



---

# All Guns Blazing!

## Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

### No. 232 – FEBRUARY 2014

---

#### EDITORIAL

Well, I don't know what the weather has been doing at yours; I only know what it has been at mine. At the time of writing, I do still have a roof and I hope it has not been too bad wherever you are. Fortunately our hobby takes place almost exclusively indoors. So if the weather is bad perhaps that gives us more time to have a game. Of course some NWS Members are in the Southern Hemisphere but try not to gloat.

Welcome to new Members, Tim, Peter, Jonathan, Roger, Alan and Dirk. Hopefully, this is the start of many years of membership.

After Christmas and the New Year, model shows begin to make their appearance at a venue near you. Try and get along if you can.

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

Norman Bell

#### VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

February 2014  
SINGAPORE

The Great White Fleet (aka Belly) , has visited both the above and Sydney, Australia. Delighted to meet one of our members, and welcome a new one.

But first, some notes for travellers. Fortress Singapore is rarely mentioned in travel guides. To find what's left of it travel to Changi village (near airport). Here you'll find official museum. Well worth a visit, better still one of the main batteries just a kilometer on towards the coast. Sentosa Island hosts it's own defences, responsible for destroying the oil tanks. 6 inch batteries with audio walk. Includes a waxwork surrender scene and victory scene.

GHQ is at Fort Canning Park. The building is well preserved, unlike the display....poor.

For me the major find was the new maritime museum, part of the aquarium. It has a stunning display of Ancient Chinese warships, a life size command junk cut in half so that you can see what it would hold (rhinos, giraffes, food, silks...usual stuff!!!) and various displays on notorious Asian pirates and the RN's role in defeating them.

Having learnt about these, you enter a cinema to watch a 4D short film on a famous Chinese admiral. You get wet, get shipwrecked, drown.....only for the doors to open and you've descended into the Aquarium....where you can view the wreck for real with a myriad of fish.

Next month: Sydney, Australia. The Maritime Museum and Headland Defences.

Stuart BW

If you live near or are visiting Philadelphia this May; Save the Olympia On-board Wargaming Event/Fundraiser.

On 3 May 2014 there will be a day of wargaming (10am-5pm) as a fundraiser to save the ship. If you bring a sleeping bag there will also be overnight gaming (5pm-9am) and sleeping allowed.

Cost is \$20 for the day and \$50 if you want to game and sleep over.

Contact: [cabrunken@gmail.com](mailto:cabrunken@gmail.com)

Besides the Olympia there is also a lot to see in Philly and at the harbor itself such as the ship model collection.

<http://www.phillyseaport.org/> Hope to see you there - Save the Olympia!

Todd Kauderer

### Royal Navy carrier returns home from Philippines

HMS Illustrious has returned home to Portsmouth after playing a major part in the typhoon relief effort in the Philippines.



*Royal Navy helicopter carrier HMS Illustrious returns home to Portsmouth*  
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Dave Jenkins, Crown copyright]

Helicopter carrier HMS Illustrious helped to deliver aid to the Philippines after the country was struck by a devastating typhoon in November. The 23,000-tonne ship was operating in the Gulf when she was diverted to the Philippines to relieve Type 45 destroyer HMS Daring which was among the first ships on scene to offer aid. As part of the UK government's response to the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, Illustrious and her 950 crew spent 3 weeks delivering emergency aid supplies and repairing key services and broken infrastructure.

The Daily Mirror newspaper's Rowan Griffiths spent time on board HMS PORTLAND recently. Commander Sarah West, 41, is the captain of HMS Portland; a role that makes her proud.



The Cold War may be a distant memory but the Royal Navy still plays cat and mouse with the Russians, who continue to snoop around our coastal waters. Tracking their submarines is one of the Navy's most important roles – and one of its most secret. Among the warship captains who maintain a ring of steel around the nation is Sarah West, who in 2012 became the first female commander of a major Royal Navy warship in the service's 500 years. The Daily Mirror was given exclusive access as Commander West trained her 185-strong crew in the art of tackling a wily, aggressive underwater enemy. HMS Portland is a Type 23 frigate bristling with submarine-hunting kit, Sea Wolf and Harpoon missiles, Stingray torpedoes and a Lynx attack helicopter.

Skulking below choppy waves off West Scotland is hunter submarine HMS Triumph, (which bombed Libya in 2011 and is now training future Royal Navy captains). Cdr West issues her plan to snare the killer sub to "allies" HMS Monmouth, HMS Sutherland and HMS Grimsby. Then she slips her ship behind a remote island, turns off the sonar and slows the engines. The frigate is now almost impossible to detect and CDR West sits in the captain's chair on the bridge, gently tapping a pair of binoculars against her leg.

"Anti-submarine warfare is the military version of chess. You must work out what the enemy is going to do before they even think of it," she says. "Many more countries have submarines now so there's always a threat out there. What we're doing is really important."



Commander Sarah West in the operations room

HMS Sutherland's bulky Merlin helicopter swoops over the bridge. Also hunting HMS Triumph, it hovers above the sub's suspected location and dips sonar on a wire into the sea. Minutes pass. Nothing. Perhaps the submarine has made it to the deep water of the Arran trench and is sprinting away. Suddenly a periscope, with its white, feathered wake, appears several miles away. The game is on. Cdr West's boots clatter down a ladder as she heads for the operations room, where orders are swiftly given to move in for the kill.

HMS Portland bursts into open water and charges straight towards the now penned-in HMS Triumph. Reports ping around the frigate's operations room as they simulate launching three Stingray torpedoes. Soon calculations show that in a real attack, the explosions would have broken the boat's back.

"Today has been a good day for submarine hunting," CDR West observes, her eyes flashing in victory as she returns to the bridge.

But HMS Triumph is not finished yet. At dusk her periscope pops up 50 metres from the ship, grabs a photograph to prove she was there, then dives sharply beneath the frigate, skimming her hull. It's a daring move taught by [Royal Navy](#) Submarine Command Course tutor Commander Ryan Ramsey.

"HMS Portland is the most aggressively fought ship I've ever come across," says the former captain. "On the submarine we've been finding it difficult to do anything."



Cdr West, who hails from Lincolnshire, did not have a life at sea on her radar as a child. She says: "I'm a comprehensive-educated northerner who knew nothing about the military as I grew up. I worked as a trainee manager for two years after leaving university – then got bored with the nine to five. Lots of women in the services have challenging roles. It's just that I happen to be newsworthy at the moment. There are drawbacks though. Years at sea probably explains why I'm single. But every person in the military makes sacrifices. There are plenty of men and women on board missing their children growing up, which is why keeping the ship happy is such a big part of my job. You can have state-of-the-art kit but, without well-trained people wanting to use it, you're useless."

But the submarine hunt will continue, on occasion in conjunction with the US Navy. Russia could be about to gain a crucial underwater advantage, as trials on the new £1.25billion K-329 Severodvinsk nuclear-powered submarine near completion.



HMS Portland will also have other duties while on patrol. Royal Marine snipers fly on for stints of anti-narcotics work and HMS Portland could have to help out in the aftermath of any Caribbean hurricanes.

During the months away CDR West will mostly be found in her favourite spot on the bridge, writing on bundles of paperwork in red ink – the colour always used by Royal Navy captains – or touring the decks

chatting to her sailors. Her role comes with a crippling workload and the sole responsibility for 185 lives. But CDR West has been at sea for much of the past five years, commanding smaller ships, and is used to it. One of her few days “off” away from HMS Portland this autumn was spent supporting a crew member playing for the Royal Navy’s women’s rugby team when they took on the Army at Twickenham.

If HMS Portland was sent to war it would be up to CDR West to issue the life and death order to fire the ships impressive weaponry. Sea Wolf missiles can knock out fighter jets and incoming missiles – even at very close range – while a Harpoon, with its 221kg warhead, can smash a hole in the side of a warship, disabling or sinking it.

### **RFA Wave Knight in Caribbean drug bust**

28/01/2014

Over a tonne of cocaine has been seized by Royal Navy support ship Wave Knight and the US Coast Guard.



*Bales of cocaine being recovered onto RFA Wave Knight*

[Picture: Mark Amato, via MOD]

The crew of Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) vessel Wave Knight have assisted with an international counter-narcotics operation in the Caribbean, seizing an illicit cargo of cocaine with a UK wholesale value of over £60 million. The international operation involved a US Coast Guard patrol aircraft, Wave Knight and a [US Coast Guard](#) helicopter, who together forced a speedboat to stop in international waters south of the Dominican Republic.

The Coast Guard helicopter first fired warning shots in an attempt to stop the speedboat, but when the suspected smugglers started to throw the bales of drugs overboard the decision was made to use disabling fire on the vessel. This allowed [Wave Knight](#) to quickly launch its own small boat with a US Coast Guard team to board and question those on the suspect vessel. At the same time, a second boat from the RFA vessel recovered 45 bales of cocaine which had been thrown from the speedboat.



*The 25-foot speedboat (right) seized by the United States Coast Guard and RFA Wave Knight [Picture: Mark Amato, via MOD]*



This success follows closely on from Wave Knight's seizure of marijuana on 26 December. The ship is deployed in support of Operation Martillo, a 15-nation collaborative effort to deny transnational criminal organisations air and maritime access to the coastal regions of Central America, and to disrupt the illegal movement of drugs from South America into the Caribbean and onwards to the UK.



*Bales of cocaine seized in the haul [Picture: Mark Amato, via MOD]*

HMS Talent arrived home to a cheering crowd in Plymouth on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January after a 5-month deployment promoting security worldwide.



*HMS Talent sailing up the River Tamar*  
[Picture: Leading Airman (Photographer) Joel Rouse, Crown copyright]

The crew of the nuclear-powered submarine were greeted by around 100 family members and friends, who braved the freezing rain and wind, after a successful patrol in the Mediterranean and the Gulf.

Website of interest: <http://www.maryrose.org/>

The Mary Rose is the only 16<sup>th</sup> Century warship on display anywhere in the world. Built 1509 to 1511 she was one of the first ships to be able to fire a broadside and was a firm favourite of King Henry VIII. She sunk on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1545, watched by King Henry on the shore at Portsmouth/Southsea. She was discovered in 1971 and raised in 1982. She is in a purpose built museum in the heritage area of Portsmouth Naval Base, just along from The Victory.



Minden Games produce a number of cheap and cheerful games, many of which have a naval theme. The Company mottoes are “keep it simple” and “games meant to be fun, meant to be played”. Available from Minden, hardcopy or as a PDF download if you can not find a local stockist, (I bought mine from Leisure Games, Finchley) Swordfish at Taranto gives you the chance to either re-create the original raid or plan your own version. Either way, your results are compared against the actual raid to see how well or not you did. Do you load up with torpedoes or bombs? How many planes should carry flares to illuminate the targets for the aircraft you hope are close behind? Once the aircraft take off, Event Tables and die rolls play out the raid. You supply the dice, pen and paper to keep track of 21 aircraft and any damage but everything else is in the zip lock bag. Playable when space and / or time are limited, there is nothing to stop you substituting miniatures and a bigger playing area than the A5 Plan of the Harbour included. Also it could be part of a bigger Mediterranean Wargame to determine which Italian vessels are available for action. I went for a maximum first wave strike to catch the defences by surprise with a smaller second wave which hopefully would have success because of the confusion following the first wave attack.

I sent the first wave in from 5 different directions, two aircraft lagged behind as one got lost in cloud and a second had a touch of engine trouble. (When playing a game you can choose to press on with engine trouble, when in real life the sensible choice would be “return to carrier”). The flares were dropped perfectly, illuminating and silhouetting the Ships lying at anchor. The decoy raid on the Oil Storage facility only scored minor damage as the Swordfish swept between the barrage balloon cables and lined up on targets. 6 aircraft received minor damage from the anti aircraft fire on approach. One aircraft received heavy damage with the pilot hit in one leg. The anti torpedo nets were only partially deployed but it is not known whether the nets accounted for the first three torpedoes dropped; Cesare, Duilio and Littorio were the “missed” targets. Then from close range a torpedo hit the Littorio causing minor damage. The Cavour shuddered as a torpedo slammed in, causing major flooding. Fierce AA fire drove off one aircraft which now re-lined up on a cruiser in the inner harbour, Mar Piccolo. Miss. The Cesare was hit by a bomb which failed to explode and only caused minor damage to the stern. Then in quick succession, two torpedoes hit the Vittorio Veneto which immediately started to list (and sunk the following day). The last plane to arrive (engine trouble) came in from the North, missed the Duilio with its torpedo and kept low as it headed out to sea and HMS ILLUSTRIOUS. The second wave attacked without any help from confusion in the harbour but was met by alert anti aircraft batteries on the harbour mole. The first and fifth ‘plane in were shot down on approach. Only one Swordfish was undamaged as the attack runs began. The flares were incorrectly dropped but the Ships were illuminated by fires started by the first wave. Two ‘planes lined up on the Littorio but both

missed. The next 'plane was shot down by fierce AA fire. The next 'plane pressed on through the AA fire and achieved a hit on Cesare for minor damage. The last two aircraft missed the Cesare and Andrea Doria. All surviving aircraft landed safely on ILLUSTRIOUS. The downed crews were picked out of the water and after a bit of rough handling by dock workers were well treated by Italian Naval and medical personnel.

I lost one more Swordfish than the actual attack and (only) achieved 75% of the damage, again compared to the actual attack.

The Minden Games website, gives the impression that Minden Games are a one man outfit, (Gary Garbor). More power to his elbow, I say. Swordfish at Taranto is cheap as chips, it is not complicated or "awesome" but it never pretends to be something it is not.

Norman Bell.

## **The Queen to attend D-day events in France**



The Queen with D-day veterans in Normandy in 2004. Photograph: Arthur Edwards/AFP/Getty Images

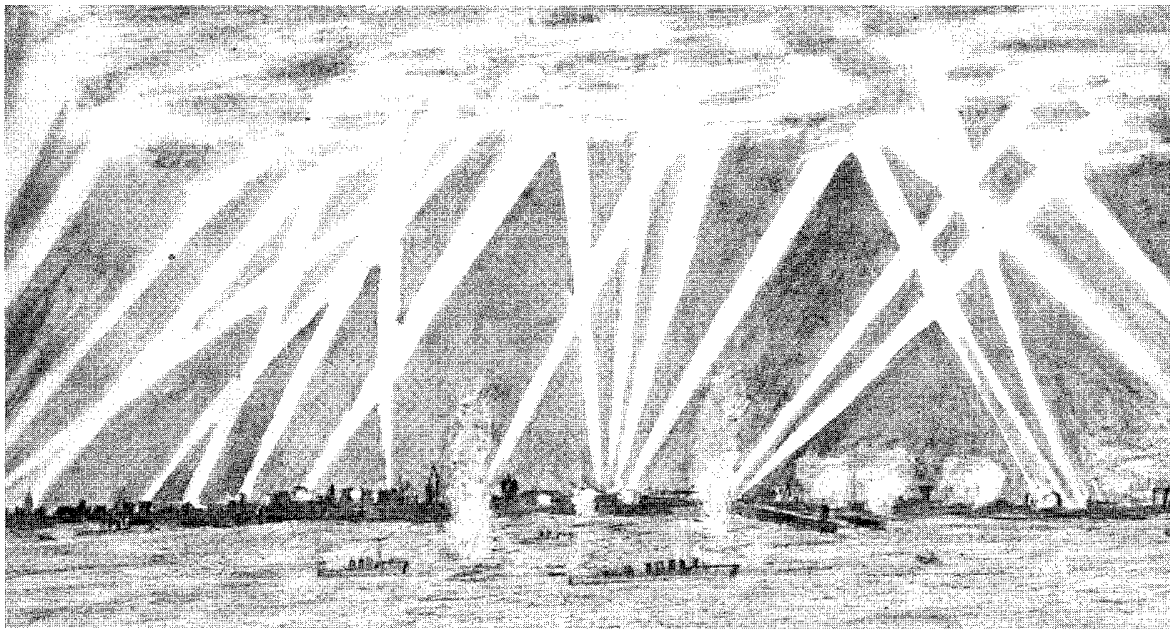
[The Queen](#) and Duke of Edinburgh are to attend events commemorating the 70th anniversary of the D-day landings during a three-day state visit to France in June, Buckingham Palace has announced.

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will attend events in Normandy to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings. On 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> June Her Majesty and His Royal Highness will attend state visit events in Paris and be received at the Élysée Palace by President Hollande.

The Queen and Prince Philip attended both the 50th and 60th D-Day commemorations in France, accompanied by other members of the royal family. But the Queen was not present at the 65th commemorations in 2009 after a diplomatic mix-up which led to no formal invitation being extended in time. In what was perceived by some as a deliberate snub, the then president, Nicolas Sarkozy, omitted the Queen from a guest list that included Barack Obama for what the French government said was "primarily a Franco-American ceremony".

The events marking the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings are likely to be the last significant commemorations attended by veterans in large numbers as many are now in their late 80s and 90s. Parades, parachute drops, military camps and open air concerts are planned to remember the bravery and sacrifice of the 156,000 Allied troops who fought their way on to the shores of Normandy on 6 June 1944.





This sketch of an air raid on Dunkirk in August 10, 1917, is part of a treasure trove of naval letters, charts, photographs and diaries that will be published online

## Missives from the Battle of Trafalgar

Napoleon's wine list and a Tudor naval survey are highlights of an online archive, writes **Tom Coghlan**

"The proceeding narrative I flatter myself will not be displeasing to you and family," wrote Robert Hilton, a medical assistant on the 74-gun HMS *Swiftsure* on November 3, 1805.

His account of the Battle of Trafalgar, written to his brother William just two weeks later, is about to find a wider audience 208 years on.

The nine-page description of Britain's most famous naval victory was published in full for the first time this week by the Naval Records Society website, a body that has been searching out artefacts of Britain's naval heritage since 1893.

Hilton's letter calls into question Nelson's commonly quoted last words, recording them as "I have then lived long enough"—a reference to the news

that the French and Spanish navies were defeated.

His account states that the words were recounted by the commander of *Victory*, Captain Hardy, who was with Nelson as he died after being mortally wounded by a French sharpshooter. Most historians have favoured a different version, as recorded by Nelson's surgeon: "I have then done my duty."

The letter came to light in 2007 as a transcribed copy among possessions of descendants of the Hilton family.

"Robert Hilton's letter survives today as a 19th-century fair copy, in the private collection of Nick Hilton, a member of the family, and to whom my thanks go for copies and photos of the letter and other material," said Dr Sam Willis, a naval historian who runs the Naval Records Society.

The account of the battle is vivid, he said, but even more interesting for the "below decks" position of the author and the fact that he includes a long account of the storm that caught the fleets afterwards.

"At 10pm the *Redoubtable* went down, and the hawser by which we still kept her in tow (in order if the weather mod-

erated and the prize be able to weather the night through, we might once more endeavour to save the remainder of the crew) was carried away with the violence of the shock. This was now the most dreadful scene I ever witnessed, we could distinctly hear the cries of the unhappy people we could no longer assist. Toward the morning the weather moderated, and we had the good fortune to save many that were floating past us on pieces of wreck. At 9 of the 23rd we discovered a large raft ahead, and shortly after a second, many of the unfortunate people were seen clinging to the wreck, the merciless sea threatening almost instant destruction to them. The boats were immediately lowered down and we happily saved 36 people from the fury of the waves. When the boats came alongside many of these unfortunate men were unable to get up the ship's sides, as most of them were not only fainting from fatigue but were wounded in a most shocking manner. Some expired in the boats before they could be brought alongside, completely exhausted and worn out with struggling to preserve their lives the whole of the tempestuous

night upon a few crazy planks exposed to inclemency of the weather."

The Naval Records Society is looking for further artefacts from dusty attics around the country, Dr Willis said.

Recent treasures unearthed from Britain's rich naval heritage have included a personal letter from the 19th-century Admiral Thomas Cochrane to his son Arthur, an 18th century naval sketchbook, a list of the wine that Napoleon carried with him into exile on St Helena and a Tudor naval survey. The son of one elderly sailor also supplied an audio account by his father who was one of only 12 men to survive the sinking of the escort aircraft carrier HMS *Avenger* in 1942. More than 500 of the crew perished when the ship was sunk by a U-boat off Gibraltar.

Dr Willis said that forthcoming publications on the website would include an 1869 sailor's diary full of poetry about naval life, a collection of letters and sketches from the First World War Dardanelles campaign and photograph albums compiled by a sailor who served on the Yangtze River in the 1920s.

[navyrecordsonline.co.uk](http://navyrecordsonline.co.uk)

The above article from the Times newspaper was seen by Rob Morgan.

Request for info.

I'm wondering if you can help me find games that use a particular method of simulating gunnery. It's one of those unconventional but interesting and clever methods. It uses a spindle with a circle of cardboard at one end and a pin through the card set off centre. The player firing his guns holds the free end of the spindle and then holds the whole thing over a silhouette of his target. He gives the thing a couple spins in his fingers and then touches the pin down on the paper. Hopefully inside the silhouette and in a spot that is vulnerable to damage.

I know this may be a one-off idea I read about in a book back in the 90's, but I'm wondering if anyone is familiar with it. Does it have a name? Do you know of any other rules that use it?

Thanks for any help you can offer,

Marc Pavone

The following article was seen by Jeff Crane.

## **Warship Wednesday Jan 15, 2014 A Tale of the Unlucky Porter**

by [laststandonzombieisland](#)

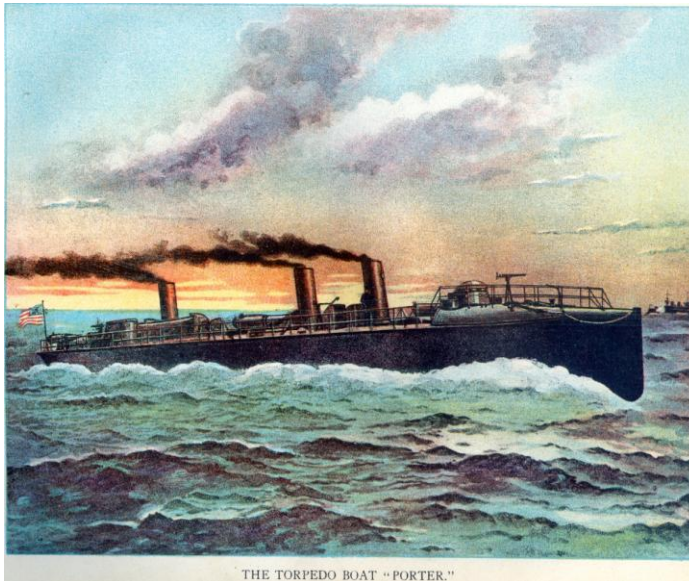
Here at LSOZI, we are going to take out every Wednesday for a look at the old steam/diesel navies of the 1859-1946 time period and will profile a different ship each week.

- Christopher Eger

Warship Wednesday Jan 15, 2014 A Tale of the Unlucky Porter



Here we see the fine lines of the *USS Porter* as she steams quietly before WWII. This destroyer, DD-356, looked more like a fast cruiser with her high bridge and four twin turrets. Truly a beautiful ship from that enlighten era where warships could be both easy on the eyes and functional.

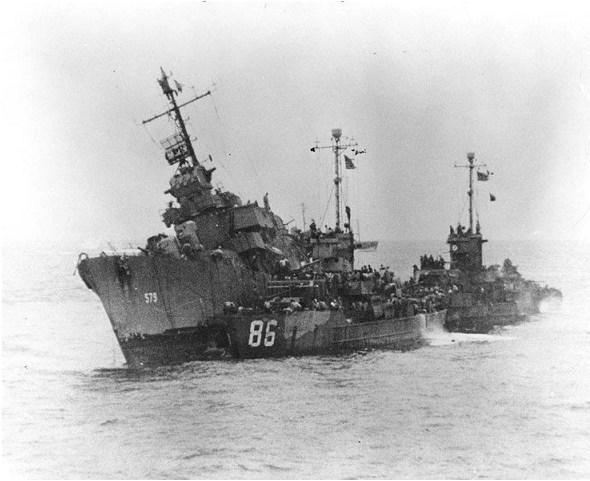


The first USS Porter almost sent a torpedo into the cruiser New York in 1898

The name of the *USS Porter* is something of an albatross with the navy. Drawn from the famed War of 1812 era Commodore David Porter, and his son, Civil War Admiral David Dixon Porter, the first ship with this name, *USS Porter* (TB-6), a torpedo boat, launched in 1896, was commissioned five years after the passing of the Admiral. This small green torpedo boat almost sank the cruiser *USS New York* in a night time engagement during the Spanish-American War, and would have if the torpedo she fired didn't miss.

The second *USS Porter (DD-59)*, a Tucker-class destroyer, commissioned in 1916, had to be stricken to comply with the London Naval Treaty.

*USS William D. Porter (DD-579)*, a Fletcher-class destroyer, was a ship of the United States Navy named for Civil War Commodore William D. Porter, son of Commodore David Porter and brother of Admiral David Dixon Porter, continued the curse of the Porter ship name. She almost sank the battleship *USS Iowa* during the war when she fired a live torpedo at the battlewagon while practicing torpedo runs. The *Iowa* at the time was carrying President Franklin D. Roosevelt, along with Secretary of State, Cordell Hull and all of the Country's WWII military brass. When the *Iowa* saw and evaded the errant fish, [she trained all of her guns on the much smaller Porter](#) whose crew were arrested and made the subject of an FBI probe to make sure the torp was an accident and not an attempted assassination.



*USS William D. Porter (DD-579)* sinking after being missed by a kamikaze

She spent the next year on duty in Alaskan waters after everything was cleared up. Then to the Philippines and Okinawa. There, on 10 June 1945 she was attacked by a lone Japanese Val dive bomber who missed the ship but exploded underneath after the craft hit the water. This gave the almost *Iowa*-killer the dubious distinction of missing a kamikaze but still being sunk by it.



DD-800

The Fourth *Porter (DD-800)*, a *Fletcher*-class sister-ship of the William D Porter above, although modern and low mileage, just spent two years on active duty before she was put into reserve. Called back for Korea, she was a member of the little know "Trainbusters Club" of warships that destroyed locomotives with naval gunfire. Decommissioned again 10 August 1953, she was scrapped in 1973, spending only a total of four and a half years

of her thirty year life outside of Red Lead Row gathering rust.



The Fifth USS Porter...

The fifth *USS Porter*, (DDG-78) is an *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyer, collided with the *MV Otowasan*, a Japanese oil tanker, near the Strait of Hormuz in 2012, ripping a huge 10x10 foot hole in the billion dollar Aegis warship that led to the replacement of her skipper.

But we are here to speak of the third *Porter*, *DD-356*.



Head of her class of large 'destroyer leaders' she was over 1800-tons and 381-feet long overall. Capable of making 35+ knots and carrying a battery of eight 5-inch/38 calibre naval guns over eight 21-inch torpedo tubes, she would have been considered a scout cruiser if she was commissioned in 1919 rather than in 1936.

She was one of the fastest and largest of US pre-WWII destroyer classes and her seven younger sisters provided yeomen service during the war. Her seven sisters earned a combined total of more than 30 battlestars during the war, fighting U-boats, protecting carriers, escorting convoys, and downing enemy aircraft.





All seven of her sisters survived the war to be scrapped in the late 1940s and early 1950s.



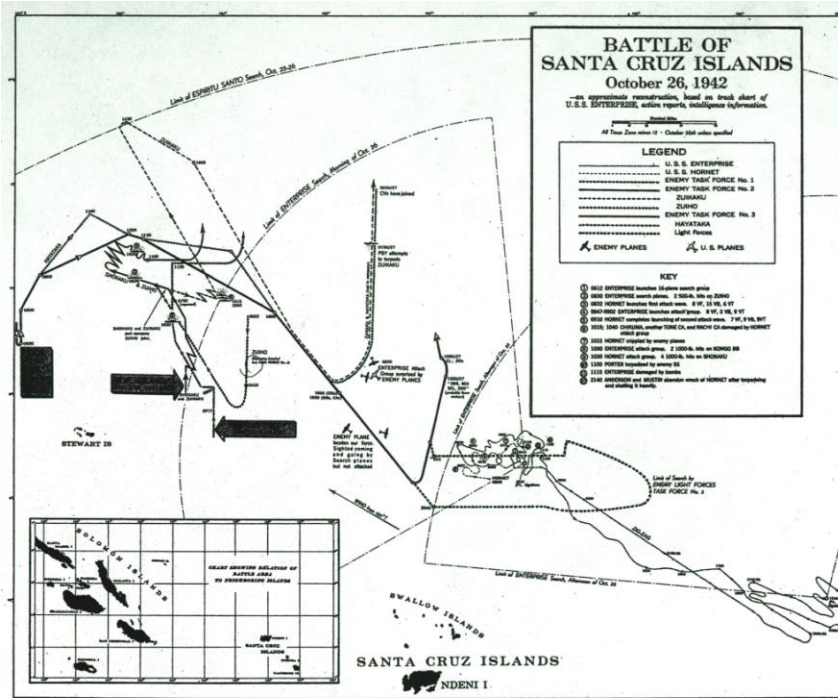
This was not to be the luck of the *Porter*.

Commissioned 25 August 1936 at New York Shipbuilding Corporation, she left immediately for the Pacific Fleet. Leaving Pearl Harbor just two days before the day of infamy, she was at sea off Hawaii when the war started. Joining Task Force 16 after convoy duty off the West Coast, she sailed immediately for the waters off Guadalcanal in 1942.



There, she found herself neck-deep in the Japanese onslaught that was the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands. This pitted two US carriers, *Enterprise* and *Hornet* against three of Yamamoto's. This battle, fought on 26 October 1942, started off with the Japanese having more planes (199 vs 136) and more surface combatants (40 vs 23).

Halsey's fleet lost the *Hornet*, had the *Enterprise* badly mauled, and had more than 70% of the fleet's carrier air-wing destroyed. During the fight, with planes ditching left and right around the *USS Enterprise*, *Porter* stood by as a plane guard, firing at Japanese aircraft while picking up pilots lost at sea.



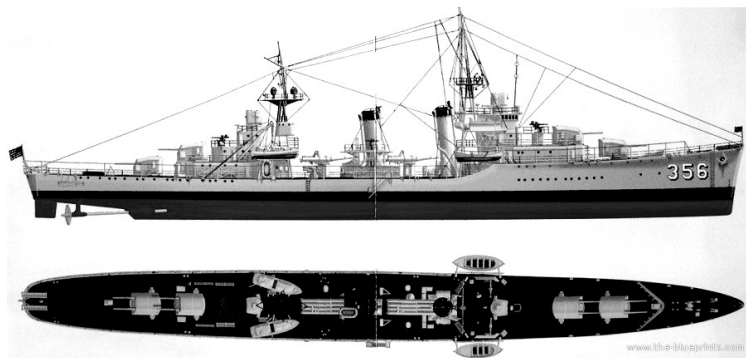
To say the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands was chaotic is an understatement.

One armed US Navy TBF Avenger torpedo bomber crashed near *Porter* and soon after, as the ship manoeuvred to rescue the crew, she was struck by a torpedo of unknown origin. During the war the US blamed it on a Japanese submarine, but post-war study of the Combined Fleet's records, none of the Emperor's u-boats claimed the kill.

This had left historians to credit the sinking of the *USS Porter*, DD-356, to friendly fire.

Her crew was rescued by the nearby *USS Shaw* (DD-373), whose dramatic Pearl Harbor photographs have immortalized that ship. The *Shaw* stood by to sink the stricken *Porter* in [deep water](#) with gunfire. Her name was stricken a week later from the Naval List where it was given to a new *Fletcher* class destroyer (DD-800) at her launching on 13 March 1944.

**Specs:**



Displacement: 1,850 tons  
Length: 381 ft (116 m)



Beam: 36 ft 2 in (11.02 m)  
Draft: 10 ft 5 in (3.18 m)  
Propulsion: 50,000 shp (37,285 kW);  
Geared Turbines,  
2 screws  
Speed: 35 knots (65 km/h)  
Range: 6,500 nmi. at 12 knots  
(12,000 km at 22 km/h)  
Complement: 194  
Armament:

*As Built:*

1 x Mk33 Gun Fire Control System  
8 x 5"(127mm)/38cal SP (4x2),  
8 x 1.1"(28mm) AA (2x4),  
8 x 21"(533mm) torpedo tubes (2x4)

*c1942:*

1 x Mk33 Gun Fire Control System  
8 x 5"(127mm)/38cal SP guns (4x2),  
2 X 40mm AA (1x2),  
6 x 20mm AA (6x1),  
2 x Depth Charge stern racks

If you liked this column, please consider joining the International Naval Research Organization (INRO), Publishers of *Warship International*.

They are possibly one of the best sources of naval study, images, and fellowship you can find <http://www.warship.org/>

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.

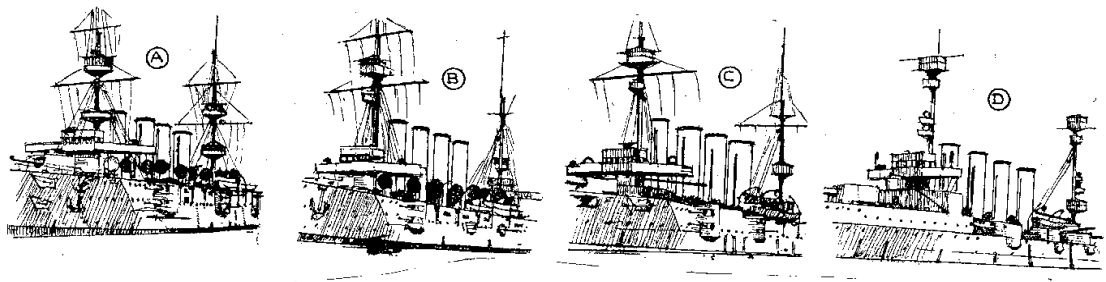
Answers to Sea Quiz 28. (It is the 1950s remember).

1. It was the WRNS but they reformed in September 1939.
2. MARS was the first Battleship to burn fuel oil.
3. All three ended as targets.
4. That was HMS HARDY.
5. The illustration shows: the bow of Fortune (K Class); the 6 inch gun of SWIFT, 1918; the torpedo tube and bridge of "S" Class; funnels of the "Termagent" Class; tubes and sl of "W" Class and the "Abdiel" Minelayer with a gun painted on the after part of the screen.

### Sea Quiz 29.

That Narvik question was easy, I don't know why the compiler gave that away, worth five marks too! No prize given though.

1. What was the world's second largest navy in 1908?
2. What did the Italian warships Benedetto Brin and Leonardo Da Vinci have in common?
3. What was a 'Killick' before it was a Leading Seaman?
4. Either Ericsson or Cowper Coles invented this. What was it?
5. Name these four WWI Cruisers.....



Good Luck.  
Rob Morgan.

This story is from Jeff Chorney and Rick. I've checked my diary, it's not April the first.

### [Lyubov Orlova, Ghost Ship Crewed by Cannibal Rats Drifting Toward the UK — Phony Hysteria on a Slow News Day?](#)

MV Lyubov Orlova

A story has exploded across the UK press about the [Lyubov Orlova](#), a cruise ship which broke free from its tow in a winter storm and was abandoned in the Atlantic in February of last year. What evidence exists suggests that the ship

sank in the mid-Atlantic in March. Nevertheless, more than a half-dozen newspapers in the UK and the commonwealth have published stories with lurid headlines like that of the *Independent*, which screams “[Ghost ship ‘crewed by cannibal rats heading to Britain.](#)” Similar stories have been published by the [Daily Mail](#), the [Telegraph](#), the [Metro](#), the [Mirror](#), [This is Cornwall](#), [News.com.au](#) and the [International Business Times](#). Even the German Web.de gets into the act with its article, “[Geisterschiff: Treibt das “Rattenschiff” auf Großbritannien zu?](#)”

This makes such a wonderful story because, while all evidence suggests that the ship sank last year, there is no absolute proof that it did. Also, all [rats are cannibals](#) and it is likely that there rats aboard the ship when it was towed out of Newfoundland. So, viola, the lost and probably sunken ship becomes the “***Ghost Ship Crewed by Cannibal Rats Drifting Toward the UK.***” Except that it probably isn’t drifting anywhere, and if it were the rats aboard may have already eaten each other, so that if the ship is afloat, there may only be one fat rat left, if it doesn’t starve first.

What triggered the sudden hysteria over a ship that has probably been on the bottom of the Atlantic for the past ten months? One name keeps appearing in the various articles – Chris Reynolds, director of the Irish Coast Guard. The Irish Coast Guard was significantly annoyed last year when the Canadian government was rather slow in notifying it that the ship was adrift and could possibly be heading toward Ireland. The [Irish Independent](#) quoted Reynolds last March. “*It was over ten days from when it went missing to when we were told about it. It has no heat, it has no light, and it is basically a black ship in darkness. We would have been much happier if they told us much earlier. We could have sunk it or towed it in for salvage.*”

After the Irish got annoyed the press started reporting that the ship was “*off the coast of Ireland.*” In February of last year the Huffington Post headline was “[Lyubov Orlova, Russian ‘Ghost Ship,’ Located Off The Coast Of Ireland.](#)” If you read the article, you realized that the ship was estimated to be **1,300 nautical miles** off the coast of Ireland! As it is only roughly 2,000 nautical miles from Newfoundland to Ireland, this actually put the ship far closer to Canada than to the Emerald Isle. The headline should have read that the *Lyubov Orlova* was still off the coast of Canada except that Canadian officials would have been happy to forget that the ship ever existed and the Irish authorities were complaining loudly.

All evidence suggests that the *Lyubov Orlova* never got too much closer to Ireland. In late February and early March signals from two EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons) aboard the ship were picked up by the Irish Coast Guard from the mid-Atlantic. As EPIRBs can be triggered by immersion in water, it appears likely that these were triggered by the sinking of the ship. The position of the EPIRBs suggests that the ship was roughly 700 miles off the Irish Coast, when it likely sank. As reported by the [Irish Echo on March 1, 2013](#), “*The coast guard spokeswoman said a satellite was sent over the location of the last signal from the Lyubov Orlova’s EPIRB but there was no sign of the ship. That lead officials to the conclusion that it had probably sunk.*” There has been no confirmed sighting of the ship since then.

#### [Drifting Russian ship may have sunk 700 miles off coast](#)

Nevertheless, Chris Reynolds, director of the Irish Coast Guard, has seen fit to opine last October, “*We’d never be able to prove that it sank.*” Recently the [Metro reports](#): *Irish coastguard chief Chris Reynolds believes the 4,250-ton vessel, spotted 1,300 nautical miles off Ireland last year, is likely to be still afloat. ‘There have been huge storms in recent months but it takes a lot to sink a vessel as big as that,’ he said. ‘We must stay vigilant.’*

There is also apparently someone described by the [Mirror](#) as a “Belgian searcher” named Pim de Rhooes, who is quoted saying “*She is floating around out there somewhere. There will be a lot of rats and they eat each other. If I get aboard I’ll have to lace everywhere with poison.*”

So there you have it. A slow news day and phony hysteria over a ship that is probably at the bottom of the Atlantic.

## **SIGNAL PAD!**

Cavalier, Tunbridge Wells, 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb.

“Overlord”, Abingdon and “Skirmish”, Sidcup in March; not forgetting “Salute” at the ExCel Centre, Canary Wharf, London, at which the Naval Wargames Society will be running a WWI Rufiji River Delta Game. Check out the Newark Irregulars website which gives details of up and coming Games, Modelling conventions etc. There is a subdivision for the UK and Ireland, USA/Canada, Europe and Australia and Asia. So wherever you live you are covered.

Coming in March’s AGB:- A review of “The Armada Campaign 1588” Osprey Elite Series 15, from Rob Morgan. Also, “You can Wargame with just about anything”, a note from Rob.

### **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)

## **NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2014**

### **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/>

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)

### **NWS North Hants [Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday]**

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

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