) and Lieutenant Commander ELOFFSON (Swedish Navy) amongst others, visiting various ships throughout the period.



19 Sqn Hawks He Cannon Fire versus Ledbury's splash target (a diverter on a sweep wire)

OUTLINE OF EVENTS

LEDBURY and BROCKLESBY sailed from FASLANE on Monday 12 June, to commence Route Survey Tasks, with LEDBURY detaching immediately to complete a Degaussing trial at ROSNEATH. The DG trial was over by early PM, and as BERKELEY entered the areas on the 13, 3 ships were already earning their "bread and butter" by Tuesday morning. BRIDPORT was unable to join until Saturday 17 as she claimed to be working hard undergoing a bizarre serial by the name of BOST.

The first week was spent continuing with Route Survey tasks, breaking off for Weapon Training Serials as required, which although PIKE's "raison d'etre", do not make very exciting reading.

CAMPBELTOWN - OPERATIONAL SUPPORT PERIOD

Having spent the vast majority of the first week Route Surveying, the 3 ships entered Campbeltown for an Operational Support Period, on Saturday 17. A quaint fishing village on the bonny shores of the CLYDE, Campbeltown has suffered an image problem following some less than successful visits by "Big ships". The problem with Campbeltown is that the men are men (and, quite often, so are the women) and wouldn't be seen dead out on the town drinking with the Missus. The men go to their pubs, and the women go to theirs, and never the 'twain shall meet - until "chucking out" time. The men expect to go back to the pubs, where their women are drinking, and take them home. "Jack" meanwhile has bimbled ashore, found a pub full of women, no blokes, and loads of beer - so he thinks he's in. "Jack" spends all night chatting up a bird, and thinks he's doing really well, when all of a sudden some bloke turns up and tells him he's taking her home. It doesn't take a PhD in Sociology to work out the potential consequences of such a meeting. Somehow, this aggressive stand-off never seems to occur with "Small-ships ratings". Either :

- a) "Small ships ratings" are natural diplomats and can calm any potentially explosive situation with their wit, charm and repartee, or
- b) They are too drunk to notice that the woman they've spent all night talking to walked out of the pub 30 minutes ago, or
- c) They are so busy arguing with each other up they don't have any time or energy left to fight with the locals.

As well as having Ships Open To Visitors, a Cocktail party was held jointly by the Hunts (although the vast majority of work was done by BROCKLESBY who hosted the event) and proved to be an outstanding success (i.e. no one fell down a hatch). This was also the first opportunity for a group of 5 Potential Officer Candidates (POCs) to see what the Navy is all about. They seem to have gone home with the suspicion that the Navy has Cocktail Parties every night and remain unconvinced that Mine Warfare can be pretty hard work. BERKELY'S Young Officer (A WAFU Upper Yardman - need I say more), who for the sake of his career shall remain nameless, managed to achieve a Royal Naval first during a visit to a local drinking establishment. He became the first person ever to be glassed in CAMPBELTOWN without anyone else being involved. If he can't coordinate getting a glass to his mouth, without injuring himself, what chance does he have of putting an EH101 onto Flight Deck? The youth of today, etc, etc

OPERATION PIKE 3/95

As part of the Minor War Vessel Flotilla's unofficial policy of "keeping CAMPBELTOWN sweet" a sea day was organised for the local community. A broad cross-section of the local community was selected and split between the 3 Hunts taking part. BROCKLESBY had Fishermen on board, LEDBURY had school children, and BERKELEY had all the young women (Hmmm?!). The day was spent conducting OOW manoeuvres, a Light-Line transfer, Mine Hunting demonstration and Ship tours, and culminated in the 3 ship's rafting up for a Bar-B-Q Lunch. The local Lifeboat came out to join us and the affiliation must have worked particularly well, because by the end of the day, LEDBURY's Cox'n and Buffer were strolling around in a pair of "Gucci" bright yellow, non-slip, hard-wearing sea trousers, whilst the Lifeboat crew were reduced to saving life in Foulie-bottoms!

HMS LEDBURY MINE HUNTING - UNOFFICIAL POLICY

In direct contravention to Starboard watch's policy of remaining awake whilst in the Ops Room, Port Watch had been fine-tuning the hugely successful technique of avoiding looking at Mine-like contacts, preferring instead to examine the interesting shapes of sea-bed rocks (It is understood that Port Watch were being directly sponsored by "National Geographic" and were attempting to conduct a seabed survey of all rocks off the UK Mainland. The book they were expected to produce was to be the definitive work and would have kept Geologists enthralled for months on end). During previous exercises, Starboard watch had found upwards of 20 mines, whilst Port watch considered the day a success if they could locate the Ops Room door. Typical Watches went as follows:

Starboard Watch:

0200 Handover
 0205 USC injected
 0210 Contact classified Poss-Mine
 0215 Vehicle launched
 0220 Contact identified as Mine
 0230 Diving Conning Run
 0240 Commence Mine Recovery
 0245 Mine on deck
 (and so on through the watch)

Port Watch

0825 Turn up late for Handover, mutter something about duff alarm clock batteries/poor shake/inability to find clean socks
 0827 Break off from handover to go and make a cup of coffee
 0850 Finally accept responsibility for the watch after continually repeating the same questions, such as "What was that bit about Mine Hunting again?"/"What's the injection to start the search?"
 0851 Go for a Blow-through (despite it only being 6 and a half hours since the last one)
 0930 Get dragged off PGA Golf game on the LRO's computer, by OOW on the phone, to go and do some Mine Hunting
 0931 Shake DWEO to fix Radar defect
 0933 DWEO turns up Radar brilliance - Defect Rectified
 0935 Shake WEO to fix Sonar Defect
 0938 Sonar lowered o/c of Blow-Through - Defect Rectified
 0940 Spill coffee down CA AIS display - Shake nobody and attempt to hush the incident up
 0942 Ask Engineering OOW whether or not he required another Blow-through
 0943 Attempt to break off task to transit somewhere (anywhere will do)
 0944 Settle down into comfortable Ops Room Chair

1355 Shaken by the Duty "Awake AB (MW)" - Preps for Handover

1356 Handover to Starboard watch in the Lunch queue

CONDUCT - SWEEPING

Port Watch's Mine-avoidance plan all started to go horribly wrong whilst conducting an Armed Team Sweep with HMS BROCKLESBY. Intelligence had suggested that there might be 2 Mk 17 Buoyant Mines near the centre of the WPA Mine Sweeping Corridor. After a careful start (differing interpretations of what the ATP 24B signals pages actually mean) the first mine was swept in text book fashion. The explosive cutter made a lovely bang and the respective MWOs raced to get the MW128 out to claim the Mine-find as their own (it's always best to leave it to the OCS - especially when you are the OCS!). A Mk 17 popped to the surface and was recovered by HMS BERKELEY (Having seen the BERKELEY's Mine Warfare team in action, it comes as no surprise to see them tasked with nothing more serious than Mine-recovery - Clive "The Good" SMITH (OPS), Rich "The Bad" BURSTOW (XO) and Alan "The Canteen Manager" BAINBRIDGE (ORS3, being 3 of the biggest cowboys in the Mine Warfare Flotilla!).

The second, and final, Mk 17 proved to be more of a chore. Having swept over the position there was no "bang" of a cutter exploding, and no mine on the surface. Despite the Captain giving the MWO his hardest "Paddington Bear" stare, there was little that could be done, as time constraints precluded another sweep over the area. The recovery of the Sweeps commenced whilst heated discussion ensued as to what could have gone wrong. Despite the MWOs halfhearted mumblings that he was sure the ships had swept over the correct position, the LEDBURY command team came to the decision that we had left the Mines to Starboard, whilst the BROCKLESBY team suggested that the Mines had been left to Port. After checking and re-checking the intelligence information, and ensuring that the position had been inserted into CA AIS and NAVPAC correctly, the decision was taken to blame the Mining Team (on the grounds that they weren't there to answer for themselves). All arguments became null and void, however, as soon as the Kites had been recovered. By a freak chance the Mine seemed to have been caught in the connection - and as such had missed all the cutters. Having been towed for approximately 5 cables the Mine suddenly broke free and floated away on the surface.

By this time BERKELEY had broken off to take part in another serial and was no longer available for Mine-recovery. As OCS, LEDBURY had tasked herself to lay a free-floating Danbuoy to mark all Mines swept. It is important to realise at this stage that there are 2 sides on which the Danbuoy can be laid. On one side there is nothing but open ocean and on the other is a snakes wedding of explosively armed sweep wire. The last thing we wanted to do was lay the Danbuoy on the side of the Sweep. So that is the last thing we did. The pipe "Danbuoy laid" was followed almost immediately by the pipe "Danbuoy swept and following". The laughter from BROCKLESBY's Bridge Teams could be heard at 400 yards!

A Double Oropesa Sweep was conducted by BROCKLESBY, but as the buoyant Mines had already been swept, the exercise was mainly procedural.

BERKELEY conducted CIS operations (after LEDBURY's CIS refused to participate) against 4 VMFI fitted A Mk 12 Mines. The VMFIs remained firmly attached to the Mines despite BERKELEY running over the Intelligence-suggested positions several times. BERKELEY later Hunted and recovered the Mines and found that they had been set to neutralise before even the first attempt to sweep them had been made. Again the Mining Team were blamed because they were unable to defend themselves.

continued overleaf

OPERATION PIKE 3/95

CONDUCT - HUNTING AND MINE-FIND

The Route Survey Tasking had become somewhat less than taxing, so LEDBURY relaxed to one operator on the sets. Unfortunately for Port Watch, their operator was occasionally AB(MW) GEARING (known as Herman to his mates - so everybody calls him AB GEARING). During a particularly relaxed Long Forenoon the following conversation took place:

Herman (to himself) - "On!"

Herman (responding to himself) - "Mark!"

Bosun (putting down mailie to his wife) - "Don't mark that contact"

Herman - "What?"

Bosun - "Disregard"

Herman - "Too late - I've already marked it"

Bosun - "Oh, you utter baboon!" (or words to that effect)

Ops (on being shaken) - "What's going on? Is there a fire?"

Bosun - "Herman's marked a contact"

Ops - "Oh, Herman - you baggy pair of underpants!" (or words to that effect)

The usual procedure then followed. The contact was remarkably good (even though the OPS and Bosun weren't overly keen to admit it) and after establishing a hover, the decision was taken to action the Port vehicle (N.B. When asked by the Captain whether or not the contact was worth sending the Diver's straight down on, the Bosun replied "It's good, Sir, but it's not that good"). The vehicle reached the contact (despite the Gunnery Officer's best attempts to ignore the Hover) and, shock-horror, it turned out to be a Mine.

Much calm, well thought-out and carefully planned procedures then followed. Or would have done if everyone hadn't panicked.

The MWO piped "Mine Threat Red" and brought the Divers to immediate notice while the Bosun attempted to neutralise the Mine with the under-rated technique of repeatedly battering it with the PAP. The Captain, who was obviously somewhat disappointed not to have found another rock to put into his "Observer's Book of Bottom Contacts", asked who had spotted the Mine. "I did, Sir" replied AB GEARING "and I marked it even though the Bosun told me to disregard it twice!". What followed, after the Captain had departed, was not a pretty sight, but once the Bosun had finished blushing (and been restrained from attacking said operator), AB GEARING became closely acquainted with the business end of a mop and bucket - and only when he is old and gnarled is the Bosun likely to let him back into the Ops Room.

At this stage, Starboard Watch came on for the long Afternoon, and Port Watch all ran away to the Fo'c's'le (based on the sound principle that if the Mine was live, and exploded, we'd all be thrown over the side by the shock-wave - and not propelled at great speed into the deckhead).

The Divers went down and did their business, and (after the Cox'n had consulted "Janet and John's Guide to Explosive Ordnance") the Mine was identified as a simplified A Mk 12, i.e. inert. The best guess as to how the Mine ended up on a War Route is that a Fisherman must have dragged it into the area whilst trawling. The Mine was recovered and we all patted ourselves on the backs for being such jolly good eggs.

MORE ORDNANCE

Along the same stretch of Q-route another 'metallic object' was discovered. After a PAP run and a diver attaching a recovery line to it, the object was recovered. When the contact came into sight it was obviously not a Mine, but an overgrown 16" Shell (circa WWII). Having no indication as to the state of the shell the decision was taken to attach a 4lb pack, lower it to the sea bed and "bang" it.

The explosion coincided nicely with the Watch changeover, and as it was a sunny day, the Ship's Company mustered on the Fo'c's'le. The explosion proved to be a damp squib, as the Shell did not High Order (it was inert), so the ship recovered its second piece of ordnance from the War Route.

CONCLUSION

Operation PIKE was substantially more exciting for LEDBURY than for most Ships that take part. I would strongly recommend finding a couple of pieces of ordnance whilst Route Surveying.

In summary, PIKE is not as good as all night in with Claudia SCHIFFER, but better than a kick in the ****@?!

THE LEDBURY TEAM

COMMAND TEAM

CO Lt Cdr Laurence "Yeah, it looks like a Rock, but if we wait a bit longer it might turn into a Mine" SMALLMAN, RN (PWO(U))

XO Lt Jason "Actually getting Daily Orders out is not as easy as you might think" SCOTT, RN (MCD)

PORT WATCH

OPS Lt John "I was so bleeding popular on Diving course the first time around that they invited me back specially" CRAIG, RN (MWO - Hoofed off Diving Course; once - so far!)

BOSUN PO(MW)(O) Paddy "Don't mark that contact" DALY
LHOW LS(MW)(O) Ian "Not another chuffing vehicle run" ROSS

AB(MW)s AB(MW) Phil "18 layers of clothing in any weather" FORT

AB(MW) Herman "How to make friends and influence people" GEARING

AB(MW) Pat "Fishing's great - isn't it Bosun?" PATTISON

AB(MW) Phil "I am not a Diver's Groupie" PHILLIPS

STARBOARD WATCH

AOPS S/Lt Mike "Cheerful" LONG, RN
(MWO - Realised Diving was thoroughly unpleasant and a bit damp!)

ORS PO(MW)(O) Jim "I AM NOT F@*KING STORMY !" BLACKLOCK

LHOW LS(MW)(O) Sean "Nice Bike - Shame about the beard" WELLINGS

AB(MW)s AB(MW) Paddy "I am not going bald" GREEN

AB(MW) Stirling "Still waters run deep" MOSS

AB(MW) Ginge "Why-Aye, Howay the Toon Army" TENNICK

THE DIVING TEAM

COX'N PO(D) Ben "Win or lose - On the booze" CARTWRIGHT

LS(D) LS(D) Andy "I'm not fat" MAIN

AB(D)'s AB(D) Paddy "I can cook anything - as long as it's Spag Bol" DONOHUE

AB(D) Jan "Standby Diver Extraordinaire" MOBLEY

AB(D) Kenny "The SAS are faggots" LORIMER



AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE - "THE MCM"

By Lieutenant Commander Tom Chambers

Since my last effort for this illustrious magazine, I have been able to witness, at first hand, the MCM/amphibious interface during seven major NATO Exercises. It seems timely to revisit my original concerns and outline the progress that has occurred in a very short space of time.

MCM IN SUPPORT OF AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS

The safety of the Amphibious Task Force (ATF) on passage and on entry into the AOA is vital since the Land Force needs to arrive without critical reduction to its combat potential. By definition, amphibious operations rely on the free use of littoral waters within the AOA which coincidentally forms the "killing ground" for any potential offensive miner. It follows the existence or creation of local sea control is a prerequisite and therefore, the ATF must include adequate MCM Forces to meet known and forecast mine threats where accuracy and speed is essential if the security and timetable of the amphibious operation is to be met.

By studying the threat and using the standard planning criteria in mining publications, it is estimated that a sophisticated miner will attempt to strike Mission Essential Units of the ATF prior to offload/assault using conventional mine types with the aim of STOPPING THE ASSAULT. Notwithstanding the primary threat to the ATF, nuisance type minefields may be laid within shallow waters to disrupt or delay the amphibious assault/offload. A wide variety of sea mines, land mines and obstructions are readily available on the world's markets or can be easily constructed with minimal technological expertise or stores. The aim here would be to HINDER THE ASSAULT.

Reliable and timely intelligence is the key to ensure the correct direction of effort. Strategic intelligence is widely distributed but CATF will be the focal point for the collation and distribution of tactical information/intelligence concerned with the AOA. Therefore, early liaison between CATF Staff and MCM CDR is essential to ensure that the importance of MCM is viewed within the wider scope of the whole amphibious operation; in particular CATF/CLF mission, aim and objectives.

Recent MCM support to amphibious exercises has been quite staggering; COMAW had TACOM of 13 MCMVs for JMC 941, 35 for DYNAMIC IMPACT 94 and 24 during STRONG RESOLVE 95. During all exercises, MCM groups have worked within the AOA in advance of the ATF arrival and proved that NATO planning, techniques and reporting are sufficient to provide a comprehensive and timely picture to CATF which forms an integral part of the continual amphibious estimate. It has also helped to dispel the misconception that MCM integration into AW will mean collocation; you do the work and we **might** pitch up over the horizon at the last moment.

PROTECTION OF MCMVS IN A MULTI-THREAT ENVIRONMENT

Inshore AAW. Following successful trialling during JMC 941, Air Defence FOTI 0708 has been issued, with an Annex dedicated to the defence of MCMV. Integration of land-based AD, such as Rapier, into maritime operations and mutual understanding of capabilities and limitations continue to improve. Further quantitative improvements are predominantly equipment dependent, but much benefit can be gained from an increase in corporate experience.

Inshore ASUW. This discipline has been the focus of a MWDC forum and a draft FOTI is expected shortly. Although there will not be specific guidance on defence of MCMVs, the general principles can be applied in all circumstances.

InShore ASW Despite testing of AAW/ASUW improvements, little importance has been afforded to the old chestnut of Inshore ASW which, compounded with poor shallow water ASW weapon performance and the demise of the SSK fleet, leaves serious concern for the defence of the ATG in littoral waters. Priority in the work up phases of future exercises must be given to testing static ASW defence of a large force in coastal waters.

MCM SUPPORT OF AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS

The decision to commit forces to operate within the AOA will remain a fine balance between putting sufficient effort (including MCM) into the AOA in order to gain intelligence and reduce the threat to an acceptable level and the need to prevent compromise of landing areas to maximise the element of surprise for the Land Force.

Therefore, the requirement falls into four distinct categories which may overlap in timescale:

- a. Offensive Counter Mining - Destroy enemy minestocks and minelayers.
- b. Long term **COVERT** surveillance and MCM operations.
- c. Short Term **DISCREET** MCM operations (D-1 to D-4 ?).
- d. Rapid **OVERT** MCM operations (H-4 to H-1 ?).

These differing operations are not mutually exclusive and are fully complementary within the escalatory timetable of an amphibious operation. Therefore, although these different techniques will be individually developed, they should not be viewed in isolation by the MCM/amphibious planner.

Offensive Counter Mining. Prevention is always the best cure and accurate intelligence can lead to pre-emptive offensive action against enemy mining depots, stocks and minelayers. Regrettably, both recent real live and exercise experience has shown that such action rarely gains political approval. Therefore, the amphibious planner will often have to wait until mining has occurred with resultant need for active MCM techniques.

Longterm Covert Operations. Looking to the future, NATO and individual nations will hopefully pursue the need for a covert form of Shallow Water MCM operations. Interest within this area is centred on the application of current research projects to achieve this goal. With a stated requirement for a covert MCM capability, the USN has funding to progress research into Unmanned Underwater Vehicles or UUVs. Near Term requirements include mine detection and mapping functions to provide minefield avoidance data. Long term concepts include UUV capabilities to minehunt, classify and dispose of ordnance and obstacles using shaped charges. This will provide an essential breaching or clearance capability. Although the final equipment and techniques remain a distant unidentified plan on someone's drawing board, it remains the responsibility of the amphibious and mine warfare communities to strenuously push forward the requirement.

Short Term Tactical Operations. Recent NATO and UK national exercises have been exploited to investigate tactical operations with the use of established MCM techniques but attempting to

continued overleaf

AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE - "THE MCM

timetable them to defeat enemy detection and intelligence organisations. CATF/CLF will study enemy capabilities/dispositions and assess when it is safe for MCM forces to enter the AOA without compromise. The effort/surprise calculation will produce a finite time within which to conduct MCM operations. However, certain tasks, especially SWMCM, may be considered more discreet and therefore authorised for earlier entry to the AOA producing a staggered approach to MCM operations. Timescales will inevitably be short and short term/exploratory MCM techniques will often be most appropriate. However, in certain cases, merely determining the presence of mines (RED LIGHT/GREEN LIGHT) may be sufficient to affect the course of amphibious planning and the subsequent operation. It must be remembered that CCATF would rather go where he knows there are no mines than being forced to conduct time consuming MCM operations.

Rapid Overt MCM Operations. The long term development of equipments to allow rapid in-stride and overt MCM will permit the phasing of assault forces directly behind MCM breaching operations, rather than introducing deliberate delays in the amphibious assault. MCM clearance must also use the same technology to maintain post- assault tempo for expanding areas for follow on forces and amphibious offload.

SHALLOW WATER MINE COUNTERMEASURES (SWMCM)

Notwithstanding the perceived relative importance of conventional MCM over SWMCM outlined above, the latter has enjoyed a very high profile in recent years. With the exception of the USN and its SEAL teams, other NATO nations do not have a stated requirement for a covert Clearance Diving capability and therefore the emphasis of national studies have centred on a fast overt operation close to D DAY/H HOUR.

The USN, alone, has put forward its own concept in the form of EXTAC 620 entitled "Amphibious Warfare in a Mine Environment". It requires a heliborne assault to secure the beach followed by a coordinated in-stride MCM breaching operation using Surface MCM Vessels, Airborne MCM, EOD Teams, Beach Line Charge Throwers and blanket bombing where necessary. This whole operation is conducted only hours before the main assault. It is clear that the US is the only country that has all of the assets required within its inventory to conduct such an operation, although other NATO countries could contribute certain elements if required. It relies on two basic assumptions; that a heliborne assault can effectively secure the beach and that MCM operations starting within the radar horizon of enemy shore will not compromise the landing site. Therefore some form of deception plan would be essential to create confusion within enemy Int gathering units. It has yet to be fully tested within a NATO exercise and some concerns remain over the accuracy, feasible effort and overall coordination of such a complex operation. Presently being rewritten to be more applicable to all NATO nations - the amphibious community awaits the results.

UK exercises have seen Special Operations Forces (SOF) and their vessels used to insert a Clearance Diving Unit into a target beach by night and then deploy as a passive defensive screen providing a tripwire warning service. The CDU then conducted a traditional visual jackstay search to detect and dispose of ordnance and obstacles. Operations should be restricted to the smallest feasible area and search speed remains very dependant on the type of bottom. For example, it would have been impossible to have completed any search to any great degree of confidence in the posidonia laden beds of Capo Teulada in Exercise Dynamic Impact. The CDU were then recovered in reverse order to the mother craft and

tactically extracted by SOF units. It is now realised that the search can be speeded up if handheld sonars and Diff GPS Navsets can be purchased. Additionally, some form of timer detonator or acoustically activated detonator is required so that disposal can be timetabled to retain surprise.

In summary, current interest in Shallow Water MCM should ensure that we build on present capabilities, fine tuning them in the medium term to ensure maximum availability, speed and accuracy so that the amphibious planner has an effective counter to this cheap and effective form of warfare. At the same time, we must continue to press for the technological answer to covert Shallow Water MCM.

ENDPIECES

Amphibious Forces, Notes and Orders, (AFNOS). To ensure that recent experience is not lost, AFNOS has undergone a major re-write and now includes a chapter on MCM support operations. Aimed at the MCM Commander, it gives planning and communications guidance on each stage of the amphibious operation. Issued in January 95, the distribution will include COMMW, SMOPS and each MCM Commander.

SWO(UW) to COMAW/SO2 N3(UW) to COMUKNLPHIBGRU. The post within the staff is here to stay and that is official! Lt Cdr Steve Lewis takes on the mantle in June 1995. The appointment has been re-entitled (UW) with the requirement for a MCD/PWO(U)(2nd Tour) who in the future will probably be invited to return to school for the following ADQUALS:

- Advance Mine Warfare, (AMW).
- Force ASW, (FASW).
- Staff Warfare Officer, (SWO).
- Maritime Tactical Course, (MTC).
- Amphibious Warfare Planning Course, (AWPC).

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HOW DO THEY DO THAT?



SEE PAGE 34 FOR ANSWER

LIFE ON FISH (DOING TIME)

By PO(D) Andy Carss

I joined Quorn back in June 1994, in its fifth month of Fishery Protection duties, while the ship was on a visit to Amsterdam (just in time for a run ashore and summer leave). The handover from Max Wall, now in the school, was 40/60, 40% handover - 60% run ashore, with his parting shot being by the way you've got families day on Thursday!

After summer leave we sailed for fish patrol with the new Ops embarked (the only MCD / MWO onboard). This was an eight week patrol during which we had six pongos embarked from the affiliated regiment, one of whom kindly scrubbed out the galley when he couldn't pay his food and accom. During the patrol there was even a chance to get in the water when we were asked to assist a F/V with its net tangled around her prop (time to surgically remove Pete from his mattress). A quick and professional job was carried out, at night and in a heavy swell - our reward - fish! The opportunity also arose to dispose of a marine marker trawled up by a F/V off Whitely Bay which was the boss' first EOD job. (DEMS training for the year?)



"My what big nets you've got"

all we sailed a day early to operate with the Dutch, who forgot to tell us that they had not gone to sea.

As the patrol continued the ship had stand offs in Newcastle, Jersey and Harwich and we stood by while the Portsmouth ACDU disposed of a GC off the Humber. PACDU arrived onboard at 0100, and diving in tidal windows they eventually managed to attach a lifting bag to it to enable them to move it away from a gas pipeline. The lifting bag however failed to inflate and a second was attached which successfully lifted the mine. Halfway through the tow the mine and lifting bag sank. Just prior to the end of the diving window they managed to attach a large pneumatic fender to the mine and tow it to the disposal area. During the next diving window the team removed the lifting bags and placed a 4lb pack on the mine. When they were about to light the safety fuse they discovered that the mine had broken free. A civilian ship, the Subsea Commander used an ROV to relocate the mine and mark it. It was by now 23:00 and the resulting detonation was heard but not seen. (Should have let SNNICDU show them how).

The final two months of 1994 saw a visit to St Malo, to stock up with Christmas spirit (and beer) followed by stand-offs in Portsmouth and Newcastle (our new base port?).



"A quiet day on fish"

The patrols were broken up by stand-offs, in Portsmouth, Poole and Newcastle (twice) which ranged from 24 to 48 hours in duration. These along with regular BBQs helped to maintain a reasonable level of sanity. With a few more boardings under our belt - and a lot more fish (!), it was time to pay an official visit to our affiliated town in Leicestershire. With the ship berthed in Grimsby most of the Ships' Company travelled to Quorn. A good time was had by all including following the fox hunt, rugby, football and a social in a local pub.

One for the S288 - whilst at anchor one night there was a dive to check the underwater winch, as the dive started we had a total power failure and the salvage generator was started which promptly burst into flames. At this time I decided to abort the dive and discovered that the boss couldn't climb the jumping ladder with a set on (he insists that the end was at least three feet from the water) after some encouragement he made it.

At the end of the patrol it was back to Rosyth for BMP, which turned out to be more like a refit, with a generator change, davit change, being totally tented up for shot blasting and repainting whilst still living onboard with no ACP. To cap it



"Come here Frenchie"

LIFE ON FISH (DOING TIME)



Spetnaz PWO(F)



Gratuitous action shot

The winter months on 'Fish' were particularly unpleasant with many days 'out of limits' for boarding operations. March proved more successful with time spent in the Channel and on West Patrol. Stand-offs included Alderney, Liverpool, Falmouth and Amsterdam.

The final four months of 'Fish' were particularly busy. Boarding days lost to the weather became less and the ship's programme became increasingly more flexible with the start of the Tuna Season. We did however make it to Rouen for a four day visit to participate in the VE Day celebrations. As well as opening the ship to visitors a marching platoon took part in the City parade.

A welcome 10 day break from Fish Duties came in May with our LSP and a highly successful deep dive work up in Gibraltar. The trip down took us through the Tuna grounds in the South West Approaches. With very little fishing activity observed we arrived in Gib on time to meet up with our families who had flown out. As well as participating in the infamous Rock Race the ship served as the venue for the wedding reception of one of our stokers, MEM CHRISTIE, who tied the knot in the sun.

Even with a demanding fish programme we have managed a few MCM serials. These have included simple danbuoy lay's and recoveries with respectable times. It all proved worthwhile training, especially for the new OM ratings. Unfortunately, unexpected fish tasking resulted in the cancellation of planned route surveys. We did, however, manage to stream and recover the CIS (with repairs to the TAG cable thrown in for good measure).

An important aspect of Fishery Protection Duties is public relations, and primarily raising the profile of the FPS. This explains why we spend most stand-offs in non-naval ports, something which brought us to Brixham for the Trawler Race. The ship was only able to come alongside after a dawn dive by the diving team to conduct a survey and bottom search of the berth (the chart shows only one depth from a survey in 1966). As well as opening the ship to visitors, we took forty guests out into Tor Bay to witness the race.

In July the ship paid its first visit to London for a seventy two hour standoff where we berthed alongside HMS BELFAST. At the time of writing we have just left Newcastle (again!), and are on our way to Grimsby for their Fish Festival. Meanwhile, we have eight of our muppets on Command Team Training.

During the ship's seventeen months on fish duties we have completed over 400 boardings; steamed 30854 miles (equivalent to the distance steamed in the first 32 months of the ship's life) and averaged 33% more days at sea per month and only 34% base port time. On 25 July 1995 we will return to Rosyth, after three months away from our base port, where we will give our Tornado to MIDDLETON wishing her all the best on Fish Duties, and we will return to the real world of MCM.

Life on a FPV is not as bad as some would have you believe, but you can expect a lot of sea time, not much diving, some good runs ashore and a long cast that is written in pencil and called Daily Orders!



The Author

SUPERINTENDENT OF DIVING - HAUL DOWN MESSAGE

By Cdr B A Mansbridge

In the past I have heard it said of my Headquarters. "What does that outfit in the corner of Gunwharf do?" Well hopefully it has not been such a mystery during my term as the Superintendent of Diving(SofD). While I admit recognition of the headquarters function is unlikely from our record of visiting you in the regions, I do hope we have more than made up for the lack of visibility in achievement. So what are the highs and lows of my term and the skeletons which lurk in the cupboard for my successor Commander John Arrow BSc MNI RN.

Hopefully the successes are already familiar to those of you who read my article in the February MADMAG. I make no apologies for repeating my summary of that article as it is fundamental to our business, it said; "In summary, I am pleased to see so much progress being made across the whole spectrum of military diving. There is a new military poignancy to our role and the importance of naval diving is more widely recognised. The long awaited new equipment is coming into service and a more efficient management structure is being introduced. The management changes will help focus and maintain our capabilities with a leaner budget whilst retaining the flexibility to meet the wide ranging tasks. Our capabilities will be enhanced whether the requirement be military tasks at home or abroad, MCM, EOD, special operations, spearhead support for an out-of-area conflict or equally routine peacetime operations supporting the Fleet. While I am confident that diving is being brought up to date it allows me to turn my attention to EOD, which is lamentably out of date."

The final line of my summary identified EOD as one of the outstanding problem areas, including IEDD. The stature and support for Underwater Engineering(UWE), this the peacetime cousin of the Battle Damage Repair and Assessment role, which runs more on goodwill than programmed support, is another challenge. I cannot promise a quick-fix solution in either the EOD or UWE roles but in both disciplines I have seen the first move toward the improvements and new techniques necessary to achieve appropriate recognition. In EOD, WO(D) Taylor, (Inspector EOD) is working to improve the professional standards in both EOD and IEDD, against more than usual difficulties as our Army colleagues reduce the IEDD training and licensing places. A LS(D) is now (sacrificed) to the staff at the JSEOD Operations Centre in order to constantly remind them of the Navy EOD capabilities! This, together with a robust approach through MoD, should help bring purple equality to EOD. UWE also has more promise of legitimacy than ever before, stoic work by Lt Les Crawford, my Diving Support and Engineering Officer(DSEO), and the Underwater Engineering Committee has, at last, achieved agreement from the Naval Support Command(NSC). They will take responsibility for the support of Military Divers and their peacetime UWE role. This will start with a study, conducted by Lt Cdr Alan Trevarthen RN, on his return from an exchange posting in the America where he has been assisting the US navy divers run their sophisticated programme of diver support to the USN, so he is ideally qualified.

So, what else has kept us busy? You may have noticed how the rest of the Navy has been progressing (or was it identifying how to trim to the 'new world order?') during much of my time as SofD. This has meant significant time has been dedicated to responding to these wider changes in order to ensure that the **unique role of the military diver** has not been overlooked in all of the searching and often radical considerations. Although it's not my prerogative, for example, to pre-judge the findings of the RCSG nor predict the conclusions of the revised JS EOD policy paper, what do I believe is the future for the Diving Branch? Based on the evidence of the Diving Policy paper and the manning considerations I have seen, the Branch's military capability and strength is not in question, although there is no easy answer to the degree of stretch being felt by so many. In fact, the management reorganisation and the new equipments improve our military capability, the SANDOWN follow on build and emphasis on shallow water warfare both underline the future requirement for the unique capabilities of divers.

To add a final chapter to the list of changes, the SofD HQ and FDG [as well as PACDU/SDU 2(Portsmouth)] will move to a new RECLAIM Building at Horsea Island on the 21 November. At the same time COMMW integrates with FOSF. After this date diving operations will be under the command and control of CinCFleet, while Captain Minewarfare and Patrol Vessels, **Diving** and Fishery Protection (CAPT MFP) will exercise Type Commander functions on behalf of FOSF for the administration, logistics and operational management of the Diving Groups. The Superintendent of Diving's responsibilities remain virtually unchanged except that he will have taken on the management of the North and South Diving Groups for CAPT MFP and FOSF.

Now to the subject which I believe will interest more of you than any other - advancement. It has been lamentably slow during my term as SofD and you have all heard the reasons why; recession, a shrinking navy and minimum PVR in the face of redundancy measures. Now these measures are behind us there is opportunity to renew those aspirations of progress. It does not mean that you all will achieve instant advancement or a place on that delayed course overnight. The reality is that the combination of space in the advancement pyramid, made by the 20 redundees, the trickle of time expired releases (with one or two new PVR's) and most significantly the manning of the 7 follow on SANDOWN Class in mid 1997, means the advancement machine must get into motion soon.

Finally I was really proud to see the unique military skills of all categories of diver demonstrated to the AFPRB in June and to witness all the Services working together so harmoniously. The fitting impression made on the AFPRB bode well for the future and I hope will be properly reflected in any revision of SSP(D).

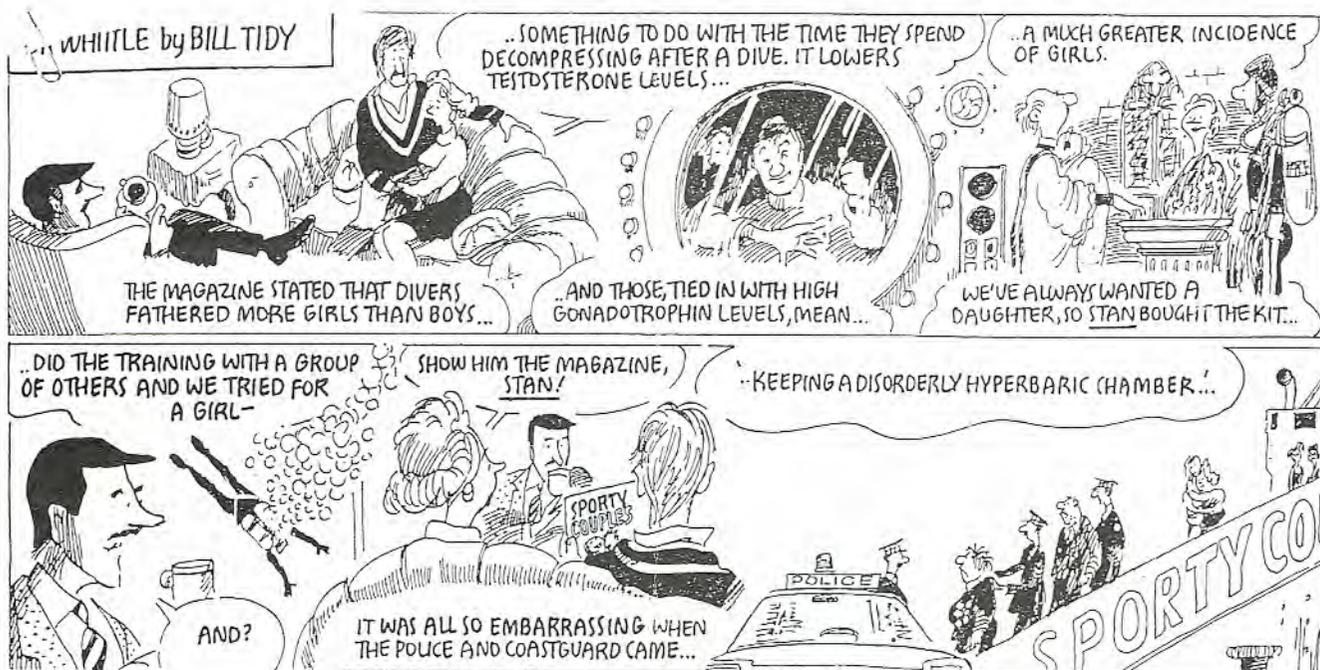
Remember, no matter what arm of diving you practice you are all part of the **services unique military diving capability** and I wish you all safe and progressive diving.



THE MERMAID FACTOR

By P. A. Balink-White

I thought you might be interested in an article of mine published in the April edition of THE NAVAL REVIEW. You may care to continue the Divers and their Daughters survey. Or it might make interesting copy for the MINEWARFARE and DIVING publication.



'Deep down it's a girlish mystery.' 'Girls keep bobbing up for divers.' 'It's funny about frogmen; they've so few sons.' 'Why do divers have so many girls?' 'Girls, girls, girls, the Navy just can't fathom it.' 'Divers' occupational hazard.'

These are just a few headlines from the British local and national press and the international press of some years back. What was all the fuss about?

It all started when this writer commanded an EOD/Diving Team in Malta. Because of the high birth rate among the local people and military families stationed there, it was known as 'Conception Isle', not always affectionately!

There were 12 divers in the Team who were all accompanied by their families. During our tour, every wife produced a child (you normally went home with a new washer/dryer, a new car and a new baby) and every child was a girl with one exception. Eleven girls to one boy (The father of the boy was not on active diving duty at the time of conception.)

In the years that followed, a casual eye was kept on divers and their families and it appeared more and more that there was a predominance of girl children.

Having reached the top of the tree, so to speak, in the British Navy's diving world – the Superintendent of Diving – I decided that a survey of divers and their families should be carried out. A form was prepared by the deputy S of D. It asked for all details to conduct the survey. The last question had to be changed, however. What was required was a question whose wording should have reflected 'what was your actual employment at the times of conception?' But, in typical 'navalese', it came out as 'What were you doing at the time of conception?'

The survey was announced in the Navy Diving Magazine which was picked up by civilian diving publications, thence the whole world including behind the Iron Curtain. The whole thing was rapidly getting out of hand.

The German Embassy in London wrote to the Ministry of Defence saying that a Dr Ernst Melzner, a German gynaecologist of note, had seen a report in the German magazine *Der Spiegel* which said: 'When the British Admiralty found out that the wives of eleven frogmen gave birth to daughters only, they ordered a Commander to find out the reason for this fact, 'It was stated that 'Dr Melzner believes that he knows the reason and wants to save the time of the Commander.' The Medical Director general was 'not amused'. He first found out about the survey through a letter from a scientist in Czechoslovakia who said he had been trying to solve the problem for 14 years and 'would be very grateful if you would enable me to co-operate with your investigation'.

Professor George Zipt of Harvard University considered that, in some mysterious manner, the body chemistry of the male is affected by the percentage of male or female persons to which he exposed in daily life. High exposure to females produces male children and vice versa.

One scientist in Denmark wrote 'I have been interested in it for 43 years!' His theory was that shining blue lights on cattle produced females and pink lights male. So, why not people? Blue is not a very complimentary colour and brings out strange effects with certain make-up!

There is an old wives' tale in Britain which says 'It takes a man to produce a girl, meaning that the more likelihood of conceiving a girl child. This was not implied. Unfortunately, some irate wives thought it was, and many letters were received from ladies saying they had a whole brood of boys and their husband was a 6'4" 'hunk' who had taken umbrage and was on the verge of seeking satisfaction' a duel – 'swords or boathooks?'

Is there any connection between a man's virility and his progeny? The Deputy Chief Scientist of the British Army announced that, 'A preponderance of female births are locally

THE MERMAID FACTOR

generated events! Amazing, put him down as a candidate for the Nobel Prize.

Others considered that a preponderance of girls was not exclusive to divers' families. Submariners, pilots and rugby players also all claimed a high percentage of the fair sex as family members. The diving survey showed an 80 per cent predominance of girls. It was an unofficial survey and, no doubt, would have been better conducted by expert pollsters.

The medical side of the Royal Navy never got involved professionally. They considered, in the nicest possible way, that the Superintendent of Diving was some kind of an interfering nut (the latter attribute helps in the EOD business).

We do not have the answer and perhaps it is best that we never will. However, it would be interesting to have a few ideas as to why, or to see if this sort of thing occurs in other sections of the Navy. It is understood that aviators, after pulling a lot of 'G's sire boys - or is it girls? Incidentally, this writer has two daughters.

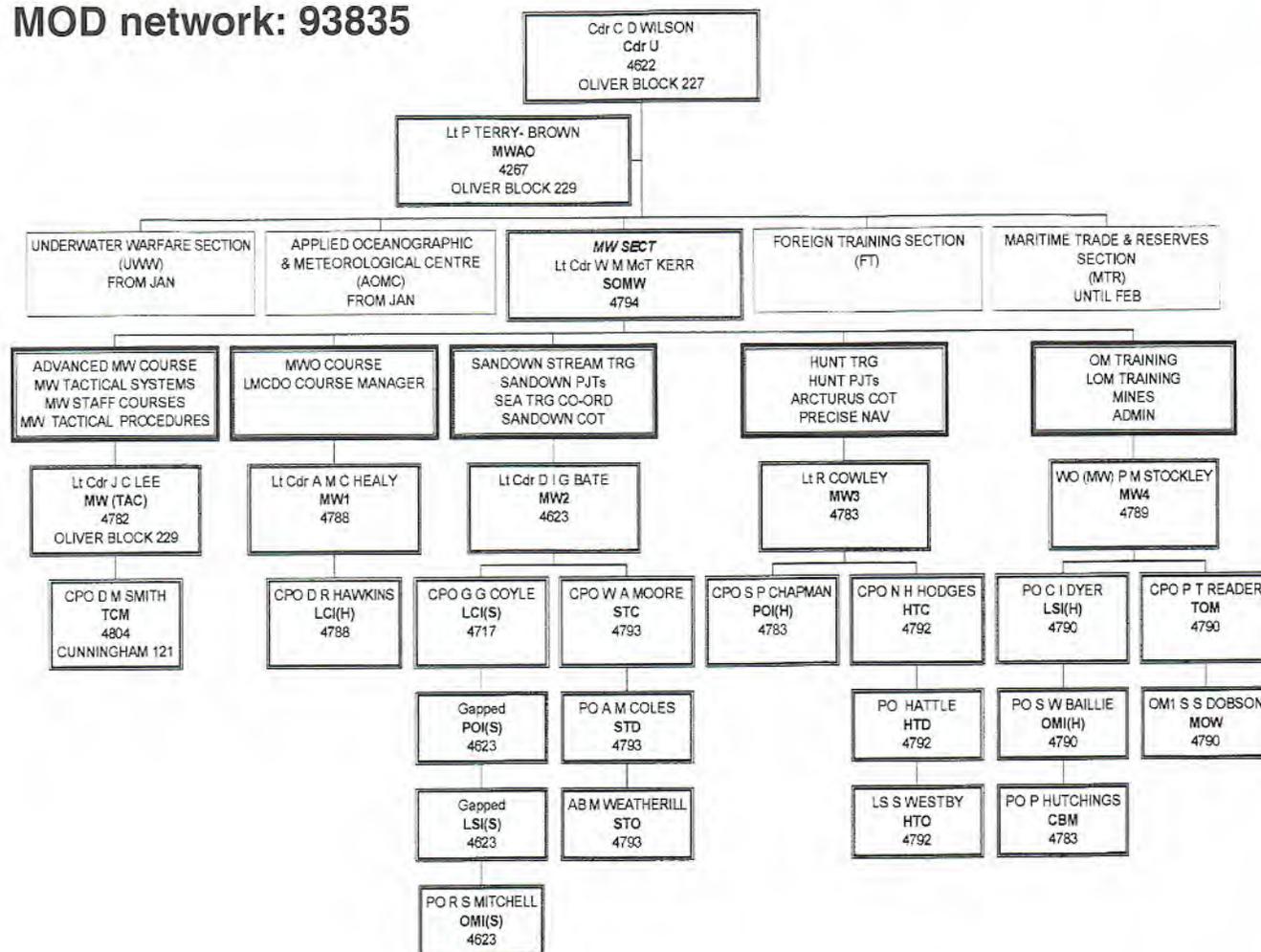
ENCLOSURE 1 TO INM's 530.010 DATED 7 OCT 94

For many years it has been claimed that divers, and incidentally also submariners, sire mainly girls. Unfortunately, despite an extensive search of the medical literature I can find no published data to support this theory. What does exist is work investigating the fertility of both divers and experimental animals, mainly rats, which have been subjected to normal dive profiles. None of these studies comment on altered sex ratio of offspring. What was revealed by these studies was that diving did not appear to have any significant effect on the fertility of divers, or indeed rats, except in a small group of divers involved in very deep dives to 400msw. Amongst this small group of divers a reversible reduction in sperm count was noted. This still leaves the question of why Commander Balink-White's survey revealed an excess of girls, the answer I suspect lies with the statisticians.

Minewarfare Section Organisation Jan 96

Civilian dialing code:
(01705) 28
MOD network: 93835

HMS DRYAD



DIVERS GOLF 1995

By WO(D) MO Crang

A J TOPPLED AS TROPHY GOES NORTH

A sun-drenched Southwick Park saw A J Wheelers 2 year championship reign end as ex AB(D) Mick Southward hit a championship record 149 over 2 rounds to take the divers top prize. Southward travelled from Scotland for the event and for the first time in the championship 10 year history the trophy lies firmly in Scotlands hands. Another record was crushed as £700 was raised for Terry Wogan "Children in Need." Well done the divers!

To add to the English divers misery, Scotland's Diamond Geezers, L Murphy, D Bailey, S Fitzjohn and K Stockton took the popular Solent Divers Team Championship.

Commodore Richard Moore watched in anguish as yet another championship slipped by and for the 3rd year running finished runner up. In the opening 4 ball the Commodore and Wheeler fought for supremacy only to finish the morning round with disappointing scores of 70 and 82 respectively. The Commodore fared better than A J in the afternoon's blistering heat with a spirited 76 only to see Southward hang on with a pm 77.

Newcomer to the championship K Stockton took the Fullerton Sherwood Stableford championship with 72 pts. Our handicap system must be the envy of the PT branch!

Ebinger UK's first division stableford winner was Veteran, always consistent, Dave Bartlet who with Lt Mark Kessler also winning the Mick Fellows Pairs Championship.

Carleton Technologies 2nd division winner was Buck Rogers. Marty Kurzdorfer representing Carlton travelled from America for the event and did not go home empty handed as he took the guests 2nd division Championship.

P Owen won the Trelleborg Beadle's Guests Championship. Beadle's representative M Cotton who won the best am round pre-sented the championship with a new trophy for this event, out own silver Claret Jug.

Star of the Championship however was not a champion, nor a best am or pm winner, but the last entry, a Scottish loving Welshman called Larry Grayson! who, by chance, hit a hole in one on the DIVEX sponsored 7th hole to win a Gallon of Whisky and the opportunity to treat every one at the bar to £250 worth of drink. As both prizes were fluids and Grayson by

now would have nothing to show for his remarkable achievement a certain lovely lady was forced to go back home and collect the Hole in One Trophy where it has sat but never ever won for 5 years leaving her husband speechless as he can no longer tell any further Hole in one stories! Mr Grayson is ill advised to work for a particular WO(D) who has now no trophies left in his cabinet.

Haskell's guests first Division Championship winner was M Payne with the overall veterans prize going to R Bailey whose diving son Robert Bailey winning the Mara Engineering's 24 Handicap Trophy.

Drager sponsored prize winners were:
Putting Champion - P Owen
Divers wooden spoon - Mick Oleary
Can't Even Come Last Trophy - A Tonkinson

Guests Wooden Spoon - R Stockton
The event was again a huge success finishing with a Barbeque, disco many stories, a few headaches and the usual funnies by Shep (I wanted to be a diver) Wooley. Our thanks to Southwick Park, sponsors, Commodore Moore for presenting the prizes and Jimmy Lynch a member of the championship committee.

Next years championship will again be held at Southwick Park on Friday the 26th July.



Commander Richard Moore presenting AB(D) Larry Grayson with the DIVEX hole in one sponsored trophy



EX AB(D) Mick Southward being presented the Championship Trophy by Commander Richard Moore.

BLUE HARRIER 95

By Lt Cdr Paul Jones

BLUE HARRIER 95, the annual NATO minewarfare exercise, was held in waters stretching from the Skaggeak to the Western Baltic from 22 April to 4 May involving 48 ships from eight different nations operating on behalf of ADMIRAL DANISH FLEET. The number of participants was matched by the vast numbers of exercise mines laid for this exercise - a total of 562! MCM1 (Cdr Richard Bell-Davies) was given tactical command of HMS CHIDDINGFOLD, HMS LEDBURY, FDU 2, USS DEFENDER, USS PIONEER and FGS LINDAU, as well as HMS HERALD (providing the MCMTA platform) and FSU 2 support based in Frederickshavn. The objective was to clear a route 72 miles long for convoy traffic and an anchorage of 25 square miles making maximum use of the assets allocated. Despite the enormity of the task ahead, the objective was achieved in time for the first of the convoys.

With the MCMTA established, briefings completed, task orders issued and a spectacular mine explosion demonstration to put everybody in the MCM mood, the mighty plan swung into action. Unfortunately, fate intervened in the form of major opdefs and USS DEFENDER was the sole MCMV representative at STARTEX. Poor weather conditions at the anchorage boat lanes prevented FDU 2 commencing worthwhile operations and LEDBURY was tasked to join another group. Before SOO slipped into a fit of depression, FSU 02 quickly resolved CHIDDINGFOLD's sonar defect and BNS NARCIS was re-allocated to our depleted task group. 24 hours later, the plot was restored and the exploratory ops

began in earnest. PIONEER joined soon after and FDU 2 overcame the adverse anchorage weather conditions. The grand plan, after a faltering start, started to produce results. DEFENDER, despite difficult environmental conditions (freshwater layers, high clutter density and shallow water), quickly found the first ground mine and successfully located and recovered 4 more mines in rapid succession. NARCIS had similar success in the southern portion of the route and the Belgian tripartite speedily located 4 mines. CHIDDINGFOLD was not to be outdone and located her first mine in the northern segments, followed by a further 2.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the MCMTA under the direction of Lt Cdr Paul Jones and CPO(MW) Tony Mulraine successfully evolved from 'one-armed paperhanging mode' and kept the MCMVs hard at work. HERALD's hydrographic survey team discovered a sandbank blocking the approaches to the designated beach landing area, which would have resulted in the LSLs grounding some 600 yards short of the target; the decision was made to 'lift and shift' beach operations to a more suitable landing area. OIC FDU 2 (Lt Jim Nisbet) and HERALD's Operations Officer (Lt Glyn Thomas) liaised closely and conducted a successful combined beach survey and boat lane clearance operation, providing yet more grist to the mill for the development of Very Shallow Water (VSW) operating procedures.

Back on the high seas, PIONEER was 'poached' by the CTF to assist MCM forces depleted by opdefs in the southern Kattegat.



USS Defender



MCM1 staff plus RNR Augmentees



The CO Lt Cdr Bill Scarth (centre) of HMS Chiddingfold with his diving and minewarfare team and three recovered mines.

BLUE HARRIER 95

The gap was filled by LEDBURY, flushed with success after spending a marvellous 2 days exploring exciting new tactics for determining the outer limits of a minefield !!.

DEFENDER, after hauling in mines in at an impressive rate, was dispatched to Aalborg to execute 'Operation HEINEKEN (where much refreshing of parts that other operations couldn't reach was achieved!).

Half-way through BLUE HARRIER, COMMW visited all the units in a packed programme (setting a new world record for boat transfers!). Commodore Moore's visit culminated in witnessing night VSW ops, with CHIDDINGFOLD and HERALD providing the support platforms.

With all 72 miles of the route successfully opened in time for the first convoy, CHIDDINGFOLD and NARCIS detached to assist in mine recovery in the southern Kattagat. LEDBURY and the fully refreshed DEFENDER set about the task of clearing the problematic waters of the anchorage. With very poor sonar conditions providing short detection ranges, two tactics were employed to aid clearance ops. HERALD, with her hull 'specially strengthened' and ship's company wearing hard hats and worried expressions, mineswept the anchorage (thinly disguised as a 'guinea pig' ship) in an attempt to actuate flare-fitted mines. DEFENDER successfully 'dunked' her VDS below the freshwater layer (in very shallow water! !) and located mines using the much improved ranges. In the final stages of the exercise, the staff spotted one of the enemy minelayers and, operating strictly within Geneva Convention rules whilst forcing the crew to drink whiskey, managed to glean further

useful 'intell'. FDU 2, despite realising disappointingly that the exercise ordnance had been laid outside of their allocated boat lane, persevered and expanded their search to eventually locate the wayward mines and bombs.

The exercise drew to a close on 2 May and the ships set off to their VE Day celebration venues. MCM1 staff attended the debrief in Aarhus - the only highlight to report was the look of terror on the faces of the exercise staff as COMSTANAVFORCHAN vented his fury over the time his ships spent 'exploring the limits of a minefield' whilst the rest of us had a useful (and fun) period..

BLUE HARRIER 95 was an excellent exercise and provided many operational highlights. HERALD proved that she has far more to offer than just a floating platform for the MCMTA - the hydrographic expertise onboard dovetailed well with shallow water clearance ops which resulted in useful lessons learnt and new ideas. HERALD's ability to support and replenish MCMVs at sea, including RCMDS transfers and mine offloads, meant that minehunters could remain on task with minimal disruption to their tasking cycle. HERALD also executed a leadthrough of a submerged submarine. USS DEFENDER's performance was outstanding and US MCM ops have clearly come a long way in a relatively short space of time. The support of RNR augmentees proved, yet again, extremely useful during a very busy exercise. In all, 72 miles of Q-route were hunted and opened to convoys with only 3 mines unaccounted for at ENDEX.

There were plenty of other less operational but very enjoyable

FDU 2 commencing shallow water operations.



FDU 2 Mandatory team Phot.



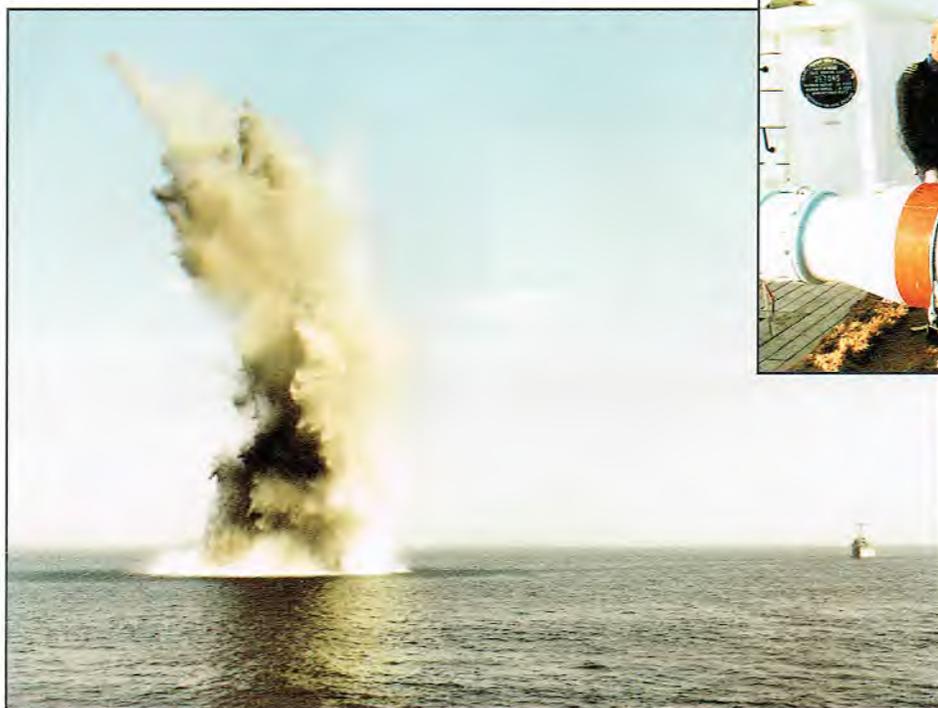
"TATTY" takes charge, how many people does it take to unload a Gemini.

I know we packed the tea in here somewhere.

BLUE HARRIER 95

highlights. The effects of an 800 kg mine going off in close proximity caused a flurry of activity in HERALD's engine room and the MEO sprouting a few more grey hairs..Once mistakenly referred to as 'HMS' DEFENDER in a signal, the American MCMV insisted on proudly flying the white ensign for the remainder of the exercise. And we must thank the Frederickshavn Comcen for using a radio operator who was clearly Miss Denmark 1995 to deliver signals to the MCMTA

(for a few brief moments the horrors of war were forgotten and the operations room transformed into a Timotei shampoo advert...sad but true). BLUE HARRIER '96 should yield even more stories next year, although MCM1 will be watching from afar - we will be off the East Coast of the United States in the spring of 96. Happy hunting!



Cdr Bell-Davies (MCM1) Lt Cdr Smallman (CO Ledbury) (CO Defender) and Cdr Bartholomew (CO Herald)

A controlled mine detonation HMS Herald is hidden from view by the water plume. USS Defender on the right.



Mines being transferred from USS Defenders quarterdeck to HMS Heralds Fòc'sle

BLUE HARRIER 95



Ledbury/Herald/US Defender raft up and mine offload.



HMS Herald PAP transfer.



HMS Ledbury (sun going down on Blue harrier '95).



USS Caron's HELO dropping MCMV stores onto Herald's flight deck.

HMS Herald PAP transfer.



PO(D) "Dolly" Parton (COXN Chiddingfold)

Letters to the Editor



... *Letters to the Editor* ...



Dear Lieutenant Commander Lee,

As the Army's Ammunition Technical Officer on strength of the Defence EOD School I am privileged to read numerous EOD related articles produced by the 3 services. As such I have just finished reading *Minewarfare and Diving* Volume 5 Number 1, and sadly I cannot agree with the departing Editor that all articles are those of quality. I refer to Lt Cdr Chapples article on PCDU and the paragraph headed *Explosive Ordnance Disposal*.

To state that the number of tasks has reduced primarily because of JSEODOC interpretation of rules is both unsavoury and I suspect groundless. The staff of the JSEODOC provide the end user, ie EOD operator with an excellent service, particularly when the operator is faced with a significant incident and requires to contact other agencies for advice. They also provide quality tasking information by skilful questioning of tasking agencies; a point he may wish to bare in mind when accepting tasks direct from HM Coastguard. If Lt Cdr Chapple does have a genuine grievance then why not write to the CO of 11 EOD Regt RLC, who is responsible for the daily running of the JSEODOC, rather than sniping from the side line.

Having spent over 2 years at DEODS working to assist any member of staff or student regardless of Service or Cap badge I find the in house bickering between Services particularly distasteful. Paradoxically the one thing that the Tri-Service staff at DEODS did agree with was that the disposal method depicted at Claredon in the same article was definitely not endorsed by anyone at this establishment.

Whilst EOD may still keep divers, technicians and the like gainfully employed in peacetime, the more we squabble between ourselves the more likely we are to find it difficult to work together in conflict under significantly greater pressures.

Yours sincerely

Captain Phillip Ingledew RLC

Real-Life Adventure from the Pacific Northwest The Farside comes to life in Oregon.

I am absolutely not making this incident up; I have it all on videotape. The tape is from a local TV news show in Oregon, which sent a reporter out to cover the removal of a 45-foot, eight-to dead whale that washed up on the beach. The responsibility for getting rid of the carcass was placed on the Oregon State Highway Division, apparently on the theory that highways and whales are very similar in the sense of being large objects.

So anyway, the highway engineers hit upon the plan—remember, I am not making this up—of blowing the whale with dynamite. The thinking is that the whale would be blown into small pieces,

which would be eaten by seagulls, and that would be that. A textbook whale removal.

So they moved the spectators back up the beach, put half-ton of dynamite next to the whale and set it off. I am probably not guilty of understatement when I say that what follows, on the videotape, is the most wonderful event in the history of the universe. First you see the whale carcass disappear in a huge blast of smoke and flame. Then you hear the happy spectators shouting "Yay!" and "Whee!" Then suddenly, the crowd's tone changes. You hear a new sound like "splud". You hear a woman's voice shouting "Here come pieces of . . . MY GOD!!!" Something smears the camera lens.

Later, the reporter explains: "The humour of the entire situation suddenly gave way to a run for survival as huge chunks of whale blubber fell everywhere." One piece caved in the roof of a car parked more than a quarter of a mile away. Remaining on the beach were several rotting whale sectors the size of condominium units. There was no sign of the seagulls who had no doubt permanently relocated to Brazil.

This is a very sobering videotape. Here at the institute we watch it often, especially at parties. But this is no time for gaiety. This is a time to get hold of the folks at the Oregon State Highway Division and ask them, when they get done cleaning up the beaches, to give us an estimate on the US Capitol.

**Tom Mahoney,
9, Coast Guard Sqn. 1/Div.13 CatLo**



BRIDPORT to the HUNTS: "Please, please PLEASE can I move to sunny Portsmouth with you in November?"

HUNTS reply: "No.... clear off to Faslane ... and don't forget your arctic clothing!"

HUNTS to BRIDPORT: "Look...we know that all your mates are in the Med at the moment . . . but STOP following us around!"

Letters to the Editor

NOW AND THEN

If the Health and Safety Executive had been in existence in those far-off days they would have given birth! A diver in overall, canvas ropesoled boots, (the forerunners of trainers perhaps!) and to cap the lot an old style gasmask with separate eyepieces rigged for diving. The lifeline consisted of inch and a half sisal, the weightbelt was a canvas waistcoat with pockets for slab weights, incidentally the canvas boots had shaped lead weights weighing about a pound each which could be added to, according to how big and strong the diver was.

The place Car Nicobar, part of the Andaman Isles in the Indian Ocean, (for those not familiar with Geography.) The ship HMS Mauritius a Colony class cruiser, flagship of the East Indies Station in 1952. Myself a young D3 going through for the hook.

The job was a poker gauge test on the starboard inner shaft, to those of you wondering, we did carry standard diving gear with the good old pattern 111 pump (No BIBS ring main in those days) getting rigged for diving in a Kitchener gear cutter, or whaler was a full time evolution, so for minor jobs we used gas mask diving especially if working in the shaft tunnels or on the screws, (The Colony class had four screws) we would rig the pump on the quarterdeck which made for a steadier platform for the pumping party than a boat, anyone who has been pumping party in the climate of the East Indies will tell you with feeling that it is the best slimming exercise devised, never mind circuit training!

Once in the water and screwing in the poker gauge I was quite happy, and cool, until I was conscious of something in my peripheral vision, which made me look up and outboard, there large as life and to me with my distorted vision equally as ugly was a large shark cruising past, followed in line ahead by others looking like X craft, they showed no interest in me but carried on astern,

My immediate concern on completion of the job, was how to surface without attracting their attention. I can hear people saying that sharks do not bother with divers below the surface, but I had not then read Hans Hass books! Nor had the sharks. On giving five bells, I prayed for good attendants and gave four and two, moments later I was on deck wondering why I had been in such a panic.

I soon discovered the reason for the rush hour traffic down below, was that the local headman on Car Nicobar had given the wardroom a sucking pig, and some bright young mids had hit on the idea of using a forty gallon drum with the guts of the aforementioned pig dangling from a wire, without first checking that diving was still taking place. No for the first time in my career I spoke my mind to the budding fishermen, as a young AB I thought that I would be in the rattle, but my TASO took over and verbally pasted them as will, plus I got an apology, so HSE eat your heart out, with all your rules and regs, and bumph, what about Salvus rigged for diving? But that is another story to swing the lamp about.

Spike W.

Dear Ed,

Having listened over the last few months to the problems the ships are having with PAP deployment and recovery, I thought it was time to write to the mag with a few ideas gained from years of sea experience on SRMH.

This letter is from me and is no way a statement from CWTA.

Yours faithfully

CPO (MW) (O) R. Darge

The rig for the man on the hero platform

1. Safety helmet, chin strap down.
Multi fab suit
HDLJ.
Irvine safety harness.
DMS boots.
Rigging set.

Launching:

The ship gets into a hover.

Pre run checks are then carried out (there is no point in doing pre run checks until the ship is in the hover. As it stands at the moment the vehicle is ready to go, but normally the ship is still trying to obtain the best hover to launch the PAP. This has to be the best position to launch the PAP and may be different to the hover that the ship took to classify the contact)

Control is passed to bridge.

The PAP is lifted over the side and positioned just above the water and the bridge is happy with his hover and the direction that he will drift in the short time when he selects DCS levers and bow thrusters at zero, he orders the LCO to carry on and launch the PAP.

The LCO launches the PAP on the vector as given to him by the ops room, he drives the PAP away smartly and when the PAP is clear of the ship at about 30m he then informs the ops room and then the MHD will take over control of the PAP.

The PAP at all times must be under positive control, at all times the MHD must pass control to the LCO "LCO OPS launch the port/stbd vehicle initial vector red/green 090"

"OPS LCO vehicle away heading red/green 090 range 30m"

"LCO OPS rodger vehicle away heading red/green 090 range 30m I have control"

On the bridge hearing that the ops room has taken control of the PAP he then can reselect the hover or pass control back to the ops room.

At the end of the mission when the vehicle is returning to the ship the ship will remain in the hover until the vehicle is on the surface, the distance to which the PAP will be driven back to the ship underwater will mostly depend on the tracking system, if you have good tracking then 30m would be a safe distance or if the tracking is poor then you must surface the vehicle at least 50m from the ship.

When the vehicle is on the surface and the LCO reports "OPS LCO vehicle on the surface" the MHD would then order "LCO OPS you have control of the vehicle recover the vehicle to the waiting position.

During this period of time the bridge would now place the ship in the best position to recover the PAP.

The LCO would drive the vehicle to a position and take station 15m on the quarter on the side on which the recovery will take place.

When the bridge is happy he will deselect as before and then order "LCO BRIDGE in position carry on and recover the vehicle LCO rodger"

The LCO will drive the vehicle back to the ship aiming to position the vehicle just aft of the hero platform, the PAP must not be hooked on if the PAP is forward of the hero platform, as the crane purchase wire will cut straight across the platform and endanger the man on the platform and may be pinned down on the platform by the purchase wire.

When the PAP is hooked on and is clear of the water the LCO informs the bridge "BRIDGE LCO vehicle hooked on" then when clear of the water "BRIDGE LCO vehicle clear of the water clear to manoeuvre"

This task works well with team work and all the main players knowing what the other team members are doing and in what order.

Letters to the Editor

FROM THE ED

Hazardous Materials Data Sheet: Woman

Analysis

- Element: Woman
 Symbol: WO2
 Discoverer: Adam
 Atomic Mass: Accepted as 55 kg, but known to vary from 45 kg to 225 kg
 Occurrence: Copious quantities in all urban areas, with traces found in most others

Physical properties

- (1) Surface is often covered in powder or paint.
- (2) Boils at nothing
- (3) Freezes for no reason, but will melt if given the correct treatment.
- (4) Bitter if used incorrectly.
- (5) Found in various grades ranging from virgin material to common ore.
- (6) Yields to gently pressure applied to selected points.

Chemical properties

- (1) Has a great affinity for gold, silver platinum and most precious stones
- (2) Absorbs great quantities of expensive substances.
- (3) May explode without warning and for no reason.
- (4) Softens and takes on a rosy glow when soaked in water.
- (5) Activity greatly increases with saturation in alcohol.
- (6) Most powerful money-reducing agent known to man.

Common uses

- (1) Highly ornamental – especially in sports cars
- (2) Can be a great aid to relaxation.

Tests

- (1) Pure specimens turn bright pink when discovered in their natural state.
- (2) Will turn green when placed beside a better specimen.

So now you know.

For your edification . . .

In Sweden, diving regulations were instituted as early as 1874 (yes, 1874!) – probably not many of you know that. One of the regulations is entitled, Selection of Divers, and an English translation from the Swedish follows. Some doctors think that it may be as useful now as it was 120 years ago.

Before anyone is accepted as a student of diving he must be examined by a doctor to find if he is suited for diving.

None shall be accepted for diving if:

- (1) He has headache, is partly deaf or has discharge from his ears.
- (2) He has a dark red face, short neck and sometimes in combination with red injected eyes.
- (3) He has coughed or spat blood.
- (4) He has tachycardia.
- (5) He is pale and has blue lips, cold hands and feet, in other words is an anaemic.
- (6) He is a heavy drinker or has had repeated occasions of syphilis, rheumatism or sun stroke.



AB (D) Andy Lonsdale

Sponsored Abseil for SCOPE, formerly Spastics Society.
 Date: 11.12.94
 Venue: Wingfield House Portsmouth
 Height: 140 feet
 Funds raised by me: £86
 Total funds for the day £10,000.

It was a good day, very windy, good tuition and very professional. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to my sponsorship.

Andy

HMS INVERNESS AND MY PART IN HER DOWNFALL

1st June 1993, I jumped on my trusty steed and thrashed it the 65 miles to Rosyth. The sun was out, the weather fine, my bike was on top form and I was hitting every corner as hard as I could, I felt on top of the world.

"Where is that grey thing I'm supposed to be joining?" I know it's in this dockyard somewhere.

On board at last, sitting in the mess, I asked stupid question number one, "do you have a longcast?" Much laughter occurred and daily orders were handed to me, "That's it", the shortcast comes out over main broadcast. "Bloody Hell", what have I just joined.

A few days later, handover complete, we sail for the Kyles of Lochalsh a little known place to most, but second base port to SRMH's.

As Engine Room POMEM(M) I was intrigued by this big silver egg in the passageway outside the mess, which many Civvies from a religious sect called Marconi seemed to be praying to on hands and knees, they also did not like the question "Is it fixed yet". Prior to sailing the Silver Egg disappeared and was replaced with a ramp (I wonder where it went to)?

We arrived in Kyles (no wonder no one knows where it is) and did the tourist bit in the evening, FBI, Norwest and Islander. We sailed in the morning with a sore head, at 0800, well not very far, as the port main engine tripped and that got the brain cells moving. (In these days of fuel economy and cost cuts today modern diesel engines do run better with the fuel turned on) Ooop's.

Due alongside at 2000 but back in at three, in time for tea, met by religious sect, with the strange egg in the tea boat flat again. Much scratching of the heads and gnashing of teeth followed, their God must have let them down.

Here comes stupid question number two, "What is that?" It's the 2093 Sonar. "Will it be fixed by then?" Sod off klankie and stick to the engines. "You must be joking that's my weak subject".

Watchkeeping in the SCC dragged on, the only major problem was a good supply of batteries for the Game Boy, on which many levels of Tetris were achieved.

On to Campbeltown and Pike, (Muppets are a strange breed spending hours searching the sea bed and rock spotting 200 metres down with PAP's). Never mind the fishing is good, and the Mackerel are in.

On watch MEM reports that he can't get the dipstick to stay in G0 generator. It keeps blowing out of its hole. Diagnosis is terminal and it needs major surgery. Well bugger me if the same thing didn't happen to G1 generator, so solution, head for Faslane and a double genny change.

Letters to the Editor

The Muppets seemed a bit miffed as their egg was working will for some strange reason.

Alongside in Faslane things went from bad to worse, the only two spare genny sets in the world, had been left out in the rain uncovered for fifteen months. After the arrival of the engine only (minus the generator end) and much work already done we were informed that we could not have it, by some obscure desk bound group, as it was a Type 23 spare. (Why send the damn thing). 72 hours wasted and much suspicion focused on me:-

- 1) The ship was stuck in Faslane
- 2) It was a Klankie defect
- 3) I was the only Helensburgh RA onboard

Answer:- Sod off I haven't been home yet and we've been here three days buggier it, I'm going, see you tomorrow.

Five weeks later we escaped minus one generator. We used the cover of darkness and sailed at midnight. About 50 yards off the jetty we get a minerva alarm in the starboard genny room, the ship goes into the hover, while the newly fitted smoking generator is sorted out. Neptune duty watch is standing by on the jetty, for what good they can do there (submariners are a strange lot).

Back in Kyle the trials drag on and I'm nearly on first name terms with everyone in the village. The thought had crossed my mind to move the wife and kids up, so that I could see them once in a while.

We returned to Rosyth and DED. I won't say much about DED, apart from it was a mad rush in the beginning, quiet in the middle and all hell broke loose at the end. The memory is still painful.

Out of DED and back to the Kyles of Lochalsh. BOST looms, and after another aborted trial, the ship tries out a 48 hour mine hunting watch experiment prior to bost.

Then enters me? An instantly qualified Klankie Muppet, assisted by a WEM(O) Muppet, a Stoker Muppet, a Steward Muppet and 3 Aqua Muppets (divers). We land the prime job of launching RCMDS Mk2 (PAPS) off the back end in the dark. (Good one). Various new words are taken in, such as donkeys what's it and Bobbin thingies, also turn that torch off. The latter being the hardest as Klankies always shout the opposite.

First launch 0300 and the real Muppets are nice and warm in the OPS room. This is taking the biscuit, so I decide to get my own back. The temp outside is minus one degree C, so on go both ACP's, (that should cool them down) back to the launch, we managed to get it into the water (with difficulty). OPS-LCO is the dragrope in the water?

(What's one of them) reply, it's all in the water and about 25 yards behind us. OK OPS has control. Bridge-crane deck has the vehicle been launched yet? Reply not printable.

OPS-LCO problems with PAP, it went go past 75 metres. This happened just as I arrived in a nice warm SCC for a cig and hot cup of tea. Oh no back to a cold wet crane deck with no lights. OPS-LCO drag rope released (must find out what that is). Vehicle at 30M and on it's way up. The yellow whale harpooning equipment was made ready. We got it alongside, harpooned it and lifted it clear of the water.

LCO-OPS there is a problem, the donkeys 'whats it' has dropped off. OPS-LCO that's the drag rope it's meant to. Oh? (That's what it is).

We push the PAP into the hanger and get the WEO up. What do you think WEO, don't know I can't see a thing in the dark. Try changing the bobbin and the battery. On removal of the yellow whale's tail, hissing air ways heard. Did you vent the body after the pressure test? What let the air out. Yes. Won't it sink with no air in it? It is meant to. Good one, somebody could

have told us about that. Anyway while you are here can you do something about that flashing light on the front of the PAP, as we are all clacked out and it's making like a lighthouse having a fit. Get stuffed I'm going back to bed. Good night WEO.

The moral is, that Klankies, WEM's, Stewards, Stokers and divers that know very little about PAP's don't make good crane deck muppets.

Our learning curve was past the vertical, things could only improve. Back to Rosyth and here comes BOST. Day one didn't go too well as the lads were told to keep a low profile. This they did so well that I could not find them. Still we survived and moved onto the mine warfare phase.

The next group of smiling assassins came up the gangway and off we went. The crane deck is an awesome sight at the end of November, covered in frost. Especially to a Klankie that sticks to indoor maintenance, September through to June, and only ventures on the upper scupper when leave has been piped, as a means of getting to the gangway. It seemed like Siberia.

So there I was several layers of clothes, overalls, foul weather gear, GSLJ, HDLJ, Surcoat, Cougar, Hard Hat and the most essential bit of kit a nice pair of warm gloves. A voice boomed down from 01 deck that sent a shiver down my spine. "You're not allowed to wear gloves when working ropes". Oh no, I want to go back to my engine room It's warm down there and I'm sure its missing me. I pray for something to break and spend hours down there warming up. Alas my engines let me down and I was doomed to freeze. I said goodbye to any feeling in my fingers for some weeks to come.

A couple of weeks into BOST and the silver egg was back in the main drag. Soon after the religious sect arrived, had a drink and left to work on SANDOWN they came back later but only to remove a bit in order to get their God working on the other boat. A cunning plan was conceived, as beer seemed to be a central part of their religion, maybe we could ply them with enough to kick the backside out of the repair as Christmas leave is only two weeks away. This plan was never put into action as Mecca and the silver egg must have lined up and an all night prayer session had it fixed and we were back out again. The clock was against us and the deep phase was postponed. Christmas leave, then BMP. I had to check the ships drawings to find out where the engine room was, it seemed so long since I had been down there, maybe it had moved.

The end of January and a rough trip down to Portsmouth, with the only excitement being a flood in the bowthrust space and the end of the bow thruster for some weeks, also most of the MEO's BR's. Vosper Thornycroft was our destination and the fitting of the idiot platform's (I can call them that as I've been in them several times) to make harpooning the PAP's easier. The principal is simple, fit a platform to the side of the ship and put an idiot in it. This gives the harpoonist a better chance to hook on, before my two little babies called Voiths eat yellow whale meat.

They seem to have acquired a taste for it, two PAP's notched up on the SCC door so far.

On to the Kyle of Lochalsh and another attempt to complete BOST. Oh dear try again later. Back to Rosyth to pick up the bow thrust, OCF GP16 work up and Easter leave. After Easter leave we deploy for three months, leaving behind the religious sect dreaming of the travel expenses that they would receive flying out to the Med.

That covers the first two years onboard. The personal cost so far:- Two Motor Bike's thrashed to death and requiring new engines. Nearly divorced, frost bite and a bloody big bar bill.

To be continued:-

**Eddie Manners PO(MEM)(M)
Inverness**



JACK EASTON, GC

Jack Easton, who has died aged 88, won the George Cross for mine disposal during the London Blitz of 1940.

On Oct 17 Easton and Ordinary Seaman Bennett Southwell, both members of the Land Disposal Section, were called to deal with an unexploded parachute mine in Clifton Street, Shoreditch.

The area had been cleared, and the two men walked down a deserted street towards the house where the mine had crashed through the roof, made a great ragged hole and littered the streets and pavements with shattered slates.

The hole was directly over the parlour, but Easton could not open the door more than a few inches. There was no back door, so he climbed through the back window of another house and over some walls to reach the parlour through the window.

The mine, a German Type C magnetic device, 8ft 8in long and containing 1,500lb of explosive, was dangling by its parachute lines, with the canopy wrapped partly round a chimney pot and partly caught on an iron bedstead in the room above.

With Southwell handing him tools through the doorway, Easton began to tackle the fuse. But it had been damaged and he could not shift it. He had been working for about a minute when the mine slipped. There was a sound of falling brickwork as the chimney pot overhead collapsed, and then the whirring of the mine mechanism. Easton knew it would detonate in 12 seconds.

Shouting to Southwell to get clear, he forced open the parlour door, ran across the street to the surface air-raid shelter opposite, and flung himself face down on its far side. He was blinded by the flash just before the explosion, but heard



Easton in 1941

nothing more. "I do not know what time passed before I became conscious," he said.

"When I did, I knew I was buried deep beneath bricks and mortar and was being suffocated. My head was between my legs, and I guessed my back was broken, but I could not move an inch. I was held, embedded. Men dug me out eventually. To this day I do not know how long I spent in my grave. Most of that time I was unconscious. The conscious moments were of horror and utter helplessness."

The mine demolished six streets. Southwell was decapitated. His body was found six weeks later: he was awarded a posthumous GC.

Jack Maynard Cholmondley Easton was born on May 28 1906 and was educated at Pangbourne before being articled as a solicitor in London in the family firm of William Easton. He joined the RNVR in 1940 and was undergoing training at HMS *King Alfred* at Hove when there was a call for 12 officers for a secret mission.

He volunteered out of curiosity and because it seemed to him that anything was better than sitting at a desk working out navigational problems: "I was to learn," he recalled, "that volunteering for anything in the Navy is a very foolish vanity."

Easton went to HMS *Vernon*, the torpedo and mining school at Portsmouth, and was still a probationary sub-lieutenant RNVR when he dealt with the Shoreditch mine – his 17th and last.

His skull and pelvis were fractured, and both his legs broken. He spent a year in plaster. In January 1941 the Admiralty sent three cases of champagne to his hospital and told him to listen to the nine o'clock news – on which his GC was announced.

Late in 1941 Easton was appointed to HMS *Britannia II*, the trawler based at Dartmouth. He commanded motor minesweeper No 6 and later No 22, and led a mine sweeping flotilla in the D-Day landings, when a new type of German oyster mine exploded under his ship, wounding him a second time.

After the war he was legal adviser to the VC and GC Association.

A witty extrovert, Jack Easton was highly attractive to women. In his youth he and a friend answered a newspaper advertisement and spent a summer as dancing partners for American women in Monte Carlo.

He married, first, Felicity Field, who predeceased him; they had a daughter. He married, secondly, Joan Easton, his cousin.



JOHN MILLER, GC

John Miller who has died aged 91, won the George Cross for bravery and devotion to duty in mine disposal during the London Blitz.

With his assistant Able Seaman Jack Tuckwell, Miller disarmed 10 magnetic parachute mines during 1940 and 1941. Their GCs were awarded for the last of these, a mine which had fallen in the Roding river and was judged to be in a highly sensitive and dangerous condition.

It was a cold winter's afternoon and raining hard. Miller borrowed a canoe, which he and Tuckwell put on board a River Fire

Service firefloat to take them to where the mine was thought to be, near a sewage outlet.

They dropped into their canoe and paddled towards the outlet until they sighted the top rim of the mine, nose down in the mud and sewage, wearing oilskins and gumboots, they waded out to it.

Miller told Tuckwell to withdraw to safety, but Tuckwell pointed out that as Miller would be working under at least a foot of water he would need someone to hand him the tools. In any case, if anything

were to go wrong Tuckwell preferred to share the fate of his boss.

Miller managed to remove one fuse but could not reach the second. Some crane drivers who had been evacuated from the scene had rashly come back to watch and Miller asked them to help; they all volunteered.

Miller and Tuckwell went back into the water and put ropes round the mine, which was lifted by the crane out of the river and dragged carefully up the bank and on to the wharf, where Miller removed the second fuse.

OBITUARIES

John Bryan Peter Duppa Miller was born on May 22 1903 and educated at Rugby and Hertford College, Oxford. He studied for the Anglican priesthood but a fortnight before he was due to be ordained surprised everyone by being received into the Roman Catholic Church. Before the Second World War he worked in local government education in Hampshire and Northamptonshire.

In August 1940 Miller joined the RNVR: "I was a yachtsman," he explained, "and thought my experience might be of use." He was sent to HMS *King Alfred*, the RNVR training establishment at Hove as an unusually elderly sub-lieutenant.

"I felt for humanitarian reasons that I didn't want to shoot at the enemy," he said.

"One day there was a call for volunteers to dismantle mines and I got my change of running risks, without endangering others' lives."

So urgent was the need for mine disposal officers that the officers on Miller's course received a mere 48 hours of initial instruction at HMS *Vernon*, the torpedo and mining school at Portsmouth, before being summoned to the Admiralty for their first assignments.

As they left each had to choose an assistant from a row of sailors outside. "I had never seen such a villainous looking set of men in my existence," Miller recalled.

"As my eye passed along the line of faces every jaw was moving slowly – every man was chewing a quid of tobacco; all except one. As the senior man I was given first choice and I chose the only motionless jaw. It belonged to Able Seaman Tuckwell.

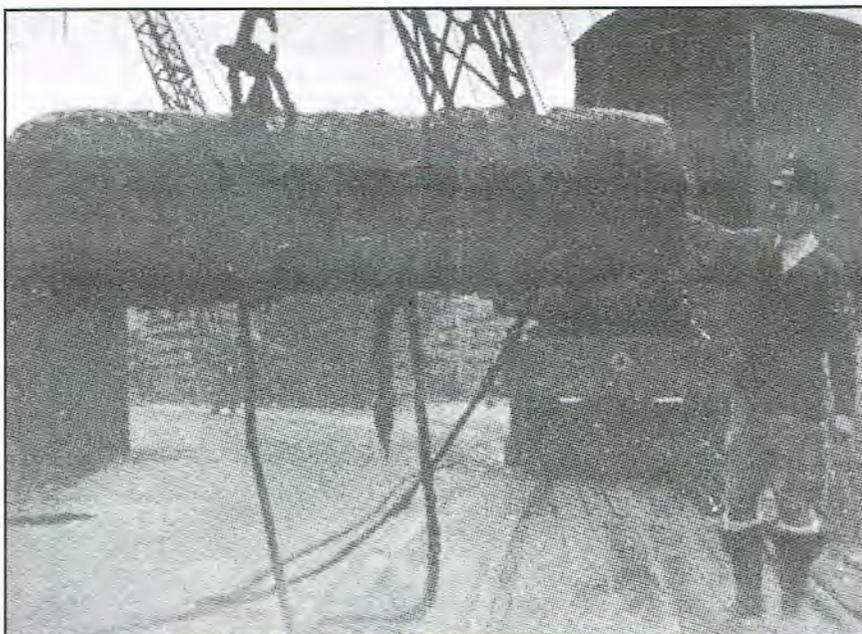
"It turned out that he was the finest fellow who ever put in 18 years service with the Royal Navy." Tuckwell died in November 1988.

Years after the war Miller recalled that "we were always pretty terrified on the job; we were not some sort of supermen devoid of fear or human weakness. It was my normal practice standing by a mine to sign myself with the sign of the cross. If the mine was very bad I didn't do it, as fiddling of any kind seemed unnecessary."

One such was his first mine, which fell on the railway viaduct outside London Bridge Station. It was lying on its nose against the wall of a signal box with the clockwork fuse on the underside and facing in towards the wall.

Miller wriggled beneath it and lay on his back in a pool of water with his mouth and eyes six inches from the mine:

"The psychological reaction to lying beneath the mine at close quarters was distinctly unpleasant. It was obvious that if the clock started to run I could not hope to escape."



John Miller with the Roding river mine in 1941

He had hardly begun when he heard the "little fizzing sound" of the clock starting. He wriggled out and ran for his life. But nothing happened. On the second try he again heard the sound and again made a frantic flight. Again nothing happened.

Miller decided he would have to stay under the mine and carry on working. His luck held: fuse and primer both fell out and rolled clear, and normal train service was resumed.

After disarming his 15th and last mine in Coventry, Miller was recommended for a second GC, but received a King's Commendation instead. Portraits of him and of Tuckwell by William Dring were exhibited in the National Gallery in 1941.

Later that year Miller was appointed to the Torpedo and Mining Department in the Admiralty as secretary to a new committee supervising the development of new anti-submarine weapons by naval officers, scientists and manufacturers. One of their early ventures became the "Hedgehog" and "Limbo" weapons.

After the war Miller was given the rank of brigadier ("It meant I didn't have to salute very often," he noted) and appointed deputy director of the Trade and Economic Division of the Control Commission in Germany, where he helped to liquidate German stocks of depth charges and other underwater weapons and to demolish factories capable of making munitions.

The rest of his life was spent in Africa. From 1945 to 1947 he was Inspector General of the Education Department in Emperor Haile Selassie's administration, and he helped to found Addis Ababa University.

For the next 10 years he served in the Education Department in Kenya, was chairman of the European Civil Servants' Association and founding chairman of the Whitley Council.

During this time Miller became a close friend of Jomo Kenyatta, whom he assisted in founding the Kenyan African National Union; in early 1960's he was also secretary to the Kenya Coffee Marketing Board and to the Coffee Board in Tanganyika.

As assistant secretary and marketing officer of the Ministry of lands and Settlement in Kenya from 1963 to 1965 he was in charge of redistributing land to Africans in the former "White Highlands".

He was invited to stand for election in the new parliament, but refused.

From 1965 he was unofficial economic adviser to Rob Mugabe in what was then Southern Rhodesia.

In 1951 Miller published *Saints and Parachutes*, 17 essays describing his wartime mine disposal experiences and his progress from the Anglican to the Catholic Church.

He also wrote a book on the attitudes towards Africa of post-war British politicians, which was not published as it parts of it were judged to be defamatory.

He married first, in 1926, Barbara Buckmaster, who died in 1966; they had three sons. The marriage was dissolved and he married, secondly, in 1944, Clare Harding, who also predeceased him. He married thirdly, in 1977, Greta Landby.

CST(MWV) AND THE SMALL SHIPS OPERATIONAL TRAINING STAFF

by Pete Cawsey & 'George' Hogg,

Although the future of Rosyth as a Naval Base has been the subject of much discussion, the working up of the Minor War Vessels has gone ahead unabated. It has been a while since our last article, but now is as good a time as any to update everyone with "who's who", "what's what" and, more importantly, "what's happening".

THE TEAM		
POST	TITLE	NAME
Commander Sea Training	CST	Cdr BR Archibald
Staff Navigation Officer	SNO	Lt Cdr A Brown
Staff Navigation Officer (H)	SNO(H)	Lt Cdr DC Ventura
Staff Minewarfare Officer	SMWO	Lt Cdr RH Hawkins
Deputy Staff Minewarfare Officer	DSMWO	Lt CPJ O'Flaherty
Staff NBCD/Technical Officer	SNBCDO	Lt B Glennie
Staff Gunnery Officer	SGO	Lt S J Clements
Staff Marine Engineering Officer	SMEO	WOMEA P Doggett
Staff Weapon Engineering Officer	SWEO	CCPOWEA I Forrest
Staff Chief Medical Assistant	SCMA	CPOMA A Batsford
Staff NBCD Instructor 1	SNBCDI1	CMEM(M) J Butt
Staff NBCD Instructor 2	SNBCDI2	POMEM S Baxter
Staff Electrical Engineering Officer	SLEO	CMEM(L) G Downie
Staff Seamanship Officer	SSEAO	CPO(SEA) J Jones
Staff Seamanship Instructor	SSI	CPO(SEA) R M Gould
Staff Chief Ops Missile	SCPOM	CPO(M) G Beckwith
Staff Petty Officer Medical Assistant	SPOMA	POMA H Crockett
Staff Petty Officer Missile	SPOM	PO(M) T Coleman
Staff Minewarfare Instructor 1	SMWI1	CPO(MW) B Hogg
Staff Minewarfare Instructor 2	SMWI2	CPO(MW) PR Cawsey
Staff Chief Communications Yeoman	SCCY	CCY K P Browne
Staff Communications Yeoman	SCY	CY S Baines
Staff Radio Supervisor	SRS	RS P J Mills
Training Programme Officer	TPROGO	CPO(OPS) S Guppy

As far as the MW and Diving office is concerned, we have some good news and some bad news, (and we'll leave you the reader to decide which is which). From mid 1995, there will be two new billets - one for another lieutenant (MCD) and one for another CPO(MW)(O). Could all those volunteering for the above please form an orderly queue.

The raison d'être of the whole of SSOTS is to bring Minor War Vessels undertaking OST to a high level of operational efficiency. Cdr BR Archibald (CST(MWV)) and most of his staff have served in small ships and take great pride in ensuring that the training is of the highest quality. All of us here know that OST starts long before the day of the Staff Sea Check, in some cases months before, with preparation being highly important to all concerned. The same applies to the staff who, when not at sea, welcome people to the office for either a pre-OST brief or a more informal chat. Our doctrine remains the same as ever - follow the procedures laid down in the relevant documentation, read the ROSTG and Common Weak

Areas issued by COMMW and you won't fall down the same holes as your compatriots and predecessors. The emphasis remains firmly on TRAINING, but obviously we expect a degree of competence from day one. Unfortunately, (or fortunately some might say), the period allowed for Operational Sea Training is not particularly long. As a result, if week one is spent instructing basic points at Training Performance Standard, (TPS), level, then this short time can become even more compressed. In summary, prepare well, ensure that operators are at least at their TPS and work together with the Staff to enable a sound result at the end of OST.

We have recently completed the full BOST package (including MCM!) on SANDOWN, WALNEY and INVERNESS. They were interesting to say the least and certainly provided a challenge for the Staff during the MCM phase. It is safe to say that much was learnt by all and everyone must continue to work to improve the way in which we "fight" these superb ships.

All MCMVs arriving for OST will immediately notice a change in the way the MCM phase is run and this is, hopefully, a change for the better. The emphasis is most definitely on the ships' primary role and ships will encounter a minewarfare programme tailored to their needs and conducted as a block after the general OST period. The "MCM Phase" is run as a scenario based exercise from the outset, with 7/10 days devoted to COST/BOST ships respectively. This not only enables the ship's teams to "settle in to the lap" but more effectively utilises the limited time available, (more nights at sea!). The MCM phase for the SANDOWN class is run on a similar basis, but is split between a shallow phase in the Forth (at present) and a deep phase in BUTEC, (7 and 4 days respectively). This split is under review and the package will undoubtedly be modified once we have a better feel for the requirements.

It is good to see so many of you making contact with the staff prior to your ship arriving for OST. Needless to say, if a ship

continued overleaf

CST(MWV) AND THE SMALL SHIPS OPERATIONAL TRAINING STAFF

comes well prepared and has the right attitude, then work up can be a relatively painless and enjoyable exercise. We train as well as assess, and are quite proud of our "results" - so keep smiling and remember that no sooner do we descend upon you, than we are moving on to the next ship and her team.

The move to Faslane is beginning to take up more and more time within SHOULTON Block. We will move during the first two weeks of December 95 and will be open for business as part of the FOST organisation immediately after Christmas leave. Obviously everyone expects some turmoil during the changeover period, but all are striving to limit the stress and to ensure that concurrent work ups are unaffected. Staff are regularly on the phone to the Clyde and areas are being negotiated in which to conduct all the OST exercises currently on offer on the East coast. Minelay areas are being

negotiated with fishermen and support requirements are being assessed for all the ships that will conduct OST in our new areas. Parallel work is in hand for OPV work ups by SSOTS on the South Coast. We are all committed to making the best of the situation so that you - the customer - does not suffer.

CST(MWV) OVERVIEW

I hope that this article re-emphasises the fact that my staff exist for the single purpose of generating improvements in the fighting capability of all Minor War Vessels, be they MCMVs, OPVs, the Northern Ireland, Gibraltar, Hong Kong or Coastal Survey Vessels. Although we are past masters at critical assessment our aim is to be constructive and to train ships in a positive and amiable atmosphere. Failure disappoints us whilst

we are delighted by success.

Success is a combination of several factors including programmes, manpower changes, attitude and preparation. Of these, preparation is by far the most important and the ship which prepares well will invariably perform at her maximum potential.

Although changing from the auspices of COMMW to that of FOST at the end of 1995, it is my intention that ships will not be disadvantaged in any way and that my experienced and capable staff will provide an undiluted service to all Minor War Vessels. This may not be easy, but rest assured that I apply absolute standards to my staff and their training ability in the same way that I apply them to ships. Wherever you may be worked up in the future I assure you of a warm welcome and a constructive package.



On Call Force Group 16 Deployment

By Eddie Manners

Seven countries, fourteen locations from Brest to Constanza. Not a Thomas Cook advert but the programme for the On Call Force Group 16 Deployment. Sounds like a bit of a loaf I hear you say, say that within earshot of Hurworth, Inverness, Walney or Brecon and you are likely to end up with a broken nose!

What the opening paragraph omits is the seven weeks of back to back exercises (Norminex, Linked Seas and Alcudra), as well as the formal visits to Romania and Bulgaria, and just in case you are short of something, do a defence industry sea day in Istanbul. All our non MCMV readers are probably saying 'A stroll in the park', so perhaps it should be put into context by reminding those readers that the Sandown class is **designed** to spend no more than five days at sea (two domestic freezers and one domestic fridge and no water making facility) and even the much improved hunts with their ro plant can only produce two tons of water a day. If its all so difficult why do it?

OCF

COMMW is charged by Cinfleet to provide an on call force of MCMVs at short notice for operations throughout Europe and the Middle East. The Modus Operandi following on from operations Cimnal, Callendar and for the younger reader Desert Storm. Thus for six months

four ships, from any of the squadrons, under the command of one of the squadron commanders make up the On Call Force.

THE DEPLOYMENT

Group Sixteen was programmed to deploy to the Mediterranean (perhaps their most likely operating area) for a bit of fun in the sun following the exercise period, alas things are never so simple and once the word was out in Whitehall everyone wanted their piece of the action. The foreign office had good reasons for us to visit here and Deso was desperate for us to visit there. The result was a programme which has tested man and machine to the limit. It would be wrong to give the impression that it was all hard work (just mostly). Quite a few personnel took the opportunity for time off with their partners during a weeks LSP in Palma, everyone had a lot of fun in Istanbul's covered Bazaar, and yes suntans are in evidence.

OPERATIONS

The exercises each proved challenging in different ways, the only common thread being very difficult communications, some things never change. A big thank you to HMS Roebuck who supported and accommodated the MCMTA during Norminex and Linked Seas, without her COMMS equipment and personnel the

camels back would have been broken. During Norminex UK units operated between Lorient and St Nazaire encountering particularly taxing and frustrating conditions off Lorient. Walney developed (thanks to her Belgian CTG) a new Sandown class operating cycle - nine days on one day off - take note DGUW (N). The nett result was a disappointing crop of mines, no prizes for which nation had most success.

Linked seas was a completely different proposition. By now the force had been joined by a STUFT Ship, MV Italica, with FSU01 suffering on board. A short CET phase off Rota operating under Spanish command then we were bound for Portugal's Algarve (Thomas Cook again). During the five days of the tactical phase the group was charged with working 80 miles of route and 25 square miles of anchorage. Now we're good but not that good! Fortunately exploratory ops and a bit of threat reduction soon narrowed down the operating area and a high level of clearance was achieved in variable water conditions. Why does the Real Time Performance Monitor not monitor the real time performance?

After LS 95, just to stop the boys getting bored the fleet CR and NBCD teams were embarked until arrival in Palma! Surely things would ease off now?

On Call Force Group 16 Deployment

At last the group (bar Inverness) got lucky, we had drawn the Southern Oparea, just off Palma and in the best operating conditions: Flat sand and thirty metres visibility. Shooting fish in a barrel I here you say, well not exactly. Those ships which monitored the conditions carefully and were cautious were successful, but ignore what you don't see on the screen at your peril, ask the Germans, Dutch, Spanish and French all of whom missed mines. LSP - Magaluf, St Miguel - enough said!

VISITS

Istanbul, highly recommended - but try and avoid Deso Sea days and beware the interaction between steel water/Gash Barge and GRP ships side. Oh and remember to take an umbrella.

Constanza and Varna were both formal visits with a weeks programme squeezed into two days, we must go back some day.

Alicante, awful, didn't enjoy it at all. Too much beer, too many distractions on the beach, too many all night clubs, to be avoided at all costs.

To those of you deploying to the states next year, the OCF might appear to be all runs ashore but beware, it is!

OCF Group 16. A Klankie Muppets Tour of the Med

We arrived in Brest during a searing heat wave. Stripped bare to the waist, I was trying to overcome a difficult technical problem on the crane deck. OK. You got me. What I was really trying to do was fit a hard biting french rag worm to a very sharp hook. After all they take our lamb and I wanted to take some of their fish. Anyway the sun was hot, damn hot. Hot enough to get me up from between decks. And who should march up the Jetty? Wearing their green Foulies zipped up to the neck, CST staff (do they have a cooling system fitted or are they just fashion Masochists?). We sailed from Brest to the Exercise area with MCM3/CTG's message ringing in our ears get the hard work out of the way first then its fun in the sun all the way after. A few days later the CST staff called it a pass and wanted to go home. But don't worry we'll be back to do COST soon. It only took six months to pass BOST somehow it seemed longer.

Norminex dragged on with many PAP runs carried out and no mines found or on deck. The divers even brought a rock back to show the ops room, its now mounted on a plaque titled 'A Port Watch Mine' to say that we didn't have a mine on deck isn't quite true, as we picked up the deep laid target that was spotted from the



On Call Force Group 16 at Istanbul.

bridge wing by the L(D) which had broken its mooring and was bobbing towards us wanting to be picked up. We could not find it, so it must have been fed up and it came to find us.

After the exercise we had a stand off in Lorient. The next day after a couple of maintenance jobs down the engine room, the port main engine decided it quite liked France and wasn't going anywhere. FSU 01 were called and arrived in record time (That would have put the AA and the RAC to shame). Close behind was a group of hanger on's with a healthy supply of daft ideas. FSU toiled away and the others proceeded to contaminate my engine room with feathers. This resulted in a game of Chinese whispers and the command getting the wrong end of the broom stick, or to be more accurate he didn't have hold of the same brush. All was sorted in the time allowed and we eventually sailed.

Morale:- Ignore daft ideas and Hoover up feathers later.

The passage from Lorient to Rota in Spain was interrupted by a light aircraft crashing close to our position. 15 hours spent searching for the pilot proved fruitless, all that was recovered were bits and pieces of wreckage. This 15 hour delay and numerous nil pim's, gave cause for concern on the amount of time allowed for the passage, what was the Soa? (Note the abbreviations creeping in) it seemed to be somewhere just above stopped, or as one suggestion that was given it must have allowed for Hurricane Haggis coming through from the West Coast of Scotland.

Eventually we made it to Rota and on

arrival, discovered that MV Italica our support ship with FSU 01 onboard, had beaten us there and left Lorient two days later than us.

After more maintenance jobs in the engine room, which was now 40 degrees plus, it was the starboard main engine's turn to play up. After a few hot and sweaty hours work I wanted to go back to the crane deck and make like a Muppet, unlike during the depths of winter in BOST in the forth.

The call of exercise Link-Seas was stronger than the power of the starboard main donk keeping us alongside. So we sailed down on one engine and an overnight trip from Rota to Portamac in Portugal, our escort frigate was last seen at 0600 disappearing south over the horizon doing about 30 knots. Never to be seen again (did the sub get it).

The SCC had how been re-named the Arcadem an extension lead and transformer was rigged to keep the game boy going, we had by now progressed to Tetris two which is one mind boggling game.

We entered into mine hunting watches and I attended the command mine hunting brief. This went straight over my head at about 30,000 feet, so I asked for a list of abbreviations so I could work out what the hell they were on about later. The only bit that I understood was the section called 'This is what a mine looks like,' which was widely criticized. Probably because it was pitched at Klankie Muppet level, not the height the rest of them were flying at.

continued overleaf

On Call Force Group 16 Deployment

The Opeval team came onboard and spent several hours trying to get their computer working, they reverted to the tried and tested method of pen and paper.

More of my on the job conversion to a muppet took place, I now know that a QZR is a straight line and SDNE is something to do with navigation. (I thought I was Lexidick).

During my first two years the Muppets had a 100 percent non detection rate (i.e. if they didn't know where it was in the first place they couldn't find it). It was soon to be shattered, with two finds and two on deck. PAP run's are getting easier and the non mine warfare Muppets now have far more experience in this field than the real Muppets. Although they won't admit to it, fifty runs this year so far and the operators haven't left the OPS room yet. However they did get out to do the recoveries, in their excitement they managed to dump the two MK 12's on 01 deck starboard, shortly followed by the command asking why the ship was listing in the same direction. We flooded the port compensating tanks and Nussy was upright again.

Water and fuel was in need of a top up, so we headed off to Italica to get some. Italica was by now anchored off at Portimac. When my back was turned doing ME type things, the OPS department off loaded their prize pair of AMK 12's without telling the stokers. This caused the CO to ask a familiar question "Why is the ship listing to port?". Deja vu struck me and a quick check of 01 deck proved me right, they had sneaked off those two heavy lumps onto Italica. With the ship upright we went back for more, three more to be exact. All claimed by starboard watch. None on deck in four years and now five in three days. Crazy.

Food, water, fuel and Lub Oil was again in short supply so we returned to Italica then onto our 24 hour standoff alongside in Portimac. We berthed at 17.30 and sailed at 10.00 the next morning? It doesn't need anyone to beat a calculator to death to work out that 24 hours were squeezed into 16 and a half. We decided that it was a ploy to get more work out of us. (and it worked).

The ship sailed with a new CO embarked and he arrived refreshed and keen. The ships company, who had at this point spent three weeks at sea with two and a half stand-off's, were cream crackered and probably could have slept on Rambo's knife point. Still we pressed on, cleared our routes carried out the lead-through, pinged a few deep targets, called it a day and headed down towards the straits of Gibraltar, with a gunnery and NBCD team onboard to keep us on our toes. The shoot was carried out in the Gib exercise areas and we steamed on towards Palma.

Various problems kept me busy down the engine room, and at one point the temp reached 48 deg C so the thermometer was removed before it exploded. "Why is this happening now and not last November when I really needed it?"

A couple of days rest in Palma someone said..? I called it two days bloody hard work. And off we went to exercise Alcudra, the ship was tasked under the Spanish CTG and our first night was spent at anchor in Alcudra Bay. The first full nights sleep for what seemed weeks was very welcome, the next day was back in to MHW's, I use the abbreviation as everything onboard seemed to have acquired one and the use of plain English during conversations appeared to be going out the window rapidly.

Several days mine hunting and we were to have a 46 hour standoff in Mahon, Minorca. This was interrupted by a trip back to Palma for a repair on the Voith Oil Pump. Friday night was spent outboard Italica and Saturday was spent getting back to Mahon for our standoff or what was left of it. The highlight of this was the COXN's leaving run during which he didn't drink a drop of booze at all. Honest.. Back on task and with 24 hours to go. A problem with length of cable and a shortage of water beneath the ship when in VDS, resulted in a Morale explosion that went right through the ship (who says that computers don't make mistakes).. We returned to Palma with our one-hundred percent no detection rate intact for the exercise. The silver egg was back in its normal position and in need of modification, severe modification, to get it back to the state that we modified it from. The religious sect flew in from Marconi and no amount of head banging towards the east, was going to do the trick.

The Silver Egg was needed back at Templecombe and so it departed on the back of a wagon. This left us with a small but usable plunge pool on two deck. The Weo spoilt all our fun and fitted the lid back on it.

During our ten day stay some of the families came out for a holiday leaving the rest of us to keep the duties and do the LSP. I seemed to remember someone saying "fun in the sun", well I'm in the sun so where is the fun, maybe later..?

We left Palma and said farewell to Italica and FSU, said hello to the new COXN and SCPO(MW). I thought that they were both short sighted and wore glasses like bottle ends! But apparently they drink with both hands at the same time.

The pair of them got their heads together (in the bar cupboard) formed the card school and After Midnight Club. Membership is free if you can stand the pace.

On to Istanbul, I was told that we were to be met by Deso, this I thought strange as we normally get Deso when we stop off anywhere. It turned out that Deso was, defence export services organisation. (Another abbreviation to add to my growing list). We arrived in Istanbul which has had two names and gave it a third. Later on in the trip I was asked if there was anything I could have done with, that was not onboard. Reply:- A damn good reason not to go there, the OCF Tee Shirts arrived and this doubled the MEO's civvie wardrobe, even if the spelling was a bit dubious. The sales demo was done by Walney on the last day and we headed up into the Black Sea and Varna, Bulgaria. Varna turned out to be the surprise visit of the trip, modern, clean and cheap. Beer 27.5 pence a pint, wine 52 pence a bottle CD's 3 pounds each, Jacks Paradise. On the second day a group from Hurworth and Inverness did a paint job on two kids hospitals which the locals very much appreciated. We sailed from Varna, disappointed that we could not stay longer. We departed with the SCPO(MW) and the SPORC(T) onboard. The latter was not a Jock, but after several offers of bolt croppers and crow-bars to prise open his wallet, in order to get a round in failed, we made him one. This automatically banned him from the After Midnight Club for failing to get the wet's in, much to the relief of the bar manager, who had submitted an S340 for a trans-plant from his beard to the top of his head because he had pulled so much out.

The run home is all that is left, a fuel stop in Augusta, couple of days in Alicante and back to Rosyth with fuel stops on the way. I leave the ship in December my two and a half years up, my career as a mine warfare (they don't like to be called Muppets) Klankie ended in Alcudra Bay in 85 meters of water just as it began in Kyles. With a disaster. I can't wait to see the look on my reliefs face when I tell him he's got COST in February and what he has to do for it (forget the engine room).

If you have read this and are in a position to do something, can you do the lads I leave behind a favour. Double the size of the fresh water tanks and draft on the crew of a type 42 that some people seem to think that we have on here.

Thank You

Eddie Manners, Engine Room
POMEM(M) on The Inverness

P.S. Not to be published until my draft to planet Mars is secured and I've left on the Shuttle.

The Short Career of a Retiring Commodore

I have recently taken the decision to take Premature Voluntary Retirement in early 1996 and this has, probably in error, caused me to reminisce.

From a personal point of view, the one feature of my 35 years in the Royal Navy is that the 'fun factor' started at a high level and has continued to the end. I believe I was lucky to join when I did; fixed wing aircraft carriers, destroyer squadrons operating in company, the Far East Fleet all had a significant impact on my development from a raw apprentice to a smooth, sleek, ultra effective watchkeeping lieutenant by the late 1960's. I then joined the MCD Branch and it has all been downhill ever since!

With a hint of arrogance and lots of 'tongue in cheek' the following highlights I hope illustrate what it has been like to grow up and work in a Royal Navy that has undergone amazing changes since I walked (marched!) through the gates of HMS FISGARD in April 1961.

- 1961 - As a member of S43 entry I discovered the general benefits of apprentice technical and general training in an establishment renowned for its sprogging and where discipline was run entirely to the satisfaction of the CPO/PO Apprentices with little apparent interference by the Captain and his officers/senior rates. I also learnt to chisel metal to 25 thousands of an inch! and play golf.
- 1962 - At FISGARD I was selected with 11 other aspirants for intensive 'How to be an Officer training' (or grooming as it was called) by a smooth Instructor Lt Cdr Furneaux (to whom I am eternally grateful). I graduated to COLLINGWOOD and passed my Admiralty Interview Board for entry into BRNC. I was under stoppage of leave at the time because I had been adrift the previous Saturday night. (PS: All 12 aspirants eventually made it to officer.)
- 1963 - As one of six fast stream Upper Yardmen at BRNC I achieved:
 - sufficient A Levels in one year to be promoted to Midshipman and go to sea.
 - avoid early morning activities completely.
 - play soccer for the College in a very successful (Brickwood Trophy) team.
 - learn 'Scottish Cross Country Dancing' with the Captain's daughter.
- 1964 - Did not enjoy 10 months at sea in HMS RHYL as a midshipman where the Captain informed me that I was the worst 'mid' he had ever met. It didn't help when I beat him in the 23rd Escort Squadron golf championship at Greenock. Had my leave/wine bill stopped many times. I was an interested bystander during the Zanzibar Revolution and the assault by Royal Marines into Dar-es-Salaam.
- 1965 - As a Sub Lt (GL)(E) I enjoyed the Devon pubs, attractive girls, getting engaged, rebuilding Jaguar XR140, racing/rallying saloon/sports cars, getting dis-engaged, playing soccer for the College 1st XI but not much else about Manadon. Morning Divisions in No 5s (stiff collars) in the rain and then sitting in classrooms and being taught by schoolies didn't seem to appeal to my low intellect. I was expelled.
- 1966 - As a Sub Lt (SL)(X) joined HMS PLOVER, a 30 year old minelayer, where I had the honour to serve under the Command of Lt Cdrs Stuart Honour MBE and Tag Caisley MBE. I immediately applied for the MCD

course but was selected for Fighter Controller (little 'd'). No one would believe what happened during my year in PLOVER - and anyway Tag Caisley is a good friend! Qualified as a Ship's Diving Officer.

- 1967 - Having qualified as a 'd'. I joined HMS HERMES during the Aden withdrawal - operated as a Forward Air Controller in Radfan. As the Visits Officer I was responsible directly to the Executive Officer (Cdr J D E Fieldhouse RN) and had regular direct contact with the Commanding Officer (Captain T T Lewin RN) - no wonder it was known as 'Happy HERMES'.
- 1968 - During our Far East deployment enjoyed the amazing sensation of playing soccer for the ship in a HMS TERROR double header under floodlights - the other match was a RNZN frigate against a Combined Services XV (the latter lost heavily) - we beat HMS ALBION. After re-appointment to HMS YARMOUTH I spent 4 weeks at Woolwich doing the Maritime Tactical Course. There were some very attractive nurses and welfare officers living in the Army mess - I fell hopelessly head over heels proposed - and to my amazement Ann accepted.
- 1969 - After 2 postponements because of other ships failing to relieve YARMOUTH on Beira patrol on time our wedding took place in Singapore (best man Lt Angus Sandford RN) followed by honeymoon in Penang, Sydney, Hong Kong and back to Singapore! Operationally, YARMOUTH was very busy, including taking part in a COMFEF exercise when BINGOs (pre-ZIPPOs) were first trialled.
- 1970 - As OOD alongside in Naples was informed on a Sunday afternoon that the Duke and Duchess of Windsor had arrived in a Greek cruise liner and wished to visit YARMOUTH for tea and tour in 30 minutes! FOF2, CO, duty staff et al all ashore in Rome or Naples. Found a QM who could pipe - a steward who could make cucumber sandwiches and borrowed CO's silver teapot. Visit went very smoothly - Duchess was charming - cruise ship had sailed before any of the heirarchy returned; had some difficulty in persuading them it wasn't a dream. Ldg Phot was onboard so there were some photographs as proof.
- 1971 - Joined HMS LONDON as 'D2/AAWO2' with FOF1 Vice Admiral Power flying his flag - the same officer who 9 years earlier I had impressed as a midshipman/golfer. During 14 ship USN exercise off Puerto Rico which included live firings against a range of airborne targets there were slight safety problems when
 - USS LEAHY fired a missile as helo carrying Secretary of Defence was attempting to land.
 - an ARK ROYAL Phantom controlled by USS CLG fired Sparrow missile at target; it hit tail plane of target launching aircraft which safely landed ashore.
 - Danish destroyer failed to cease firing its main armament and straddled LONDON whilst at the same time getting GDO (visual) very excited.
 Exercise was terminated early - all these incidents plus 3 successful Sea Slug firings all happened when I was on watch - FOF1 blamed me for the whole debacle!
- 1972 - After a short spell in HMS EAGLE when my best friend died on his second catapult launch as the pilot of a

continued overleaf

The Short Career of a Retiring Commodore

- Sea Vixen and we lost 3 a/c in a week I joined HMS DRYAD as 2i/c Harrier air defence trainer. Highlights of this short appointment were being given the job of redesigning the Long Direction course syllabus into a 2-week PWO module, teaching practical Air Defence/AAW to the first 2 PWO courses but much more importantly being informed by Captain DRYAD that I had been transferred back General List and much to his surprise selected for the 1973 LMCDO Course rather than the last Long D course. I was over the moon!
- 1973 - With Ed Thompson/Bill Baukham in charge of LMCDO 73 I enjoyed myself immensely during the diving phase. Our course gained the reputation for being 8 individuals rather than a strong team and there were lots of examples where perhaps we didn't take things as seriously as we should have done. George Dance made an immediate and profound impact on me - we agreed I would do the running if he could do the carrying. A 150 cu ft bottle on each shoulder was no problem for George - I couldn't get one off the deck. After deep diving in Falmouth Bay I speared a large skate in Helford River - George was supervising - over reacted to my frenetic arrival on surface with skate taking charge - threw me and buddy (Derek Leach) in pot - got his tables wrong - MFV transitted back to Falmouth - we missed run ashore as we were still at 10m MSW.
- 1974 - Relieved Mike Critchley as XO BRINTON - that was an eye opener - Dave Harker was my Coxswain! - all in all an interesting baptism in the Branch; assumed command for the last few months before BRINTON entered Chatham for refit. Lost all electrical power on entering Great Yarmouth, bridge and funnel tried to separate from hull in gale in North Sea, fire in ER on passage up Medway. Good experience.
- 1975 - Attended PWO course as a Lt Cdr along with Tim Paul seemed to spend a lot of the time asleep in the back of poorly ventilated classroom~. We were invited by Course Officer to be frank in our critiques of training modules - we were - and as a result received frequent visits by Training Cdrs and Captain(T) telling us we were an irresponsible and disrespectful bunch of officers.
- 1976 - Relieved Pat Gale as the Operations Officer of AMAZON during her first commission with lots of Part IV trials and 3 lengthy but enjoyable spells in Gibraltar. No restrictions on how we could employ the Olympus/Tyne machinery configuration led to very exciting demonstrations to many VIP visitors and any steam frigate/DLG/CVA we came across. It also led to severe strain on the gearboxes, thus leading to all the restrictions which now apply. A vibrant, happy and small ship's company taught me a lot about how the 'new Navy' had to operate if it was to remain effective and enjoyable. The CO Cdr David Dobson RN was a great believer in sensible delegation and we all benefited from his wisdom.
- 1977 - After some minor hassle with my appointer I joined AUWE Southwell as the Naval Applicator (MW) to Mr Harold Hudson the Assistant Director for Minewarfare in DUWP(N). It was a great pleasure to work for Harold Hudson (SPSO) who had been one of the scientists who invented 193, the world's first minehunting sonar. The tales of the trials in SHOULTON were fascinating and from people like Rad Heward, Sidney Parsons, Colin Churcher, Alf Cotton, Denis Hiscock, Bob Weatherburn and the many other scientific and technical grades I learnt the fundamentals of minewarfare equipments and techniques. As Project Manager of DREAMT achieved FWA on 7.7.77.
- 1978 - After lots of practice was selected for the RN golf team and played against counties and in the Inter Services at Burnham on Berrow. With Lt Cdr David Cartlidge in command, trials in IVESTON of Sonar 193M proved very interesting - it was meant to be as good as 193 - it was initially a lot worse! A lot of hard work by David and his team plus Len Jarman of Plessey's led to a satisfactory Sonar 193M being developed as BRECON was leaving the builders.
- 1979 - The R&D activity in MCM and Mining was growing apace and the following business flowed across the applicators' desks - Lt Bob Lusty was the Diving Applicator.
- CHALLENGER including DP, SAT System, Towed Unmanned Submersible System.
 - HUNT Part IV
 - COFAM
 - VEMS
 - DREAMT Mk II
 - Sonar 193M Mod 1
 - Remote Hunting and Disposal System (RHADS), a DAUWE research project.
 - Continental Shelf Mine
 - New Ground Mine and Update
- All very interesting/instructive and there was a lot of contact with US, FR, NL, BE through National and NATO studies. I was the chairman of the NATO Minehunting Study Group that analysed the performance of 193, SQQ14 and DUBM 20A, Sonar 193 didn't do too well - the politics were interesting.
- 1980 - Joined HMS BRILLIANT as Senior Officer in build in YSL, greatly enjoyed the day to day cut and thrust with Yarrows' management - particularly Ian McIntyre (Production Manager) - in ensuring that the third Type 22 was up to her name. Commuted weekly to Bridport, Dorset by car through an interesting winter - it always seemed to snow at Friday lunchtime in Strathclyde and Borders regions.
- 1981 - Capt J F Coward RN joined as Commanding Officer in time for Contractor Sea Trials - a fantastic leader with lots of very radical and forthright views on how to command an HM Ship. His orders were a photocopy of the Captain Standing Orders of the previous BRILLIANT written in hand in the 1930's - total of 3 pages! Having been selected for promotion NavSec couldn't find me a relief so in company with HM S/M SPLENDID we conducted Part IV and a visit to Gibraltar. BRILLIANT and SPLENDID exchanged impolite signals and raced the final 200nm to Gib - we won, just, although Cdr Roger Lane-Nott confused the FO Gib staff by conducting a submergged approach to the harbour. After my relief arrived I joined RNSC for staff training.
- 1982 - Three weeks after joining DNW as the relief for Cdr J C L Wright OBE RN the Falkland conflict started. I was the only member of the BRILLIANT's ship's company at commissioning who wasn't onboard in the South Atlantic so I kept a close eye on her progress. As

The Short Career of a Retiring Commodore

expected, Capt Coward was always in the thick of the action - leading by example. I became deeply involved in Rules of Engagement, followed by watchkeeping in the MOD before the mining, MCM, diving and EOD aspects became significant. Developments in aerial minelaying were interesting, so was the UOR for portable influence minesweeping for the trawlers, the deployment of BRECON/LEDBURY and St Helena 8000 miles south and the sterling work done by all the divers involved in EOD operations. The highlight, however, was spending money across a whole range of equipments during the Easter period when all the civil servants were on holiday! When they came back all hell broke loose and the lesson was unfortunately learnt and not forgotten when the Gulf War started.

- 1983 - Deeply involved in the development of an exciting and coherent US/UK Joint Concept of Mining and UK Mining Policy papers which were designed to lead into the procurement of joint Continental Shelf Mine (later the Advanced Sea Mine) and ground mine update. Resistance to the development of this cheap but effective, primarily, ASW capability was early to surface - particularly amongst the S/M fraternity who at the time were planning new SSNs/SSKs/Trident and expensive torpedo/sonar projects. The fact that a mine depot was not seagoing and didn't attract command pay was also factor to the eventual decision later in the decade to cancel any mining activity in the UK. The US Navy was not pleased!
- 1984 - As CSNFC during a visit to Lubeck (right on the border between West/East Germany) called on local military commander at his HQ - the mosaic in the entrance foyer was familiar - namely a swastika - discovered it was the ex-SS headquarters and they had never got round to replacing the tiles! Called on Burgomaster who gave us lunch in a beautifully restored restaurant - he repeatedly reminded me that the RAF had destroyed the previous building. After noisy cocktail party along with COs visited jazz night club - invited pianist and guitarist back onboard and discovered both from East Germany!
- 1985 - Having joined HMS INTREPID as the XO shortly after work up I quickly realised with some trepidation that there needed to be some radical changes to the leadership/management of the ship. The large ship's company, including nearly 100 RMs in an old steam driven ship with 2 distinct roles - Amphibious and Dartmouth Training - brought a whole set of interesting challenges. My solutions were:
 - Greater real responsibility to Senior Rates.
 - An increase in privileges to SRs (eg leave, wines).
 - More power to DHODs.
 - Regulating Branch more proactive management, less reactive discipline. Thanks to an enlightened WO/ CPOs Mess and a particularly good MAA, I believed the changes helped enormously - but the RMs continued to be a source of amazement.
- 1986 - During a particularly enjoyable DTS trip to West Indies, played golf in Kingston, Jamaica against Sir Garfield Sobers. He is as good a golfer as he was cricketer and along with my 2 handicap partner we were given a golf lesson! Became re-acquainted with Pina Coladas!
- 1987 - Continued to enjoy INTREPID - particularly a 24 hour official visit to Belfast with CinC embarked!

- 1988 - Appointed at short notice as the CSO to SNAME based in the Ramada Hotel, Dubai and RFA DILIGENCE in Jebel Abi. During my 6 months, mines were found off Fujairah, in the Northern Gulf with a possible mine explosion that destroyed a fishing boat off Khawr Fakkan. The USS VINCENNES shot down the Airbus and HMS SOUTHAMPTON collided with MV TORBAY off Oman. The latter incident was so close to being a major disaster - there were only minor injuries to a few personnel. I met the ship when she arrived in Fujairah with the base of her jack staff not far above the water-line. We moved the ship's company ashore to the local 'HILTON', flew a large number back to UK, disembarked 4.5 in ammo and turret to DILIGENCE, towed her into Gulf alongside DILIGENCE, in Abu Dhabi built jury structure on fo'c'sle to extract Seadart missiles. In Jebel Abi an EOD team (i/c WO(D) Ridman) removed all Seadart missiles into barge, barge towed to dumping ground in Arabian Sea and scuttled, ship transferred to floating dock and returned to UK - all for about £1.8m, thanks to Jarvis Humby's Visacard.
- 1989 - A few months after joining Naval Secretary's department during which time I managed to get the 'Early Promotion to Lt Cdr' paper approved by 2SL, I was selected for promotion to Captain. Very happy 16 months in the OPS of NavSec (X, E, S, I specs all represented) with a very effective and cooperative group of colleagues.
- 1990 - Appointed as Director Staff Course at RNSC Greenwich met some very intelligent and lucid speakers who had the students' full attention - and lots at the other end of the scale. Both courses contained a fascinating cross section of UK and foreign students with the International Evening where the foreign students and families showed off their national dress, foods, customs and liquid refreshments being the social highlight.
- 1991 - The visit to Greenwich of the Commandant (4* Admiral) and directing staff (5 Captains) of the Kuznestov Soviet Naval Academy was extremely illustrating. The highlight was Trafalgar Night mess dinner in the Painted Hall when the Mess President introduced the Soviet guests to the assembled company and a spontaneous, loud, prolonged period of applause was followed by a standing ovation. Tears came to the eyes of the senior Soviet officers.
- 1992 - The rigours of being the Captain(X) on the Officer Study Group based in New Oxford Street for one year were slightly relieved by playing 5-a-side soccer with fellow officers/SRJRs from MOD in Army gym or at the underground sports facility in Whitehall COMMCEN! WE culture intake by acquiring cheap tickets for various 'West End' shows - on occasions we were the only members of the audience - they were that bad! I found the OSG fascinating, rewarding and challenging I await the implementation of a large proportion of its recommendations with interest.
- 1993/4/5 Enjoyed the most professionally stimulating and fun job of my career with the highlight, by a long way, being the very high quality of all the naval and civilian personnel working in the Flotilla. The future is extremely bright for MCM, FP and ITS!

I look forward to watching the MCD/MW and Diver branches expand and develop their already superb capabilities over the next decade.



Recollection

By Lt Cdr N. L. Smith BEM & BAR RN(RTD)

I was very interested in the article by D. Bruce-Jones BEM in the February '95 magazine, which I have just received and may I put up one or two of my own recollections?

I first became aware of clearance diving on hearing a story of a civilian diver, early in the war, who on being asked to investigate a suspected object on the bottom required a 'fee' of £100 for the dip and a further £1,000 if he was required to touch the object. Now I don't know if this was true, or indeed whether it actually came about. However, it makes more understandable the fact that when, in June 1940, a mine was located near Poole in Dorset a naval team from Whale Island was sent to deal with it This at a time when for dips under 6 fathoms a seaman diver got 2/6d. (12½p) for the first half hour down and 1/6d. (8p) for subsequent half hours. In the event, Diver Robert TAWN extracted the bomb fuse using the motor horn tool and hooked on the mine itself which was taken in tow towards the shore. On the way, it self-detonated and for this operation Tawn got the D.S.M., and presumably his four shillings or so.

Shortly after this VERNON's own diving team was formed round Tawn and I joined it as a young Leading Seaman Diver on my return from Dunkirk. The final member was A.B. Wharton, also a diver. So I guess Tawn, myself and Wharton were the first three Clearance Divers, in that order. We went through the Battle of Britain and from then into 1941 we actually dealt with more mines on the ground than we did in the water. It was late in 1940 when I was allowed to render some slight assistance to Bill Filer (later Lt Cdr W. G. (Bill) Filer MBE GM RN) in his laying of the D.G. Range at Clarence Pier, Southsea. In the January 10th 1941 Blitz on Portsmouth the pier was nearly destroyed but much of the equipment was saved by an intrepid S/Lt, RNVR and a small party who, despite the bombing, took it by lorry up to Portsdown Hill.

In the first quarter of 1941 much of Britain's merchant navy shipping was holed up at Suez because mines had been dropped in the Canal. The situation was desperate because many of the ships carried war materials needed by General Wavell in his desert campaign against Rommel. Lieutenant Commander Maurice Griffiths G.M. RNVR and I were therefore flown out to Ismalia to form a diving team and clear the canal. Some 17 mines were removed, one way or another, and the canal opened. Many ships passed safely through but the next night 7 more mines were laid. These too were dealt with and the rest of the ships got through. I was then sent up to Alexandria to keep the harbour open with DSEA Divers from HMS Medway. (Just as a sideline, I rendered safe a C type mine in the Governate building and was recommended for an Egyptian decoration. King Farouk agreed, providing he was given the empty mine case and parachute to hang in his palace at Ras el Tin. Permission for this being refused, he said in effect, "Well, no mine no decoration!").

On my return to the U.K. in October, I was disturbed to hear that Tawn and Wharton, together with S/Lt Rex Sutherland, had been killed in Falmouth two days after I left for Suez. Their replacements were Divers Jackson and Martin. At this time America was almost in the war and 'observers' from the U.S.N. were already in VERNON where we became engaged in tests on a recently recovered acoustic mine. Despite the rather fanciful procedures put up by the boffins, we found that the unit could easily be triggered by noise of the bubbles emanating from the diver's outlet valve on his helmet. Great consternation, and an urgent need to produce a suit with a circulatory breathing system which we could use in the colder waters of the U.K., just as we had used the DSEA sets in Alexandria. Commander J.G.D. Ouvry D.S.O. gave the go-ahead and after one or two false starts a rather strange suit appeared, of which Prof. JBS Haldane, advisor to Siebe Gorman, diving engineers, and Lieut. J.S. Mould G.C., G.M. RANVR were chiefly involved in the production.

I must say, the suit wasn't too popular with those who were expected to use it and, having tested it myself in the escape tank in the H.M.S. DOLPHIN and finding condensation inside, I knew very well why Jack, with his inevitable ability to find the "mot Juste" immediately dubbed it the "Clammy Death". This was in 1942. Personally, I never used the suit in action, so to speak, but after the war I did find it in use in the fleet.

Touching on one or two points in Bruce-Jones's letter: I knew Commander C.E. (Daddy) Hamond quite well - in fact he was in my boat when I dived on a downed German bomber in the Firth of Forth. Also present was Lieut/Cdr. Charlie Chapple, another WWI veteran and one of the 'greats' if ever there was one. John Stuart Mould I worked with on several occasions and I enclose a very old and faded snap of Mouldie holding my coat while I took out the bomb fuse of a Type D. I doubt if it is good enough to reproduce but, if it were, anyone who knew him would recognise the rakish angle at which he invariably wore his cap. Sadly, he has now passed on with, I believe, the rank of Commander RANVR. There is a book, published in Sydney, and a copy of which I got through the Public Library in the U.K. It is solely about the RMS exploits of the Australians with special reference to Mould GC & GM and his buddy Hugh Syme GC GM & Bar.



As for the matter of diving pay - in the old 'hard hat' days there were two rates, namely one for seamen divers and one for artificer divers who were paid a higher rate for 'skilled work with tools'. In 1941 in Alexandria Admiral A.B. Cunningham, C-in-C, approved the higher rate for clearance divers, including the DSEA divers of HMS Medway. Being a thrifty soul with my wedding in prospect on my return to the U.K., I left my extra pay - some £75 - a lot of money in those days - on the ledger, only to find on asking about its nonappearance that the Admiralty had rescinded ABC's decision as clearance diving was not skilled work with tools. Surely any further comment on that point would be superfluous! On the other hand, if the MOD should at last choose to honour Admiral Cunningham's word, that £75 would be well worth having by this very old dinosaur and his fellow eastern Med. divers of the early forties - if paid at today's equivalent. To quote our American allies, "We reckon we wuz robbed".

Perhaps this too may be of some slight interest to those doing the job today.

Finally, in a book on mining generally the author referred to me, at the time of the Suez affair, as an experienced diving instructor from Whale Island. In fact I was hardly experienced, having barely a year in as a diver, I certainly was not an instructor and, at that point, I had never even seen Whale Island. So I know the fallibility of the human memory.

HOW DO THEY DO THAT? THIS IS HOW



They used a Mk II Pusser's chair!

ROYAL NAVY CLEARANCE DIVERS GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP 1996

VENUE- SOUTHWICK PARK (Naval Recreation Centre)

DATE - 0730 Friday 26th July 1996

COST - £25 for Divers. (Members of SPNRC Golf Club)

£35 for Divers. (Non-members of SPNRC Golf Club)

£35 for Guests

£22 for Diving Vets (55 and over) PM round only. (Vets Championship)

£3 extra for Ex Divers playing in main championship who wish to participate in Vets Championship. (Over 55's only)

Cost includes: Entrance Fee, green fees, nearest the pin (charity hole) morning coffee, luncheon, 2 ball sweep, evening barbecue and entertainment.

£8 per head for evening barbeque/entertainment for non golfers.

There will be a limit of 84 players on a strict first cheque first served basis including guests. No post dated cheques. Priority will be given to Past and present CLEARANCE DIVERS up until 1st June 1996 with last entries 27 June 96 or before if limit is reached.

CANCELLATIONS - £10 cancellation fee will be charged for any cancellation after 1 June 96. No refunds after 27 June 96.

Cheques made payable to the "RN Divers Golf Championship" and addressed to WO (D) M J Crang, Fleet Diving Headquarters, Horsea Island, West Bund Road, Cosham, Portsmouth, PO6 4TT. Telephone PNB 4138/4139.

CLEARANCE DIVERS ENTRY FORM (DIVERS ONLY)

Name & initials _____ Present/Retirement Rank/Rate _____

Handicap _____ Golf Club (if member) _____

Service or home address: _____

Tel No _____

Tick one - Chicken & Chips _____ Sausage & Chips _____ Ploughmans _____

Entrance fees - Clearance Divers (members SPNRC Golf Club) (£25) £ _____

- Clearance Divers (Non-members SPNRC) (£35) £ _____

- Ex clearance Divers PM Vets Championship (£22) £ _____

- Additional PM Vets Championship (£3) £ _____

Additional Evening Guests (£8 a head) No _____ Cost £ _____

Total £ _____

If applicable do you wish to play with your guest Yes/No

GUESTS ENTRY FORM

Name & initials _____ Service Rank/Rate (If applicable) _____

Handicap _____ Golf Club (If applicable) _____

Service or Home address (This section must be completed, failure to do so may cause disappointment and unnecessary travelling): _____

Tel No _____

Tick one - Chicken & Chips _____ Sausage & Chips _____ Ploughmans _____

Entrance Fee - (£35) £ _____

Additional Evening Guests (£8 a head) No _____ Cost £ _____

Total £ _____

Readers Response Page



The Editor
 "Minewarfare and Diving" Magazine
 Defence Diving School
 Horsea Island
 Cosham
 PO6 4TT
 Tel: 01705 224049

Your Name

Your Rank/Rate

Your Job Title

Your Unit

Your Address

.....

.....

Your Tel No

Your FAX No

Dear Editor,

1. I have read this edition from cover to cover and I think:
 - (a) It's terrific—keep up the good work
 - (b) It's OK—but you need more
 - (c) It's no good—because

2. Please find attached my contribution towards the continued success of "Minewarfare And Diving" Magazine. It is:
 - (a) a written article/Letter To The Editor, typed, double spaced and word-counted.
 - (b) a photograph /slide /diagram No. of items:
 - of
 - (c) less than RESTRICTED in classification

3. I realise that the Magazine publication dates are 1 Jan/1 Jul of each year, and that by sending my article in today it will arrive at least six weeks before the next edition is due.
4. I would/would not like my material/contribution returned on completion of printing.
5. I understand that inclusion of my contribution, in whole or in part, is at the discretion of the Editorial Committee.

Yours.....

Signed.....



Challenge And Reply

Lieutenant Commander Nigel R Butterworth (MCD) RN Retd



Nigel Butterworth, the outgoing MAD Magazine Managing Editor, is seen here being presented a glass Mk 17 mine by Cdr Pat Gale (Cdr MDT) before his 'initial' departure from both the MW section in March and the Royal Navy on June 4. He very bravely returned to the section on June 12 to help DN(Res) by instructing an additional RNR Staff Officer's Course, an RNR training weekend followed by a period of producing an RNR MCMV Junior Officer's Task Book before finally leaving the Royal Navy after 19 years of service. Nigel now heads off to study towards a career in Optometry at UMIST. We wish him, Elizabeth and their children Ben and Holly, all the very best for the future.

BIG BADGE CHALLENGE X



By Ed,
We had no replies to the last challenge. The supplier of the potentially libellous photo is going to check his facts, and prove to the editor who the MCD is before we print a name

LEAVING THE SERVICE?

1. Are you a Rating due to leave the service? If so, have you considered a part-time career in the Royal Navy Reserve (RNR) Diving Branch?

Can you think of a better way of keeping in touch with your old shipmates once a year and being paid for doing it? At the present moment there are 30 "Ex" RN CD's on the books of the RNR with room for more, all rates are required, Senior and Juniors alike so come along and join us. You will be directly administered by the Superintendent of Diving's organisation and do not have to join an RNR unit.

2. If you are interested and would like to know more about the RNR, then please give us a ring or drop us a line.
3. Point of contact is, CPO(D) PATTINSON, Inspector Ship's Diving and RNR co-ordinator, on Portsmouth Naval Base Ext: 24538 or BT (01705) 753751. I look forward to hearing from you.

MCDO ASSOCIATION TIES

Minewarfare and Clearance Diving Officers' Association ties have been manufactured and are now ready for purchase. They are to a design agreed by the committee and are good value for money. The cost has yet to be determined but will be in the region of £5.00. These most desirable items of personal attire can be purchased from OIC, FDU1, HQFDG, West Bond Road, Horsea Island, Cosham, PO6 4TT.



BIG MINE CHALLENGE XI

**NO CLUES WITH THIS PICTURE,
SO WHAT IS IT?**

EDITORIAL

Having relieved Nigel Butterworth earlier this year as DSOMW (new title 'MW TAC' to fall into line with DRYAD policy) also meant that I would assume the duties of MAD Magazine Managing Editor but without completing a PJT! That being said, Mark Kessler has been doing all the hard work, as he has done for the past couple of years, in preparing the copy and liaising with Bourne Press. Very many thanks to all of you who have produced articles, letters or comments; be they factual, serious or light-hearted. They are all appreciated and hopefully cater for our very broad readership – any feedback, using the proforma at the back, is always gratefully received. However, as you may or may not be aware, there was a general shortage of articles earlier this year resulting in the late printing of this edition. The editorial team fully appreciated how far down the priority list 'article for the MAD Magazine' is and it probably even appears well below 'update Ship/Section Standing Orders', but I must stress that each of the two editions per year is fully dependant, not only on your input, but also on funding. So, if we don't fill it we lose it. For future editions I will be sponsoring a calling notice through RNTMs, allowing ample time for budding journalists from MOD departments, squadrons, ships, diving groups, schools and of course any other correspondents who wish to donate articles, to burst into print. Meanwhile, happy reading.