



# All Guns Blazing!

## Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

### No. 229 – NOVEMBER 2013

#### EDITORIAL

Firstly, apologies to David Manley for not including his name in October's AGB as originator of the details of the, "Battle Report – The Russian War in the Baltic, 1855". Finger trouble on my part.

Welcome to new Member, John Laing.

A good battle was had at Basingstoke in October. Form Line of Battle was the rule set, some cracking ship models were in use. Tim Moore was the umpire, well done to him. The Royal Navy was hammering the U.S. vessels, we stopped for a sandwich and then it was a complete reversal of fortune after the break. The RN could not hit a side of a cow with a banjo while the US vessels were hitting and boarding ships all over.

Computer problems result in this AGB's circulation being delayed. Will my present machine last until the January sales?

Somewhere in the World the Sun is over the yardarm.

Norman Bell [normanpivc@gmail.com](mailto:normanpivc@gmail.com)

#### VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

November 2013

Chairman: Stuart Barnes-Watson

Stuart Barnes-Watson Chairman  
Simon Stokes Membership Secretary & Treasurer  
Norman Bell Editor 'All Guns Blazing'  
Jeff Chorney Editor 'Battlefleet'

October witnessed the Devon Branch putting on the Baltic Campaign 1855 over a weekend. All sides fought to their absolute best, no arguments, no cheating.....just full on naval wargaming. The Russians lost but gained the respect of the Allied fleets.....more importantly old friends rejoined and new friends were made. All the wargames that I fondly remember have been either a full day or weekend. Well attended and hard fought. History recreated, or slightly altered within the realms of belief. If any members are contemplating putting on a big game then please let us know. I for one would be keen to attend, and I've seen some terrific displays put on by us at wargame shows.

Here in Devon we are gearing up for a 1/1200 Chile vs Argentina Campaign 1962, Beagle Straits Crisis with Peru pushing their claims. Only a year ago, Everett had never heard of wargames, let alone naval wargames. Now its game on, ships acquired from me, map downloaded, aircraft from Tumbling Dice in 1/600 (works well); daughter gets Latin American Airforces Book for colours as a present.....who can tell who will prevail?

And that's the joy of Naval Wargaming! For members in the South West, games will re commence regularly on Thursday afternoons, Lee Bay Village Hall, near Ilfracombe. Your Battlefleet editor has put out a call for more articles. Please contact Jeff via email on [chorney.jeff@gmail.com](mailto:chorney.jeff@gmail.com).

If you are putting on a big show, or have thought about it, let us know. I for one would be delighted to attend. Your continued support is vital in this, and as such I urge you to renew your membership asap.

Stuart

### Royal attendance for HMS BULWARK in Oman

Amphibious assault ship HMS BULWARK welcomed His Highness Mohammed Bin Salim Al Said, Head of Protocol Department for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; to the official reception and capability demonstration held during her recent visit to Muscat, Oman.



*Royal attendance for HMS BULWARK in Oman*

[Image Crown copyright](#)

The event was to demonstrate the capabilities of HMS BULWARK, part of the Response Force Task Group, to the distinguished guests and influential members of the local community. Over 200 guests attended the evening reception, including Her Majesty's Ambassador to Oman, Jamie Bowden, and the Commanding Officers from French Naval Ship ACONIT and the USS BULKELEY.

The guests were given a tour of the ship, where the ship's company simulated how they would respond to an incoming missile attack, and how these actions would be controlled from the Combined Operations Room and the bridge.

The Crown Prince met with some of HMS BULWARK's sailors and Royal Marines while they demonstrated the maritime, air and land component capabilities that make HMS BULWARK so versatile and flexible. HMS BULWARK Commanding Officer, Captain Andrew Burns Royal Navy, said: "As we prepare to take part in exercises with the Armed Forces of Oman, my ship's company has been given the opportunity to host some very important guests and they have done so with characteristic style."

The evening concluded in the picturesque setting of Muscat Harbour, with a Ceremonial Sunset Ceremony; the lowering of the Royal Navy's White Ensign flag.

The following articles on HMS KENT, DRAGON and DARING come from HM Navy Base Portsmouth's "Base News" publication.

HMS KENT, a Duke Class Type 23 Frigate, returned home to Portsmouth Naval Base having completed a six and a half month deployment during which she carried out Maritime security operations in the Arabian Gulf area. The Frigate received an emotional welcome by friends and family eager to see their loved ones onboard. The celebratory mood was enhanced by various activities to enjoy, including a magician, face painting and a Royal Marines band that helped welcome the ship home. While deployed, HMS KENT made 12 visits to various ports in Bahrain, India and the United Arab Emirates. She also visited Crete and Italy on her way home.



**HMS KENT ENTERS HM NAVAL BASE PORTSMOUTH**

Built to take out enemy aircraft and missiles, Type 45 Destroyer HMS DRAGON faced one of her toughest tests to date when she linked up with a number of US jets and helicopters in the Gulf. This time, however, it was an opportunity for her to choreograph an impressive array of air power – B-1B Lancer bombers, Apache gunships, F/A-18A Hornets, Sea Hawk helicopters, Sea Eagle drones, plus DRAGON's own 815 Naval Air Squadron Lynx. The Portsmouth-based Type 45 Destroyer, drawing to the end of her maiden deployment, met up with USS Ponce and USS Shoup to test both the command and control structure of different vessels with different technology, as well as the Ops Rooms team. To add to the ability of HMS DRAGON's radar suite – capable of tracking contacts at distances of over 250 miles – she was assisted by an eye-in-the-sky Sea King from 849 NAS which scours the skies fulfilling the same role courtesy of its Searchwater radar. The reams of data the collective radars gathered were fed back to the teams of radar operators and aircraft controllers in HMS DRAGON's hi-tech operations room. "It is all about directing the right aircraft on top of the right vessel at the right time, whether that is for identifying and targeting purposes, or, if required, for engaging with weapons while still at a safe distance from the ships," said Sub Lt Ali Taylor, one of three fighter controllers aboard HMS DRAGON whose job it is to direct aircraft on to targets. "This was a far more complex exercise in comparison to previous exercises in which we have participated. The command and control of such a large number and type of aircraft was incredibly challenging. It's another fantastic demonstration of how maritime and air power provides more than the sum of their parts, when they operate so closely together." As well as a test of air power, the exercise also featured several US Navy patrol ships – USS Firebolt, Sirocco and Whirlwind – and US Coast Guard Cutters Aquidneck and Maui acting as challenging contacts. The Anglo-American workout came hot on the heels of the Portsmouth-based Destroyer working with RAF Typhoons in the region.



HMS DRAGON TYPE 45 DESTROYER

## HMS DARING leaves Australia following a week of celebration.

HMS DARING, the first of six Type 45 (or Daring Class) Destroyers, left Australia's largest city on 11 October following a week in the spotlight as she took part in the country's centennial celebrations of its navies. On a rather gloomy spring day, tugs helped the 8,500-tonne destroyer under the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge and past the equally-famous Opera House as vessels attending the International Fleet Review departed. HMS DARING left Sydney with plaudits from Britain's High Commissioner Paul Madden who said the Royal Australian Navy's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday was supported "in style". "HMS DARING was busy all week. We really took advantage of having such a splendid Royal Navy asset in town," Mr Madden said. He spent two days aboard the Type 45 sailing into Sydney Harbour when the ship arrived – "a spectacular experience" – and was impressed by the "seamanship and camaraderie" of the 200-plus sailors aboard Mr Madden said that all the Royal Navy's participants in the week-long events in Sydney had been a credit to the country: "Britain turned out in style to support the event," adding, "The Band of HM Royal Marines drew many admiring glances as they marched through the streets of Sydney on parade with 4,000 sailors. Their musicianship and the precision of their drill demonstrated clearly why they are generally held to be the best military band in the world." DARING hosted various receptions for business and political leaders in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, and welcomed a lot of media aboard – resulting in considerable coverage for the RN Down Under. The Portsmouth-based Destroyer is officially 49 per cent of her way through her global deployment – the first by a Type 45, and the first visit to Australia by the Royal Navy's new breed of air defence ships. HMS DARING has taken part in two ceremonial reviews – the first recreated the entry by the inaugural RAN Fleet in 1913, the second was a more traditional fleet review witnessed by Prince Harry – services of commemoration for Australian sailors killed in the line of duty and a parade through the heart of Sydney with 4,000 seafarers from around the world.

HMS WESTMINSTER recently visited Goa where the ship's company trained alongside the Indian Navy for Exercise Konkan.



HMS WESTMINSTER (foreground) and the INS Delhi during Exercise Konkan 13  
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Dan Rosenbaum, Crown copyright]

The Royal Navy Type 23 frigate took time out from her busy counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics operations in the Gulf for a workout with Indian Navy Ship (INS) Delhi and her company. Exercise Konkan is part of the long-term commitment shared by the United Kingdom and India to maintain strong ties and developing the ability to work closely and efficiently together during operations. The British frigate later hosted an evening reception with ceremonial sunset, which was attended by the Admiral, many of his senior staff, the Mayor of Goa and other local dignitaries.

INS Delhi's helicopter takes off from HMS WESTMINSTER's flight deck during a cross deck landing exercise



[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Dan Rosenbaum, Crown copyright]

HMS WESTMINSTER and the INS Delhi rehearsed gunnery, anti-submarine warfare, boarding operations, close manoeuvring and cross-deck flying. WESTMINSTER's Lynx helicopter landed on the Delhi's flight deck whilst the Indian ship's helicopter hopped across to be hosted by HMS WESTMINSTER's flight crew. HMS WESTMINSTER has now returned to maritime security operations in the Gulf region, where she will remain until early 2014.

### **Royal Navy's 260 captains for just 19 warships: Defence cuts see 15 times as many commanding officers as vessels**

- **There are now 40 admirals and 260 captains in the Royal Navy**
- **However, as a result of defence cuts, there are only 19 active warships.**

The above was the eye catching introduction to an article by a [Daily Mail Reporter](#)



Britannia says,

The above story from the Daily Mail is slightly misleading, in as much as the Royal Navy has Minehunters, Submarines one helicopter carrier and Survey ships. Also Captain is a rank not a job title. The “19” in the headline is the number of Frigates and Destroyers. The statistics were exposed by Tory MP James Clappison during a defence debate in the Commons. He said: ‘In the past the dream of a captain in the Navy might have been to command his own ship. Today, it might be that dream is simply to set foot on a ship.’

Let’s hope that the dream of a captain in the Navy never becomes “to see a Ship”. As the Army has 256 Brigadiers and Generals but only 200 Challenger Tanks, does anybody think that the reduction in the UKs armed forces will be managed sensibly and correctly? Does anyone know the ratio of Group Captains / Wing Commanders etc to aircraft in the RAF?

The following article is courtesy of Jeff Crane.



### [Warship Wednesday October 23, The Net Jumping Cricket](#)

by [laststandonzombieisland](#)

Here at LSOZI, we are going to take out every Wednesday for a look at the old steam/diesel navies of the 1859-1946 time period and will profile a different ship each week.

- Christopher Eger

Warship Wednesday October 23, The Net Jumping Cricket



Here we see a rendering of a very interesting boat in the Italian Naval service during World War One. Part tank, part torpedo boat, it was designed to crawl over the nets protecting enemy naval bases, then punch holes in the bad guys ships, sending them to the bottom and taking them out of the war.

When the Great War started, Italy, who was officially an ally of Germany and Austria, flung its hands in the air and proclaimed its official neutrality. You see Italy bordered France to the west, and faced the might of the combined British and French fleets in the Mediterranean, and had very little to gain for coming into the war for the two Kaisers, with everything to lose. Then, after eight months of wooing from the Allies, Italy double crossed their buddies and cast their lot with the West. Although the Italian Army found itself in a bloody stalemate in the Alps against the Austrian army that brought nothing but misery, their navy served a very real purpose in bottling up the rather large Austrian fleet in the Adriatic. This freed up the British and French forces in the Med to move into the Atlantic to face

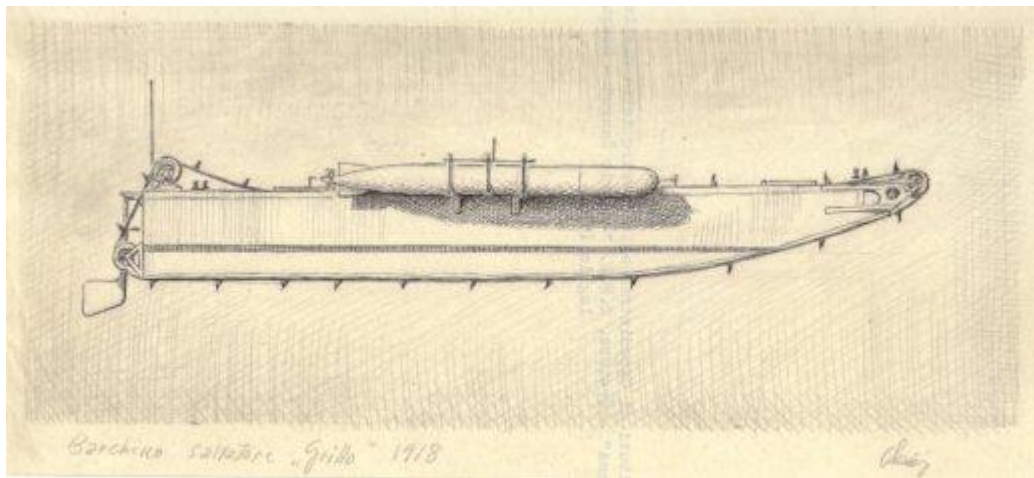


the Germans.

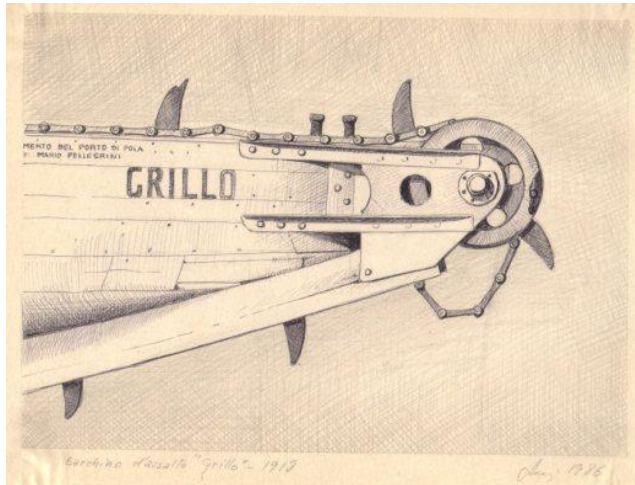


Just look at all of those pretty Austrian battleships at anchor in Pula harbour. Here you see Austro-Hungarian dreadnought battleships (Tegetthoff class) at the roadstead in Pula, Croatia, Which Was then a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

For most of 1915, 1916, and 1917 the Italian Navy, (Regia Marina) was content with holding the line across the Adriatic and keeping the Austrians in their ports. Then in 1918, they decided to go north and sink the Kaiser's battleships where they slept. Two Italian torpedo boats made it into the lightly defended harbour at Trieste and sank the old battleship Wien. The problem was the Austrians had years to fortify their largest naval base at Pola (now Pula in Croatia) with anti-submarine nets, anti-torpedo nets, underwater obstacles, coastal artillery, and naval mines. To penetrate these harbours, the Italians had to come up with something different.



They came up with the "*Barchino saltatore*" or "punt jumper". These fifty foot long wooden hulled boats had a flat bottom and two tracks along each side of the hull, port and starboard. Each track held a series of metal crampon hooks and was turned by a set of pulleys fore and aft, propelled by a pair of 5hp electric motors. This unusual boat 8-ton could literally crawl over the rows of torpedo nets and anti-submarine nets that separated the Adriatic from the protected harbour. Once over the nets, the boat would drop into the inner harbour, where it would transit, using its spinning tracks to move like a side-mounted paddle wheel, at 4-knots. Then, lining up with an Austrian battleship at anchor, it would send two torpedoes into its side before beating feet (err, tracks) back out to sea. Of course this required the punt jumper to be towed to Pola and back by a larger ship, but once there, it was good to go.



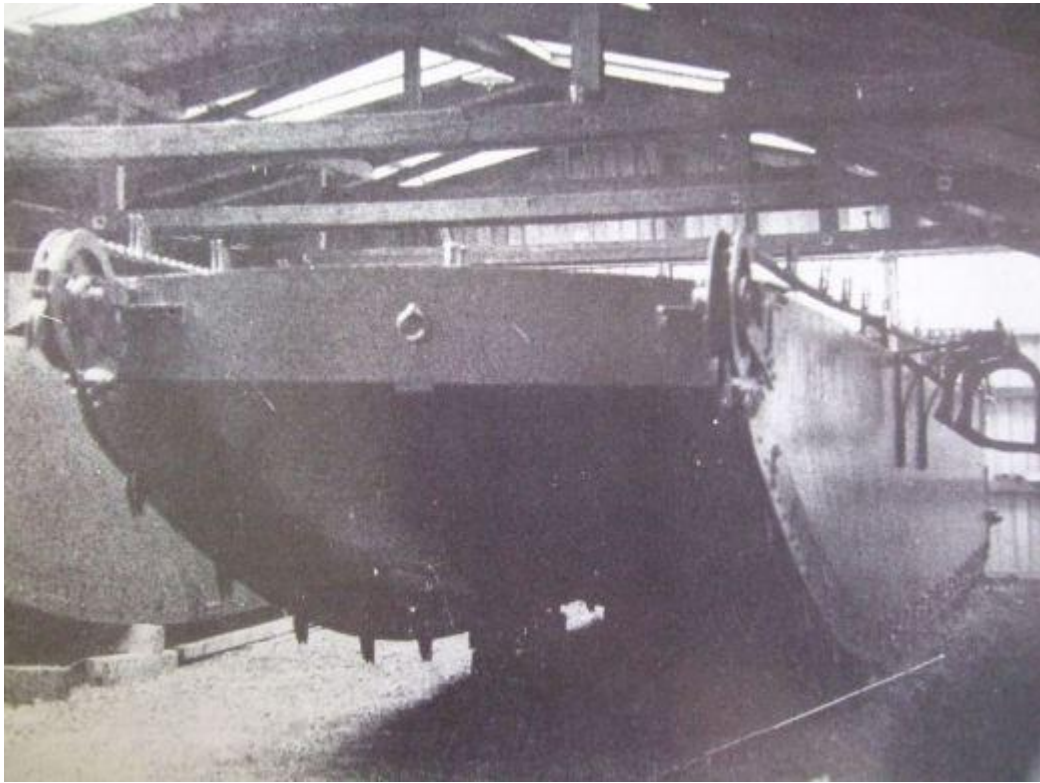
The Italians built four of these boats and named them the *Cavalletta* (Grasshopper), *Locusta* (Locust), *Pulce* (Flea) and *Grillo* (Cricket). They were made a part of MAS 95 and 96 squadrons, which became famous for irregular naval actions in the war.

Four times in early May, 1918, two Italian destroyers, two torpedo boats, and the punt jumper *Grillo* left the Italian side of the Adriatic and made its way in convoy to Pula. On the first three of those attempts, conditions were less than ideal. Then on the night of May 13-14, 1918, the *Grillo* made a go of it with a mission to make it through Pola harbour. Crewed by Stoker Giuseppe Corrias, Seaman Angelino Berardinelli, and commanded by Lieutenant CC Pellegrini, the *Grillo* made it through four of the five Austrian obstruction nets, but got caught on the last one. These obstacles were rows of timber baulks and wire hawsers six feet apart. Four out of five doesn't count in harbour defences and the Austrians opened fire on the helpless *Grillo* when it was caught in the searchlights, which sunk.



Pellegrini

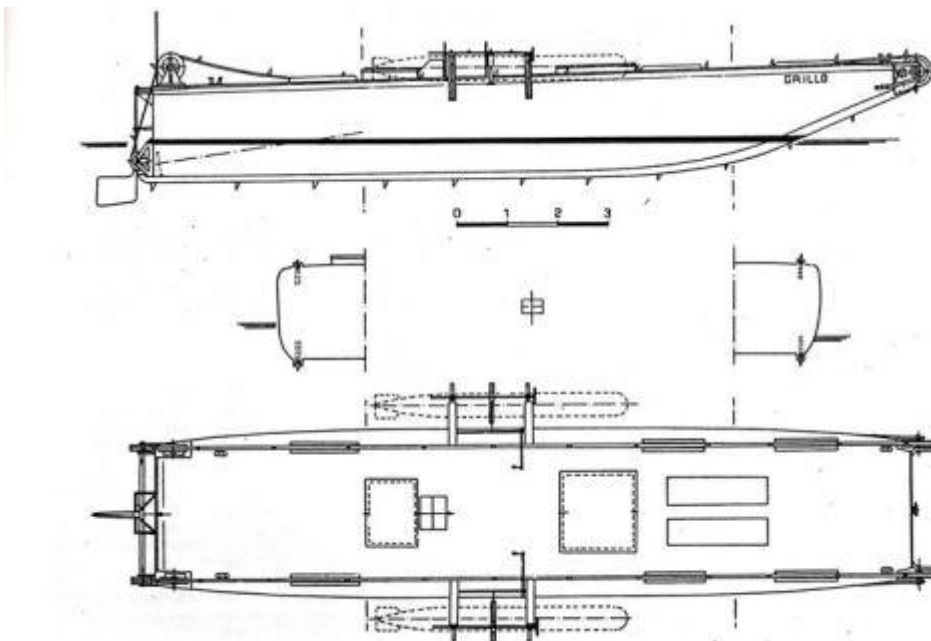
Her three-man crew was captured and ended the war as POWs, winning the Italian Gold Medal for Military Valour.



The Austrians Grillo clone

The Austrians thought it interesting enough to make one of their own as a test-bed to make sure the Italians couldn't get successful using one of these tank-boats in the future.

With that in mind, the Italians shelved the other three and concentrated on human torpedoes, which they used to penetrate Pola in November and sink the battleship *Viribus Unitis* (20,000 t) and the nearby steamer *Wien* (7,400 t) in the last days of the war.



Barchini tipo «Grillo», 1917.



**Specs:**

Displacement 8 tons  
Length 16.0 m (52.29ft)  
Width 3,10 m (10.17 ft)  
Draft 0.75 m (2.46ft)  
Propulsion 2 electric motors on axis for 10 HP total  
Speed 4 knots  
Range 30 mn at 4 knots  
Crew 4  
Armament 2 x 450mm torpedoes

If you liked this column, please consider joining the International Naval Research Organization (INRO)

They are possibly one of the best sources of naval lore <http://www.warship.org/naival.htm>

The International Naval Research Organization is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the encouragement of the study of naval vessels and their histories, principally in the era of iron and steel warships (about 1860 to date). Its purpose is to provide information and a means of contact for those interested in warships.

Nearing their 50th Anniversary, Warship International, the written tome of the INRO has published hundreds of articles, most of which are unique in their sweep and subject.

**This web site of interest is from Rob.** The Battle of the Atlantic Exhibition at HQS

Wellington moored on the Thames Embankment. It's free entry Sundays and Mondays up to 16th December 2013 from 11.00 to 1700. The details are on their site.

<http://www.thewellingtontrust.com/home>

### Ministry Of Defence seeks ideas to preserve HMS Illustrious

The MOD is looking for ideas for how best to preserve the legacy of the Royal Navy's Invincible class aircraft carriers.



*HMS Illustrious approaches Glen Mallan (library image)*

[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Keith Morgan, Crown copyright]

The last of the class, HMS Illustrious, is due to retire in late 2014 after 32 years of distinguished service that has seen her involved in operations around the world. Following the announcement last year that the 22,000-tonne ship will be preserved in some form, MOD is now inviting private companies, charities and trusts who are interested in buying her to come forward with ideas for her future use. [HMS Illustrious](#) is currently the UK's high readiness helicopter and commando carrier, able to deploy Merlin, Chinook, Sea King, Lynx or Apache helicopters. She is currently in the Mediterranean as part of the Royal Navy's Cougar 13 deployment of the UK's Response Force Task Group.

The ship, which is 210 metres long, the equivalent of 18 double-decker buses, was involved in the First Gulf War and the conflict in Afghanistan in 2001, and supported evacuations from Sierra Leone in 2000 and Lebanon in 2006.



*HMS Illustrious along side at Her Majesty's Naval Base Portsmouth (library image)*  
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Paul A Barrow, Crown copyright]

MOD wants HMS Illustrious to remain in the UK and bids for her future use must be viable and include plans for part or all of the ship to be developed for heritage purposes.

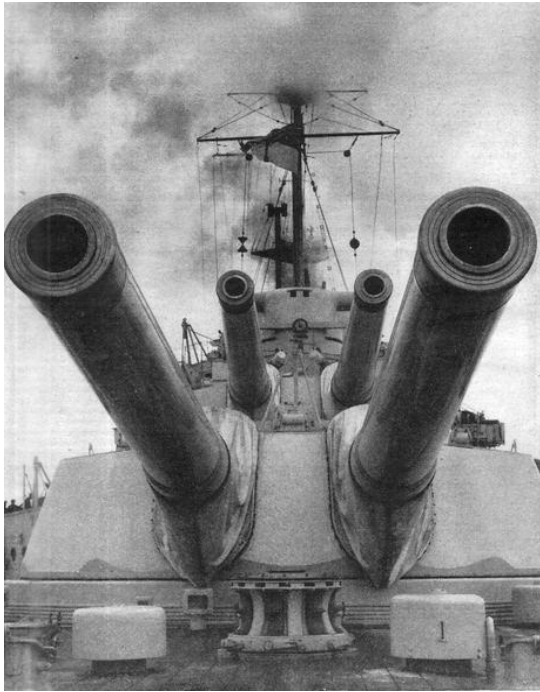
The [Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology](#), Philip Dunne, said:

"HMS Illustrious, like her 2 sister ships Invincible and Ark Royal, has provided an invaluable service to this country over more than 3 decades. This competition will provide the opportunity for organisations to put forward innovative and viable proposals to honour the role and history of this iconic class of ship and all those who served on board them."

Once proposals are received, an industry day will be held next year to discuss the ideas further. It is expected a final decision will be made after the ship is decommissioned and handed over to the [Disposal Services Authority](#). The UK's new [Queen Elizabeth Class](#) aircraft carriers, which will replace the Invincible Class ships, are currently under construction. HMS Queen Elizabeth, which is almost complete, will begin sea trials in 2017 before undertaking flight trials with the [F-35 Lightning II](#) aircraft in 2018.

Check out the Ship Nostalgia website. <http://www.shipnostalgia.com> The following is from the pages on HMS WARSPITE. The site is well worth a look.

Main battery: eight 15" C42 Mk1 guns in four twin Mk1 turrets, these guns fired an AP shell weighing 1,920 lbs out to approximately 23,400 yards at 20 degrees elevation and using 428 lbs of MD45 propellant in four quarter charges contained in 'Shallon' silk bags. Post the 1937 refit the guns were given a 30 degree elevation and were designated Mk2 guns with a new shell weighing 1,938 lbs and using a charge of 432 lbs of propellant they now had a range of 32,500 yards, a shell covering this distance would take slightly over a minute to arrive. The 15 inch gun was without a doubt the finest gun ever produced by the UK, it was first test fired for the Queen Elizabeth class in 1912 and it's last firing was the Vanguard in 1954, (Vanguard was fitted with the 15" turrets and guns originally intended for the 1916 Glorious class battlecruisers – it was often said that she was the best battleship but was fitted with her Great Aunts teeth!). The Queen Elizabeth class were built at great risk, the normal proving of a new gun was surpassed to allow the guns to be made in time for them to be fitted, if this had not been done then they would have had to have been fitted with the 13.5" weapon fitted to the preceding Iron Duke class, the man responsible for this great rush was Winston Churchill, he wanted the ships built quickly and to be armed with the 15" gun and the man that made it happen was Rear Admiral Moore the Director of Naval Ordnance. The 15" gun was very powerful but had a very good wear rate and could fire 330 to 340 rounds with a full charge before needing relining, they were constructed of a steel liner inside a steel inner or A tube over this to reinforce the gun 185 miles of thin flat wire was wound at a set tension, over the wire windings a steel jacket was shrunk on, the entire gun was 54 feet long and weighed about a hundred tons and the entire two gun turret a total of 770 tons.



This excellent shot shows the 15" X and Y turret's guns of Warspite, the built up nature of the barrels can be clearly seen.

#### How to load and fire a 15" gun

You cannot leave these guns without describing how the 70 man crew for each turret operated them. The request to load would come down from the director officer to the guns giving the shell type: Armour Piercing Capped (APC) Common Percussion Capped (CPC or Semi AP) or High Explosive (HE) these shells would be picked from their stowage in the shell room located above the treble bottom – British warships stowed them horizontally and the USN vertically – by a pair of hydraulic grabs and transported by overhead rails to a pair of bogeys. These bogeys could be either locked to the rotating turret trunk or locked to the ship, the shells would be placed into them whilst locked to the ship, the bogies were then unlocked and rotated so that the shell aligned up with the flash proof access doors to the trunk and the bogies relocked to the rotating turret trunk. The shells were then, rammed through flash tight doors into the lower sections of a pair of three tiered hoists to take them up to the shell handling room located below the guns themselves. At the same time in the magazines located above the shell rooms the magazine crew would remove eight quarter charges from their storage canisters and pass them through flash tight doors into the turret trunk where they would be hoisted in the upper sections of the hoists to the shell handling room. In the shell handling room the shells and charges would appear through another set of flash tight doors in the floor, they were then rammed from the shell hoist into the gun loading cage and the hoists sent back down to reload. The shells were rammed into the top level of three in the gun loading cages, and the quarter charges were loaded two to the second and two to the third level of the cage and the loading cage would then be sent up through another set of flash proof doors into the gun house itself. The gun would have its breech open and the breech would be locked (something like a huge door bolt) to stop the gun moving during the loading process, the loading tray which connected from the loading cage to the gun breech would be down. The upper level of the loading cage would be stopped at the tray and the shell rammed home into the gun barrel by a chain rammer, the rammer would then withdraw and the cage move up to the second level where the rammer would ram home the two quarter charges (108 lbs each) the process would be repeated for the next two quarter charges and the loading cage would be sent down to the handling room for the next round, the loading tray would retract and the breech would slam shut. The breech lock would release and the gun layers would, if in director control, align the gun to match the director pointers, or aim the gun at the target if in local control, as soon as the gun is 'On' the electric circuits would be closed and the gun ready light would come on in the director tower. Guns were then usually fired in salvos, normally all four left guns would fire followed by all four right guns, this allowed for adjusting the guns by the fall of shot from the previous salvo, range correction was faster than firing eight guns together and waiting for the reload. This was the normal daylight method of firing, at night it was usual to fire eight gun broadsides as the fall of shot could not be seen. When all four (or eight) gun ready lights were on the directing officer would sound the warning bell and fire the guns. If this seems complex imagine repeating it every 45 seconds, the guns were supposed to fire two rounds a minute but in reality it was just under a minute per round.

#### Answers to Sea Quiz No. 25.

Well shipmates (I've always wanted to write that!), sometimes the responses to the original Sea Quiz brought argument and dispute to the journal's pages. The Commodore question was one. Here are the answers....

1. This is a temporary rank given only to the senior Captain of a detached squadron on active service. Or to the C.O. of a shore establishment.
2. HMS Wakeful was torpedoed off Dunkirk in 1940.
3. The compiler gives....Retriever, Revenge, Resolution, Redbreast, Repulse, Renown, Ready, Recruit, Reliance, Regulus, Relentless, Resource, Restive, and ends with, 'etc; etc'. Hm!
4. These carriers were all at Suez in 1956.
5. The six funnels are... Vanguard, Nile, Abercrombie (pre-1916), Inflexible, and Courageous and Glorious (these shown both as completed).

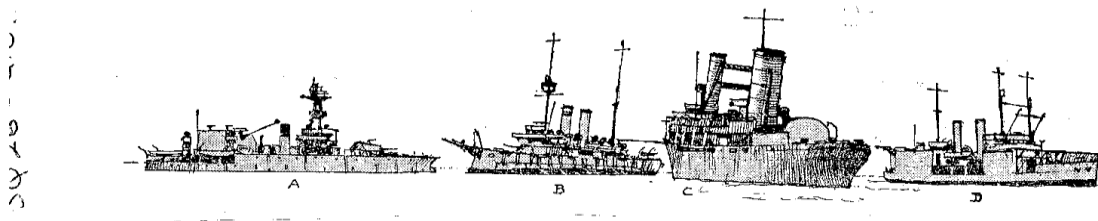
Best of luck, with Number 26.

Rob Morgan

#### Sea Quiz 26.

A fairly straightforward set of questions this time. From a 1951 issue.

1. Which Royal Navy ship was a Corvette in 1817, Cruiser in 1914, and a destroyer in 1944?
2. Whose last words (allegedly!-RM) were 'It's all my fault'.
3. Who is in charge of a ship's boats?
4. Which two 19<sup>th</sup> century British Ironclads were known as the 'Half-Boats'?
5. Name these WWI ships...



This press Release from MBDA came via Peter Colbeck.

### MBDA's VL MICA successfully fired by the Royal Navy of Oman from the Al Shamikh OPV.

The Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) has recently conducted an operational naval Vertical Launch MICA missile firing from the Al Shamikh Ocean Patrol Vessel (OPV), a Khareef class constructed by BAE Systems. This live firing took place at the French MoD's test range off the coast of the "Ile du Levant" in the Mediterranean sea under the supervision and control of the French DGA – EM (Direction Générale de l'Armement - Essais de Missiles). The VL MICA missile successfully intercepted and destroyed at very low altitude the target which was simulating a sea skimming anti-ship missile. The success of this firing is evidence of the operational capability of the RNO with its new vessel and weapon system.

VL MICA is the latest generation of air defence systems and deploys the MICA missile vertically launched from a canister which serves for both storage and launch purposes. In its naval version, VL MICA provides both area air defence as well as self-defence of the host vessel. MICA fire-and-forget missiles can be equipped with both IR or radar seekers and are capable of dealing with the full range of airborne threats as well as saturating attacks.

Worldwide to date, 12 armed forces have selected the MICA missile. With a significant presence in five European countries and the USA, in 2012 MBDA achieved a turnover of 3 billion euros with an order book of 9.8 billion euros. With more than 90 armed forces customers in the world, MBDA is a world leader in missiles and missile systems. MBDA is the only group capable of designing and producing missiles and missile systems that correspond to the full range of current and future operational needs of the three armed forces (land, sea and air). In total, the group offers a range of 45 missile systems and countermeasures products already in operational service and more than 15 others currently in development. MBDA is jointly held by BAE SYSTEMS (37.5%), EADS (37.5%) and FINMECCANICA (25%).

### **LANCASTER wears her poppy with pride**

The red poppy is one of the most iconic symbols of remembrance and a Royal Navy ship is wearing hers with pride.



*Lancaster wears her poppy with pride*  
[Image Crown copyright](#)

The company of HMS LANCASTER have taken time out of their busy patrols in the Caribbean to remember the brave men and women who have given their lives, or been injured, in the line of duty. Thousands of miles from home, the ship's company mustered on the flight deck and paid their respect by creating a bright red poppy, bowing their heads in silence.



The German auction house Hermann Historica, frequently sends the department a copy of it's auction lists, splendidly illustrated and although massively expensive, often interesting reading. Lots of Nazi stuff, from attics and, huh, 'private museums', but now and again some naval items appear.

In November, the auctioneers will be selling two Russian carronades, 12pdrs, dated 1835 and described as 'captured by the British near Hango in 1855'. There's a photo of them, and they look as perfect as they could be, though a bit 'embellished' perhaps. I won't be bidding for them, no room on the front lawn for one thing, and me finding the asking price of 55,000 Euros would upset the other member of this marriage!

The web site is....

[www.hermann-historica.com](http://www.hermann-historica.com)

take a look...

#### Some Articles found in "Mariner's Mirror".

The August 2013 issue of the journal of the Society for Nautical Research, Vol 99:3, contains more than one interesting naval item. One which appealed to me was a lengthy note by the Israeli scholar Joseph Eliav on the subject of the guns and *Corsia* recoil mountings carried board 'early modern', (Renaissance-that's a much better term!) galleys in the Mediterranean. It's a twelve page (262-274) piece on the design of what compared to the gun mounting procedures of the galleon and later sailing warships, remains unique. A heavy gun of 50pds or more, centrally mounted in the bows, and which when fired, recoiled backwards along a pair of 14 metre long rails to the buffer-protected mainmast. Eliav writes in a scientific manner and format, but also provides a very significant appraisal of the effects of a relatively small warship having such a substantial naval artillery feature, you might even call it overwhelming, in the forward part of the vessel. He even gives a short 'Health & Safety' comment!

This is an interesting article for the galley wargamer, and the author reminds us of the fact that Ottoman and Christian designs of the 'Spirone', the long beak differed significantly, and this clearly has a 'game' knock-on. The Turks favoured an up-turned beak, the Venetians, particularly, horizontal or slightly downturned. As the heavy centre-line gun was usually fired at close range, before boarding, the gun had to be pointed below the horizontal to gain maximum effect (and avoid an overshoot!). As the upturned Turkish 'Spirone' got in the way, it frequently meant a missed single chance closing shot, and this

was recorded at Lepanto. In fact, Eliav tells us that Don John of Austria gave orders for the 'Spironi' of all the Christian galleys to be sawn off before the battle to avoid any possibility of this happening. An interesting article this, and one worth reading.

The second article is of significant value to the Napoleonic table-top Admiral. It's entitled '*The Application and Scheme of Paintworks in British Men-of-War in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*' and is found between pages 287-301. Written by Peter Goodwin, who will be well known to many NWS members as the former curator of *HMS Victory*, very readable and well worth reading. It distances reality from the myths of painting ships at that time, and gives a decent account of Nelson's attempts to formalise the schemes of his fleet's vessels. The author, who speaks with authority, confirms that the present colour scheme of the *Victory* is more likely to be that of French Man-of-War than a British one!

He provides the detailed list of colour schemes written out by Colonel Fawkes at the Battle of the Nile, when of all the Royal Navy warships present only *HMS's Minotaur* and *Zealous* were painted other than 'yellow', both were red with black or yellow ornamentation. By the close of the wars, the white chequer had prevailed, because of the habit of painting ships laid up, white overall to protect them. A superb short article.

Finally, pages 312-321 include an article on the development of Japanese Naval Air Power in the Great War period. The piece focusses on *HIMJS Wakamiya*, and gives a very useful account of the campaign against Tsingtao in 1914. The Japanese achieved a number of 'firsts' in the field. Though not primarily a note on 'carriers at war', this provides some marvellous background to the concept of frequent and cordial British-Japanese naval co-operation in the early decades of the twentieth century, before American suspicion of both island races became paranoia, and ended a long relationship.

Rob Morgan.

This article was seen originally by David Manley.

[http://www.bridgwatermercury.co.uk/news/bridgwater\\_news/10782740.WWII\\_boat\\_being\\_restored\\_in\\_Bridgwater/](http://www.bridgwatermercury.co.uk/news/bridgwater_news/10782740.WWII_boat_being_restored_in_Bridgwater/)

### How did they get it up there?

In the Breton town of Carantec last month, I found the local maritime museum open, just for the afternoon. It's a small place in an ordinary town house. Most of it dedicated to the exploits of a handful of local fishermen who for most of the Nazi occupation period ran a shuttle by sailing boat from the bays and inlets around that part of the rugged north Brittany coast to Plymouth and the Isle of Wight. They carried airmen, resistance workers and volunteers for the Free French forces. The museum has a relatively small number of ship models, but at the top of a rather steep staircase there's this....

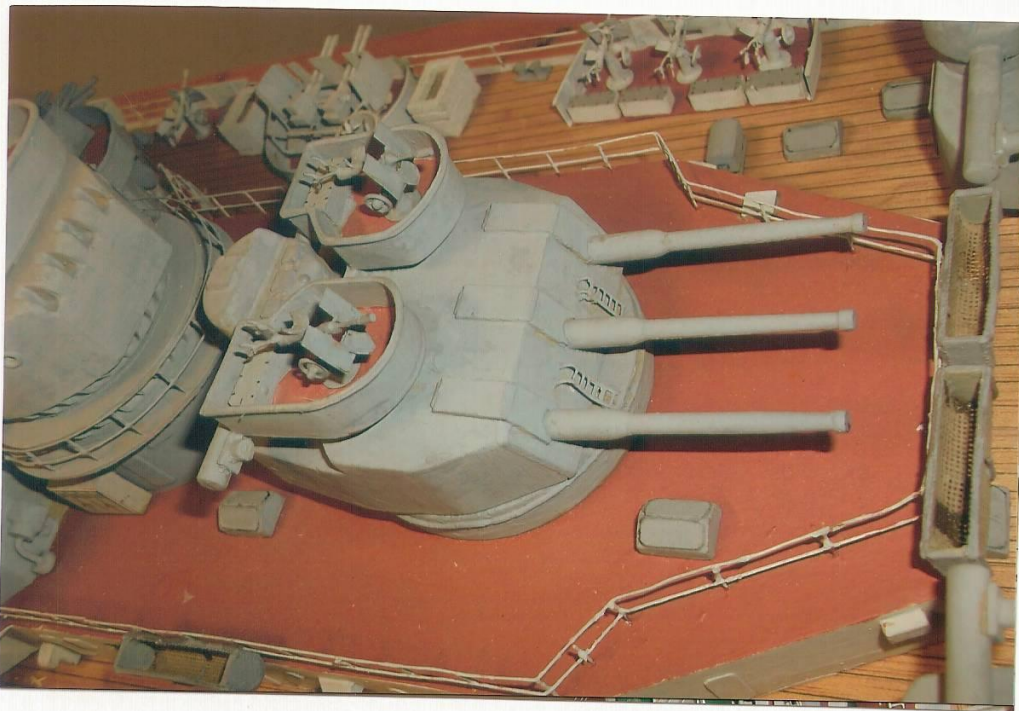
It is of course the French Battleship *Richelieu*, completed at Brest in 1940, damaged at Dakar and later joined the Allies in 1942. The model shows her after her US refit with the large numbers of 40mm and 20mm added at that time. According to Conway's 1922-1946 volume her main guns 8-15in/45 Mod 35, mounted in two quadruple turrets forward, could fire a 1938lb shell to 50,000 yards at a rate of 1-2 rounds a minute. I couldn't get into a position to take a decent photo of her forwards, but the centre line triple 6" gun turret aft shows the immense craftsmanship in the model, and the funnel structure is immensely detailed. The heavier turret in the funnel shot is one of the original six 3.9in/45 Mod 31 AA guns which survived the US refit.

She served with the British fleet in the Far East in late 1944 and 1945, and then off French Indo China, paid off in 1959, she was hulked at Brest and used as an accommodation ship, and finally broken up in 1964.

A very elegant capital ship, rather futuristic in look especially when compared with the not too dissimilar *Nelson* and *Rodney* in the Royal Navy. Her sister *Jean Bart* is better remembered perhaps, though served for less time during the war, after suffering heavy damage off North Africa during the landings. The model is described as being 1/100<sup>th</sup> scale, which seems close to the mark, and was made locally by modellers in Roscoff, but I still can't work out how they got the ten foot plus Battleship up those stairs, and no it doesn't seem to have been built in sections.

Rob Morgan.

October 2013.

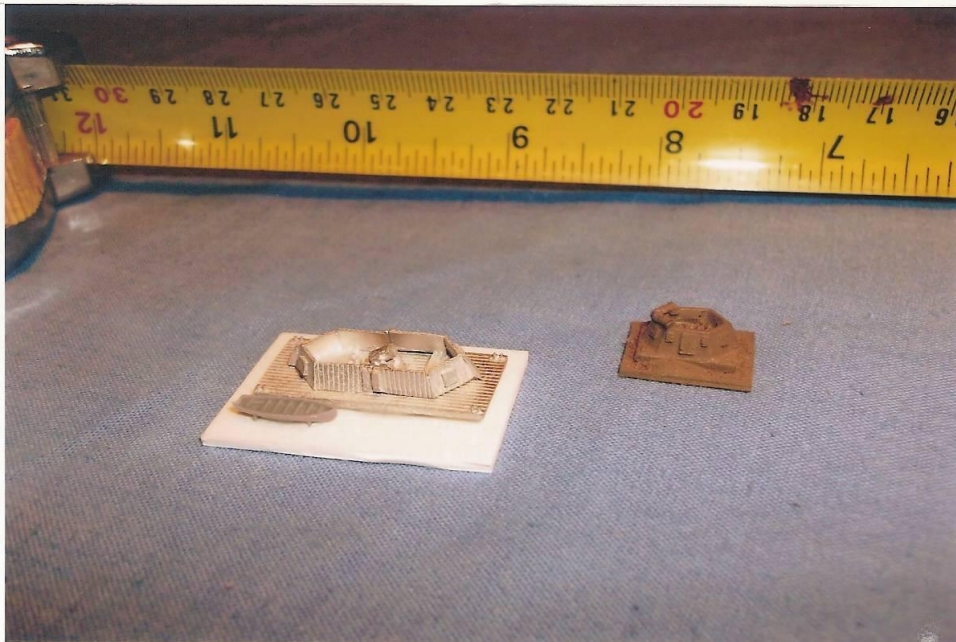




In my ACW collection, in 1/1200<sup>th</sup> and 1/600<sup>th</sup> scales, and now as I've found their immense value, in 1/2400<sup>th</sup> scale, thanks to 'Tumbling Dice', I have a number of the odd little Union mortar boats or rafts, depending on what you want to call them. Mind you I haven't been able to find out a lot about them in action historically, or their exact dimensions. For instance Tony Gibbons in his excellent 'Warships and naval battles of the Civil War' barely mentions them, and in other titles such as the 'Pictorial History', there are some drawings, and little else. They were numbered, or at least accounted for or identified by number, but this apparently wasn't painted on the armoured or protected sides of the unpowered craft. The extent of their use by the Union, Island No. 10 is very well known of course, is also rather vague. Unless there's a specific title on the vessels of which I'm not aware.

They are unusual, attractive, and vulnerable little rafts, and in my favourite scale of 1/600<sup>th</sup>, I acquired a set of the 'Peter Pig' version ( the reason for the term will become apparent shortly). They are pack 53 in the "Hammerin' Iron" ACW range and sell at standard pack price, neat little models, one 's on the right in the photograph, undercoated ready for painting. One or two of her sisters have the tarpaulin on the left hand edge rolled over the well deck for cover against rain or night.

The rather larger model on the left, shown unpainted, is a sample from Toby Barrett's exquisite 'Thoroughbred Models' range from the USA. It sells at \$8





US for 4 in pack TS55b, and is in fact a four part kit, deck, tow hull sides, and the lovely little mortar- the plastic 1/700<sup>th</sup> ships boat alongside on the unpainted base is for general supply, crew rotation ( they surely must have been changed over during lengthy firing?) and so on. Provision of ammunition for such a small hull to store ( 5-10 shells?) must also have been a problem. The operational procedures seem to be as vague as everything else about these vessels.

The difference in size is remarkable, now before you mutter collectively under your breath, like most other 1/600<sup>th</sup> ACW naval wargamers, I only buy the rarer items from 'Thoroughbred', which is a costly range for any British buyer. The company's 'CSS Stonewall' and their 'USS Casco' for instance are really beautiful models. At one time Rod Langton carried some of them, but not for a year or two now. In fact the bulk of my ACW fleets are from 'Peter Pig', cheaper and very robust and ideal for the table top.

But.....the arrival of the longer, wider, higher 'Thoroughbred' rafts' poses a query. What were the exact or rough dimensions of these craft? Were they built to a set Dockyard or Arsenal pattern? Or did they differ slightly according to the builder? One of the few line drawings ( and said to be contemporary) of these rafts in action, shows just three crewmen rushing outside the plated superstructure, as the mortar's fired. That again provides some interesting questions, the crew outside the armour ( however thick it was?) at the time of firing would become very exposed indeed. Maybe the rafts were individually moored, or lashed together and anchored(?) with shore troops for protection against Confederate snipers?

Size in this case does seem to matter.

Rob Morgan.

October 2013

## More from Rob.

1. Marco Galandra in Pavi, who's generally a medieval historian where ships are concerned, tells me that there's a 'quest' by the country's Museo Tecnico Navale to discover the wreck of the Corazzata ROMA. The RItN Battleship sunk by German rocket bomb en route to Malta after the Surrender in September 1943. I think I've still got a group of the old Pyro (???) 1/1200th's of that Littorio Class somewhere. I also think I heard of the possibility of the two surviving units being sent to the Far East?

More news when it arrives ( translated!!!)

2. The BBC website for Scottish news carries a substantial piece on the memorials and the activities (and sadly losses) of the X Craft mini subs of WWII, and not only against Tirpitz. Well worth reading.

3. Mike Crane tells me of the planned sale of the USS Olympia the pre-dreadnought, and hopes to put her in dry dock. She is, he says, the oldest American ironclad still afloat.



HMS ILLUSTRIOUS FROM USS BOXER. CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE TAIL PLANE? ANSWER BELOW.

### Divers salute the ROYAL OAK

08/11/2013

Naval divers have returned to the wreck of HMS ROYAL OAK to replace her White Ensign in time for Remembrance Day.

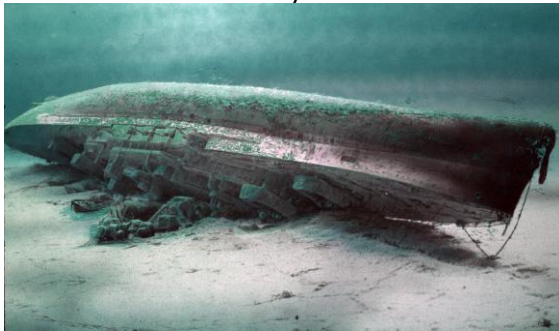


Image Crown copyright

The battleship was sunk by a U-boat while anchored in the wartime home of the Fleet, Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, just six weeks into the Second World War.

Each year, around Remembrance Day, a team from the Royal Navy Northern Diving Group, based in Faslane, returns to the Orkneys to inspect the twisted, upturned hulk of the battleship, and fix the Royal Navy's standard as a mark of respect.

ROYAL OAK was at anchor in the flow – which served as the principal base for the ships of the Grand and Home Fleets during both World Wars – on the night of October 14 1939 when U-boat ace Günther Prien penetrated the defences and torpedoed her in U47. The resulting explosions caused the battleship to capsize and sink in under 15 minutes, taking 833 sailors – including more than 100 boy sailors – down with her.

## MIGHTY OAK: THE FIRST TRAGEDY

'The Mighty Oak' as she was known, was a Revenge Class battleship built in Devonport and launched in 1914.

She first saw action at the Battle of Jutland. The 29,000 ton ship had a top speed of 20 knots and an impressive array of guns. But by the time World War II broke out she was deemed unsuitable for front-line action.

She was sunk while anchored at Scapa Flow, the wartime home of the fleet, on October 14, 1939. The war was just 41 days old. A U-Boat captained by German naval ace Günther Prien sneaked through a blockade into the supposedly safe haven, and fired a series of torpedoes. Three scored direct hits and the ship took only around ten minutes to sink.

HMS ROYAL OAK was loaded with fuel and ammunition - so regular safety inspections of the wreck have to be carried out, to this day along the wreck's 620 ft (189 m) hull.

In 2001, 97-year-old war widow Dorothy Golding was reunited with her late husband Arthur when her ashes were placed in a weighted casket in the ship on which he died.



By the way, that tail plane is a V22 OSPREY.

### **SIGNAL PAD!**

16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> November. Warfare at Reading, Berkshire.

23<sup>rd</sup> November. Alpha Ares, Barcelona. Alphaares.com

23<sup>rd</sup> November. Smoggycon. [www.m-gc.co.uk](http://www.m-gc.co.uk) Middlesbrough.

24<sup>th</sup> November. Reveille II. [www.bristolwargaming.co.uk](http://www.bristolwargaming.co.uk)

If you know of a wargames event let me know and I'll gladly include the details in AGB. 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? We have members in many countries, so you may have information of a show that is not readily available to me.

A date for you to pencil in your diaries - the provisional date for the 2014 Naval Wargames Show at the Explosion museum in Gosport is June 21st and 22nd. Hope to see you there :)

Regards,

Dave Manley

## **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](http://www.navalwargamessociety.org).

Membership secretary: [simonjohnstokes@aol.com](mailto:simonjohnstokes@aol.com)

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## **NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2013**

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### **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](mailto:kenny.thomson@hotmail.com) - *Website:* <http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk/>

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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 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday]**

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

*e-mail:* [gf.crane@ntlworld.com](mailto:gf.crane@ntlworld.com)

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### **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](mailto:stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com)

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

Tel: 01271 866637

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