



ROYAL NAVAL PATROL SERVICE ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No. 77 Winter 2014

POSTAL ADDRESS and HEADQUARTERS

Royal Naval Patrol Service Association
Naval Museum, Sparrows Nest,
Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 1XG

Charity No. 273148

Tel: 01502 586250

E-mail: rnps_hq@lowestoft.org.uk

I hope you are all benefitting from the unusually mild autumn we have had but I somehow feel that it is on the change and winter will come in quite sharply. With Christmas only weeks away I suppose we have been very lucky but we would not be British if we did not complain about the weather.

Reunion 2014 report

The AGM was held as usual at Trinity Methodist church but attendance was very low with only about 30 present. The main subject discussed was the proposed new set of rules as published in the last newsletter. Only three letters had been received as a result of this and these were in agreement while also making some suggestion for the future most of which had already been explored by the Committee. It was therefore agreed by all those present that this set of words would be taken forward to the next stage which would be legal advice. Mike Sims was thanked for his considerable work on this project. The President, Chairman and Secretary gave their reports and all mentioned the sad passing of our past National Chairman Ron Berry.

At the election of officers and committee, with the exception of the vacant post of Treasurer, all were re-elected with the addition of two of our long term volunteers who were elected to the committee having previously been co-opted during the year.

Reunion 2015. Next year's reunion would take place with the AGM on the 2nd October 2015 and the parade on the 3rd October 2015. The AGM will most probably take place in the Sparrows Nest restaurant subject to the owners approval. There would be no dinner on the Friday evening but there may be the possibility of a buffet at the Giardino Restaurant in the Sparrows Nest on the Saturday following the parade. (see further item on this later in Newsletter).

At the AGM a question was asked about the membership numbers as unlike other years this had not been announced so as promised at the AGM, here are the membership totals –

FULL Members	303	WIDOWS & LIFE Members	154
ASSOCIATE Members	130	OVERSEAS	16

Friday evening saw the Annual dinner take place at the Hatfield Hotel with, unfortunately, reduced numbers from last year. An enjoyable meal was followed by speeches from our President and the Mayor of Lowestoft before music was provided by Harbour Lights and the annual reunion draw was made. At the end of the evening the general raffle was drawn and a patriotic finale with enthusiastic flag waving brought the night to a close.

Saturday saw the parade and service take place in Belle Vue Park in good weather although at one point a few eyes turned skyward when a dark cloud dared to show its self, but the thought of upsetting a bunch of hardened ex-matelots soon changed its mind! The service was conducted by our Lowestoft Padre, Senior Superintendant Tim Jenkins, with music by Yarmouth Brass. This year the escort for the National Standard was found from Beccles Sea Cadet unit, TS Brave, and consisted of 2 Royal Marine Cadets and a Sea Cadet.

Following the conclusion of the service everyone made their way down to the Sparrows Nest Gardens where the Standards and a small marching contingent marched past the assembled VIPs for the salute before assembling in front of the Museum for the address from the President. Before "Sunset" was carried out, there was an added item this year. During the year the mast had been lowered and totally stripped and refurbished by Museum Assistant John Coble and included having six coats of special paint applied which had been kindly donated by local company Witham Paints. A new plaque was commissioned. At this point our Padre blessed the mast and our President Cdr. Titmus unveiled the plaque. We then moved into the "sunset" ceremony with Sunset being played by Marine Cadet Bugler Ashley Cook. After the parade was dismissed the Standard Bearers *reluctantly* made their way inside

for their "Tot" but we are a bit confused as there were only 5 standards on parade but it seems quite a few pretended to be Standard Bearers as a whole bottle of rum disappeared – good luck to you lads!

Post script from the National Chairman

Following the announcement at the re-union AGM and dinner this year that the 2015 dinner was cancelled there were some expressions of dismay from shipmates and requests to reconsider the decision. The National Committee at their de-briefing meeting on 14th November discussed the matter and decided to rescind such decision and, subject to membership approval, to re-instate the dinner for 2015. It is vital that we have member's feedback and **sufficient numbers** attending to make it a viable proposition.

Ron Berry



You will have seen in the reunion AGM report that unfortunately our previous National Chairman, Ron Berry, has crossed the bar. Ron served the association well for a long time and only relinquished his position as Chairman after he suffered a stroke. Ron made a reasonable recovery from the stroke and still managed to make the reunions even in later years on his mobility scooter. Ron and his wife Betty worked tirelessly for the association and in the days when the reunion had dances were always seen on the floor as they were accomplished dancers. Ron was always very smartly turned out, in fact when he worked at Birds Eye factory as a fitter he was known as "the gentleman fitter". Ron lost his devoted wife Betty at the beginning of the year and I think this took its toll on him and his health declined rapidly. As a mark of respect not only to Ron the man but to his former office in the Association his cortege was led to the crematorium by our National Standard and our President, Cdr Titmus in full uniform. After the funeral a

buffet was held at the restaurant in Sparrows Nest Gardens and the museum was opened so members of Ron's family could see an important part of his life.

Mayor of Lowestoft

At our reunion we were delighted to have the Mayor of Lowestoft, Cllr. Roger Bellham and his wife with us on both the Friday night and Saturday for the service. I have known Roger for some time and was aware that he had been unwell the previous year but did not know any details. At both our events Roger said how much he had enjoyed himself, in fact a few weeks later we met him in his official capacity at another event and again both he and his wife remarked on our reunion. It was, therefore, a great shock to hear on the morning of Remembrance Sunday that Roger had died the previous day. It was only then that we learnt the full extent of his problems.

Roger was diagnosed with cancer in October 2013 and underwent a major operation to remove both of his kidneys as well as his bladder and prostate. He spent two weeks in intensive care and had dialysis three mornings a week. He only discovered the cancer had returned in September this year.

Roger's wife Jo and sons Steven, Michael, Jonathan and Scott paid tribute to him: "Being mayor was the highlight after the year he had previously had, he loved every moment of it. He has done a lot for the community over the years".



Song – Harry Bates Navy

Having been heavily involved with our association since 1988 I have been in a position to learn new things about the RNPS mainly from research for people making enquiries. Every so often a little gem drops into your lap and makes you think "I wonder who else knows about this" Well this and the following few paragraphs are such examples which all happened in the last couple of months.

During the week of our reunion Committee Member Mike Sims received an email from a chap called Brian May who had heard a song called "Harry Bates Navy" written by Folk Singer Bill Meek and he has posted a film of himself singing the song on the internet on the YouTube site at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvQ88xNCqAw> It is from a double CD called "By Humber's Brown Water" which is available from a firm called "The Chantey Cabin" and the song is described as - Written by Bill Meek, this song celebrates the Royal Naval Patrol Service in World War 2. Fishing vessels and similar vessels were modified to act as convoy escorts and minesweepers. Their loss rate was horrendous. The title was originally sarcastic, but as they proved their worth, it was adopted.

While looking on the internet for more details on this song I came across yet another RNPS song entitled Roy Scrivener by Ross Scrivener, written and performed by a son about his father this is very moving and the pictures that accompany the song are of Roy and our reunions through the years. This wonderful tribute to a father can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fwoq5Q5PHbM>

Feeling quite pleased with myself at finding this second song I was about to come out of the programme when something caught my eye, I opened the link and was amazed to find it was a film about the recruiting of the men for the RNPS with shots of men marching out of the gate at Sparrows Nest and on trawlers minesweeping. This gem can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETiHg0_v210

The pièce de résistance comes courtesy of our Curator, Alf Muffet, who came across a Pathe News film which shows the unveiling of our memorial in Belle Vue Park in 1953. It looks as if a lot of similar material has just been made available via the internet as I would have thought that someone would have brought this to our attention before now. Have a look at this fascinating piece of our association's history at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMQnLzRxAzk>

If you do not have access to a computer then I would seriously urge you to find someone who can show you these three films, they are well worth it.

Navy News

In the latest edition of Navy News there was an article about HMS Exploit which is one of the University Squadron P2000 patrol boats. In the article it mentioned that she had visited the wreck site of a WW1 Naval Trawler and scattered 2 wreaths. The ship in question was HMT Abelard which was lost on Christmas Eve 1916 near Plymouth.



Trawler Kirkland, sister ship to HMT Abelard

Commodores Little and Moores and RBL Standard Bearer salute on HMS Exploit as wreaths are scattered



The article reads:- The past and the present came together for a poignant water-borne event to mark 100 years since the birth of the poppy as a symbol of remembrance.

Guests and dignitaries were invited to HMS Drake before boarding the patrol boat HMS Exploit, P167, for a short ceremony over the wreck of HMT Abelard in Plymouth Sound, which sank during World War One.

The ceremony was attended by Devonport Naval Base Commander, Commodore Graeme Little and Royal British Legion (RBL) President, Commodore Jake Moores.

A pair of wreaths were thrown overboard in memory of those who died, accompanied by a reading of the Exhortation and a rendition of the Last Post.

There are several web sites that feature the wreck of HMT Abelard, one interesting dive site is <http://www.sportdiver.co.uk/News/Latest-News/Divers-commemorate-seamen-lost-during-WWI>

An unusual tin hat!

Shipmate Jim Thompson from Fife sent in an interesting newspaper article about a RNPS man who died earlier this year. His name was Rowland Cort from Blackburn. He joined as a boy sailor at 17 and was sent on Arctic Convoys where he was injured twice. The first time, after his ship hit a mine, he was thrown into the freezing sea and did not regain consciousness until several days later in Scotland with his parents by his bed. His second injury came when his ship was staffed by a German aircraft, his best friend was killed and Rowland was struck with shrapnel which was never removed. While he was in hospital an air raid forced staff to evacuate walking wounded but he was too ill to be moved so a nurse improvised some protection for him by placing a large enamel dish over his head. After the all clear they found that blast had caused quite a bit of damage and Rowland's bed was covered with rubble, broken glass and timber - but when they cleared it, he was unhurt and later returned to active duty.

Thanks for the article Jim.

RNPSA Reunion 2014 Centre spread photo details

1. The march to the memorial.
2. The National Standard escorted by Marine and Sea Cadets from Beccles Sea Cadets, TS Brave.
3. "Divisions" at the Sparrows Nest being addressed by the President, Cdr Titmus.
4. Cdr Garry Titmus lays the Association poppy anchor at the memorial service.
5. Mayoress Mrs Bellham, President Cdr. Titmus, Mayor Cllr Roger Bellham, Vice President Capt. Scoles, Vice President Cdr Braybrooke and Padre Senior Superintendant Tim Jenkins at the saluting base.
6. The March past

Photograph credits Photographs 1 – 6 courtesy of Mick Howes

Branch Donations in Lieu of Subscriptions

We have noticed that a number of Branches have decided to close down as a Branch, due to falling membership and only meet up for comradeship. It costs the Association a minimum of £1.75 per member just to send out the newsletters. To keep the Nest running costs a considerable amount, i.e. Electricity £1,037.44, Telephone. £280.99 and now the Waveney District Council have decided to charge us rates of £687.00.

We would like to remind the shipmates that if the 'Branch' is not going to send donations in lieu of your subs that members should pay their full subscriptions to H.Q.

Legacies

None of us want to dwell on the inevitable but I am afraid it is a fact of life that at some stage someone is going to have to sort out everything we have collected over our long and varied lives. All too often we at the museum get enquiries from relatives researching a father's war service and all too often during the course of the conversation it transpires that they remember seeing service papers, medals, silver badge and photos etc. but they got "lost" in the house clearance. Can I make it quite clear that we are not asking for everything to come to our museum, what we are saying is that if you would like these sort of things to be preserved then provision needs to be made by either making a bequest to a family member or to a museum or organisation that will appreciate and look after them. Local museums are very keen to gather information about local residents. If you would like them to come to our museum we would of course be very grateful but instructions have to be made clear. Recently we have received a couple of financial legacies which we found very touching to think that our work at the museum had been recognised at such a sad time.

REMINDERS

Wreath laying service

With the help of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (and others) it is now possible to arrange for Poppy Wreaths to be placed on graves in most overseas countries. Badged wreaths are not available under this scheme.

Please make requests for laying at least eight weeks in advance. An annual replacement standing order service is also available.

Contact: The Poppy Appeal, Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX Tel: 01622 717172

Welfare

Our National Welfare Officer is there to try and help you, she cannot perform miracles but will do her best to address any problems. Bonnie's contact details are - Mrs Bonnie Whisstock, 133 Corton Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 4PR. Tel. 01502 584555 or via e-mail at bonnie@theharbour.fsbusiness.co.uk

Curator

If you are sending anything to the Museum can you please make sure you state if it is on **loan** or a **gift** as it helps with the cataloguing and any future claims to ownership and with photographs please give descriptions and/or where possible. Our pool of volunteers are gradually making headway with restoring, copying and documenting all the photographs which will hopefully make locating them in the museum much easier.

Museum visits

For information, the Museum and office are open Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings until about 11.30 (ish). What we do recommend is that if you are travelling some distance that you telephone a few days beforehand to either the office on 01502 586250 or my home on 01502 584555 or 07975623651 (**new No.**) and we can arrange, if necessary, to open up for you at a suitable time.

Web sites

Don't forget, if you have access to a computer, to keep checking the 2 web sites connected to our Association which are: www.rnps.lowestoft.org.uk run by Mike Sims and www.harry-tates.org.uk run by Nick Clark. Both offer a wealth of information. There are also plenty of other sites where you can search for old oppos or look for things to do with the war and the Royal Navy. Nick is looking for anyone who can supply a story for his "Veterans Stories" section. Take a look at some of the photos, how did they get their hats to stay on "flat aback"?

Keep the odds and ends coming, they all make interesting reading. If you have any items for inclusion in the next Newsletter or comments on this one, please send them to me at , Leo Whisstock, 133 Corton Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 4PR. Tel. 01502 584555 or via e-mail at rnpsa@theharbour.fsbusiness.co.uk

Facebook and Twitter

Nick Clark has also asked me to inform members that the Harry Tate's Navy web site is now at last on twitter at: www.twitter.com/harrytatesnavy and that he has also created a brand new page on the popular facebook! www.facebook.com/RN.Patrol.Service Any silver surfers out there are most welcome!

Yours Aye, **The Duty Watch**

Shipmates Corner

If you do not have access to e-mail or you have information on any of the following enquiries that do not have contact details, then you can pass the information to me (Leo) at the address above **or** to Nick Clark, 174 Manton Crescent, Beeston, Nottingham NG9 2GA Tel: 077124 59257 (new number) or by either E-mail at nickclark1961@googlemail.com or info@rnpatrolservice.org.uk Please note that the Forum on Harry Tate's Web site is still down due to factors beyond our control but Nick is working on it and hopes to get it back soon.

Has anyone any information or a photo of **BYMS 2039**. Our father was a signalman based at Lowestoft and from Feb 43 to Feb 45 and was one of the men who made the journey to America and stayed at Asbury to bring the ship back to this country. There are no photos of this ship and in fact sadly, we have very few of him. His name was **Bernard Boyes** from Leeds.

Contact Cynthia Crane 01622 747875 cynthia.crane@lineone.net

I am hoping the RNPS Association and its members, may be able to help me identify personnel in the attached scanned photo's from my father's service on board **BYMS 2037**. Which I think was between August 1942 and November 1944 ending in Malta. His name was **Edward William Woodman**, Service No **JX315015** You will see I have some of the first names only of the Football Team

Contact Stan Woodman stanleyjwoodman@msn.com



Reunion Draw Results - 2014

	Ticket	Winner		Ticket	Winner
1	00968	Miss J Taylor, Feltham, Middlesex	8	03998	D Rodd, Marshfield, Cardiff
2	08468	C Harris, Lowestoft, Suffolk	9	02413	S Draper, Huntingdon, Cambridge
3	00631	Mrs A Soar, Woodford Green,	10	02158	F Harris, Boston, Lincolnshire
4	11928	J Scoles, Denmead, Hampshire	11	02653	Donated to RNPSA
5	06639	Mrs P Masters, Brentwood, Essex	12	00931	P Durrant, Lowestoft, Suffolk
6	10203	R Scrivener, Barton le Clay, Bedford	13	03613	F White, Sudbury, Suffolk
7	13447	C Hill, Lowestoft, Suffolk	Congratulations to all the winners		

Obituary for Winter 2014

S/M R Berry	Lowestoft	Suffolk	S/M J Morrison	Rugley	Staffordshire
A/M G Cooksley	Benfleet	Essex	S/M N McKay	Seahouses	Northumberland
S/M W Demaine	Cheadle	Cheshire	S/M W Newsbury	Bembridge	Isle of Wight
S/M R A Harvey	Saltash	Cornwall	S/M P Quennell	Warrington	Cheshire
S/M A Layer	Penryn	Cornwall	S/M S Rhodes	Penn	West Midlands
S/M B Meadows	Lancing	West Sussex	S/M R W Stammers	Colchester	Essex

At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them

Cut ✂ -----

Slops items for sale from HQ (Winter 2014)

Item / Title	£	Qty	£	Item / Title	£	Qty	£
Europa Plaque	27.00			RNPS Memorial Post Card	0.10		
Lg. Blazer Badge, Gold wire	12.00			Sparrows Nest Post Card	0.20		
Lg. Blazer Badge, Woven	6.50			RNPSA Colouring Poster	0.30		
Small Blazer Badge, Gold wire	8.00						
Jumper / Cap Badges, Woven	4.00			Publications			
Association Crested Tie	11.00			Christmas cards - original	0.50		
RNPSA Ladies head square	7.50			Christmas cards – clean sweep	0.50		
Museum Squiggle pen	1.00			HMS Europa Booklet	2.00		
Museum 4 colour pen	2.00			Dawn Always Breaks	5.00		
RNPSA Museum pen	1.50			Churchill's Pirates Pt.1	5.00		
Lapel Badge, Blue enamel	7.00			Churchill's Pirates Pt.2	4.50		
White Ensign Lapel Badge	3.50			A Brief History of the RNPS	4.00		
White Ensign Car Sticker	0.50			Blue Mariners CD	4.00		
RNPSA Car sticker, coloured	2.00			The Story of the RNPS, 2 CD set	5.00		
RNPSA Bookmark	0.50						
RNPSA Jubilee Mug	3.00			Total	£		
RNPSA Key rings	1.00			P & P Small items	1.25		
RNPSA Epaulettes (pair)	6.00			P & P Large / Heavy items	2.50		
				Total Submitted	£		

Name _____

Membership No. _____

Address _____

_____ Post Code _____ Tel. No. _____

Please send payment and completed order form to:-

Royal Naval Patrol Service Association, Naval Museum, Sparrows Nest, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 1XG