



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

No. 290 – DECEMBER 2018

Extract from President Roosevelt's, "Fireside Chat to the Nation", 29 December 1940:

"....we cannot escape danger by crawling into bed and pulling the covers over our heads.....if Britain should go down, all of us in the Americas would be living at the point of a gun.....We must produce arms and ships with every energy and resource we can command.....We must be the great arsenal of democracy".

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The Poppies of four years ago at the Tower of London have been replaced by a display of lights. Just one of many commemorations around the World to mark one hundred years since the end of The Great War.



Another major piece of art, formed a focal point as the UK commemorated 100 years since the end of the First World War. The 'Shrouds of the Somme' brought home the sheer scale of human sacrifice in the battle that came to epitomize the bloodshed of the 1914-18 war – the Battle of the Somme.

Artist Rob Heard hand stitched and bound calico shrouds for 72,396 figures representing British Commonwealth servicemen killed at the Somme who have no known grave, many of whose bodies were never recovered and whose names are engraved on the Thiepval Memorial. Each figure of a human form, was individually shaped, shrouded and made to a name. They were laid out shoulder to shoulder in hundreds of rows to mark the Centenary of Armistice Day at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park from 8-18th November 2018 filling an area of over 4000 square metres. The purpose of this work was to illustrate the

enormity of the loss of life, also to remember each as an individual. It is almost impossible now, 100 years on, to imagine the impact that these deaths had on the friends and families of these individual soldiers and collectively, upon society.



Carrier *Shōkaku* preparing to launch the attack on Pearl Harbor. Picture from Wikipedia page.

Photo # 80-G-275940 Battleships Idaho, New Mexico and Mississippi at Pearl Harbor, Dec. 1943



Picture from the Avalanche Press website.



The real Washington was commissioned in 2016 and the Oregon is currently under construction, due for completion in late 2019.

USS Washington SSN-787 and USS Oregon SSN-793 scratch built by Damian Petro

SEA QUIZ 77.

For this 'run' of quizzes, I've moved into the later 1950's editions of 'The Navy', and things changed significantly. The editorials frequently poured scorn and dismay on the plans of Government to cut and cut again, and occasionally the quiz questions echoed this. Many of the later quizzes were prepared by someone under the *nom-de-plume* 'OCTOPUS', while 'SEAMEW' who was active in the early fifties still dropped in a set of questions from time to time. One we go....

1. Name the last Capital Ship built to foreign order in a UK yard.
2. Where is the original model of Nelson's statue for the column kept?
3. Name the last Battleship to have 'Victorian' livery, black, white and buff.
4. What was the first RN warship to be attacked in WWII?
5. Name the only British Battleship of the 1800's to have a two deck battery.

Now, 'OCTOPUS' had the slightly annoying habit of, from time to time, awarding points for correct answers (no prizes, sadly!) and if you answered 1-4pts, 2-8pts, 3-8pts, 4-8pts and 5-4pts, and all correct then you get 32. Some few senior ranks complained that it spoiled the exercise- really, they did!

Rob Morgan.

Patrol ship HMS Tyne (River Class Offshore Patrol Ship) has monitored a Russian frigate as it passed through the English Channel. The Portsmouth-based warship kept a watchful eye on the Yaroslav Mudry, a Russian Neustrashimy-class frigate. Tyne is the latest patrol vessel to be activated this year to monitor the activity of Russian surface ships sailing in or close to the UK. Patrol ship HMS Mersey, (River Class), HMS Diamond, (Type 45 Destroyer) and HMS Montrose (Type 23 frigate) have all been dispatched to observe Russian vessels passing the UK in recent months. Lieutenant Peter Cowan, HMS Tyne's Executive Officer, said: "Escorting foreign warships is a clear statement of our nation's determination to protect our area of interest".

Book Review.

Bayly's war: the battle for the Western Approaches in the First World War

Dunn, Steve

Pen & Sword Books Limited, 2018

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/mod/detail.action?docID=5399276>

Bayly's War is the story of the Royal Navy's Coast of Ireland Command (later named Western Approaches Command) during World War One. Britain was particularly vulnerable to the disruption of trade in the Western Approaches through which food and munitions (and later soldiers) from North America and the Caribbean and ores and raw materials from the Southern Americas, all passed on their way to Liverpool or the Channel ports and London. After the sinking of the Lusitania in May 1915 and the introduction of unrestricted submarine warfare by the Germans, Britain found herself engaged in a fight for survival as U-boats targeted all incoming trade to drive her into submission. Britain's naval forces, based in Queenstown on the southern Irish coast, fought a long and arduous battle to keep the seaways open, and it was only one they began to master after American naval forces joined in 1917.



HMS Tyne, HMS Mersey and HMS Severn are to continue in service for at least the next two years. The Fishery Protection Squadron may have an increased workload after BREXIT. Each ship will forward-operate from their namesake rivers – from Newcastle, Liverpool and Cardiff respectively – to boost rapid responses in British waters up and down the nation. The versatile ships are also vital to the Royal Navy's anti-smuggling and counter-terrorism work.

Last year, HMS Mersey returned from a 48,000-mile deployment where she played a key part in a £12million drugs bust off the coast of Nicaragua and helped combat the migrant

crisis in the Mediterranean. HMS Tyne, HMS Severn and HMS Mersey are each operationally available for 320 days a year. The ships are armed with a 20mm cannon, which can fire 700 rounds a minute at a maximum effective range of 1300 yards, and can travel at up to 20 knots. They will also be bolstered by five new-generation Batch 2 Offshore Patrol Vessels. The Royal Navy is expected to have all the Batch 2 OPVs, named HMS Forth, HMS Medway, HMS Trent, HMS Tamar and HMS Spey, by the end of 2020.

Another two Type 26 (City Class) Frigates have been named. HMS NEWCASTLE and HMS SHEFFIELD. The two ships will join HMS Glasgow, HMS Belfast, HMS Cardiff, HMS Birmingham and HMS London. All the Type 26 Frigates will be built on the Clyde, supported by suppliers across the country and securing decades of work for more than 4,000 people.

The fourth HMS Sheffield will be built on more than 80 years of proud naval history, with the first ship carrying the name from 1935. The Light Cruiser played a vital role in Scandinavia during the Second World War and assisted with the evacuation of Andalsnes in 1940. Whilst shadowing the Bismarck she was attacked in error by Fleet Air Arm Swordfish aircraft. She also took part in the first major Allied landing of the war in North Africa during Operation 'Torch', and patrolled waters from the Mediterranean to the Arctic. The second HMS Sheffield, a Type 42 destroyer, was lost during the Falklands War.



Computer generated image courtesy of BAE Systems.

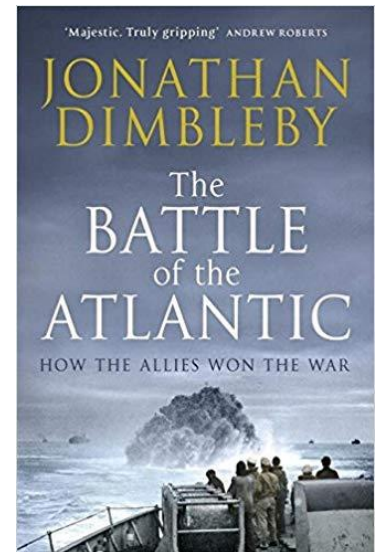
The Royal Navy's Type 26 frigates will be based in DEVONPORT, a location with RN links dating back to 1691. The eight 6,900 tonne vessels will replace the Type 23 Duke Class anti-submarine vessels from the mid-2020s. Canada has selected the Type 26 as the preferred option to replace the Iroquois and Halifax Classes. Australia will build nine ships.

HM Naval Base DEVONPORT is the largest Naval Base in Western Europe covering more than 650 acres with four miles of waterfront. The Base employs 2,500 people and generates around 10% of Plymouth's income.

Book Review.

The relationship between Churchill and Roosevelt; also between Donitz, Raeder and Hitler, the USA isolationist movement, the internal battles between the Royal Navy and the RAF for resources, the Germany first policy, the Arctic and Mediterranean Convoys, the U-Boat tactics, the monthly tonnage ship losses plus stories about how the public put up with food rationing are all covered in this page turner of 500 plus pages showing just how close the Atlantic lifeline came to being cut with only a handful of U-Boats. What would have happened if Donitz had got his 300 boats? When I finished reading it, I started again because I wanted to. One of the human-interest stories is how First Lieutenant Peter Gretton was swept overboard off HMS Cossack by a wave in an Atlantic storm. By a stroke of monumental lifesaving good fortune, he was swept back on board. Reporting to the Captain, he was reprimanded for leaving the Ship without permission. An example of wartime humour in the face of dire circumstances. Two other crew members were washed overboard and were not recovered.

Norman Bell



USS ROSS in the Black Sea.

During the filming of a documentary, the UK's Channel 5 captured interesting footage of a Royal Navy Type 45 destroyer, HMS DUNCAN, being "buzzed" by Russian fighter jets off the coast of Crimea, in May 2018.

Su-30SM Flanker



HMS Dragon seizes 3 tonnes of hashish in major Gulf drugs bust.

Portsmouth-based warship HMS Dragon has seized hashish in one of the most significant drugs busts in the Gulf this year, dealing a major blow to the funding of terrorism. The Type 45 destroyer was on patrol in the Middle East when they came across a suspicious dhow in a notorious drug smuggling route known as the 'Hash Highway'. Swooping into action, sailors and Royal Marines from HMS Dragon launched their fast boats to intercept and board the vessel. They found 148 bags of hashish, weighing around 3048kg.



The seizure comes a week after HMS Dragon became the first Royal Navy destroyer to work alongside F35 Lightning jets on operations in the Middle East.

Sea Quiz 77, Answers.

I was a bit surprised by the answer to number 4, which took place at 1104hrs on the 3rd September 1939. By my reckoning, Neville Chamberlain was still speaking on the wireless! Makes you think, eh? Now, the answer to question two was tricky. It is in the Admiralty, but the statue's sword and a lack of sword belt caused some comment; mind you I've never been in the Admiralty, and the column's a bit high up to notice.

1. It was 'Almirante Latorre' for Chile, completed at the beginning of the war as HMS Canada of course.
2. It stands, or stood in 1958, in the entrance hall of the Admiralty.
3. HMS Colossus, Devonport Cadet Training Ship 1920. Must have looked very attractive.
4. It was HM Sub Spearfish, she was attacked by a U-Boat.
5. HMS Alexandria.

Rob Morgan.

SIGNAL PAD!

Thank you to everyone who submitted articles for AGB and Battlefleet in 2018. Rob Morgan again did more than his fair share with the sea quiz, articles and photographs. All Members can contribute articles or something of interest to other Members, which can only improve the standard of both publications.

A few years ago, the possibility of saving an Invincible Class Carrier, as a museum/tourist attraction or helipad moored on the Thames briefly existed but came to nothing and INVICIBLE, ARK ROYAL and ILLUSTRIOUS went to a Turkish Breakers Yard to be turned into razor blades. How pleasing was it to read a newspaper cutting from Rob Morgan about how INS VIRAAT (“Giant” in Sanskrit) could be saved and used as an adventure tourist destination with facilities for skydiving and sailing. In a previous incarnation VIRAAT was HMS HERMES, the flagship of the British Task force in 1982. The Ship was commissioned in 1959, Prince Charles served on board in 1975. Sold to India in 1987, she served for 30 years until escalating maintenance costs brought about her decommissioning. Surely NWS Members sincerely hope that the plans to save her come to fruition and she can bring enjoyment to many, for many years moored at Sindhudurg south of Mumbai.

Another press cutting from Rob was a review of “Seapower States”, by Andrew Lambert, professor of naval history, King’s college London. The author separates Seapower States from countries that are sea powers and therefore says that there has only been five (so far). Athens, Carthage, Venice, the Dutch Republic and Britain. 399 pages and should be obtainable for somewhere in the region of £20 if you want to give yourself a Christmas present.

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, 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 - 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

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 • 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

THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY <http://www.navalwargamessociety.org>
(Victorian Division "Cerberus") Email: nws.victoria.au@gmail.com Membership by \$7/year e-Subscription to NWS BATTLEFLEET magazine.