



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

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EDITORIAL

I hope that NWS Members did not let the International Naval Wargames Day pass them by. My plans had to be revised downwards due to circumstances beyond my control. Each side of the day itself, I played Torpedo Raiders and Salvo, both by Minden Games. The torpedo attack on Pearl Harbor produced a decisive Japanese victory with the ships of battleship row listing/damaged and or resting on the bottom. At the Battle of the River Plate, the Exeter limped away sinking, the Graf Spee with flooding and one turret damaged sought respite in Montevideo, the Achilles was not fired on and therefore undamaged and with the severely damaged Ajax, she picked up the Exeter survivors after she sank beneath the waves.

Norman Bell

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On Sunday 3rd September 1939, Great Britain and France, at last no longer fooled by Hitler's promises about there being no more territorial claims, honoured their commitment to Poland and declared war on Germany. Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain acted without delay and asked Winston Churchill to become First Lord of the Admiralty and by 6 p.m. he was at his desk. The Board of the Admiralty signalled every man in the Fleet, "Winston is back". Churchill was to later write, "I came again to the room I had quitted in pain and sorrow almost exactly a quarter of a century earlier".

At 7.43 p.m. on 3rd September 1939, the Steam Ship Athenia, carrying 311 Americans, 469 Canadians, 150 refugees from Europe, 34 of whom were German Jews, British and Irish nationals including children being evacuated to the safety of Canada, was torpedoed 200 miles off the coast of Ireland. Fortunately, she took a long time to sink and there were ships nearby to come to her aid. However, the death toll was 118, a figure that included 16 children.

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The British Fourteenth Army was a multi-national force comprising units from Commonwealth Countries during World War II. ... It is often referred to as the "Forgotten Army" because its operations in the Burma Campaign were last in line for men and resources. It appears that naval operations were overlooked also. How else would you explain that HMAS SYDNEY and 5 RN Destroyers were awarded a battle honour after they sank the 5,500 ton Italian Cruiser "COLLEONI" in the Med in July 1940 but 5 RN Destroyers which sank the 13,000 ton Japanese Cruiser "HAGURO" off Malaya in May 1945 received no similar recognition.

Extract from President Roosevelt's fireside chat to the Nation, 11th September 1941.

"To be ultimately successful in world mastery, Hitler knows that he must get control of the seas. He must first destroy the bridge of ships which we are building across the Atlantic and over which we shall continue to roll the implements of war to help destroy him, to destroy all his works in the end. He must wipe out our patrol on sea and in the air if he is to do it. He must silence the British Navy," "when you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, you do not wait until he has struck before you crush him. These Nazi submarines and raiders are the rattlesnakes of the Atlantic. They are a menace to the free pathways of the high seas. They are a challenge to our own sovereignty. They hammer at our most precious rights when they attack ships of the American flag - symbols of our independence, our freedom, our very life".

The speech referred to the sinking of the "Robin Moor" and the torpedo attack on the USS Greer. The President had to choose his words carefully so that the isolationists were not encouraged.

A file photo of the aircraft carrier USS Wasp (CV-7) in early 1942 in Casco Bay, Maine, with SB2U and F4F aircraft on its flight deck. (U.S. Navy photo courtesy of Naval History and Heritage Command/Released)





The aircraft carrier USS Wasp (CV-7) is shown burning and listing after it was torpedoed by the Japanese navy submarine I-19 on Sept. 15, 1942 while operating in the Southwestern Pacific in support of forces on Guadalcanal. (U.S. Navy photo courtesy of the National Archives/Released)

Wasp was sunk on Sept. 15, 1942, by two, possibly three, torpedoes from the Japanese submarine I-19 while escorting transports carrying the Seventh Marine Regiment to Guadalcanal as reinforcements. Of the 2,162 on board, 176 were killed as a result of the attack. 76 years later, the sunken aircraft carrier was found in the Coral Sea, 4,200 metres (nearly 14,000 feet) below the surface. Wasp was hit in arguably the most effective spread of torpedoes in history, Japanese submarine I-19, fired six torpedoes. USS North Carolina and USS O'Brien were hit, and either crippled or sunk as well.

<https://www.navalhistory.org/2019/04/25/the-strange-navy-that-shipped-millions-of-japanese-home> At the end of the War, seven million Japanese soldiers and civilians were scattered throughout the Pacific with no way of returning home. Also there was the million Chinese and Koreans who were used by the Japanese as slave labour who had to be transported home. Problems like this are easily forgotten.

Name that Ship. How soon can you do it?

Laid down in 1933 and completed in 1936. She was commissioned in 1937. At 12,000t She was initially armed with ten (10) 6in (152mm) guns in two triple and two twin turrets, a variety of medium and light guns, six (6) 533mm torpedo tubes while she could carry up to four (4) IMAM Ro.43 reconnaissance single float seaplanes that were launched from the ship's two catapults. Active during World War II, she participated in numerous operations. Along with her convoy escort duties, shore bombardment and convoy interception, she was present at Punto Stilo/Calabria. She missed the Battle of Cape Matapan. On July 28, 1941 she was torpedoed by a submarine and returned to port along with 700 tons of water. She sailed to Malta in September 1943. Except for a very brief period of time on anti-blockade runner duties, she spent the remainder of the war in transport and training duties.

Name that Ship answer below.

Another new ship. USS Billings is the 17th littoral combat ship to enter the fleet and the eighth of the Freedom variant. It is the first ship named for Billings, the largest city in the U.S. state of Montana.

Anchors Aweigh

This phrase may instantly have you humming the [official song of the U.S. Navy](#) in your head, but the phrase is actually called out when the anchor has been pulled up and the ship is free to sail on its own. The word *aweight* is derived from the Old English term *woeg*, meaning “to raise.” Why is this an important part of seamanship, you ask? Well, if the ship set sail before the anchor was aweight, a dragging anchor could impact the safety of other vessels in the vicinity, cause a collision with another vessel, or catch an underwater cable or pipeline causing serious damage.



Dutch sailing ships from
Tumbling Dice, 1/2400 scale.

Off the coast of Australia in July 1881, the teenage Prince George and his brother were aboard *HMS INCONSTANT*. The two young royals had been despatched on a three year character-building voyage around the world. This is how the future King George V recorded an “encounter” in his diary:

“At 4 a.m. the Flying Dutchman crossed our bows. A strange red light as of a phantom ship all aglow, in the midst of which light the masts, spars and sails of a brig 200 yards distant stood out in strong relief as she came up on the port bow, where also the officer of the watch from the bridge clearly saw her, as did the quarterdeck midshipman, who was sent forward at once to the forecastle; but on arriving there was no vestige nor any sign whatever of any material ship was to be seen either near or right away to the horizon, the night being clear and the sea calm. Thirteen persons altogether saw her.”

Perhaps there is something in the legend of the Flying Dutchman after all.

The Flying Dutchman has made numerous appearances in literature, film (*Pandora and the Flying Dutchman*, (James Mason and Ava Gardner) 1951 and more recently, *Pirates of the Caribbean*), and in television shows as diverse as *Scooby Doo*, *The Simpsons* and I am reliably informed, *SpongeBob Square Pants*.

Name that Ship answer:

Giuseppe Garibaldi was an Italian Duca degli Abruzzi-class light cruiser, the latest evolution of the light cruisers Condottieri class that served in the Navy of the Kingdom of Italy (Regia Marina) during World War II. The ship was named after the Italian general, politician and nationalist Giuseppe Garibaldi who played a large role in the history of Italy and was the inventor of a biscuit I don't really care for. (No not really – forget that garibaldi biscuit bit).



U-Boot. Picture from Boardgame Geek, showing the model and online periscope view app.

I came across this photo of an un-named ship on the internet. Can anyone supply a name?



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, 2019

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 e-Subscription to NWS BATTLEFLEET magazine.