



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

No. 224 – JUNE 2013

EDITORIAL

Let this be a warning to us all. When I took on production of All Guns Blazing, I opened a gmail email account for AGB business. Just as well because despite having what I consider to be top rate security software, my personal hotmail account was compromised in early May and I've lost everything that was in it. Some of you, Simon, Stuart, Peter, Jeff who were in my hotmail address book may have received an email appearing to come from me. If this in turn caused problems with your email I apologise. As for any hackers out there – don't let me get my hands on you. Not that I'm suggesting violence is the way to solve problems. I would sit them down, I would convince them of the error of their ways with logic and reasoned argument and then we would go down the pub and I would buy them a pint. (Yer right).

Welcome to new members, Robert Langlois and Stuart Fieldhouse.

Web site of interest. <http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/News-and-Events/Special-Events/battle-Of-The-Atlantic>
I particularly enjoyed the info on Convoy ONS5 (Outbound North (Slow) 5) and the image gallery.

Thanks to Rob Morgan for once again supplying more than his fair share of articles for AGB.

Somewhere in the World, the Sun is over the yardarm.

Norman Bell
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VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

June 2013

Chairman: Stuart Barnes-Watson

From a personal point of view, May was outstanding! Having made 50 not out, I celebrated in true NWS style by hiring Lee Bay Hall and inviting fellow naval wargamers to battle out Yellow Sea and Tsushima. So merry was I, that I even did a sea shanty stint in the Grampus on Friday night. From a personal point of view it was the result of 10 years hard collecting of 1/1250 models. I've done the battles in 1/3000, but now.....spectacular! And for the first time the Russians won both (hard fought) battle.

The month then peaked with Kassel ship collectors show. Rather than just dash there and back I make it into a holiday. Having endured a Force 10 gale getting to Esbjerg, Denmark, we spent the next day buying ship models in Kiel before camping at Laboe in full view of the entrance to the Kiel Canal....with the German navy very active. The next day we headed south to the Steinhuder Meer near Hannover. I had found an interesting fortress by Google map situated in the lake. We took a boat out to the fort, and I found true inspiration. During the Seven Years War this lake was on the frontline between Britain, Hannover, Brunswick, Schaumburg-Lippe, and France. Minden is nearby. Should that battle have been lost (as it should have been!) then the Steinhuder Meer would have become important. Graf von Schaumburg-Lippe knew this, and had built a semi submersible, the Pike, to deal with any waterborne attack on the heavily armed fortress. With fresh water all around, plentiful fish and ducks, the fortress could have held out indefinitely. Buying the 10mm card model of the fortress and the plans of the 'Pike', I now have new enthusiasm for yet another naval wargames clash.

Kassel was a Mecca as usual, and I've knocked a few off my wants list. More importantly, I've negotiated some deals that should help all naval wargamers.

After Kassel we camped on Walcheren Island in Holland. Whilst famous for the failed WW2 invasion, it yielded a true gem in Vlaar, a small 'town' from which King William III set sail for Brixham in Devon at the start of the Glorious Revolution. I've now retraced those steps. As if that were enough, got invited onto the captains bridge as the Stena Hollandica berthed at Harwich. I stood on one leg, felt nothing. At the turning point we had 5 metres bow, 3 metres stern, before grounding. Captain Laas van der Zee, my lasting thanks!

In short, naval wargaming is far from dull, boring or featureless. Sailing out and back via Harwich, imagining the ranks of escort vessels and MTB's and MGB'S, thinking of the U Boat crews who lost their lives and are commemorated at Laboe. Imagining the feelings of the Schaumberg-Lippe defenders on the Steinhuder Lake if Minden had been lost. The shock as the French commandeered boats to sail them to the fortress only to be confronted by the 'Pike'.

Our yearly show is on Saturday to Sunday 22nd - 23rd June at Explosion Museum, Gosport, Hampshire. The games look terrific, and I urge your attendance. We will also be holding an AGM. If you can attend that would be great, if not, please email any concerns or requests. I will be hosting a BBQ on Saturday night.

Vacancy on the bridge: Please contact me if you are able and willing to take on the role of webmaster. Our site is under reconstruction with the aim to make it easy to use and a link station for all manner of naval websites.

Email: stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com or cal 01271 866637



HMS PROTECTOR, the Royal Navy's ice patrol ship, returned home to Portsmouth in May, following a 9-month deployment to Antarctica.



HMS PROTECTOR passing HMS DUNCAN as she returns to Portsmouth
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Alex Knott, Crown copyright]

HMS PROTECTOR left Portsmouth on 17 September 2012 and sailed south via St Helena, Simon's Town in South Africa and Tristan da Cunha, before arriving in Antarctica in early December. Operating in the British Antarctic Territory and around South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands throughout the austral summer, the ship conducted 3 intensive work periods in the ice and a fourth work period in the waters surrounding South Georgia. PROTECTOR's programme of work included providing direct support to a UK-led, multinational Antarctic Treaty inspection team, landing and recovering British Antarctic Survey scientists at ecologically-important sites, assisting with ongoing environmental and conservation work, and surveying the poorly-charted waters around the Antarctic Peninsula. Her multibeam echo sounder and survey motor boat helped provide hi-tech hydrographic charting and imagery used to improve the navigational awareness and safety of other ships and mariners operating in the area.

Eaglewall... Admiral Scheer.

I was looking through a pile of old 'Airfix Magazines' the other evening, in a search for something on a 17 pdr anti-tank gun. In a 1972 issue, there was a letter which continued a very long running debate on the Eaglewall range of 1/1200th wargames ships of blessed sixties memory.

A reader from Walthamstow, A. S. Gilbert, on whether or not the company had 'prepared drawings' for the Panzerschiffe Scheer, and added to earlier comments on the existence of moulds for the warship. He had, and the magazine published, photographs of a model of the Scheer, and also the instruction sheet from the kit. He'd lost the box. Mr. Gilbert then asked the obvious question; did he have a rarity on his hands? If the comments in this newsletter are anything to go by, then Eaglewall's Admiral Scheer was simply a re-boxed Graf Spee. Presumably there was, or might have been a 'Deutschland' too? Didn't Revell and Pyro follow a similar style of kit issue at one time?

Rob Morgan

Battle of the Atlantic remembered

Crowds of visitors packed the city of Liverpool to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.



In a service at Liverpool Cathedral tributes were paid to the thousands of seamen who lost their lives in the Battle of the Atlantic
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Dean Nixon, Crown copyright]

Tens of thousands of people enjoyed events in the maritime city, including battles on the River Mersey, flypasts, field gun displays and public open days on warships. The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest continuous campaign of the Second World War in which more than 30,000 Merchant Navy personnel lost their lives. To mark the 70th anniversary, events have been held in London

and Londonderry, culminating in a weekend of activities around Liverpool which was home to the Western Approaches operations room and the receiver of over 1,000 convoys.



Crowds of people enjoy the Merseyside sunshine at the Battle of the Atlantic 70th anniversary event in Liverpool
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Nicky Wilson, Crown copyright]

Saturday morning began with veterans and their families gathering at the city's Cunard Building for a procession by Chinese lion dancers, Indian drummers and troops from the Polish community which was followed by a wreath-laying ceremony at the Merchant Navy Memorial on the Pier Head.

Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel took to the river in attack craft and helicopters for a 'Battle on the Mersey' along with the Merchant tug Brocklebank. This was followed with a flypast by a Spitfire and a Hurricane.

Throughout the weekend thousands of people visited 5 ships that were open to the public – HMS Edinburgh, HMS Pembroke, Russian destroyer Vice Admiral Kulakov, Canadian destroyer HMCS Iroquois and German minesweeper FGS Groemitz.



HMS Edinburgh opens her doors to the public in Liverpool
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Dan Rosenbaum, Crown copyright]

On Sunday, in a moving service at Liverpool Cathedral, veterans, serving sailors and invited guests paid tribute to the thousands of seamen who lost their lives in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Also in attendance was Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal who was joined by senior officers of maritime organisations and the Armed Forces, local MPs, borough mayors, the Russian Ambassador and the Canadian Deputy High Commissioner.

The commemorative service was followed by a march-past of veterans in front of the cathedral where Her Royal Highness took the salute. Veterans came from far and wide to be at the service with representatives in attendance from Australia, Canada and the USA, while sailors from Poland, Canada, Germany and Russia joined in the march through the streets of Liverpool.

Warships in London for Battle of the Atlantic commemorations

Three Royal Navy warships were in London to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.



Yeoman Warders from the Tower of London at the top of HMS Illustrious' ramp as she transits the River Thames Barrier
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Dean Nixon, Crown copyright]

HMS Edinburgh, the last of the fleet's Type 42 destroyers, is on her first stop on a round-Britain farewell tour which ends nearly 30 years of service. She was joined in the capital by the giant helicopter carrier HMS Illustrious and Sandown class minehunter HMS Blyth for 6 days of events commemorating the longest military campaign of the Second World War, the Battle of the Atlantic.

Watched by hundreds of people on both banks of the Thames, HMS Edinburgh glided under Tower Bridge - where she faced a barrage of camera flashes from eager tourists - to berth alongside museum ship HMS Belfast, sister of her forebear, which was sunk in the Arctic 71 years ago.

HMS Illustrious took all of her 22,500-tonne bulk down the river and through the Thames Barrier en route to her Greenwich moorings.

HMS Edinburgh makes her way along the River Thames



HMS Edinburgh passes under Tower Bridge
[Picture: Sergeant Jez Doak, Crown copyright]

Captain Martin Connell, the commanding officer of HMS Illustrious, said:

"We are delighted to be in London for the Battle of the Atlantic commemorations. HMS Illustrious has a very close affiliation with the city, which we will be aiming to strengthen further through a very busy programme of events.

"It is, however, a very poignant occasion and we look forward to welcoming onboard some of those who served through the longest and one of the most costly campaigns of the Second World War."

The 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic (BOA 70) culminated with a series of events in Liverpool. The city was home to the Western Approaches Command in the Second World War – it was from here that the struggle against the German U-boat was successfully directed.



HMS Illustrious' Commanding Officer, Captain Martin Connell, takes charge as the ship transits through the Thames Barrier
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Ray Jones, Crown copyright]

In London, as well as the presence of the Royal Navy warships, an Evensong Service at St Paul's Cathedral, a Merchant Navy Memorial Service and a charity fundraising dinner all helped to raise awareness of the importance of the maritime community to the UK economy, with London as the political and financial centre.



Members of HMS Illustrious's ship's company line the flight deck as she transits the River Thames past the O2 Arena at Greenwich
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Dean Nixon, Crown copyright]



HMS Edinburgh passes under Tower Bridge as she comes alongside in London
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Dan Rosenbaum, Crown copyright]

HMS Edinburgh's farewell tour

HMS Edinburgh has spent 3 weeks sailing around Britain - first to London, then the Scottish capital and finally Liverpool as part of a farewell tour, a goodbye not just to Edinburgh herself but also a class of ship which has served the Navy and nation with distinction, and paid the ultimate price in doing so on occasions: the Type 42 destroyer.

The Type 42s have been the safeguards of the Fleet against air attack since the 1970s and have seen action in every major conflict and police action which the Royal Navy has been involved in over the past four decades, from the Falklands and two Gulf wars to UN peacekeeping duties in the Adriatic in the 1990s and, most recently against pro-Gaddafi forces in the 2011 Libyan civil war.

But, with all 6 Type 45 destroyers, 21st-Century successors to the Type 42s, now in the hands of the Royal Navy, and 4 of them operational, the hour has come for the last of the veteran 14 Sheffield-class to sail into the sunset.

See the [Royal Navy official Battle of the Atlantic website](#).

UK Armed Forces Day on Saturday 29 June.



Armed Forces personnel at the launch of the nation's fifth annual Armed Forces Day
[Picture: Corporal Gabriel Moreno RLC, Crown copyright]

The fifth Armed Forces Day is gearing up to be the biggest and best yet. This year the city of Nottingham has been chosen to host the national event, when organisers hope to top the 60,000-strong crowds that turned out in Plymouth last year. The aim of Armed Forces Day is to honour the contribution of military personnel past and present and gives the nation an opportunity to show support and thank the men and women who serve.

The celebrations also complement the ethos of the Armed Forces Community Covenant which encourages towns to show their support for troops who live locally. The curtain-raiser in Nottingham is on 28 June when a military parachute display team will drop in during the interval at the Nottinghamshire-Leicestershire cricket match at Trent Bridge.

There will also be a day of celebrations at the city's Victoria Embankment, including a parade, a drumhead service, a Red Arrows and Typhoon flypast, and dynamic displays by Royal Marines commandos featuring helicopters and 'lots of bangs'. Throughout the UK, the day will be marked with family-themed events including parades, pageants, aerial displays and various other performances. In London the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich will be hosting one of the UK's largest events, with historical re-enactments, animal displays, fairground rides, stunt car shows and birds of prey demonstrations. While Manchester's 'big thank you' will comprise an afternoon of live music, dancing and a veterans' parade. Sport will also play its part: at Wimbledon, the military stewards will take a bow before the sell-out crowd on Men's Final Day. With momentum growing, Armed Forces Day has already garnered 1.2 million Facebook followers, while celebrity supporters Carol Vorderman, Andy Murray and David Beckham are expected to tweet their support. Among the VIPs lending their support will be royalty and politicians, though, at this stage, names are being kept under wraps. National Express is also supporting Armed Forces Day. The UK's largest coach operator currently offers a travel discount for all serving personnel, with 60% off journeys booked online, enabling people to take advantage of affordable travel to the national event in Nottingham. Clothing companies, fast food restaurants, sports firms and Thorpe Park will also run special offers for troops, veterans and their families.

HMS ARK ROYAL's final farewell before going to the scrap yard.



Hundreds of HMS ARK ROYAL's former crew wore black armbands as she made her final voyage. They watched from the shore as the Royal Navy's once mighty flagship was towed away on her two-month trip to a Turkish scrap yard. The decision to axe the aircraft carrier in 2010 and sell the Navy's 72 Harrier jump jets to the US provoked a national storm. Ex-Navy officer Mike Critchley, of Warship World magazine, fumed: "The early demise of ARK ROYAL and her aircraft is a national disgrace, leaving the fleet without protective air cover wherever it may be needed at any serious distance away from the UK." It was hoped ARK ROYAL could be preserved as a museum ship, but the MoD said her condition was too poor. Instead the - Government sold her to Turkish ship recycling firm Leyal for £2.9 million. (Peanuts) ARK ROYAL was launched on the Tyne in 1981 and saw service in Iraq and the Balkans.

The UK Ministry of Defence and Westminster Abbey will formally mark the bravery and dedication of those who fought in the Korean War over 60 years ago.



Centurion tanks and men of the Gloucestershire Regiment advancing to attack Hill 327 in Korea (library image)
[Picture: © IWM (KOR 649)]

A parade and muster of veterans, and a service of thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey, will take place in London on Thursday 11 July 2013. Some 100,000 British troops served on the Korean Peninsula, many of them [National Servicemen](#), as part of a United Nations force after North Korean troops invaded South Korea in June 1950. They fought with conviction for peace alongside servicemen from the United States of America, Canada, Australia, India and many other UN member states.

An armistice was signed on 27 July 1953, by which point over 1,000 British servicemen had lost their lives and some 1,060 taken prisoner by the North Korean forces. Most famously, nearly all those in 1st Battalion The Gloucestershire Regiment (now part of The Rifles) were killed or taken prisoner during the Battle of the Imjin River in April 1951.



Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Ocean at Sasebo, Japan (library image)

[Picture: Public domain]



Red Chinese prisoners of war taken by soldiers of the Gloucestershire Regiment await medical attention in Korea (library image)

[Picture: Public domain]

Approximately 500 British veterans of the Korean War will march from Horse Guards to Westminster Abbey, remembering those involved in the campaign. A dedicated service of thanksgiving at [Westminster Abbey](#) will follow. Representatives of the [British Korean Veterans Association](#) will attend a General Assembly of the International Federation of Korean War Veterans Associations in Seoul from 23 to 27 July 2013 and a Korean War Commemoration Day at the [National Memorial Arboretum](#) in Staffordshire on 27 July 2013.

The Korean War does not lend itself to naval wargames. Or perhaps you know different? Write a few words for AGB if you can recommend a scenario or rule set.

“Roles of the Sea in Medieval England”

Ed. Richard Gorski. Boydell & Brewer 2012. £50.

ISBN 978-1-84383-701-5.....204 pp Hardback. £50.

A rather pricey hardback (unless you’re a member of the ‘Lance & Longbow Society with a hefty 25% discount), consisting of nine chapters contributed by well known and competent naval historians, Susan Rose, Craig Lambert and Ian Friel among them. This is a very good book.

The Medieval Kings of England’s relationship with the sea, sometimes understated in histories, all too frequently neglected entirely, was a complex matter. The sea was a barrier to invasion (sometimes an effective one), but also formed routes of exchange, of transport and communication. The sea coloured the wider view of every English King from the day William the Bastard stepped ashore at Pevensey. War, unsurprisingly, was the key role the seas played between 1200 and 1500 AD, these dates forming the rough parameters of the text’s contents; dates set in Susan Rose’s superb article on ‘The Value of the Cinque Ports to the Crown’ during those three centuries. Though of course, as far as ‘value’ is concerned, the Ports could on occasion prove, in the pursuits of their cantankerous mariners to be something of a liability! Rose is supported by Craig Lamberts chapter on the Cinque Ports contribution to the wars of Edward II and III, again this is a useful commentary for the naval oriented medievalist.

Elsewhere, David Simkin provides the story of England’s Admirals in those two crucial decades between 1369 and 1389AD, stating and elaborating on their prowess as commanders at sea. There are two sound chapters directly on warfare. First one on the fight off Margate- Cadzand 1387, the title of which is deceptive, as it does provide a well

written account of a battle which is worth re-creating on the table top. The chapter on 'Piracy and Anglo-Hanseatic Relations 1385-1420' could easily have been expanded twice or three fold. The author selects the first date as in May of that year a Royal Fleet under Sir Thomas Percy seized a Hanse Fleet in the Zwiyn, opening what really was little less than a full-blown war fought in small flotillas and ship-to-ship actions. I enjoyed this chapter, after all 'business is business' and piracy for the English Kings and their Admirals was just that!

Further competently written chapters focus on ship design and construction and on the problems of trade between Bristol and Ireland. It's left to Ian Friel to conclude the volume with a chapter on how much and why, the sea actually mattered to the Kings of England in the medieval centuries. He considers its economics, its images, links with the church and the creation of something which I think has long vanished 'a maritime society', but again and again Friel returns, as he surely must, to war and defence of the Realm. As he reminds us, between 1225 and 1492, English Kings despatched well over fifty major military expeditions, sustained and supported by naval power, to the continent between Flanders and Iberia. "The seas" he says, "were never safe". The dangers of piracy and warfare declared or not, simply added, but significantly, to the natural perils of medieval waters off Europe's coasts. Just so.

Rob Morgan.
May 2013.

These words and questions from Rob Morgan.

I was reading the 'New Scientist' earlier, and in an article about Cyber warfare, there's an official of the US Naval War College at Newport Rhode Island, and he has a screen behind him, it bears this.....

WARGAMING IN THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE SINCE 1887...AND INTO THE FUTURE.

I wondered if anyone knew anything about those early US naval wargames? I can't seem to find anything published about the US Navy's games in the ironclad and still just about Monitor period?
Anyone know?

Any info to Norman Bell for inclusion in AGB.

THE CAREER OF THE "VICTORY".

1759. The Admiralty direct that a First rate Ship of 100 guns be built at and fitted for sea at Chatham. Designed by Sir Thomas Slade, she was named "VICTORY". Completed at a cost of £63,176 in 1765 She is put into reserve. First commissioning was in 1778 and She serves during the American War of Independence.

1793. A refit costing £15,372 is completed and HMS VICTORY (the term His/Her Majesty's Ship becoming standard in 1789) serves in the French Revolutionary War in the Mediterranean.

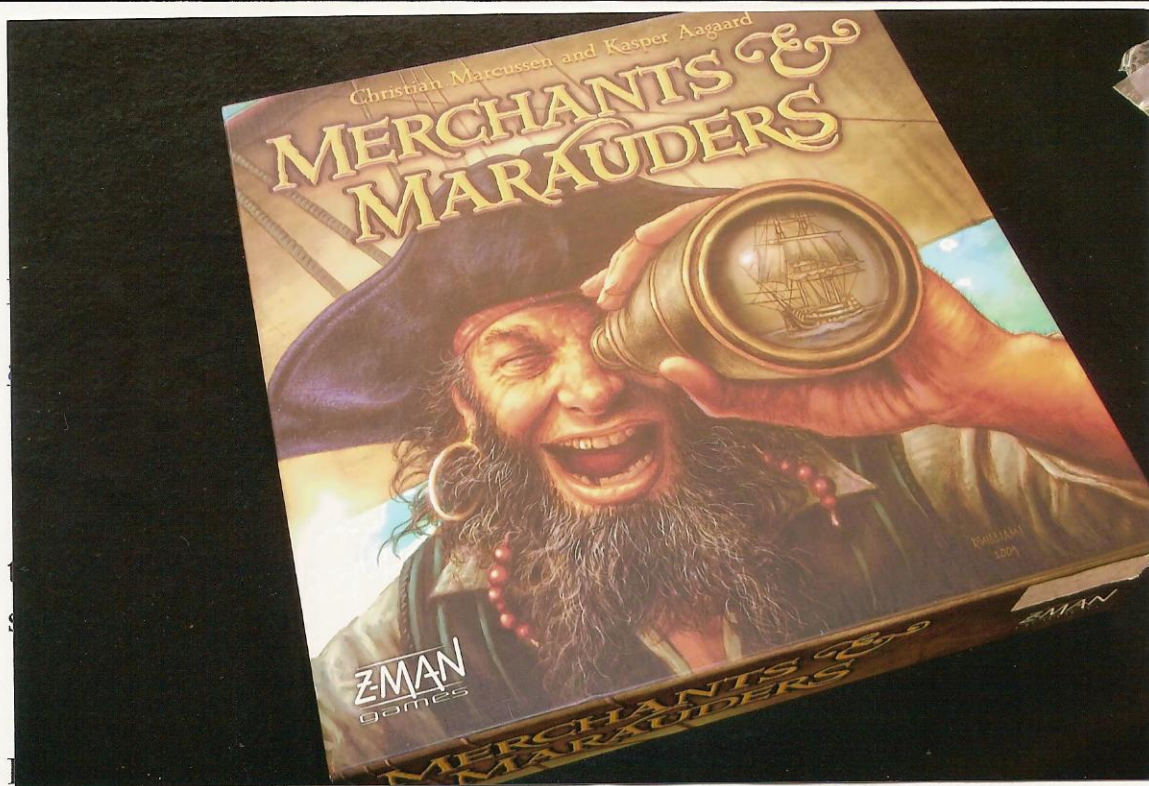
1797. A survey back in England considers her unfit for service and She is stored. Due to be converted to a hospital ship, her fate changes when HMS IMPREGNABLE is lost in 1799. She is refitted at Chatham in 1800 but what originally is a "middling repair" turns into a "great repair" costing £70,933.

1803. Commanded by Captain Thomas Hardy and under threat of French invasion, HMS VICTORY sails for the Mediterranean carrying the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief Lord Horatio Nelson.

1805. After blockading the French fleet in Toulon for 18 months and operations in the Atlantic, HMS VICTORY returns to Portsmouth. In September She sails to join a blockading fleet off Cadiz. Monday 21st October 1805 She takes part in the Battle of Trafalgar where Nelson is shot and dies. After the battle the badly damaged vessel is towed to Gibraltar before returning to Portsmouth still carrying Her dead Admiral. After a further refit at Chatham, VICTORY sees active service in the Baltic and off Spain.

1812 – 1922. HMS VICTORY is paid off in Portsmouth and goes into reserve. Becoming flagship to the Port Admiral in 1824 and in 1889 to the Commander-in-Chief. In 1903 she was accidentally rammed by HMS NEPTUNE under tow to the breakers. Deliberations on her future were delayed due to the Great War but eventually VICTORY was saved after a national appeal and put into her present dry dock in Portsmouth.

HMS VICTORY website: www.hms-victory.com



“Merchants and Marauders”

It's often the case that board games of the traditional sort contain bits and pieces of interest and table top use to the wargamer. Playing counters can be converted in all sorts of ways. I scrounged a small metal ironclad model from a 'Monopoly' set a while back, and it's become *'Thunder Child'* for use in a 'War of the Worlds' SF game, and it really is donkeys years since I began gaming with the models from Waddingtons 'Buccaneer'.

Now as far as pirates are concerned, some may not regard this as serious wargaming, but do take a look at the far-from-new game pack from Z-Man games, called *'Merchants and Marauders'*. It's not cheap, retailing at around the £50 mark, but it is a remarkable, and detailed game. It's a sound way to interest non-wargamers in starting, and is a different evening's pastime for those of us who are still looking for the greatest naval battle of all (Vigo Bay 1702 since you press me on the point). The board and rules are delightful, but in the pack you also get 26 model ships, shown here in the photo, of four different types- two large vessels, around 45mm long and 35mm tall, a smaller 'frigate' type around 35mm by 32mm, and a little, well-canvased yacht or brig around 25mm by 20m. These are very useful indeed, they come in several colours, red, yellows, blue and a kind of khaki brown, but will take a paint job easily and can be upgraded in terms of detail with little effort to make a decent wargames fleet.

I took a look on You Tube, where so many board games are quite competently reviewed, and found that half a dozen gamers had taken the option of painting up and detailing the '*Merchants and Marauders*' models. In my opinion the game board will take say 'Tumbling Dice' 1/2400th scale models as replacements or add-ons, but the pack's attractive ships will I suspect find a place on the table top ere long. I found my set at 'the Games Emporium in Swansea, but most games shops will stock it.

Rob Morgan.

May 2013.

Sea Quiz 23 answers.

I trust the 'Warspite' questions passed an hour or two, the others were less complex, I think.

1. The salute became official in 1890.
2. 'Havock' was the captured Dutch 'Havik' (Hawk) of 1796.
3. First target ship was Agamemnon and her attendant Shikari.
4. In 1952, Crescent was a Royal Canadian warship.
5. As for the old 'Warspite'....
 - There should be one anchor only
 - There were only 4-6in in the upper deck battery.
 - Should be no Conning Tower.
 - Topmast was stepped before the lower mast.
 - There were 2 a/a positions amidships, not 3.
 - Director towers athwart mast omitted.
 - After mast was not a tripod.
 - Deck broken aft, superstructure and turrets are a deck too high.

More follows....

Rob Morgan

“Wargames for Women”.

In the small, but varied canon of wargaming literature, I don't ever recall finding a book with this title, nor even an article or note in one of the multitude of magazines, journals and newsletters which have been born, flourished and withered in the fifty years since I first painted an Airfix *'Campbeltown'*. It appears from the article in 'The Times' recently that things have changed significantly!

H.G.Wells was a sad old misogynist of course, a typically pre WWI English snob to boot, and in contemptuously dismissing women from the wargame table he did the hobby no favours at the very outset. In the century since he wrote 'Little Wars', things have indeed moved on, and since women have been actively involved in warfare at virtually every level why should there be any surprise that they become involved in wargaming? Women officers in the military must as process of training wargame, and the vast array of board and computer wargames are surely designed to attract everyone, especially the young. In the local independent games shop, the crowd of teenagers and twenty-somethings assembled around the tables almost always includes several girls and women. I must point out that it's the entry of a grey-beard in his mid sixties (me!) which turns the surprised heads towards the door.

Back in the eighties, I regularly staged participation games, always naval, but it surprised me then, at model shows and even 'specialist' games gatherings of all sorts, just how many young women joined in. They tended to show several

interesting features at the wargames table I recall. They showed an interest in their ships, thought about their game plan, and were far less likely to be 'gung ho', risking everything on a ramming or boarding. In short they played... they also displayed two other rare features in the wargaming world. They didn't argue with the referee, and they didn't try to cheat.

I found it interesting that there's to be a 'Ladies Wargames Club' from now on, but in a time of terrible contraction in the hobby, it's a venture to be welcomed by us all. It will I suspect, bring a new aspect to wargaming, and let's face it we do need some new approaches drastically if the world of wargaming is not to be consigned to the old men's hut along with draughts and dominoes.

Where does this lead a Society like ours? Period specific groups like us may not appeal to the female wargamer. I know, well we all do, blokes who are obsessional about the number of light a/a guns aboard *KGV*, or the invincibility of the 'Long Lance' torpedo, but perhaps women wargamers will prove to be more interested in a broader approach to games? It might be interesting to know what our potential constituency of women wargamers is? How many women read 'Battlefleet', or 'AGB, or attend events but haven't really got around to wargaming because of all the anoraks and more likely because they haven't been given the chance. How many naval women wargamers are there, we may be outnumbered!

'The Times' article was a complete surprise to me, we haven't even mentioned women wargamers in this publication, so perhaps it's time we cast the nineteenth century's net a little wider, and who knows we might grow in strength. Of course, some things haven't changed have they? The article still talks about 'toy soldiers' whatever they are. No-one ever calls my fleets 'toy ships', I'm pleased to say, that's a legacy of our maritime history maybe?

Rob Morgan.

May 2013

It's a whole different game of toy soldiers as women go to war

Colin Drury

In his 1912 book *Little Wars*, H.G. Wells dismissed the idea of women playing toy soldiers. "They regard the objects," he noted in his ode to this most male of activities, "with the empty disdain of their sex for all imaginative things."

One hundred years on, it seems things are changing. Miniature war games have become the latest battleground in the fight for equality and the girls are storming the barricades.

In the past three years, war game societies have recorded a surge in women members. Britain's first ladies' club is being set up in Sheffield this month.

"We're not exactly burning our bras over the tabletop battlefields," said its founder, Kayte Hides, a university business support manager by day, leader of 600 Napoleonic troops by night. "But I do think, in a small way, we're doing our bit to knock down gender stereotypes."

A war game sees two or more opponents re-enact historical battles, from Roman skirmishes to Second World War assaults, using dice and cards to move soldiers around a miniature terrain. Rules vary depending on the conflict but the object is always the humbling of one's rival. Dropping in

quotes from Sun Tzu or Julius Caesar is an optional extra.

Career-conscious women say that the strategic thinking required is a useful skill for work, while mothers see it as a good way of engaging children away from computer screens. In difficult economic times, it is also considerably cheaper than many hobbies.

"Plus, it's better than playing with toy trains," said Mrs Hides, 44, who took up the game at the suggestion of her husband, Mark. "It's so varied. You go from that creative aspect of painting the figurines to the forward thinking needed to keep your troops safe in battle. And it allows you to give your husband a pasting."

Peter Berry, whose online company Baccus form manufactures 4.5 million toy soldiers every year, says that women now account for 10 per cent of sales. "Three years ago that figure was about zero," he said.

According to Tim Gow, a conference organiser with the elite London-based Wargame Developments club, 4 per cent of its members are women. That is 4 per cent more than in 2010. "It used to be the only women you'd see at exhibitions were being dragged around by their husbands," he said. "Now a lot of them are doing the dragging." Kiera

THOMAS PHOTOGRAPH BY BETANY CLARE



The tabletop wargame, as devised by Wells and Jerome, is attracting new fans

Bentley is one. "My husband would play and he'd come back raving about it," said the 45-year-old private investigator. "I'd look at him and think: 'But it's just smelly men wearing sandals pushing toys around.' Well, there are some people like that. But from the moment I started, I loved it."

Rebecca Harford, a 30-year-old accountant from Bradford, is also a fan. "The boys don't like it when you win, though," she said.

Modern war gaming is said to have



"The boys don't like it when you win"

Rebecca Harford, above left

been invented by the German mathematician Johann Christian Ludwig Helwig in the late 18th century. The Prussians' stunning defeat of France in 1871 is often credited to officers playing *Kriegsspiel* — German for war game — as part of their preparation.

"Would they have liked women getting involved?" pondered John Curry, founder of the History of Wargaming, a project to re-publish every book on the activity. "Perhaps not, but you move with the times."

ON FEBRUARY 17, 1864, the Confederate submarine *Hunley* attacked the Union sloop of war USS *Housatonic* in Charleston Harbor. *Hunley*'s eight-person crew became the first submariners to sink another vessel, but they were never heard from again. What happened to them remained a mystery, even after the rediscovery of the sub in 1995. *Hunley* was finally raised from the seabed in 2000 and placed in a conservation tank, where it continued to guard its secrets. Archaeologists have studied the vessel for more than a decade, and now the recent find of traces of the weapon *Hunley* carried into battle has dramatically altered how we under-

spar, which archaeologists found still attached to the submarine, Jacobsen and her colleagues now know that scenario is wrong. The 16-foot-long pole—made of iron, not wood—was encased in a dense jacket of concretion, a hard mixture of rust, sand, and shell. After *Hunley* was raised, chief conservator Paul Mardikian placed the spar in a separate tank containing a preservative solution of sodium hydroxide. It lay there for more than a decade while the team excavated the silt-packed interior of *Hunley* itself.

Last year, Mardikian finally began removing the concretion. X-rays had shown it was covering something that looked like a bolt at the spar's tip, but the images weren't clear. "The object had been encrypted by the environment," says Mardikian. "My job

HUNLEY DECODED

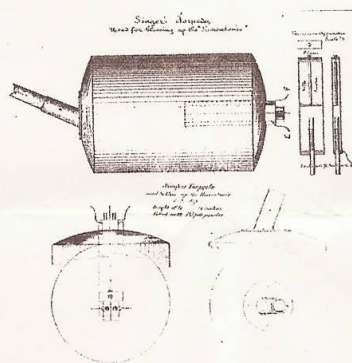
The discovery of a simple piece of copper is changing how we understand the legendary vessel's last moments

by ERIC A. POWELL

stand the submarine's final moments. "This changes everything," says Hunley Project senior archaeologist Maria Jacobsen.

Until now, the conventional narrative of *Hunley*'s attack was based on newspaper accounts dating to the turn of the last century. "The idea has been that *Hunley* rammed a wooden spar with a torpedo at the tip into *Housatonic*'s hull and somehow implanted the torpedo in the enemy vessel," says Jacobsen. *Hunley* was then supposed to have pulled away, unspooling a long rope, or lanyard, attached to the torpedo's trigger mechanism. "Once *Hunley* was a safe distance away," says Jacobsen, "the notion was that they pulled the lanyard to ignite the weapon." *Housatonic* sank in five minutes, and *Hunley* disappeared. One theory about the crew's fate had them setting the hand-crank-powered submarine on the seabed for a rest and then succumbing to bad air.

But thanks to recent conservation work done on *Hunley*'s



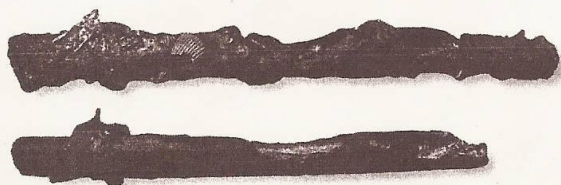
Technical drawings of the Singer torpedo *Hunley* used to sink USS *Housatonic* were found in the National Archives.

in conserving it was essentially to decode the spar." Over several months, he used dental tools and a pneumatic chisel to "deconcrete" the artifact, eventually revealing a piece of deformed copper held in place by a rusted bolt. When he called Jacobsen to examine it, she was stunned. "As soon as I saw it," she recalls, "the hair stood up on my head. I knew immediately we were looking at the weapons system. That is something

I never thought we would have." Jacobsen soon found that the remains matched technical drawings of a torpedo designed by Confederate gunsmith Edgar Singer that held 135 pounds of gunpowder, twice as much as standard torpedoes of the time.

The discovery of traces of the Singer torpedo shows it was not detonated remotely, but was still attached to the spar, and thus to the submarine, at the instant it exploded. The find means *Hunley*'s mission was far riskier than anyone had guessed. It will also allow the team to accurately simulate the final desperate moments of the attack. "We knew soldiers on *Housatonic* were shooting at them," says Mardikian. "Now we can say that they also had 135 pounds of black powder going off just 16 feet away. The odds of surviving that are not good." Mardikian is now preparing to chisel away concretions covering *Hunley* itself, which could be concealing evidence of breaches in the hull caused by the explosion. That would be the final proof that *Hunley*'s own torpedo sent it to the bottom. ■

Eric A. Powell is online editor at ARCHAEOLOGY.



Hunley has been in a conservation tank (left) since it was raised in 2000. It carried a 16-foot-long spar attached to the bow. 3-D scans of the spar's tip show it before cleaning (above top) and after (above). The metal on the left end of the cleaned spar is a remnant of the sub's torpedo.

www.archaeology.org

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ARCHAEOLOGY
U.S. Magazine

Thanks to Rob Morgan for the above article from "Archaeology" the USA Magazine for May-June.

SIGNAL PAD!

- 9th June. Broadside! Swallows Leisure Centre, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne.
www.mhwc.co.uk This website leads to the Chairman's blog – the author of the Blood, Bilge and Ironballs Rules. I was planning to go to "Broadside!" but it clashes with a 70th Birthday Bash which I'm going to. Perhaps Kent NWS Members and I can book a table at Broadside next year for a Naval Wargame?
- 15th June. Phalanx. St Helens, Sutton Leisure Centre, Elton Head Road. www.phalanxshow.co.uk
- 16th June. "Valhalla" Farnborough Community Centre, Elles Hall, off Meudan Avenue.
www.fwgs.org.uk/valhalla

Naval Wargames Weekend, 2013

The Naval Wargames Society and the Explosion Museum of Naval Firepower are holding the third weekend of naval wargaming at the museum in Gosport over the weekend of June 22nd and 23rd 2013. The emphasis of the event is on games and getting together, and we had a lovely selection last year. This year there may well be some trade stands attending too. We are on the lookout for volunteers to run games at the event. If you'd like to put on a game on either or both days please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Plenty of space and tables are available and there should be room for upwards of ten tables available of varying sizes. There is also a large outdoor area where it is hoped a WW2 surface action will be played out using 1/600 models and a 1/600 "ground scale" for some of the weekend. Space is available in the museum grounds for camping over the weekend. Admission to the museum for the weekend will be free for those running games.

The aim of the event is to provide a forum where naval (and other) gamers can come together to run and/or play in each others' games. Games can be as long or as short as you like, and the intention is to include a few participation games so that members of the public can join in too. Traders who would like to attend would be more than welcome - please contact Nick Hewitt for details of arrangements.

For more details or to book a table for a game for all or part of the weekend please contact Nick Hewitt nh "at" pnbpt "dot" co "dot" uk or me, **David Manley**. Contact details for the Explosion Museum are as follows:

Explosion! Museum of Naval Firepower
Heritage Way
Priddy's Hard
Gosport
Hampshire
PO12 4LE
United Kingdom

Telephone: 023 9250 5600
Fax: 023 9250 5605
Mobile: 077 8741 5382

A brief report on the 2011 and 2012 events can be found here:

<http://dtbsam.blogspot.co.uk/2011/08/naval-wargames-weekend-gosport.html>
<http://dtbsam.blogspot.co.uk/2012/07/naval-wargames-weekend-june-23rd-2012.html>

More information on the museum can be found here:

<http://www.explosion.org.uk/>

29th 30th June. War Torn. Scarborough Spa Centre. The Scarborough Wargames Club supports and raises money for "Help for Heroes".

6th 7th July. Battlegroup South have a wargames weekend at the Bovington Tank Museum.

18th – 21st July. Historicon. The Fredericksburg Exposition Center, Virginia. www.HISTORICON.org

Looking further to the future – September 14th – 15th. Colours. Newbury Racecourse. www.colours.org.uk
The NWS plan to put on a participation game.

The Shows above are only some of the total out there. If you go to one of these or any other show, how about sending in a few words of a review for All Guns Blazing?

Coming in July's AGB: Crusades, a review by Rob Morgan. Following on from the refight of the Denmark Strait (see May's AGB); will HMS KING GEORGE V and HMS RODNEY bring the BISMARCK to her knees?

JOINING THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY

If you have been lent this newsletter and would like to join the Naval Wargames Society, please follow this link to join our Society:

www.navalwargamessociety.org.

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2013

NWS Northern Fleet – Falkirk East Central Scotland

Kenny Thomson, 12 Craigs Way, Rumford Grange, Rumford, Stirlingshire, FK2 0EU

Tel: 01324 714248

e-mail: kenny.thomson@hotmail.com - Website: <http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk/>

Falkirk Wargames Club meets each Monday night at 7pm with a variety of games running each evening. Naval games are popular with 2 or 3 run each month. Campaign games sometimes feature in our monthly weekend sessions. Games tend to be organised week to week making a 3-month forecast here a waste of time. Please get in touch if you'd like to come along.

- Popular periods – Modern (Shipwreck), WW1 and 2 (GQ), WW2 Coastal (Action Stations), and Pre-dreadnought (P Dunn's rules)
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NWS North Hants [Every 3rd Sunday]

Jeff Crane 31 Park Gardens, Black Dam, Basingstoke, Hants, 01256 427906

e-mail: gj.crane@ntlworld.com

Devon and the West Country

Naval Wargames afternoon/evening/all day on a regular basis.

Contact Stuart Barnes Watson to arrange the details.

stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com

3 Clovelly Apartments, Oxford Park, Ilfracombe, DEVON, EX34 9JS

Tel: 01271 866637
