



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

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EDITORIAL

My trusty Desktop computer running Windows XP began to show signs of slowing down before Christmas and I was getting an increase in “page not responding” messages. After much humming and erring I took the plunge and bought a Windows 8 Laptop in the January sales. I only have one word of advice for anyone thinking of changing to Windows 8. Don't.

Welcome to new members, Frederick Charlton, P Lane, Bob Blanchett and Ian Thompson.

Yet again I'm knocked out by the standard of “Battlefleet”. Well done to Jeff Chorney and all the contributors. Don't forget you can contribute to AGB! Give Rob Morgan a helping hand.

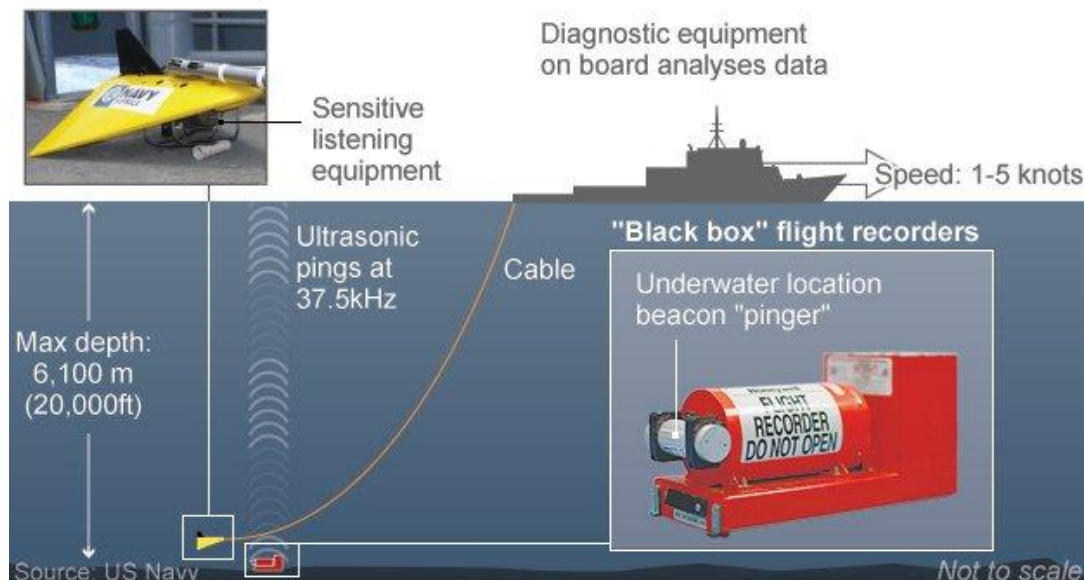
I hope you like this edition of AGB. Produced using a trusty Desktop and Windows XP. (Although I suppose I'll have to renew battle with Windows 8 before long. I feel like HMS GLOWWORM up against the ADM HIPPER).

Norman Bell
normanpvc@gmail.com

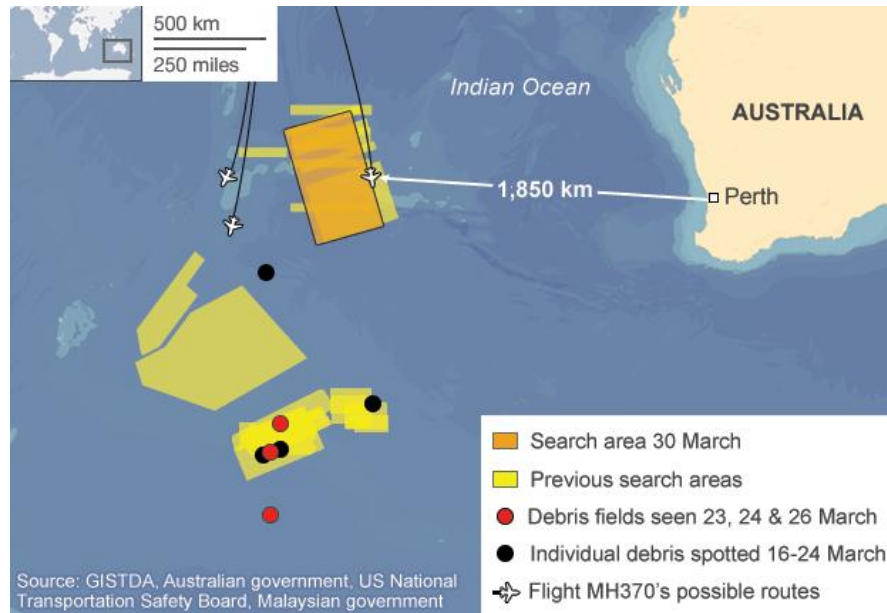
Search teams have begun using towed “pinger” locators to hunt for the black box of missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370. Two ships with the locator capabilities will search a 240km (150 mile) underwater path, in the hope of recovering the plane's data recorder. The search is being coordinated from the city of Perth in Western Australia.

Australia naval vessel Ocean Shield was using a towed pinger locator from the US Navy, while HMS ECHO, which had similar capabilities, was also searching.

Black box finder: Towed pinger locator



The two ships will search a single 240km track converging on each other. The battery-powered pingers on the plane's black box stop transmitting about 30 days after a crash, giving the searchers now perhaps only a few days.



warartisan.com

This is a web site which originates in North America, and sells, with a number of free downloads, models of ships, made in paper or light card. The models are all of the sailing era, Napoleonic, War of 1812, etc. Unusual, though very similar to the models made by Maty Modelarz in Poland, and though not I think a concept likely to alter the traditions of naval wargaming, a site well worth looking at, both for ideas and for inspiration. The models are superbly constructed, and there's a range of flags too. Many items are freely copyable. The scales are out of the ordinary, I don't think I've ever encountered 1/900th before, but there are many models in 1/600th and 1/300th ranges as well. Take a look at least, well worth a few minutes and the Gallery of models, many of them scratch-built is interesting too.

Rob Morgan

D-Day veterans are being asked to contact the Royal British Legion to gain access to the 70th D-Day anniversary events in June.



RAF Veterans pictured in Normandy (library image)
[Picture: Jack Pritchard, Crown copyright]

Second World War veterans who are planning to attend commemorations to mark the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings in June are being asked to contact the Royal British Legion to make sure they can gain entry to the sites they wish to visit.

Due to the high profile nature of [D-Day 70](#) there will be security restrictions in place in Normandy, and accreditation is required for many of the events during the anniversary period.

The following is from the monthly newspaper, "Navy News".

HMS KENT to remember her Great War dead from Falklands victory

Sacrifices made by the men of HMS Kent 100 years ago will be remembered when a centennial service is held to honour them at Canterbury Cathedral.

Eight sailors and Royal Marines aboard the cruiser were killed during the 1914 Battle of the Falklands, when the Royal Navy routed a German cruiser squadron in the South Atlantic.



Damage on the upper deck of HMS Kent during the Battle of the Falklands. In the left of the shell hole in the bulkhead is Sgt George Mayes Royal Marines Light Infantry who received the CGM for extinguishing a fire in one of the cruiser's magazines. Pictures: Imperial War Museum

THE people of Kent will honour the sacrifices made by their own warship to mark the Royal Navy's first major victory of the Great War.

A service of commemoration will be held at Canterbury Cathedral on December 8th, 100 years to the day that the roaming squadron of German Admiral Graf von Spee was all but wiped out by a superior British force off the Falkland Islands.

Spee's cruisers, which had dealt a severe blow to the RN's pride by defeating a British squadron in the Pacific a month earlier at Coronel, was hunted down by a force which included battle-cruisers.

Also avenging Coronel that day – and her sister ship HMS Monmouth, which was blown up with the loss of all hands – was armoured cruiser HMS Kent.

After a lengthy chase, she sank the light cruiser SMS Nürnberg – younger and lighter than the Kent, her ten 4.1in guns lighter but with a greater range than the 14 6in guns of the Royal Navy vessel.



Those guns took a fearful toll of the Nürnberg in her final moments – the German ship was on fire from bow to stern as most of her crew abandoned the cruiser.

“The sight was one of absolute awe, yet she turned over and sank as peacefully and as gracefully as would a cup in a basin of water,” one Kent crewman wrote in his diary.

“Those who went with her were ‘game’ to the end. We saw a party of her men standing on her poop deck waving the German Ensign (tied to a staff) and they went under with the ensign still in their grasp.”

Just seven German sailors were rescued from the Nürnberg from a crew of well over 300. In all, the Kaiser's Navy lost nearly 1,900 men that day. HMS KENT took several hits from the German cruiser and of the ten Britons killed in the Falklands battle, eight died on the Kent, with a similar number wounded. Those fallen are honoured with a memorial plaque, erected by their shipmates, in Canterbury Cathedral.

Descendants of Kent's ship's company at the Falklands are invited to attend the centennial commemorative service.

The Ministry of Defence has signed a £20 million contract to buy parts for the Royal Navy's 3 new offshore patrol vessels (OPVs).



The Royal Navy's new offshore patrol vessel will be based upon a modified version of this design built for the Brazilian Navy

[Picture: Copyright BAE Systems]

It was announced in November last year that MOD would purchase the ships which will be built, subject to approval, by BAE Systems.

During a visit to the company's shipyards on the Clyde in Scotland, Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology Philip Dunne announced that MOD has committed £20 million to the programme. The contract will enable BAE Systems to begin work on parts such as the engines and gearboxes, which require a longer time to make and therefore have to be ordered in advance of the main shipbuilding programme.



THIS is a bird's eye view of one of the mainstay's of the Royal Navy's mission in the Gulf region.

Seen from the back of an 815 Naval Air Squadron Lynx, dipping its nose, this is 'floating warehouse' RFA Fort Austin, which provides food, spare parts and ammunition if required by Royal Navy – and other Allied vessels – keeping the sea lanes east of Suez free of pirates, terrorists, smugglers and other criminals. In this case, the 36-year-old support ship joined five other British ships for the latest demanding exercise with the US Navy to deal with the threat of mines.

Three of the RN's four Gulf-based minehunters – HM Ships Ramsey, Atherstone and Shoreham – command and support ship RFA Cardigan Bay, Fort Austin for supplies, and

frigate HMS Somerset providing protection, headed to sea from Bahrain with their American counterparts to hone hunting and clearance techniques during the latest in a series of mine warfare exercises.

This workout saw sailors clear an exercise minefield in the waters of the Gulf, making use of mine robot submersibles – Unmanned Underwater Vehicles in military parlance – divers, helicopters and other specialist equipment. In addition to the technical skills being tested, sailors practised coping with challenging environmental conditions including strong tidal streams, complex underwater topography and high temperatures – it's already typically in the high 20 degrees Celsius in the central Gulf and on some days high 30s.

"The Gulf provides very different conditions from the ship's base port in Faslane. Out here, our equipment gets to run through a full spectrum of environmental extremes," said PO David 'Muddy' Watters, HMS Shoreham's bosun.



USS Devastator 'rafts up' alongside RFA Cardigan Bay to take on supplies

While the minehunters focused on clearing mines and RFA Cardigan Bay choreographed the ships' operations – she's permanently home to a Royal Navy staff – HMS Somerset shielded the task group from any potential threat. That demanded careful positioning in relation to all the other ships – and being acutely aware of what the task group was doing, spread across a wide area.

Replying to Rob Morgan's query about the model Napoleonic ships, I am pretty sure they come from 'Trafalgar'

<http://www.games-collector.com/Data/Compendium%20Items/Library/T/Trafalgar%20possibly%201970s%20Action%20games%20and%20toys.html>

As far as I remember each ship had a record card with; one, two, or three plastic cannon for each broadside. When the ship received a hit a cannon was removed. When a ship had no cannon left it was destroyed. I used to have this game, but I may have got rid of it - next time I am at my parents' house I will see if I can find it and scan the rules.

Best wishes,
Dirk Bracke.

Noting Robs question about the plastic Napoleonic sailing ships, they are from the old "Trafalgar" game published by Action Games and Toys Ltd, many years ago.

Regards,
DM

Technology marches on. This from Peter Colbeck.

MBDA PRESENTS THE MARTE COASTAL DEFENCE SYSTEM

At the DIMDEX exhibition in Doha, Qatar (25-27 March 2014), MBDA is presenting for the first time ever a new coastal defence system based on the Marte missile family.

This system, the Marte Coastal Defence System (MCDS), guarantees maritime coastal traffic surveillance and interdiction to hostile ships in territorial waters.

The system is capable of:

- monitoring and picturing sea communication lines;
- detecting and identifying hostile vessels through the use of active surveillance equipment;
- receiving target data via data-link;
- neutralising hostile vessels by using a new generation of anti-ship missiles.

The MCDS is available with different and flexible configurations depending on customer requirements. This system can operate in either a stand-alone mode or integrated within an existing surveillance radar network.

In addition, MBDA can offer two different missile options for MCDS; the Marte MK2/N for the control of brown waters and Marte ER, for the control of a more expansive sea area.

The system configuration consists of:

- a Command and Control (C2) module, comprising an ISO standard 12 foot shelter that can be connected via data-link with the upper level surveillance system. This module includes consoles to manage the local picture provided by its own radar (stand-alone mode) or to track targets provided by the upper level surveillance system (integrated mode).
- a launcher module, comprising up to four firing units that can be mounted on ISO standard trucks. Each launcher can deploy up to four missiles.
- a logistics module, comprising a logistic and support vehicle, plus a variable number of reloading vehicles.

The Marte missile family

The all-weather Marte MK2 is a fire-and-forget, medium-range, sea-skimming anti-ship weapon system. It is equipped with mid-course inertial and radar-based terminal guidance and is capable of destroying small craft and seriously damaging larger vessels. The missile weighs 310 kg and is 3.85 metres long. Marte was first developed in the 1980s with the 30km range MK/2 version being deployed on helicopters. Subsequent models followed for integration on different platforms and thus a family of missiles came into being.

The Marte MK-2/S, where "S" stands for "Short" and indicates shorter munitions in order to enable simpler on board integration, has already been integrated on AW101 and NH-90 NFH helicopters (Naval/Nato Frigate Helicopter) in service with the Italian Navy. The Marte MK-2/A was then developed for launch from fixed-wing aircraft (fighter or patrol aircraft). Finally, in response to the growing interest for a lightweight, rapid-response surface-to-surface naval missile system for littoral operations, Marte MK2/N was developed.

The new version of the missile, called Marte ER (Extended Range), keeps the basic characteristics of the Marte family, but extends its range. The new product is different from previous versions thanks to two main features: turbojet propulsion (leading to a four-fold increase in range compared to the rocket motor version), and the new ISO-calibre cylinder cell. The missile, equipped with these new important components, still preserves a series of elements that were already present in previous versions of the Marte missile, providing a number of significant commonalities that are widely appreciated by the market.

Thanks to these improvements, the new missile has a range that now exceeds 100 km and a much increased speed, both in the cruise and final attack phases. However, it is shorter than the previous model. Logistic systems, such as

the transport and stocking canister in the helicopter version and the trolley for moving and hooking the missile to aircraft, are the same as those used in the Mk2/S model, offering clear user advantages.

MBDA is jointly held by AIRBUS Group (37.5%), BAE SYSTEMS (37.5%), and FINMECCANICA (25%).

Rob Morgan says about the Quizzes from the 1950s:

Interestingly, the questions in the quiz, and frequently comments made in the magazine's text by senior officers of the Royal Navy (Usually, but not inevitably, retired Admirals) would create minor whirlwinds among the readership. Take the comment that "the rarest and most prized" medal worn by the service was the Polar Medal. What about the VC? came the immediate response! Not surprising that one, but what about the comment from a 'pongo' that in the face of an unnamed 'new weapon', presumably the atomic bomb, 'that navies were doomed'? There was a remarkable outcry in the pages when a Mr. Phillips described HMS Warrior as the 'first true ironclad' in the fleet. One indignant correspondent, Mr. Carruthers Corfield of somewhere in Sussex replied that, 'The first ironclad was HMS Glatton. The old wooden wall was plated with iron and used as a target ship with such satisfactory results that the ironclad era had arrived.'

Thanks to all who e-mailed me so far with comments and not one serious criticism.... but I do think Carruthers Corfield is wrong!

Answers to Sea Quiz 30.

1. HMS Achilles was the 4 masted ironclad.
2. In the fifties, the Chest was at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. I think it's still there!
3. According to the reply, Ark could operate one hundred and ten (110) aircraft.
4. Archerfish sank the IJN Shinano.
5. Nice easy one this..... HMS Agamemnon had...
 - a). Stockless anchors and no anchor bed.
 - b). No bridge or charthouse.
 - c). The fore funnel was much narrower than the after funnel.
 - d). The middle 9.2in turret had a single gun.
 - e). There should be three tops on the foremast.
 - f). Main mast should be a tripod.
 - g). Torpedo booms should trail forward.

Rob Morgan would like to bring the monthly publication, "Marine Engineers Review" to the notice of NWS Members. Those with an engineering inclination could even contribute articles!

SEA QUIZ 31.

I suppose someone with a love of the underwater weapon will know exactly what USS Archer Fish sank in total. Anyway, off we go, firmly based in the 1950's of course!.....

1. What carries (1954) the world's largest anchor?
2. What in the good old days of 'steam and sail' carried her armament on one uncovered deck, was of 1,570-4,200 tons displacement, and a Captain's command?
3. What or whom do Badger, Janus and Boreas have in common?
.....
4. What sank HMS Gladiator in 1908?
5. What ship was a Cruiser first and then a destroyer three times?
.....

Best of luck.
Rob Morgan.

World War I at Sea.

The Society for Nautical Research Newsletter highlights this web site....

naval-history.net

.....contains masses of useful material for the WWI wargamer, battle summaries, warship log books of the war, details of all Royal Navy warships and auxiliaries. Casualties, both Royal Navy and Royal Marines, as well as information on USN and US Marines. It's a much bigger site of course, but the SNR concentrates on WWI.

Rob Morgan.

Royal Naval Bases 1700-1914.

The cost of this book is exactly £100, and the review copy didn't make it to me for longer than five minutes! So, on the basis of a very brief examination, and since the price is so extremely high, an examination unlikely to be repeated, here's my comment.

"Support for the Fleet: Architecture and engineering of the Royal Navy's Bases 1700-1914." By Jonathan Coad, is a very substantial work published by English Heritage. A large sized book, it contains 460+ pages and is sumptuously illustrated. The Royal Dockyards are dealt with in some 17 chapters, which divide into two historical periods, from 1700 up to 1835 and from 1835 to the outbreak of the Great War. It neatly considers the Sailing navy and the Steam, and goes far beyond the simple requirements of a wargamer bent on research, it's a naval historians book, and an archaeologists and an architects too.

Jonathan Coad examines the growth of the many overseas bases of the Royal Navy throughout the period. The amazingly extensive Mediterranean bases, those in the West Indies and in North America too, as well as the bases in the South Atlantic and Australasia. The fleet was everywhere.

There are interesting chapters on feeding the fleet and on the Naval Ordnance Yards, and the Naval Hospitals and training establishments too. A better inspection and the opportunity to read the information on Wales' utterly

vanished Royal Dockyard at Pembroke Dock will I suspect have to wait until I'm next at Greenwich. A very useful volume.

Italian WWI Batteries in 1/3000th Scale.

Mick Yarrow's produced three useful small 1/3000th naval vessels for WWI. Number 3115 in the list at 50p is the *Faa Di Bruno*, a 20mm long, rectangular model, with hefty single gun turret forwards. The vessel, described in Aldo Fraccaroli's WWI volume as a Monitor was in fact a big oblong concrete hull, and the turret came from an uncompleted Battleship. The turret had very limited traverse, but the Monitor survived war against the Austrians and numbered GM194, she was a floating battery to defend Genoa during WWII. A clean little warship model, as well as the Great War, I thought there was potential in converting her into a big landing barge by cutting away the guns; and I even thought I could use her in a Science Fiction Scenario or two.

The others are pack 3254 'Small Italian Batteries', priced 80p, and described as the '*Monte Santo*' and the '*Carso*', and they are small indeed, on sea bases they are only 22mm long in each case. Fraccaroli illustrates both barges; they were all captured from the Austrians- '*Monte Santo*' had a 'sister' '*Monte Sabotino*', and their Austrian names were '*Jella*' and '*Tina*'. Apart from their WWI uses, these two models will fit in with the 'Tumbling Dice' 19th century Ironclads in 1/2400th scale. They don't look like standard barges, and if the fore deck gun on '*Monte Santo*' is trimmed off, then you have a decent late 19th century merchantmen. I think they both go well with the South American Ironclads in the 'TD' range, and also with some of the later British and French, and of course the big American Monitors in that 1/2400th range. While with the '*Carso*'s' guns trimmed away, again an easy task; then you can also have a 1/3000th WWII merchantman, or an SCW blockade runner maybe.

Rob Morgan.

An Oared Gun-Vessel?

By Bob Mearns

The work of the sixteenth century Swedish cleric, traveller and writer Olaus Magnus is sometimes discredited as a layman's fancy, but often his descriptions, especially of the paraphernalia of war is supported by other sources. Take this, from his *'De Bellis Navalibus'* published in the 1540's. It's an oared vessel, with large sweeps, and carrying a 'broadside' of four guns with another wheeled (field?) gun at the bow. A second similar boat's behind it. Both are covered by a ridged housing along the length of the vessel, and this seems open at both ends. It may be wood, or canvas or fabric, and is probably intended to be protective in terms of the elements rather than armoured in any way- though it does hide the crew from sight and provide them with protection from gunners and bowmen.

Fanciful? Well, the drawing's extremely artistic, but the concept works and has historical counterparts. The Swiss lakes saw many similar small, protected oared gun craft during the late Medieval period, and there's an account and contemporary illustrations of them in 'HOBILAR' No.56 (Journal of the Lance & Longbow Society). The attractive 'Floating Fortress of Pavia' is another example of a protected craft for use in close waters, though that was crenelated and more like the large ships stationed in the rivers of the Low Countries during the Burgundian wars. Articles on this appeared in the late, and much lamented 'Practical Wargamer' in the 1990's and in 'Postern' the fortifications journal more recently.

You'll find a Japanese warship similarly fitted out and protected in the Osprey 'Fighting Ships of the Far East'; this latter craft is intended to be armoured, and the protective screens are thick bamboo poles, and they sit as a roof above the gun deck. In this case used to attack shore defences, probably the most suitable target for an armed and covered boat like this. There's some similarity to the protective wood and canvas screens of the Dutch 'Sea Beggar' Sloops of the 80 Years War too. Sadly I don't know of any examples of these ships in the lists of wargames manufacturers, though Falcon Miniatures did make a Portuguese River Boat in 1/600th scale, which could be turned into this kind of warship with ease; that was fifteen or twenty years ago of course, and I'm not sure that the company is still in existence.



HMS. Ariadne.

My old mate Malcolm is 'down-sizing' and throwing out piles of stuff for the charity shops to benefit. He used to put on flippers and look for things under the water, but has long retired from that. This was in one of the small pile of 'DIVER' magazines he showed me, ones he'd kept for potential diving 'visits'.

It was published in 1985, and tells the story of an obsolete WWI Cruiser, I had to look her up in 'Conway's', but this tale which bears no writers name, seems accurate enough. The loss of an obsolete warship was common enough in The Great War, as everyone reading this knows, but I was interested in the remarks about the old Cruiser's last resting place and her fate on the sea bed.

Of course as she was minelaying, with a reduced crew fortunately, the explosion of the torpedo set off the mines she carried, and 'Ariadne' was as the writer says '*badly broken*'. However the note continues that she....

'...was further broken up between 1923 and 1925 by the explosive charges used by the Ocean Salvage and Towing Company to disperse her under contract to Trinity House.'

Nothing apparently was left standing more than forty five feet above the sea bed. This isn't an area of special interest, or general knowledge, of mine, but I assumed that as there were thirty eight men killed aboard HMS Ariadne, she was a War Grave, and not to be salvaged or disturbed? Am I wrong in this? Was, I wondered, a special dispensation given to or by Trinity House simple because some of these sunken warships were in busy sea lanes?

Anyone know?

Rob Morgan

February 2014.

Ariadne the unwanted

**WRECK SITES
of the
BRITISH ISLES**



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

KENDALL McDONALD ON THE TORPEDO VICTIM NOBODY WANTED

Not wanted even before she was christened—that was the fate of poor *Ariadne*. It was the start of years of rejection which only ended in her death when she was just 19 years old.

HMS *Ariadne* was built in 1898 and, at the time she was planned, it was thought that there would be a place in the sea warfare then developing for a fast, heavily-armed commerce raider. So she was built at John Brown's with 18,000 horse power engines and huge Belleville boilers which were intended to make her one of the fastest cruisers afloat. Unfortunately, the weight of the armour plate fitted to this 11,000-ton ship slowed her down a lot.

Speed trials shortly after her commissioning at Portsmouth in June, 1902, showed that she could only manage 20.75 knots flat out. Even so she became the flagship for Admiral Sir A. L. Douglas while he was Commander-in-Chief of the North American and West Indies station. After those moments of glory, by 1908 she had been relegated to be tender to the *Barfleur*, and just before the outbreak of the 1914-1918 war she was further demoted to the training service.

She was, in fact, obsolete almost as soon as she was launched and it was the building of ships like the light cruiser *Emden* of 3,600 tons, by Germany which made her so. The *Emden* was so much faster that while the *Ariadne* was relegated to odd jobs during the first years of the war, the *Emden*, captained by Karl von Müller, made absolute hay with allied shipping.

In a cruise lasting from the outbreak of war until November 9, 1914, the *Emden* captured or sank some 23 merchant ships totalling 101,182 tons in the Indian Ocean, before being sunk at Cocos Keel-

ing Island by the Australian cruiser *Sydney*.

In July, 1917, the *Ariadne* was allowed to adopt a belligerent role—but only to lay mines in the Northern Barrage which entailed setting a wall of mines across the 240 miles from the Orkneys to Norway and so bottling up the German U-boats and German shipping and stopping their exit into the Atlantic.

On July 26, 1917, HMS *Ariadne*, laden with mines, lumbered up the Channel towards the Royal Sovereign light vessel. If she had been crewed as planned she would have had 677 officers and men packed into her 462-foot-long hull. But as she was only to operate as a mine-layer, there was just a nucleus crew aboard to do just that and to man most of her 16 six-inch guns and dozen 12-pounders. Her two torpedo tubes were unmanned just as they had been for most of her service, and there were no torpedoes aboard.

Danger! U-boat!

But there were some close by. Itchy fingers in the German *UC-65* were ready to send them across to HMS *Ariadne* directly Kapitän Otto Steinbrinck gave the word.

Otto Steinbrinck was unlikely to be hurried. He was the veteran of all the U-boat commanders, having served as captain of *UB-10*, *UB-18*, *UB-57* and *UC-65*. In his 24 patrols—more than any other U-boat captain—he sank 210,000 tons of shipping, which put him fourth in the scoring table of all the German submarine aces of the war.

Otto Steinbrinck was a cool customer all right. To get HMS *Ariadne* in his sights he had just completed the longest-ever submerged run through the heavily

defended Straits of Dover during the early hours of that July day in 1917.

He had been rewarded with the whopping great target of the British cruiser.

It must be said that HMS *Ariadne* with Captain Harry Hesketh-Smyth, D.S.O., R.N., on the bridge was totally unaware of the presence of *UC-65*. He too was a war veteran, having been mentioned in despatches for his bravery in an action on October 25, 1916.

This decoration was followed by the award of the DSO in February, 1917.

It was a storm-clouded morning in the Channel. The depressions were pushing over from France—in fact an air battle over the British front line was broken up by a thunderstorm of such violence that four of our aircraft were missing.

Otto Steinbrinck fired only one torpedo at the big cruiser. It went home amidships on her port side—and the resulting explosion was enormous. All the mines on board HMS *Ariadne* went off at once.

Thirty-eight men were killed instantly. Nine more were badly wounded. If *Ariadne* had been carrying her normal complement the number of casualties would have been much higher. She sank down in 19m of water and stayed upright long enough for her escorts to take off all the other crew members. Not long after the last man, Captain Harry Hesketh-Smyth, left the ship, she rolled over and sank down on her starboard side. The escorts criss-crossed the area angrily, dropping depth charges on any likely echo. But Otto Steinbrinck and *UC-65* were not one of them, and he slid safely away from yet another of his kills.

The *Ariadne* is at 50 42 52; 00 23 29 E. She is well out in the Channel near the Royal Sovereign Light and so must be a hard-boat dive. Such boats can be hired from Newhaven or Rye.

Eastbourne Sub-Aqua Club (BS-AC No. 513) warn, however, that anyone diving this distance out must keep a constant watch for coastal shipping "clipping" the coast around Beachy Head. They say that such ships pass both sides of the Light Tower with scant regard for dive boats displaying the "A" Flag.

Broken up

The cruiser was badly broken by the explosion of the mines aboard, and was further broken up between 1923 and 1925 by the explosive charges used by the Ocean Salvage and Towing Company to disperse her under contract to Trinity House. By September 14, 1925, they were able to report that nothing stood more than "45 feet above the seabed".

Salvage went on over the years, and the ship, or what was left of her, was bought in 1975 by Metal Recoveries (Orkney) Ltd. By 1981 sea and salvage had dispersed her over a huge area, and there is nothing left standing higher than four metres above the seabed.

Even so, divers wanting to have a rummage should remember that the wreckage has extremely sharp edges. One diver whose SMB was cut on such a piece is said to have been picked up seven miles away! It is an area of strong currents.

What is left of the bow still points towards the Royal Sovereign. Much of the wreckage can be buried under the sand and there is a diving story that one entire engine room was missed by the salvors and lies buried, intact, to this very day! General depth in the area is 19m.



SYRIA CRISIS

Chemical materials to be shipped to Ellesmere Port

Some of the chemicals that have been used in the Syrian chemical weapons programme will be transported to Ellesmere Port on the Manchester Ship Canal and destroyed at a special facility in the town as part of a United Nations operation to dispose of all Syria's chemical weapons.

In London, the Foreign Office said on Jan 16 that the chemicals would not arrive "for some weeks."

The chemicals, in special drums, were expected to be transported by a ship from the Mediterranean to Ellesmere Port and then travel by road to the facility. This sea transport was to be made "with the help of the Royal Navy".

On Jan 16, the French waste disposal company Veolia announced in Paris and in London that it will destroy 150 tons of the B-precursor chemicals at its High Temperature Incineration facility at Ellesmere Port.

Veolia Environment said: "This would be carried out under the existing hazardous waste treatment contract with the Disposal Services Authority of the Ministry of Defence.

"B-precursors are chemicals used routinely in the pharmaceutical industry in the UK and are similar in nature to standard industrial materials safely processed on a regular basis at Ellesmere Port.

"These are industrial-grade chemicals as opposed to chemical weapons."

Opened in 1990, the facility treats around 1000,000 tonnes of hazardous materials every year and has a staff of 73.



The Norwegian cargo vessel Taiko tused in the operation was the former Barber Hector, of the Ocean Transport & Trading Co, of Liverpool. (Wilh Wilhelmsen AS)

The B-precursor chemicals being taken to Ellesmere Port have been designated by the organising authorities as Priority Two chemicals.

The Foreign Office stated that the B-precursor chemicals "only become toxic if mixed with the A-precursor chemicals - designated as Priority One chemicals - which are being removed from Syria and disposed of separately.

The other Priority Two chemicals will be destroyed by other commercial companies.

Within days of the announcement, locals in Ellesmere Port were protesting about the chemical materials being moved through the port and processed in the area.

The six month international operation to remove chemical agents and weapons from Syria got underway on Jan 7. Syria continues to own the weapons until they

Tight security

BECAUSE of the civil war in Syria, a major security operation took place to move the chemical weapons from 12 sites to the port of Latakia

Russia provided armoured lorries for transporting the chemical munitions and materials, and the US supplied the drums for holding the chemicals, each drum being fitted with a GPS system giving its exact location at any time.

The Russians provided the security at Latakia during the loading while the US provided loading, transport and decontamination equipment.

China sent 10 ambulances and surveillance cameras, and Finland provided a chemical weapons emergency response team in case of an accident.

British links with chartered ships

THE two commercial roll-on, roll-off cargo ships chartered for the Syria chemical weapons disposal programme have historical British connections.

The Ark Futura was completed by Cantieri Navali 'Visentini' di Visentini Francesco & C, of Donada, Italy, in 1996 as the Dana Futura and in December, 2000, she was renamed Tor Futura, becoming the Ark Futura in April, 2011.

As the Tor Futura, the ship operated initially on the DFDS services between Harwich and Esbjerg and then mainly on the Immingham-Esbjerg route.

The Taiko is the former Barber Hector, of the Ocean Transport &

Trading Co (formed in 1972 and originally Alfred Holt & Co, which disappeared in 1967, and then the Blue Funnel Line Ltd formed in 1967), Liverpool, and was completed by Hyundai Heavy Industries, Ulsan, South Korea, in 1984. The ship served on the Barber Lines's Round the World service, calling at ports in the US, Far East, and the Persian Gulf.

Operated by Barber Blue Sea Lines, she was sold to the partners in the group Swedish Liners KB, of Gothenburg, and chartered by Wilh Wilhelmsen and then bought by the Norwegian company in 1993 and operated as part of Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics, of Lysaker, Norway.

The ship underwent a major conversion to a roll-on, roll-off vehicle/cargo ship in the early 2000s.

are destroyed, including when they are no longer under its control.

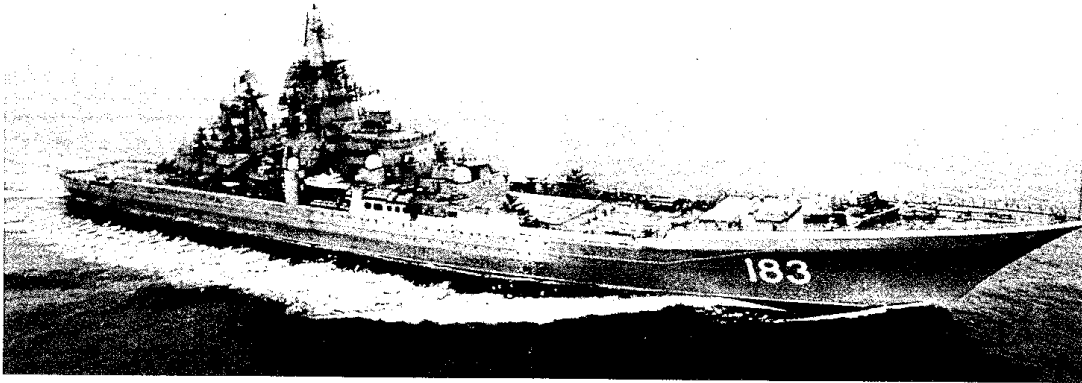
Seven countries are directly contributing to the process of decommissioning with others providing support services.

On Jan 7, the joint mission of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations said: "The first quantity of priority chemical materials was moved from two sites to the port of Latakia for verification and was then loaded on to a Danish commercial vessel.

"Accompanied by naval escorts, the ship sailed for international waters where she will wait for the arrival of additional priority chemical materials at the port."

The first shipment, reported to be 16 tons, was loaded at Latakia onto





The most powerful warship in the escort of the two commercial ships has been the Russian Navy's large cruiser *Petr Velikiy* (Peter the Great), of 24,500 tons displacement and armed with surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles. (Russian Navy)

the Danish roll-on, roll-off cargo ship *Ark Futura*, 18,752grt, which has been chartered by the Danish Government from her owners, the DFDS group, of Copenhagen. The Norwegians have chartered the roll-on, roll-off cargo ship *Taiko*, 66,635grt, of Wilh Wilhelmsen, of Lysaker, Norway, for the mission.

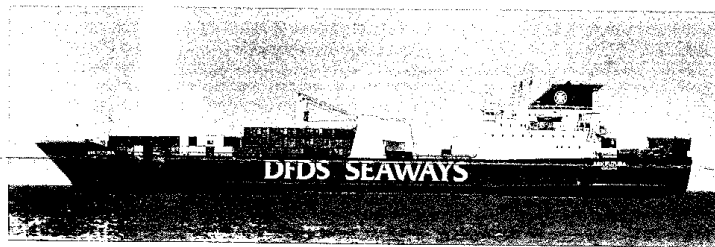
China, Denmark, Norway and Russia provided the maritime escort for the first cargo from Syrian waters and remain guarding the chartered ships as they await the next cargo. Both chartered ships and warships have called at Limassol, on Cyprus.

The Danish escort was the frigate *Esbern Snare* and the Norwegian escort was the frigate *Helge Ingstad*. The Norwegians also provided a Norwegian Marines commando unit which was based on its frigate to protect the civilian ship, and a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear team.

The Chinese Navy frigate *Yancheng* having called at Limassol for stores, arrived in the area on Jan 7 and joined the escort that day. On Jan 11, the frigate carried out live ammunition exercise in Syrian territorial waters.

On Jan 14, the Russian Defence Ministry said the escort included the Russian nuclear-powered missile cruiser *Peter the Great*, and this was first time that the Russian and Chinese navies had cooperated in an operation. Also part of the Russian escort was the destroyer *Smetlivy*, and two large landing ships were expected to join the ships at various stages of the operation.

On Jan 13, the British Government announced that the Royal Navy frigate *Montrose* will join the other warships in the eastern Mediterranean to provide maritime force protection. The frigate had been working in the Gulf for the previous



The DFDS cargo ship *Ark Futura* has a major role in the operation. (DFDS)

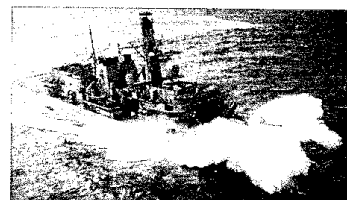
This was the first time that the Russian and Chinese navies had cooperated in an operation.

five months, conducting maritime security patrols with other nations.

The Italian Government has given permission for the most dangerous chemical weapons materials to be transferred from the chartered ships to the US Navy's Military Sealift Command cargo ship *Cape Ray* at the port of Gioia Tauro in Calabria in southern Italy.

On Jan 16, the Italian Transport Minister Maurizio Lupi said: "60 containers of material will be transferred ship-to-ship and none would be taken ashore."

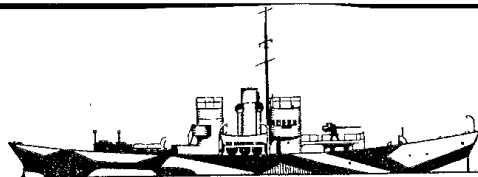
The *Cape Ray* carries two deployable hydrolysis systems that will dispose of the chemicals at sea in international waters (see last month's *Sea Breezes*). She was due to leave Norfolk, Virginia, towards the end of January.



The Royal Navy frigate *Montrose* is among the fleet of warships that have acted as escort to the chemicals-carrying chartered ships. (Ministry of Defence)

The UK has given the US specialist equipment and training to enable these highest-priority chemicals to be processed more quickly.

Syria's most dangerous chemicals, which may include between 20 and 30 tons of mustard gas and a quantity of the sarin nerve agent, are due to be removed from the country by Mar 31 and destroyed by the end of June. The original deadline to remove the stockpiles by Dec 31 had been missed because of security concerns in Syria, technical issues and poor weather conditions.



'Ships and Ship Models Monthly' ... December 1955.

A date when I'd not long enter the Mixed Infants, pre-Suez and the last real display of RN carrier borne airpower too! This was in a pile of unbound issues of 'The Navy' which I dip into for quiz material. Hardly a naval, or a modelling publication, and one I hadn't ever seen before. About the size of the old 'Meccano Magazine' black and white with lots of adverts, plans and drawings, an article on the Frigate '*Foudroyant*' in those days a training ship accommodating 'a hundred youngsters a week' learning seamanship and the traditions of the sea. Well, well. The old magazine contained a couple of interesting pages entitled 'Naval Photograph Club', which was nothing of the sort, it actually reported recent developments in the fleet. Rockall had just been annexed, and a Soviet Baltic Flotilla had just visited Portsmouth, two *Sverdlov* cruisers and four destroyers.

Amazingly twenty two warships were up for disposal, including the Carrier *Indomitable*, leaving the fleet with just six carriers in all*, the Cruiser *Argonaut*, *Montclare* the sub depot ship, and nineteen frigates and destroyers, regarded as 'unsuitable for modern requirements'. No change there then.

Take a look at the drawing, which was on page 39 of the issue. It might make a quiz question, but of course it's a WWI '*Kil*' patrol Gunboat, remarkably easy to recognise with it's double ended style. The last of the class formerly *Kilburn* was up for sale in Malta. This drawing illustrated a short note on the 'In the News' page. This is as it was drawn. With black, or dark grey or dark blue and white or light grey swathes of camouflage and a small area below the bridge on the waterline of blue, or green, or possibly grey? This is a magnificent scheme, and I wondered if anyone could identify the colours exactly?

Rob Morgan.

*'Eagle, Ark Royal, Centaur, Albion, Bulwark and Victorious**

Royal Navy joins search for missing aircraft

Submarine HMS Tireless has been tasked to assist in the search for flight MH370 as UK support to the international effort continues.



HMS Tireless (library image)

The Trafalgar Class submarine has arrived in the southern Indian Ocean to help with the search for the Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 that went missing on 8 March.

With her advanced underwater search capability, HMS Tireless will be able to contribute to the attempts to locate the missing plane.

The UK has remained in close touch with the Malaysian authorities since the disappearance of the aircraft and is providing a range of support.

Additionally, HMS Echo is due to arrive in the southern Indian Ocean to assist in the search for the transponder on the black box. She will also play an important role in the search for debris on the sea's surface and her advanced environmental assessment capability will help to optimise search operations.

SIGNAL PAD!

Coming in May's AGB: Jack Scruby's American Civil War Ships.

I Name This Ship.

The NAVWAR 1/1200th Scale ACW Blockade Runner MARS.

Plus, hopefully, lots more.

And don't forget the Naval Wargames Weekend at the Explosion Museum. Sails of Glory, Battle of Tsushima/ East Indies WWII, Ironclad 1870, Battle of Coronel plus more, yet to be finalised.

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.

Membership secretary: 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 - 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 3rd Sunday]

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

e-mail: gf.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
