



Exeter Branch Newsletter October 2020



Introduction:

We have not met formally since February, Pat attended a WEC committee meeting where it was unanimously agreed to reopen the club on Monday 12th October following a thorough deep clean. To satisfy COVID regulations the club will close at 2200, the rule of six applies so any gathering will be spread out and informal in the main bar if necessary, face coverings will be required until seated, social distancing must be adhered to, temperatures will be monitored on entry, contact details will have to be given and a form of table service will be in operation. **We will convene to have an informal gathering on Thursday 15th October in the WEC, because of the early closing time we will meet from 1830 for a 1900 start.** If you have any concerns then please err on the side of caution and keep safe, contact myself or Pat if you have any questions.

In this edition; some notes from the secretary, a list of branch members, information on November ceremonies, a crowd funding request and a report from the NMC serving rep.

If you have anything to contribute or wish to share with us then please let me know.

1. **Secretary's notes.**

- On Friday 4th September Pat and I attended the funeral of Dave Ash, there was a very good military turn out with seven standards present. As COVID restrictions limited numbers only Pat made it into the ceremony, the family were very pleased with the effort made by the branch, WEC and 'We Remember Submariners' who supplied a wreath and 'molly pins'.



- **Welfare;** I have been in contact with John Harlow who is very well, he and his wife celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary on 11th August and are keeping safe. Keith and Ann Baxter have not been in the best of health, Keith has spent some time in hospital and Ann has had to be put up in a care home temporarily, both are getting better and being cared for by family. Pat is in regular contact.

Pat also had a message from Shirley King, Tom's widow, who is having a clear out. Pat visited her and collected some submarine related books which we will add to our library.

- I include a list of submariners that have crossed the bar in the past couple of months, this would be part of a silent minute at our monthly meeting. Raise a glass for;

David Robinson (Rock Buffalo), Harry Anderson, Alan Mulvey, Bill (Tom) Sawyer, Norman Keith 'Jan' Langdon, Tony Gisby, Mark Rose (Rosie), Chris Wright, Phil Bladen, **Dave Ash**, David Craven, Tim Greensides, Peter Inchcliff, Craig Pomfrett (Pom), Michael Hillman (Jan), Alan McCullough, Robert (Bob) CLIFF, John Ronald Drysdale (Ron), Mark Forster (Fozzie), S/Lt Mick Rowe, Alan McCullough, Brian Thornton.

- 2021 Submarine Association diaries; Do you want an association diary for next year? Please contact me by phone, text or e-mail with your requirements. I have received three orders so far.
- On Thursday 17th September nine of us met at the Imperial Weatherspoon's in Exeter, we occupied two tables in the garden maintaining a safe distance and only have two groups of four and five at any one time. This was a very pleasant afternoon allowing us to have a chat and catch up with likeminded people outside the restricted social bubbles we have been sentenced to throughout lockdown. No sing songs, just a good opportunity to catch up, raise a glass to Tom King and Dave Ash that have CTB during lockdown.



- **HMS/M Truculent Memorial Service;** I am sorry to have to inform you that with the current virus situation and not knowing when we will all be free to congregate. Medway Towns Submariners Association have decided not to hold HMS/M Truculent Memorial Service in its usual form on Saturday 9th January 2021. The Medway Towns Branch will

hold a Branch Members only Memorial Service in the St. Georges Centre in Chatham. Unfortunately we had to decide on this course of action now because of forward planning. We hope that you understand. We hope to be back to normal in 2022. Very best wishes and good health to you all. Derek Grant (President Medway Towns Submariners Association).

- Frank Pas has 'stood down' as the Slops Shop Manager. Slops is currently closed until a new Manager has been identified and a handover has been conducted. Anyone wishing to take on the Role and be the new Slops Shop Manager should forward their details to the Secretary as soon as possible.
- The Reverend Professor Stephen Dray (Essex Branch) has been appointed as the Honorary Chaplain to the Submariners Association with immediate effect and that he will conduct the Service at the Embankment Parade in November

2. EXETER Branch Membership

Mal suggested that I produce a list of members so that you can each see who we are and maybe recognise someone that you did not realise was so close. This at first thought, seemed a quick way to fill some column inches, however just reproducing a list of members is not that easy, under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) no contact details can be disclosed without the individuals' permission, so contact details have been redacted.

In looking at our modest membership of forty covering a submarine service from 1942 to present ranging from two WW2 veterans to serving members, Admirals to ABs and Stokers to Stewards, it soon became apparent that we have a unique variation and range of submariners. I became slightly humbled when looking at this subtle brotherhood of men, still with a camaraderie and common bond of being a submariner making us all equal no matter what our rank, rate or the background we came from.

We cover a large geographical area, from Poole, Axminster and Taunton in the East, Launceston and Totnes in the West, Bishops Tawton in the North and Paignton and Torbay to the South. Additionally we have an affiliate member in Cornwall and a full life member in Victoria, Canada. Consequentially we do not always see our valued members, this does not mean, however, that they are forgotten and we are pleased that they remain members of our branch.

4 Life members* are over the age of 90 and are not required to pay subs.

2 Affiliate members# have chosen to join us but pay subs at their parent branch.



H Class submarine 1942, John Harlow



HMS Ambush 2020, Cdr Nick Stone (CO)

*John Harlow **WW2 Veteran**; *H43, H48, Truculent, Severn, Rorqual, Teredo.*
 *Rupert Harrison **WW2 Veteran**; *Spiteful (P277).*
 *C Hoddinott; *Springer, Taciturn, Amphion, Alliance.*
 *Eric Travers; *Tradewind Trespasser, Acheron, Explorer, Aurochs, Telemachus.*
 Lou Barker; *Alliance, Finwhale.*
 Keith Baxter; *Odin, Valiant.*
 R (Bill) Bonney; *Astute, Ambush, Onyx, Onslaught.*
 Mal Davey; *Dreadnought, Churchill, Courageous.*
 David Edge; *Repulse, Resolution, Sovereign, Splendid, Valiant.*
 John Flower; *Tiptoe, Orpheus, Token, Acheron.*
 Reg Greenham; *Alderney, Solent, Trenchant.*
 Cdr Tim Hale OBE (**President**); *Subtle, Totem, Tally-Ho, Sanguine, Taciturn, Trump, Osiris, Dreadnought, Tiptoe, Artemis, Warspite, Swiftsure, USS Scorpion.*
 Pat Helliard; *Trump, Andrew, Teredo.*
 Phil Jays; *Alaric, Opossum, Olympus.*
 Barry Kitson; *Untiring, Alliance, Amphion.*
 Pat Langdon (**Chairman**); *Ocelot, Rorqual, Onslaught.*
 Tom Moultrie; *Revenge, Repulse, Renown.*
 Michael Readdy; *Alderney, Alliance, Andrew, Cachalot, Oberon.*
 Peter Roberts; *Resolution, Renown, Oberon.*
 Graham Russell; *Sleuth, Astute*
 Barrie Sandover; *Solent, Auriga, Tabard, Tally-Ho, Alcide.*
 Alan Turner; *Repulse, Sovereign.*
 Patrick Wilson; *Torbay, Trafalgar.*
 Sir Mark Stanhope GCB OBE ADC; *Swiftsure, Orpheus, Superb, Splendid.*
 Brian Hall MBE (**Secretary**); *Valiant, Warspite, Superb, Swiftsure, Tireless, Vigilant, Vanguard, Victorious, Vengeance.*
 John Stather (**Treasurer**); *Dreadnought, Spartan, Superb, Triumph, Valiant, Torbay.*
 Martyn Jeffery; *Warspite, Valiant, Churchill, Turbulent.*
 George Prior; *Repulse, Resolution, Churchill, Warspite, Valiant, Courageous, Triumph.*
 Henry Colville; *Grampus, Orpheus, Osiris.*
 Scott Matthews; *Sovereign.*
 Cdr Nicholas Stone; *Trafalgar, Triumph, Tireless, Talent, Artful, CO HMS Ambush.*
 Peter Austin; *Repulse, Renown, Victorious, Vanguard, Vigilant.*
 Tony Cooper; *Swiftsure, Dreadnought, Courageous, Sovereign.*
 Stephen Reed; *Onslaught, Spartan, Trafalgar.*
 Paul White; *Oracle, Onslaught, Osiris.*
 Geoff McCready MBE; *Walrus, Narwhal, Swiftsure, Otus, Orpheus, Upholder, Sceptre.*
 William G. Martin; *Courageous, Dreadnought, Renown, Splendid.*
 Karl Morgan; *Revenge, Repulse, Odin.*
 Andrew Mason; *Finwhale, Swiftsure.*
 #John Weale CB OBE; *Sovereign, Opportune, Trenchant, Splendid, Trafalgar, Illustrious.*
 #Roger Clements; *Thermopylae, Andrew, Cachalot, Narwhal, Opportune, Olympus, Repulse.*

If I have made any mistakes or omissions from the above list, sorry and let me know.

3. Submariners Remembrance Service at Middle Temple Gardens on Sunday 1st November 2020

Members will be aware that revised COVID Guidance has been issued by the Government and that new strict rules on Meetings and Gatherings come into force on Monday 14th September. It is not known how long these new restrictions will remain in force.

The NMC are making urgent enquiries of the relevant Authorities on whether the November Ceremonies can go ahead as planned, or on a reduced scale (possibly a maximum of six persons)' or must be cancelled altogether.

It is unlikely that we will have an definitive answer for at least ten days.

To this end it is recommended that Association Members and any other Submariners planning to attend the Ceremonies at the Middle Temple should avoid booking travel or accommodation until further information is available.

Branch Secretaries will be informed as soon as the way ahead is clear, and updates will be posted on the Association Website

Regards

Ian Vickers
National Secretary
Submariners Association

4. Crowd Funding a new Cold War Museum in Plymouth, with Courageous at its core

There is the potential for an excellent future for HMS Courageous, which are outlined below by Ian Whitehouse. I believe that this will be the one and only opportunity to save a Royal Navy nuclear submarine for future generations which should be grasped, as the opportunity will not happen again.

Can I ask if the message below can be given as much publicity on the website, emails and facebook to all the S/M Association membership to enable the target to be met please?

Below is a link to a crowd funding page for a project that Rear Admiral John Weale (recently retired FOSNI & RASM) and Ian Whitehouse (ex CO Sovereign) are working on with Plymouth City Council and the NMRN to establish a new Cold War Museum in Plymouth, with Courageous at its core, as part of the Devonport South Yard regeneration programme.

Detail of the proposal is found at the link. In essence, it is to remember the history of the Cold War from Plymouth which was the home of both the S and T class submarines, and the SM School before all training and operations migrate north to the Clyde and we lose the unique history of operational submarines in Plymouth. The intent is to try and raise £40K by Christmas such that we can complete a scoping study of the feasibility and costings for a Cold War Museum (Sub Hub) to include what work needs to be done to provide Courageous with a permanent home. Any donation you give will be gratefully received. Finances are being managed by the RNRMC and any funds donated above the target figure will be given to the RNRMC SMF charity.

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/hmscourageous?utm_term=k2xZRzMRw

Please forward to all your submariner friends & colleagues

Kind regards, Pitt.k (former naval person)

5. Serving Reps Report

Firstly please except my apologies for the little contact I have had in recent months. I am currently still serving away on HMS trenchant and as we are a clean COVID free crew it is easier for us to stay at sea than risk pulling in anywhere. That being said we did pull into Faslane for a night to re-store food. I took this opportunity to invite Commodore Jim Perks to meet us on the jetty for a socially distance chat with the men.

The main topic of conversation was the Submarine Fund and the fact that it was now up and running. For those that already pay into the RNRMC there is no change our money will automatically be diverted to the Submarine Fund. There is a big drive to target the SMQ's during their dry training and word is getting out to the serving submariners. Unfortunately I think it will be hard initially to get buy in until they see some of the money being spent and realise it will benefit them in the long run. COSM is taking ideas of how we can spend money to benefit ourselves and our families.

There has been a great response to the idea that Submariners will wear black cap covers instead of the traditional white, this serves two purposes. One it gives us recognition for the work we do and two it will make us stand out and get people talking and asking questions which will help recruitment/retention. All trainees will be issued a set of black dolphins to wear so they are recognisable as trainee submariners. As per tradition they will only be issued their Gold Dolphins once all the training requirements are met.

Recruitment is on the rise and all training establishments are full (HMS Raleigh/Sultan & Collingwood) Dartmouth has been used as an overflow for trainees during phase 1 training. Although it will take a while for these trainees to come through the system it is a positive step for the Submarine Service.

SETT at Fort Blockhouse (HMS Dolphin) has finally closed it's doors and the new SMEARAS training is starting in HMNB Clyde this month. This is a state of the art facility and will provide realistic training for submarine escape and surface abandonment. When the world is back to normal and the NMC are in Faslane for a meeting or K13 remembrance this is well worth a visit if possible.

The message is well and truly out there about this year Remembrance Weekend in London. I believe they are going to limit the numbers of serving personnel to 30 uniformed. To allow the veterans to maximise the numbers of the ticket allocation. I will still be away so unfortunately I will not be there this year but I hope the weather holds for those that do manage to get a ticket.

Many Thanks for your time in this matter

Charlie Drake



Eric Travers (90) 5th October 1930
 Dave Edge (79) 16th October 1941

EVENTS CALENDAR

Please note that all events may be cancelled or change at short notice.

October 2020		
Monthly meeting	Thursday 15 th Oct 2020	White Ensign Club
Annual Dinner	Saturday 10 th Oct 2020	Exeter Golf & Country Club
November 2020		
S/M Assn Memorial Ceremony	Weekend 1 st Nov	London
Remembrance Sunday	Sunday 8 th Nov 2020	Local
Monthly meeting	Thursday 19 th Nov 2020	White Ensign Club
HMS Renown reunion	Nov 20-23	Leicester
December 2020		
Ladies Lunch	Saturday 5 th Dec 2020	White Ensign Club

That's all for this month, but our thoughts are with our members, their families and submariners everywhere, particularly those that are not feeling well or are away from home.

The next monthly meeting will be at the White Ensign Club, South Street Exeter on Thursday 15th October 2020, 1830hrs for 1900hrs.

Brian Hall
 Honorary Secretary
 Submariners Association
 Exeter Branch