



# All Guns Blazing!

## Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

### No. 285 – JULY 2018

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#### EDITORIAL

Please ensure that if you change your email address for any reason, inform Simon and I so that you can continue receiving AGBs. I have deleted a few email addresses from the distribution list for AGBs as they have been more than once bounced back to me as “undeliverable”. So although we welcome new Member Alan Shanks, the email list for AGBs has not broken through the 200 barrier (yet).

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

Norman Bell.

The first four of Britain's new cutting-edge aircraft have arrived into RAF Marham; their new home in Norfolk. They touched down after a trans-Atlantic flight from the United States, where Britain has more of the jets and 150 personnel in training.



The F-35 Lightnings took off from Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and were flown by British pilots of the newly-reformed RAF 617 Squadron, which was immortalised by the famous Dambusters' raid of World War II.

This autumn, the first landing of the F-35 will take place on HMS Queen Elizabeth in the next phase of trials.



PHILIPPINE SEA (June 20, 2018) An EA-18G Growler assigned to Electronic Attack Squadron (VFA) 141 lands on the flight deck of the US Navy's forward-deployed aircraft carrier, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). Ronald Reagan, the flagship of Carrier Strike Group 5, provides a combat-ready force that protects and defends the collective maritime interests of its allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kenneth Abbate/Released)



## Scapa Flow anchorage by Kostas Katseas

HMS Hermes, HMS Royal Oak and HMS Valiant 1/700 Scapa Flow anchorage



“Tumbling Dice” has great models and I read online, great customer service.

Age of sailing ship wargame rules are plentiful. *Trafalgar* from Warhammer Historical, *Man o’War* (out of print?), *Kiss me Hardy* by TooFatLardies. Perhaps you have one or more of them and can write a few words for AGB or Battlefleet?



The Maidstone Wargames Club have been busy showing their participation game, “Twisting the Dragon’s Tail” at Salute, Cavalier, Broadside and the RN Museum so far this year.

HMS VINDICTIVE up against The Mole at Zeebrugge disgorges the raiders.

A British frigate was recently dispatched to track a mysterious ship that covertly sneaked in close to Denmark’s coast. The ship turned out to be a Russian stealth corvette conducting a complex checkout of battle systems. HMS Montrose (a type 23 frigate) had to establish a visual in harsh conditions of 30 knot winds. She was identified as Russia’s 104-metre-long RFS Soobrazitelny (Project 20381), Steregushchiy-class stealth corvette,

armed with a vast arsenal of anti-ship and air-defence missiles, and anti-submarine torpedoes.

The Plymouth-based frigate then escorted RFS Boikiy and Stoikiy as the Russian vessels sortied from their base in the Baltic and entered the North Sea and the English Channel on their way to the Mediterranean.



HMS MONTROSE is in the foreground.

The oil recovery from HMS ROYAL OAK continues. The Revenge class Battleship was torpedoed by U47 on October 14<sup>th</sup> 1939. A successful diving programme has serviced 30 valves and collected data on the steel thickness of the hull. A minute's silence was held by the diving team after the conclusion of the latest dives on the Ship. A wreath was laid and a tot of rum or Scapa Malt Whisky was drunk in a toast to the 833 who lost their lives from the crew of 1,234.



HMS ROYAL OAK

## THE FIRST RULE OF WARGAMING AND THE SPIRIT OF THE WARGAME

### **The First Rule:**

'Nothing can be done contrary to what could or would be done in actual war.'

- From 'The Rules of the Naval War Game' by Fred T Jane

### **The Spirit of the Wargame:**

'Wargames are played, for the most part, without the supervision of an umpire. The game relies on the integrity of the individual players to show consideration for other players and to abide by the rules. All players should conduct themselves in a disciplined manner, demonstrating courtesy and sportsmanship at all times, irrespective of how competitive they may be. This is the spirit of the wargame.'

- Adapted from 'The Spirit of the Game' in 'The Rules of Golf' as published by the R&A Ltd.

## New Books to Look Out For.....

I've just received the new summer list from 'Seaforth Publishing' and there are several bargains to look out for in both the new titles and in their bestsellers and ship-craft ranges.

In the new titles, Marco Ghiglino's *'Italian Camouflage of World War II'*, a hardback landscape volume of 240 pages, is described as 'a major new work for..... wargamers and ship modellers.' It looks a bargain for the Italian fleet enthusiast, and contains over 750 colour line drawings, and over 50 photos in two sections, describing first the development of Italian camouflage schemes, and secondly, depicting all the ships and their schemes showing both sides of the vessel in most cases.

The book deals not only with capital ships and Cruisers; destroyers and escorts, but also.... *'Landing craft, merchant ships, and even the Royal Yacht and small tugs.'* This, clearly will be an important book and is offered at £28, published in July 2018. Another new title is *'River Gunboats'* by Roger Branfill-Cook. A large format hardback of 330+ pages, and described as 'An Illustrated Encyclopaedia', it's the 'first comprehensive study of a totally neglected naval subject', and I'm inclined to strongly agree that the vast number of ancient and modern river and lake campaigns have been overlooked compared to the encounters on the high seas. There were, say Seaforth, over forty campaigns and actions involving gunboats recorded since 1830. The steam era. There are some 900+ photos, line drawings and maps in the work, and the 'blurb' mentions two 'brown water' campaigns in particular. Vietnam, which I know best from the excellent 1980's Squadron book *'RIVERINE'* by Jim Mesko, and secondly.....river warfare I know absolutely nothing of, the Portuguese naval actions in Africa during their late 20<sup>th</sup> century conflicts!

Something new and worthwhile for the modern naval wargamer will certainly emerge from that I suspect. I'm also hoping that there will be material of value on the French Navy, in the Franco-Prussian war for instance, where gunboats were seriously active, and in the Far East. The price stated is £32, which may well prove a bargain for many of us.

That's just two titles which grabbed my attention, in the recent bestseller section *'Hitler's Forgotten Flotillas'* by Lawrence Paterson, well-illustrated and dealing with the *Kriegsmarine* Security Forces ( what a massive, motley collection of armed vessels!) must be worth the £20 hardback price. I'll stop there, but the list is substantial and worth more than a glance.

In the absence of illustrated material for this 'stop press' note, here are two photographs of models in my collection. A couple of WWII Italian Warships, and a colonial gunboat. I suspect I'll have to repaint my entire fleet after I read this book. Ho hum!

The Seaforth site is....

Rob Morgan.

1. This is the Seaplane Carrier '*Giuseppe Miraglia*' lovely looking ship, if not a front-line warship! This is the 1/1200<sup>th</sup> scale Fleetline model FSC 87, Bought for ten bob thirty five years ago! I didn't have any 1/1200<sup>th</sup> Italian seaplanes then (or now). A repaint job shortly I suspect!



2. These two are WWI reparation transfers. The Light Cruiser is *Brindisi*, formerly the Austro-Hungarian *Helgoland*. In company with the former Imperial German B97, '*Cesare Rossariol*' in Italian service. Both were discarded by the outset of WWII. The models are old 'Trafalgar 1/1200<sup>th</sup>'s, and most of the moulds are still I believe with Mick Yarrow.





Good luck with the quiz. As usual, the quiz is from the 1950s, so remember that, especially for question 3.

Rob Morgan.

SEA QUIZ 72.

1. What did HMS Royal Sovereign become before she got her name back?
2. The Fleet Air Arm's first monoplane first flew in 1937. What was it?
3. Which two countries joined NATO in the last year?
4. Which crown appears on Royal Navy epaulettes, badges and buttons?
5. Which weapon, long in service, was declared 'obsolete' in 1866?

The following article by Rob Morgan first appeared in the Society of Twentieth Century Wargamers newsletter and is reproduced here with Rob's permission. It may interest you, as the Chinese are undoubtedly about to become the major Pacific naval player.

Coming Soon.....?

The 'Sun-Yat-Sen': A Chinese Aircraft Carrier Class?

A Note by Rob Morgan.

Remarkably few fleets have ever built true aircraft carriers. Britain did from the outset, Japan, the USA, France and latterly the USSR obviously, with smaller, and less successful attempts by Nazi Germany and Italy during WWII. The 'second-hand' option is an easier and much cheaper route to naval air power, and one taken by India, Australia, Brazil and Argentina in particular, since WWII. Carrier ownership not only provides not only the distant ability to defend territory and interests, but of course it confers status as a regional, if not a global naval power.

A Carrier = Sea Power. As true today as it was in 1945.

As far as the Pacific Ocean is concerned, the appearance anywhere by any other than an American carrier is a rarity indeed, but perhaps that's going to change, and fairly

soon. Sources such as the '*Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*', '*Janes' Defence Weekly* and '*Intelligence Review*' along with a mass of regional naval, security and intelligence publications are obsessed with one naval warfare topic above all; there have been over a hundred articles on the subject in the past three or four years. When, and it is when rather than if, China's 'People's Liberation Army-Navy' or 'PLAN', will acquire the aircraft carrier which will project the enormous economic power of China into the blue waters of the Pacific. There it, or they, will undoubtedly confront and challenge the US Navy's Carrier Group, the hitherto dominant force at sea, and have an enormous impact on East Asian and Pacific Rim stability.

PLAN bought the incomplete Soviet carrier '*Varyag*' from Ukraine in 1998, and conjecture as to its use has fuelled the minds of naval commentators since then. One possibility debated in the following years was that '*Varyag*' would be completed using Russian assistance and parts from the old Soviet '*Minsk*' scrapped in 1998, and '*Kiev*' scrapped in 2000, and that the reborn carrier accompanied by the larger units of the PLAN would form a 'Task Force' or carrier Group to undertake blue water exercises in the South China Sea, and beyond, probably in support of claims to the Spratly Island group. Even that such an *ad hoc* collection of Chinese warships might undertake a goodwill tour of selected Pacific Rim and Asian ports. It hasn't

happened, of course, but detractors from the idea might do well to recall the effect on European and other Admiralties of the US Navy's 'Great White Fleet' round the world voyage of 1902. A feat which the PLAN imitated, in part, with its 2002 circumnavigation of the globe, probably the most significant Chinese event at sea since the days of Cheng Ho.

One of the most recent articles on the fate of the '*Varyag*' described its status as 'shrouded in mystery', it is reported as having no engines, rudders or weaponry by Taiwanese sources, so, arguably, she's out of the equation, but will China develop a carrier? The internal arguments split into two; the 'green water' Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) group which wants to strengthen its already immensely powerful coastal forces, and regard aircraft carriers as 'floating coffins', which is probably not a wholly defensible stance since the last carrier sunk in combat was the IJN's '*Amagi*' in July 1945. Though the Japanese WWII experience at the hands of the Allied navies' air power, losing twenty out of a total of twenty six excellent carriers, might well be a source of influence upon the RMA! Admiral Liu's 'blue water' school however, strongly desires an Aircraft Carrier to project naval power as soon as possible, and China is the only permanent member of the UN Security Council never to have deployed an aircraft carrier.

The whole debate may just be academic at this stage, since the PLAN may be as much as ten years from being able to deploy and maintain a carrier, and its battle



group. Maybe more, since the Chinese don't possess, despite Russian help, the technology to create an indigenous carrier, and its support and survival systems. Chinese yards are, however, capable of building a 100,000 ton hull. Using espionage the PLAN is beginning to acquire some of the technology, and that from the US!

Ten years is nothing, a mere grain of sand, in the long game which China plays, and some of the big US carriers are ageing fast. The Chinese long game dates back to the relationship between Admiral Liu and Admiral Gorshkov in the 50's, and it's a fair bet that the Chinese will follow Sergiy Gorshkov's route to a deep water fleet capable of challenging control of the Pacific. The road to that began in 1985, when China bought the old '*Majestic*' class Australian warship '*HMAS Melbourne*' for 'scrap' keeping the flight deck intact for pilot training! At present the Chinese cannot confidently secure waters more than about 900 km from the mainland, and the heart of the South China Sea is over 1,500 km away, with the vital straits of Malacca even further again. China is a net importer of oil, 80% of which travels this route, and of course the Indians, seen as a threat, bought the last of the '*Kiev*' Class carriers from Russia a few years ago, and also have 'Harrier' jump-jets. Not to mention the fact that with a carrier group at sea, defending Taiwan from a two directional attack would be slightly more problematic for the Taiwanese, and it's the Taiwan conflict scenario, with its US 'carrier card' option which sits clear in the sights of the PLAN, as it does in Washington.

One carrier, and its battle group would be enough, even in a limited deployment, to alter US, Japanese, Thai and other perceptions, but not enough to alter the balance in real war terms. US doctrine, well known to all naval enthusiasts is 'three for one'. Three carriers built, one on active deployment, one in training and the third in refit. It works. One or two sources deduce that if China began a carrier, Japan would have to respond, and respond with at least the historical perspective of carrier use to draw upon. Other Pacific nations would have to respond if a Chinese carrier was launched. Perhaps, as one commentator suggested Taiwan, or Japan, or South Korea might suddenly find itself the proud owner of a formerly 'moth-balled' US flat-top? South Korea launched a 'light' carrier in 2005, the '*Dokdo*, and this was seen by the Chinese as another potential threat to its northern coasts and interests. A modern carrier's an offensive military platform, nothing else, so the prospect of two or three Asian states with carriers would be a PLAN nightmare. India's carriers have long ensured regional dominance of the Indian Ocean, what might others do?

China, continuing to grow and prosper as it does, will as Admiral Liu's school suggests, at some stage have to have a carrier fleet, no doubt of that at all. Western naval analysts probably know as little of the Chinese intent now, as they did of the Japanese in the 1920's. This subject is becoming far more than a 'what-if' just for naval and air war gamers.

I recommend an article in *'Korean Journal of Defense Analysis' Vol XVIII, #1, Spring 2006. ISSN: 1016-3271* as a fascinating source of information, references and technical detail as you wish to find. It's entitled 'Dying with Eyes Open or Closed', by Andrew Diamond, pages 35-59. Diamond's final conclusions are not exactly oriented to naval or military policies, and he may be very wrong. It's probably when-not if-the PLAN's *'Sun-Yat-Sen'* slips into the waters of the Pacific.



If you like a bargain check out the Airfix Falklands Ship box. Three ships, a County Class destroyer, a Type 21 Frigate and a Leander Class Frigate. Included are transfers for ships of each Class. Devonshire, Antrim and Glamorgan; Amazon, Active and Arrow; and Leander, Minerva, Sirius and Penelope. Choose the gun or exocet missile versions where appropriate. My box cost £10.99.

Norman Bell

In AGBs 277 and 278, Rheinhard Hardegen was mentioned in a review and replay of "Operation Drumbeat". The following from Brooks Rowlett was brought to my attention by Simon Stokes.

Rheinhard Hardegen, believed to be the last living U-boat commander from WWII died Friday at age 105.

Mini-biography

<https://uboat.net/men/hardegen.htm>

Notice (auf Deutsch)

[http://www.bremische-buergerschaft.de/index.php?id=35&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=1083&cHash=bd89fa6d9fc680a2b4abf8277e746e4a](http://www.bremische-buergerschaft.de/index.php?id=35&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=1083&cHash=bd89fa6d9fc680a2b4abf8277e746e4a)

Brooks A Rowlett

Another submarine rule set on Wargame Vault

<http://www.wargamevault.com/product/244487/Grey-Wolves-at-Dusk?src=hottest>

In a postscript to the Zeebrugge (and Ostend) Raid articles in recent AGBs:

#### **HIDDEN WW1 MEMORIAL REVEALED**

A Great War memorial, which has lain hidden and forgotten for over 20 years, has been discovered at St Ann's, the Royal Navy's Church in Portsmouth Naval Dockyard. The memorial is for an Unknown Stoker who was killed in action whilst serving on HMS Vindictive during the Raid on Ostend on the 10 May 1918. His body was washed up after the raid was over and buried with full military honours in Ostend by the Germans. Years later the Imperial War Graves Commission, forerunner of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, presented the cross taken from his grave to Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, the Naval Commander for the Ostend Raid. It was suggested that the cross bearing the Unknown Stoker be a permanent naval memorial to all those who had lost their lives at sea during the war of 1914-1918. The discovery came about because the church was renewing the old carpet.

#### SEA QUIZ 72 The Answers.

The 'Skua' completely defeated me, and as for grapeshot, well, the boarding pike, looked rather more obvious, but not the cutlass of course. Begs another question of course...the last use of grapeshot by a British man o' war? I've no idea, anyone???

1. She was loaned the USSR as 'Archangelsk' at the end of the war, but apparently just sat at her moorings.
2. This was the Blackburn Skua dive bomber.
3. Fairly straightforward....Greece and Turkey.
4. The emblem is the St. Edward's Crown.
5. This was, hold your breath, grape-shot! It didn't bring a response, but there were fond memories of the Skua, but before the War.

How did you do?

Rob Morgan



Royal Navy warship HMS Diamond (left) shadowing a Russian Navy spy ship (right) as it passes through the English Channel. The Portsmouth-based Type 45 destroyer plus a Wildcat helicopter from 815 Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Yeovilton were dispatched to follow the Russian underwater reconnaissance ship Yantar as it approached the UK's area of interest. HMS Diamond continued to

monitor the vessel's movements and activities as it continued north. The Russian vessel Yantar is a specialist reconnaissance ship which carries two unmanned submersible vehicles, which can descend to the sea bed and send back images as well as collecting items from the bottom of the ocean.

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

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

## **NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2018**

### **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)

### **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

### **Uruguay, SCOW: Southern Cone Orientales Wargamers • Games erupt,**

inquire to set one off: Bill Owen US telephone is [217-619-0202](tel:217-619-0202),

Uruguay 099 834 544 [WmOwen@aol.com](mailto:WmOwen@aol.com) • If Spanish speaking, email & I will get someone who speaks it better. • Soca, Canelones or in Montevideo we can arrange a "Graf Spee 3 Gun Salvo": see her 5.9" gun, anchor & rangefinder salvaged from the ship resting in the harbor, a Real English Tour conducted by British expat staff who were associated with the British Ambassador who won the post-battle diplomacy and subterfuge plus, of course, a GQ3 refight of the battle (fees for features like museum & tour). • Most of the Salvo can even be done during a cruise ship stop in MVD from a Round Cape Horn itinerary between Santiago<->Buenos Aires.

- [wargamecampaign.wordpress.com](http://wargamecampaign.wordpress.com)

THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY <http://www.navalwargamesociety.org>

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