

The RNARS



NEWSLETTER

ROYAL NAVAL AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY



30th Anniversary Celebration Issue



Amateur
Radio
Society

Autumn 2023

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Front Cover: Captain Tim Davey, Admiral Sir Philip Jones,
Commodore Paul Sutermeister, Joe G3ZDF

Back Cover: HQ Shack on HMS Collingwood Open Day, 1 July 2023

RNARS CONTACT NUMBER – 01329 717627 (ANSWER PHONE)

FROM THE EDITOR



Joe Kirk
g3zdf@btinternet.com

Welcome to the Autumn 2023 issue of the *RNARS Newsletter*. David our usual editor is still hors de combat. We send him our best wishes and hope to see him back in harness again soon.

I was tempted to headline this column with ‘*Das Boot*’. Nothing to do with Wolfgang Petersen’s iconic TV series in the 1980s but something much closer to home. I ruptured my Achilles’ tendon playing badminton and now I have to wear a cross between a ski-boot and one of those boots one sees astronauts wearing. Those who have suffered a similar fate will know the limitations and restrictions that wearing such a boot brings especially as it has to be worn 24/7 for the first 6 weeks and then gradually reducing the hours over the next 6 weeks. Normal activities suddenly become a major chore.

The main news over the past 3 months has been the reception we held to commemorate the 30th anniversary of our arrival in HMS Collingwood. We had our Patron, our President and our host – the Captain of Collingwood in attendance as well as representatives of local radio clubs and the RSGB. There’s more about that and lots of photos further into the newsletter.

The AGM is coming up shortly (14th October) and there will be a number of vacancies among the officers and the Committee. We need members to participate in the running of the Society otherwise we will just fade away. Most meetings are a mix of in-person and Zoom/Skype electronic attendance so it’s not necessary to live in the vicinity of Collingwood to take part. It’s not just a matter of what the RNARS can do for you but what you can do for the RNARS so why not give it a try? Drop your name to our Secretary, Martin(Secretary@rnars.uk). Thanks to everyone who contributed articles for the Newsletter, without your input there would not be a Newsletter.

Finally, a reminder that Mike still has a few commodities from the 30th Anniversary celebrations. Get them while you can.

73

Joe G3ZDF

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RNARS OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Patron: Admiral Sir Philip Jones GCB DL | | |
| President: Commodore Paul Sutermeister DL RN | | |
| Chairman | Vacant | |
| Treasurer | Adrian Mori 2EØJVM 33 Valerian Road, Southampton SO30 0GR | ade.mori64@gmail.com |
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| Membership Sec & Website | Joe Kirk G3ZDF 111 Stockbridge Road Chichester PO19 8QR | g3zdf@btinternet.com 01243 536586 |
| Committee | Wally Walker, Kevin Lamb, Steve Legg, Martin Longbottom, Mike Moore, Pete Milson, Simon Murray, Dave White, Ian Hutchinson | |
| Ex-Officio | Vacant | |
| RNARS Managers | | |
| NL Editor | Vacant | editor@rnars.uk |
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| HQ Shack Manager | Steve Legg M6WVV, Assistant Manager, Alan Campbell M6LFM | |
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| RNARS Overseas Representatives | | |
| USA | Mike Rioux W1USN | |

30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

28th July 2023

It was 30 years ago today

Admiral Ashmore opened up these bays

With this bit of doggerel which shamelessly plagiarised Sgt. Pepper Joe G3ZDF welcomed our Patron, Admiral Sir Philip Jones GCB DL, our President Commodore Paul Sutermeister DL RN and Mrs Susan Sutermeister, Captain Tim Davey, Commanding Officer HMS Collingwood, WO1 Mark Gower, Base Warrant Officer, representatives of local radio clubs and of the RSGB and members of the RNARS.

The HQ Shack in HMS Collingwood was formally opened by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Edward Ashmore GCB DSC, Patron of the RNARS on 30th July 1993. The move was made necessary by an Admiralty decision to close HMS Mercury and move the Signal School to HMS Collingwood rather than to HMS Dryad as had been the original plan.

The ceremony was opened with a rededication prayer by Rev. John Backhouse. Commodore Sutermeister then explained the background to the move but first he thanked Admiral Jones saying that it had been his experience that Patrons only appeared on letterheads of official letters so it was an honour and our pride to have him with us at the celebration.

He said, 'For those of our guests who are not naval acquainted I will try to avoid using navalese and I will start by explaining that the Royal Naval Establishments are referred to as stone frigates and all have the HMS prefix. HMS MERCURY was the Royal Naval Signal Communications School situated in the hills above East Meon, near Petersfield in Hampshire.. The Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society had been formed in the middle sixties, was based in HMS MERCURY and was integral part of this establishment.'

'In the early seventies the Navy introduced the formation of an Operations Branch which absorbed the Communications, the Gunnery, the TAS, the RPs and the Navigation and Direction Branches and were to be based at HMS DRYAD which was designated SMOPS (School of Maritime Operations). HMS DRYAD was chosen as the Tactical School and all its equipment was situated within DRYAD and would be too costly to move. As a saving measure HMS VERNON (TAS), HMS EXCELLENT (Gunnery) and HMS MERCURY (Comms) were to be paid off and sold. HMS MERCURY was given a stay of execution as it housed the sensitive SCU

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(Special Communications Unit) which had to be made self supporting and MERCURY's closing was delayed until July 1993.'

'I was Captain of HMS MERCURY in its last Commission and both we and DRYAD assumed that we would be moving into DRYAD especially as the Communications School was already part of SMOPS.'

'To our shock it was announced that HMS MERCURY was to move to HMS COLLINGWOOD and would no longer be part of the Operations Branch. At that point HMS COLLINGWOOD was the Weapons Electrical training establishment. The term Operator Maintainer or User Maintainer was being muttered some years beforehand when I was in MOD and I suppose someone had the bright idea that the Communications was the best branch with which to start.'

'When I was informed of this decision I made an appointment to see the Captain of HMS COLLINGWOOD to talk to him about when HMS MERCURY moved into COLLINGWOOD. I was told in no uncertain terms that this was not the case. MERCURY was closing down and the communicators were becoming a school within COLLINGWOOD and all contacts with COLLINGWOOD were to be made through the Captain's office with no contact between the various Heads of Departments (HODs). When I left him I certainly had the feeling that this was not going to be a happy marriage.'

'Fortunately not too long afterwards and in the normal course there was a change of command and the new Captain's directive was that his Heads of Departments should liaise with those in HMS MERCURY and HMS COLLINGWOOD should make us feel welcome and make our move as easy as possible, which it was.'

'I said before that the RNARS was an integral part of MERCURY but with the move its future home was looking uncertain. However, many of the WE Senior rates were old ships with many of the Comms senior rates and despite the initial embargo some contacts flourished and with the change in command the RNARS also became an integral part of COLLINGWOOD and is nicely established here. We have a much bigger ship's company from which to recruit, we have a very convenient large car park on our doorstep and eventually HMS DRYAD closed and moved into our establishment here and we were here before them.'

'Finally, Captain Davey thank you for all the support and help which HMS COLLINGWOOD gives to the RNARS to make life so satisfying for us here.'

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Lt Cdr GD 'Doug' Hotchkiss RN (Retd) GW4BEQ, former Chairman (twice) described how Captain Henry Jackson RN carried out early wireless trials on board naval ships and but for the fact of his appointment as Naval Attaché in Paris curtailing his experiments he might well have received the accolades and honours later accorded to Guglielmo Marconi.

Henry Jackson was born in Yorkshire in 1855. He joined the RN as a cadet just before his 14th birthday and was trained on HMS Britannia. In 1881 he was posted to HMS Vernon as a Lieutenant. He was interested in all things technical and as the CO of a torpedo boat he became deeply aware of the problems of signalling between ships particularly at night.

On his next appointment in 1890 as Commander and second-in-command of the battleship HMS Edinburgh he started to consider the use of 'Hertzian' waves (as radio waves were then called) to overcome the ship identification problem. In 1895 in command of HMS Defiance Captain Jackson carried out a number of successful radio experiments including building a transmitter and a receiver.

A year later in 1896 at a War Office conference he met Guglielmo Marconi. They exchanged details of their respective equipment and the results each had achieved. Despite their 20-year age difference they struck up a lasting friendship. The results of Captain Jackson's experiments improved immensely, communicating from one end of HMS Defiance to the other in August 1896 and then ship to shore of distances of 3 miles in Spring 1897.¹

Captain Henry Jackson therefore set up the first successful ship to shore radio communication network. Marconi was more interested in commercial and public services and did not install a radio on board ship until July 1897. Admiral Henry Jackson died in 1929 and is buried in St. Mary's Churchyard on Hayling Island.

Admiral Jones toasted His Majesty the King and then the RNARS.

Captain Davey wished the Society well for the next 30 years in HMS Collingwood.

On behalf of the RNARS Joe G3ZDF presented Admiral Jones, Commodore Sutermeister, Captain



30th Anniversary Challenge Coins

¹ John Hooper, *Captain Henry Jackson of HMS Defiance*, pub. John Hooper, 2007

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Davey and the representatives of the local radio societies and of the RSGB with copies of the Challenge Coin² we had specially struck to mark the occasion. Captain Davey presented the RNARS with an HMS Collingwood/Maritime Warfare School Challenge Coin.



Admiral Jones proposing the Loyal Toast



Adm Jones receiving a Challenge Coin from Joe G3ZDF



Cdre Sutermeister receiving a Challenge Coin

2Mike still has a few Challenge Coins left

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Capt Tim Davey receiving a Challenge Coin



Stewart G3YSX, RSGB Board Chair receiving a Challenge Coin



Joe G3ZDF presenting a Challenge Coin to Rod G4ZUP IOW ARS



Joe G3ZDF presenting WO1 Mark Gower, Base Warrant Officer, HMS Collingwood with a Challenge Coin



Simon M0KFQ Itchen Valley ARC receiving a Challenge Coin



Rod, G4SPS accepting a Challenge Coin on behalf of Fort Purbrook ARC

MEMBERSHIP CORNER - ANNUAL SUBS & HOW TO PAY THEM

PLEASE CHECK THAT YOUR SUBS ARRIVE ON TIME ON OR BEFORE THE FIRST OF APRIL EVERY YEAR.

Please ensure your name and RNARS number appears on all transactions. **UK:** £15 or £5 per year **due on the first of April** and to be sent to the Membership Secretary. Cheques and postal orders to be made payable to "*Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society*"; bankers orders are available from the treasurer.

Subscriptions can be made via **PayPal**. The email of the Society's PayPal account is rnars.treas@gmail.com.

Payment can also be made through our website <http://www.rnars.org.uk/PaySubsByPayPal.html>

Overseas members:

Subscriptions via PayPal is the preferred option, see above for details.

Newsletter by e-mail: If you want to receive email Newsletters contact the Membership Secretary for details making sure you include your email address.

The society banks with Lloyds

272 London Road, Waterlooville, PO7 7HN. Sort code: 30 99 20 - Account number: 00022643 - IBAN: GB92 LOYD 3099 2000 0226 43 & BIC: LOYDGB21271.

If you are 25 years of age or under then you are exempt from paying subs.

GDPR/A: Your details will be held on the society's database by the Membership Secretary. The committee requires your permission with regards to the release of your personal information held on the database to be used only by the Society.

RNARS NEWSLETTER – THE ROYAL NAVAL AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY'S MEMBERS' JOURNAL

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ENVELOPE STUFFERS: HQ SHACK MEMBERS

PUBLISHING DATES & DEADLINES

Spring: 21st March, Summer: 22nd June, Autumn: 22nd September, Winter: 21st December.

Deadline for articles, letters etc. is 3 weeks beforehand. Contributions for the newsletter should be in a text format such as .RTF, .DOC, .XML, .ODT, .TXT etc. Images should be in the highest resolution possible.

Contributions should be sent to editor@rnars.uk or Editor, RNARS Newsletter, Bldg 512, HMS Collingwood, Newgate Lane, Fareham PO14 1AS

The RNARS Newsletter is published by the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society as its official journal to all members of the Society. Views expressed within the newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the RNARS. The RNARS is affiliated to the RSGB.

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NEWS FROM CANADA – MATTHEW VE3ZQW

ANOTHER SEA CADET UNIT GAINS AMATEUR COMMUNICATIONS

Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps INVINCIBLE, located in Maple Ridge, British Columbia has become the 11th Canadian Cadet Unit licensed to conduct Amateur Radio communications. Operating as VA7UCL, the callsign was chosen in respect to the unit's namesake HMS INVINCIBLE, which carried the call letters "GUCL" whilst in commission.

Living up to the unit Motto which is "Sequimini Optima" (Aim to be the Best), Invincible also put forth the top licence exam score amongst cadets in Canada with Cadet PO Dhanvin Puppala (VA7DZP) achieving a score of 100%.

Well Done "Vince", and we look forward to hearing you and your cadets on the air this fall.



CANADIAN SEA CADET ATTENDS YOTA CAMP-REGION 2

While most youth look forward a summer of vacation or leisure, Cadet PO Adam Nissim-Stem-VA3BHT was enjoying the memorable experience of attending the Youth on the Air Camp (YOTA) for the Americas, hosted in Ottawa Canada this past July. As one of 30 youth amateur radio operators selected from across the Americas and Europe, participants were able to spend a week receiving theoretical as well as practical training on many facets of amateur radio communication. Developing their skills with subjects such as DX work, construction projects, balloon launches and field day set ups were included along with a day of operations from the former Canadian Forces Station Carp command bunker.

A most memorable, and rewarding capstone achievement for a 15 year old Sea Cadet Amateur Radio operator.

Cadet PO Nissim-Stem is a member of the ships company and communications department at RCSCC VANGUARD (VA3GFP), located in Toronto.



Figure 1: Adam Nissim-Stem (VA3BHT) with Radio Amateurs of Canada President Phil McBride VA3QR

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nothing yet but we look forward to hearing from you at any of:

editor@rnars.uk or 01329 717627 (answer phone)

The Editor, RNARS Newsletter

Bldg 512, HMS Collingwood

Newgate Lane

Fareham

PO14 1AS

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Joe G3ZDF



| New Members | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|------|
| Gary Sangwell | 2E0IHS | 5166 |
| Edward White | SWL | 5167 |
| Trevor Parker | M0TVR | 5168 |
| Phil Taylor (Honorary) | M0VSE | 5169 |
| John Hartshorne | M6GOV | 5170 |
| Re-joiners | | |
| | | |
| Changes | | |
| | | |
| Resigned | | |
| | | |
| Silent Key | | |
| Hans Van Den Berg (was life member) | PA0HIS | 1242 |
| Keith Robinson (former member) | G4KKZ | 1642 |
| Ray Ezra (was Life member) | G3KOJ | 0594 |

Members whose Newsletter delivery has bounced and who do not have or have not responded to email or telephone contact. Please send any info relating these suspended members to Joe G3ZDF Membership Secretary

| | | |
|-------------------|--------|------|
| David Pilley | VK2AYD | 0013 |
| Len Franklin | G0JKV | 0306 |
| Bill STEPHENSON | G3AQB | 0486 |
| Reg RUBINS | G4HAB | 0790 |
| Henry Shields | G3GB | 1199 |
| Ian Coombe | VA3ICC | 1673 |
| Roland Freshwater | G6CNK | 1984 |
| Ken Aseltine | SWL | 2520 |
| Bill BAILEY | G2CHI | 2531 |
| Dennis EVANS | GW4VEK | 2550 |
| John Finch | G4YVB | 2594 |
| Sid DUNN | GOKHN | 2884 |
| Ray EVANS | G0FQT | 3139 |

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Membership Statistics

| Type | Current | Free | Life | Suspended | Under25 | TOTAL |
|-----------|---------|------|------|-----------|---------|-------|
| Affiliate | 13 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Associate | 105 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 115 |
| Corporate | 272 | 3 | 47 | 16 | 4 | 342 |
| Family | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Honorary | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 397 | 10 | 55 | 17 | 4 | 483 |

MORE NEWS FROM CANADA

Sea Cadet Communicators assist in Memorial Statue Dedication

82 Years ago, Canadian Wireless Operator Fern Blodgett Sunde (1918-1991) took her front row seat to the Battle of the Atlantic by becoming the first Canadian female operator in the Merchant service aboard the Norwegian vessel, M/S Mosedale. Thankfully never being torpedoed, she had several close calls including having a U-Boat surface off their bows, allowing her to become the first woman to transmit the position of a submarine in real time whilst in visual contact. Flashing ahead from that turbulent time, and her home town of Cobourg Ontario, was commemorating her Wartime service by dedicating a statue of her, with the assistance of the Communications Department from RCSCC SKEENA on 2 April.

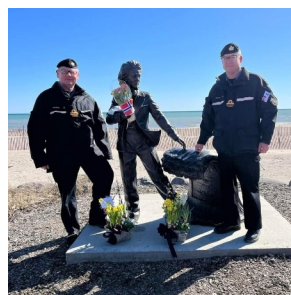
With her family present, and dedication ceremonies were underway, Sea Cadets operating under SKEENA's callsign (VA3YZJ) conducted a special event station alongside. Operating two radios covering 20 and 40 meters simultaneously, many dozens of pleasant qso's were achieved across both North and South America by the young operators. Of particular pride, Cadet PO Alina Czycyro had the distinction of functioning as representing all female radio operators past and present at the ceremony, as well as on the air. BZ, and Well Done to all those who took part in remembering those that secured our freedoms, across the waves.



Fern Blodgett Sunde



Ethan Yoo, Cadet Alina Czycyro operating 20m



*Brian Holmes-VE3IK, SLT.
Matthew Batten-VE3ZQW, with
the Fern Blodgett Sunde Statue*

Amateur Radio At Depth

Cdr Simon 'Ruby' Murray CEng RN, MM0XME

As a Marine Engineer I'm going to make a guess that I'm in a minority section of the serving or ex-serving members of the RNARS with the Weapon Engineers, which includes Communications and Information System Specialists, being the likely largest representation. As many will have experienced, the rivalry between departments can be strong and especially that between the Marine and Weapon Engineers. On many occasions after scrum (dinner) while sitting at the Wardroom table the WEO and I would jibe each other as to who was the real 'Chief Engineer'. Of course, we each thought we were more important than the other with me reeling off my reactor qualifications and vast real-estate of systems and equipment, him reminding me that I was only there to push his weapon system around the seas and keep the lights on! However, the one trump card I always had was that I was pretty sure I knew more about the internal workings of the radio equipment fitted to the submarine than he did, almost exclusively thanks to my amateur radio interest.

Prior to deploying on my latest SSBN patrol, I racked my brains and the internet to find an amateur radio project that I could complete whilst underwater. I soon stumbled upon a small 5W HF single-band CW transceiver by QRP Labs, the QCX. Designed as a small self-build handheld transceiver, this was the ideal project that I knew I could complete without recourse to the 'real world' and would be a significant challenge having not done a huge amount of electronic building before. It also had the benefit of not taking up too much room in my limited locker space!

After setting sail and soon settling into the rather monotonous routine of a deterrent submarine patrol, I quickly dug out the kit and commenced the build. As any submariner will tell you, the atmosphere is strictly maintained, with a long list of prohibited substances that cannot be brought onboard and tight controls of anything that could contaminate it to ensure the recirculated air remains safe for the crew. Soldering is one of these activities and should be limited to essential repairs only. A quick check of the regulations showed that the small volume I would need to undertake to complete my project combined with the more modern solders we now have to use meant that I would not be putting the crew at risk.

Every Sunday following my forenoon watch back aft I would come forward for my roast dinner and then continue the next stage of construction. Some would go to church on Sunday (aka the nav centre), I would go to my shack (aka the MEO's cabin). Being a very compact circuit, the use of a magnifying station was essential to enable me to solder the ~150 components tightly into place and thankfully the small number of surface-mounted items come pre-installed. QRP Labs have produced excellent assembly instructions that

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are really easy to follow with lots of useful diagrams and pictures to ensure you don't make too many mistakes and have to get the dreaded solder sucker out of the toolkit! The most fiddly part was winding the toroids, especially the quadruple wound input transformer. In the end I found this to be a rather relaxing and almost meditative process once I got into the swing of it, helping to keep me sane from the stresses and strains of life on a submarine.

After a couple of months of relaxing Sunday afternoons, I had completed the build but the only problem was that I wasn't able to test the kit beyond powering it up and going through the main setup of the circuit using the inbuilt diagnostic tools. I did consider trying to hook it up to the Buoyant Wire Aerial to test out the reception but decided the potential to knock out one of our essential communications receiving methods and risk missing a firing drill (or worse giving the WEO a chance to one up on me), was probably not worth it! Side note; if you want to know more about the protocols, procedures and process of how the directive to launch nuclear weapons would be transmitted from the Prime Minister all the way to the submarine dived on patrol and ultimately leading to the WEO pulling the trigger to launch, I would highly recommend listening to the 2008 Peter Hennesy BBC radio programme 'The Human Button' which can still be found on YouTube. Eventually having been relieved by the next submarine on patrol (somewhat late I might add) and thereby continuing the Continuous At-Sea Deterrent that the UK has now maintained for over 54 years, we returned to the surface, fresh air (it actually smells anything but fresh when the hatches are first opened) and arrived back in HMNB Clyde to our long awaiting families. Following hand over of the submarine to our relief crew, I went on leave and finally had the chance to fully test my build. Connecting it to my end-fed half-wave antenna and powering it up, I was immediately greeted with the sounds of dits and dahs through my headphones. A great sense of relief and satisfaction that it actually worked and I hadn't wasted all those hours. Only one slight problem, I don't



know Morse code, perhaps that's something to learn on a future trip beneath the seas!

Final note, the QCX has now been superseded by the QCX+ which features the same circuit, same firmware and same operational characteristics as the QCX transceiver and can be found at www.grp-labs.com along with plenty of other interesting projects.

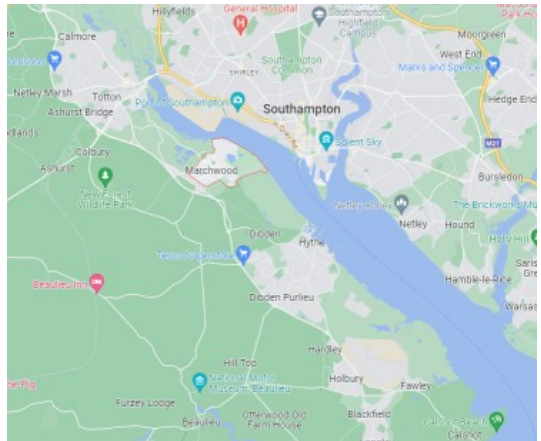
The completed QCX powered up once back home.

Tales of The Waterside

Kev Lamb – G4BUW

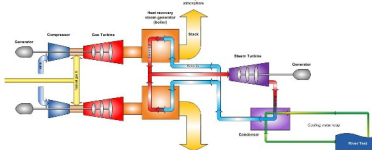
In April 2022, I moved to Marchwood, Hampshire primarily to be closer to the sea. Having The New Forest close-by is a much-appreciated bonus. My Dad's stories from his Royal Navy experience and passion for ships rubbed off on me. I've many happy childhood memories of wandering with him around quays, docks and trawlers. A few years in The Merchant Navy boosted my maritime enthusiasm.

The south west side of Southampton Water (The River Test flowing into The Solent), referred to by local people as The Waterside, stretches from the town of Totton to the villages of Eling, Marchwood, Hythe, Fawley and Calshot. The whole area has a wealth of historical and geographical facts; far too many to write about here. So, I'll touch on some of the key ones I've learned about since my move.



Southampton Water

17 Port & Maritime Regiment is based at Marchwood where it has a dock with two deep water berths. The unit deploys regularly around the world (e.g. Cyprus and Gibraltar) in support of military operations and is unique in providing the UK Armed Forces with Port & Maritime, Vehicle Support, Operational Hygiene and Mortuary Affairs specialist capabilities. I understand the base has around 2,000 people.



Combined Cycle Gas Turbine Diagram

In addition to our military friends, Marchwood has a large industrial estate which is not particularly evident when living in the village. Estate inhabitants include a cement works, a power station using combined cycle gas turbines - one of the most efficient power stations in the UK, and a non-recyclable waste processing incinerator producing enough electricity to supply around 22,500 local homes.

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These industries use state of the art technology and have good management so the village air quality is, thankfully, very good and helped by prevailing breezes from The Solent and The New Forest.

Marchwood is on the opposite side of the water to the Southampton Container Terminal (SCT), where some of the largest ships berth. I don't know the percentages of our imports and exports handled by the terminal, but I would imagine them being large.

The channel leading to the SCT is quite narrow and so ship handling operations require powerful tugs with crews that have many years of experience. It's quite an eye opener when watching their very precise operations. Other vessels include bulk carriers (there's a massive scrap metal wharf), huge passenger ships (which I think of as floating blocks of flats), and vehicle carriers. Southampton Football Club's extensive training campus is on the village edge. I have been told that this is where numerous well-known players started their careers.

Hythe is a couple of miles down The Waterside from Marchwood. It is a bustling village with the atmosphere of a small seaside resort and probably the best place



Ship leaving SCT - viewed from Marchwood

to view ships and other water craft on Southampton Water, especially the conventional Red Funnel ferries travelling to and from Southampton and The Isle of Wight, as well as the Red Jets – fast hydrofoil passenger boats. To the south east of Hythe is a marine engineering complex which manufactures work boats and repairs/refurbishes a wide variety of boats and ships including trawlers and 'gin palace' leisure craft. Next door is the very friendly Hythe Sailing Club which I joined shortly after moving into the area. It has a purpose built wonderful club house with splendid views spanning Southampton Water and The Solent. From a double sized slip way, club activities include yachting, dinghy sailing, power-boating and kayaking. There are also a number of radio controlled boat enthusiasts.

Next to the sailing club is a Navy Cadet base, and The Spartina Nature Reserve – owned by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Beyond those are about a mile of creeks and mud flats leading down to the oil refinery at Fawley.

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Kayaking the creeks has developed into a personal passion, mainly because it's a great way to see wildlife and shipping traffic. The refinery has multiple extended berths that can accommodate a wide range of tankers, including very large crude carriers (VLCCs). This was the base for my last ship, Esso Cardiff, a lightering (cargo transfer) tanker.



Schneider Trophy Team 1931

The Waterside final point is Calshot around which several books have been written mainly because of its flying boat/amphibious aircraft history, especially the Schneider Trophy which the British Team won in 1931 for the flight of a Supermarine aircraft at over 400 MPH. Reportedly, half a million spectators lined the beach fronts to watch the event.

The Waterside was home to numerous anti-aircraft gun emplacements during World War 2 because of the close proximity to Southampton docks, which, together with the city, suffered tremendously from intensive bombing attacks. I read some staggering facts about this in reference material at Hythe library.

Southampton Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) is responsible for the safe navigation of ships and other significant craft on Southampton Water and The Solent. It uses shore based radar systems and VHF radio communications (Channel 12 – 156.600 MHz). I use an old FT – 2 11 transceiver fed by a 2M co-linear antenna to monitor VTS. It's a great way to learn about the wide range of ships that transit the area. Of particular interest is the method VTS uses to manage ships entering and leaving the Nab Tower and St. Helens anchorages to the east of the Isle of Wight. Any ship not following the right procedures will receive some heavy words from VTS! The team there does a great job of effectively policing maritime traffic.

There is quite a bit of amateur radio activity in The Waterside area and I'm looking forward to having more local QSOs especially when I get the V/UHF mobile station set up.

73

Kev, G4BUW

How to Simulate Living in the Navy

Mike Rioux, W1USN, Commander, U.S.N.(Retired) RNARS #3889

1. Buy a steel dumpster, paint it gray inside and out, and live in it for six months.
2. Run all the pipes and wires in your house exposed on the inside walls.
3. Repaint your entire house every month.
4. Renovate your bathroom. Build a wall across the middle of the bathtub and move the shower head to chest level. When you take showers, make sure you turn off the water while you soap down. Squeegee and wipe down the stall when done.
5. Put lube oil in your humidifier and set it on high.
6. Once a week, blow compressed air up your chimney, making sure the wind carries the soot onto your neighbour's house. Ignore his complaints.
7. Once a month, take all major appliances apart and then reassemble them.
8. Raise the thresholds and lower the headers of your front and back doors so that you either trip or bang your head every time you pass through them.
9. Disassemble and inspect your lawnmower every week.
10. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, turn your water heater temperature up to 200 degrees. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, turn the water heater off. On Saturdays and Sundays tell your family they use too much water during the week, so no bathing will be allowed.
11. Raise your bed to within 6 inches of the ceiling, so you can't turn over without getting out and then getting back in.
12. Sleep on the shelf in your closet. Replace the closet door with a curtain. Have your spouse whip open the curtain about 3 hours after you go to sleep, shine a flashlight in your eyes, and say "Sorry, wrong rack" or "Sign this."
13. Make your family qualify to operate each appliance in your house - dishwasher operator, blender technician, etc.
14. Have your neighbour come over each day at 5 am, blow a whistle so loud Helen Keller could hear it, and shout "Reveille, reveille, all hands heave out and trice up."
15. Have your mother-in-law write down everything she's going to do the following day, then have her make you stand in your back yard at 6 am while she reads it to you.
16. Submit a request chit to your father-in-law requesting permission to leave your house before 3 PM.

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17. Empty all the garbage bins in your house and sweep the driveway three times a day, whether it needs it or not. ("Now sweepers, sweepers, man your brooms, give the ship a clean sweep down fore and aft, sweep down all lower decks, ladder wells, and passageways.")
18. Have your neighbour collect all your mail for a month, read your magazines, and randomly lose every 5th item before delivering it to you.
19. Watch no TV except for movies played in the middle of the night. Have your family vote on which movie to watch, then show a different one.
20. When your children are in bed, run into their room with a megaphone shouting that your home is under attack and ordering them to their battle stations. ("Now general quarters, general quarters, all hands man your battle stations.")
21. Make your family menu a week ahead of time without consulting the pantry or refrigerator.
22. Post a menu on the kitchen door informing your family that they are having steak for dinner. Then make them wait in line for an hour. When finally get to the kitchen, tell them you are out of steak, but they can have dried ham or hot dogs. Repeat daily until they ignore the menu and just ask for hot dogs.
23. Bake a cake. Prop up one side of the pan so the cake bakes unevenly. Spread icing real thick to level it off.
24. Get up every night around midnight and have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on stale bread. (midrats)
25. Set your alarm clock to go off at random during the night. At the alarm, jump up and dress as fast as you can, making sure to button your top shirt button and tuck your pants into your socks. Run out into the backyard and uncoil the garden hose.
26. Every week or so, throw your cat or dog in the pool and shout "Man overboard port side!" Rate your family members on how fast they respond.
27. Put the headphones from your stereo on your head, but don't plug them in. Hang a paper cup around your neck on a string. Stand in front of the stove and speak into the paper cup "Stove manned and ready." After an hour or so, speak into the cup again "Stove secured." Roll up the headphones and paper cup and stow them in a shoebox.

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28. Place a podium at the end of your driveway. Have your family stand watches at the podium, rotating at 4-hour intervals. This is best done when the weather is worst. January is a good time.
29. When there is a thunderstorm in your area, get a wobbly rocking chair, sit in it and rock as hard as you can until you become nauseous. Make sure to have a supply of stale crackers in your shirt pocket.
30. For former engineers: bring your lawn mower into the living room and run it all day long.
31. Make coffee using eighteen scoops of budget priced coffee grounds per pot and allow the pot to simmer for 5 hours before drinking.
32. Have someone under the age of ten give you a haircut with sheep shears.
33. Sew the back pockets of your jeans on the front.
34. Every couple of weeks, dress up in your best clothes and go to the scummiest part of town. Find the most run down, trashiest bar, and drink beer until you are hammered. Then walk all the way home.
35. Lock yourself and your family in the house for six weeks. Tell them that at the end of the 6th week you are going to take them to Disney World for "liberty." At the end of the 6th week, inform them the trip to Disney World has been cancelled because they need to get ready for an inspection, and it will be another week before they can leave the house.
36. Repeat back everything anyone says to you. Repeat back everything anyone says to you.
37. Sit in front of your TV set, with the antenna disconnected and watch for 6 hours. Report any unusual static patterns.
38. Get a clipboard, paper, and leaky black ink pen, then take hourly readings on your electric and gas meters.
39. Buy 50 cases of toilet paper and lock up all but two rolls. Ensure one of these two rolls is wet at all times.
40. Start every story with "This is no-sh*t".

73

Mike

W1USN

From the Archives

Boy Coxswain Spring 2006 Newsletter HMS GANGES 1949

Or the memories of a "Boy Coxswain" therein By Wally Walker G4DIU # 0391

It was Thursday, it was June and I had just passed my sailing examination to become a Boy Coxswain and the whole world was at my feet, which at that time were about a foot from the floor (sorry "Deck") of the cutter which I was bringing alongside at the jetty of H.M.S. Ganges, prior to hoisting it on the davits to complete the tasks for the day, when I was hailed and told to report to my D.O.'s office - "AT THE DOUBLE".

This somewhat dampened my euphoria and whilst I was pulling myself up on the ropes to get to the jetty, I was wondering what I had done wrong 'Again' to warrant this intrusion into my state of happiness. I could not think of any wrongdoing on my part, so with some trepidation I doubled up to the bottom of the short covered way, and presented myself to my Divisional Officer.

Something was very badly wrong, he was smiling, something completely unheard of from this particular gentleman. He asked me to sit down, again unheard of and proceeded to tell me that he had been on the shoreline, watching my antics with the cutter, and, as I had passed and could now consider myself a qualified Boy Coxswain and as such, he had a job for me for the coming weekend, starting at 1230 tomorrow, Friday. I was to take a cutter away for the weekend and sail it up the river Orwell towards Ipswich to a particular farmer's field, which would be pointed out to me by the Officer-in-charge once we had arrived.

I was informed that there would be twelve members on board, ten crew and two Officers, together with tents and sleeping bags plus enough food to sink a Battleship, or so it seemed from the amount stacked in the office. 4 boxes of 10 man x 24 hour ration packs plus some Bacon and Eggs etc. for the officers.

On Friday morning at about 0630, after breakfast, I was instructed to get the gear, food and other items down to the boat, and stow them aboard, leaving space for the rest of the lads, and leaving sufficient space for the officers to rest in the stern without impeding me "The Coxswain"

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This had to be completed before going to instructions for Friday morning, so I was Excused Divisions, another unheard of practice. Three of us collected the "Buffers" wagon and piled everything in to it and off we went down to the foreshore and did as we were told. Looking forward to a whole weekend away from Ganges, but not knowing what was involved once we parted from the jetty. When 1200 (Noon) arrived we were fallen-in outside the division office and informed that we were to become "little ambassadors" of the Royal Navy and as such we were to behave ourselves. We were to make sure that the camping site was left in a clean and tidy condition after Sunday lunch had been eaten and cleared away as we had to sail back to Ganges again, to arrive before dark, clean the boat, hoist it and leave it ready for the Monday morning sailing lessons.

This all seemed to be very, very good, because it suddenly dawned upon us, that we would not be going to Sunday Divisions or Church Parade, both being events which every boy in Ganges looked forward to each week, as those who have resided in that establishment will remember. It also meant that we did not have to climb the mast on Friday morning either, for which I was very sad, because, unlike in the winter, climbing the mast in the summer months was quite enjoyable, sometimes.

The ten of us were sent to lunch and told to be on the jetty by 1230 to lower the boat and Set ready to pull out and then rig for sailing and off we would go. This achieved with great gusto we were going to be away from the eyes of such people as G.I's and Master at Arms and his army of Gestapo type minions, for nearly two whole days. Such joy as was never dreamed of by the likes of us.

We pulled round to the steps, as it did not seem fit that two Officers should have to shin down the ropes to come aboard and when they were safely inboard I was told to get under way and make ready to rig the sail.

It had not occurred to me that getting the boom rigged and hoisted with so many bodies and stores aboard would be a problem, but, as in all good things, it was, there was a bit of shoving and pushing, to get things organised, but eventually everything got sorted out. We only lost one man overboard, he was holding the outer end of the boom, to keep it clear of the Officers, and when the wind caught the sail, as we started to hoist it, he did not let go. In true nautical fashion, he did not want it to cause trouble by clouting one or more of the Officers, so he made sure that he kept a grip on things and was promptly shot over the side where he

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did let go. After he had been recovered he sat and shivered, despite the balmy weather, for the rest of the trip up the Orwell.

The actual trip up the river was fairly uneventful, what wind there was, was from the East and we managed to do most of the trip without changing tack more than twice, as I remember.

It took quite a while for everyone to relax and start enjoying this carefree life of ours, and eventually, even the Officers seemed to mellow and not mind all the chatter and joking which was going on.

When we arrived at our destination, we were able to go alongside the river bank, which was just slightly higher than the sides of the cutter, and two able bodied crew members were sent ashore to hammer in two stakes to secure to boat and then to take the tents, food and kit as they were handed up to them.

The field was flat and surprisingly dry. We had three tents, two Army "Bell Tents" and one smaller tent for the stores etc. We rigged the two Bell tents with a lot of skylarking and shouting, whilst the Officers went off for a walk. They had actually gone to see the Farmer to let him know that we had arrived, and no doubt to receive some of his hospitality. When they returned, we were informed that they would be sleeping in one of the tents and us lads would have the other. This wasn't too bad, as the tents were 20 man sized so there would be enough room for the 10 of us without having to crush up anywhere.

The next job was to go looking for stone etc., to make up a fireplace so that we could boil up the water for our tea, which was now overdue as the time had sailed by and it was almost 2100. However we found a lot of useful stones and a couple of iron rods, which had obviously been used before for these purposes, and then "OF COURSE" it hit us that we had no drinking water. This was resolved by one of the lads finding a cattle trough in the next field which had an extra tap to fill up our utensils, we finally settled down to sleep at about 2330 and promptly all fell fast asleep despite all of the strange noises from various wild animals surrounding us. By the way, we had been instructed, not to wake up too early and above all, not to make any excess noise.

Even in a Bell tent the morning light came flooding in through the sides etc., so a couple of us got up and I decided to go for a swim in the river and I was followed by most of the rest of the gang. It's far better than trudging through to the cattle trough and washing there.

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When we had all had enough of this we decided to let cracking with the breakfast. As we had been very carefully instructed in the arts of wardroom tea making, we decided to get on the right side of our leaders by proving them with a hot steaming cup of tea to start their day before we made them their breakfasts.

We made the tea by putting the five gallon fanny on the fire, which we had got going first thing, putting the leaf tea, the Condensed milk and the sugar all in to the fanny with the water and gradually bringing it to the boil, stirring all the time. When this was accomplished, we sent off two "Volunteers" to wake the Officers and give them their first cuppas.

The first words of thanks we heard were "What the Bloody hell is this muck" . . "Don't you know what the bloody time it is" . . . (I might have got the wording slightly wrong here - but it was a long time ago). As none of us had a watch to tell the time by, we said "No It's bloody half past four in the morning, you oafs, . . . get back to sleep and keep quiet". Well of course we were all too wide awake to go back to bed so we decided to have an early breakfast and go exploring ourselves to see what we could find. It was all strange country to us lads.

Once again, all did not go as planned, you cannot cook eggs, bacon, sausages, wild mushrooms and tinned tomatoes without creating a wonderful smell, so whilst we were all preparing to have a real good feast, the two Officers decided that it was all too much to bare and joined us in the eating of this food of the gods.

Because we now had such a long day ahead of us, it still not being 0800, we were detailed off to scour the field to remove any stones and other non-grass items and build a cairn to show that we had been there.

Lunch time came nearer, so two of us were detailed to get a meal under way, using the contents of one of the 10 man 24 hour packs. Stew was decided on by the Officers, I think that they thought that nothing could go wrong with making a stew.

For those of you who do not know, these ration packs are designed to give a reasonably sized and nutritious meal to the number it is designed for i.e. three good meals for 10 men in twenty-four hours. So we got to work, opening tins of vegetables, Beef stew, Butter, Flour, Boiled sweets, Ships Biscuits, Treacle Pudding, etc., etc., etc., When we had assembled all of these ingredients together, it did not seem nearly sufficient for 10 starving ratings and, not

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forgetting, two officers. So we went looking for more mushrooms and anything else which looked eatable. We came across the farmer, moving some cows along the hedgerow and he asked us what we looking for, we told him, and he said to follow him, which we did. He took us to a barn and showed us were there were Carrots and Potatoes and Onions and he said that we could take a few of each for the day and Sunday, so we took a sack full.

When we got back to the camp- site we were told to get on with preparing the dinner, which we did. We had two 5-gallon mess tins and the 5-gallon teakettle so we boiled some water and peeled the potatoes, carrots and onions whilst we waited. We then split the vegetables up in to two portions and dumped them in the mess tins together with boiling water, added salt and pepper, stirred it all up and thought that it looked a little watery, so we popped all the contents of the ration packs in as well, just for good measure and continued stirring for about an hour. It smelled beautiful, it looked beautiful and by golly it was bloody awful - I do not think that it was such a good idea putting the treacle pudding and crushed ships biscuits in at the same time, Perhaps the ships biscuits were off or something.

However, with a little bit of "Pusser's Magic" and even more stirring things did eventually come right and a good meal was had by all. I do not remember anyone thanking me for all my hard work, but I was relieved of cook's duties for Sunday. The Farmer joined us a little late on and he had brought However, with a little bit of some lemonade shandies with him, together with some other "Stronger Stuff" for the Officers. I think it was Cider or maybe something stronger than that, because they gradually became more human after a few glasses. We were all invited up to the barn for Sunday Lunch, to be prepared by the farmer's wife who would also provide breakfast if we took all the other rations etc., which we had left, which of course we did.

I think some words may have passed between the officers and the farmer during Saturday afternoon so at least Sunday was not wasted day for anyone. By the way, we did not get up quite so early on Sunday Morning, as the farmer's wife was providing Breakfast at 0800.

We lads, of course, did all the washing up and generally cleaning everywhere around the farm but it was really well worth it when the dinner came up. We had rigged four trestle tables in the barn, and seating was for 20 altogether There

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were five chickens, each split into four, enough vegetables to sink a Battlewagon and so much figgy duff and jam roly poly with custard that it did not all get eaten. The journey back to Ganges was uneventful, everyone was happy and so we didn't mind when we got back to the jetty that we had to scrub down and make everything ready for the Monday classes before we eventually got back to the mess to find that our Instructor had arranged for a meal to be waiting for us when we returned which made for the perfect end of my very first weekend away from the Navy.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR THOSE WHO MAY NOT BE FAMILIAR WITH RN SLANG OR 'JACK SPEAK'

The **coxswain** is the person in charge of a boat, particularly its navigation and steering. The etymology of the word gives a literal meaning of "boat servant" since it comes from cock, referring to the cockboat, a type of ship's boat, and swain, an Old English term derived from the Old Norse sveinn meaning boy or servant.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coxswain>

H.M.S. Ganges was a boy's training establishment in Shotley, near Ipswich. Notorious for its 42m high mast the yardarms of which would be populated by the trainees on ceremonial occasions and on the top of which stood one of the trainees designated as the 'button boy'.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Ganges_\(shore_establishment\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Ganges_(shore_establishment))

Divisions – a formal parade of the ship's or shore establishment's company.

The Buffer – a familiar name for the Chief Boatswain's Mate who supervises and organises seamanship activities on board RN ships and in shore establishments.

G.I. Gunnery Instructor who is responsible for all ordinance on board ships and in training establishments for coordinating, organising and teaching sailors how to march as a body.

The Master at Arms is a ship's or shore establishment's senior responsible for discipline, law enforcement and security.

Fanny: a kettle, pot or bucket-like container used to hold liquids of which the Rum fanny was probably the best known.

DEATH OF A DUMMY LOAD

Tony Jones G7ETW #5159

There are three things a shack cannot have enough of: power supplies, RF adaptors and dummy loads. I'm all right for adaptors - the box I cannot lift with one hand - and my four PSUs give good service, but I only had two dummy loads so when my London radio society, the Radio Society of Harrow, had a DL150 50W dummy load listed in a Silent Key sale I bought it for the princely sum of £10.

When I got it, I put it away without testing it. I mean, it's a dummy load; what can possibly be wrong with it?

Well, quite a lot it seems. I've just tried to use it and it's obviously not 50 Ohms. As Pic 1 shows, it's actually 196 kOhms. This does seem rather a lot. Do I bin it, or investigate? £10 isn't a lot, but I hate to think I've simply wasted it. Let's see if anything can be done.



Pic. 1

Ingress

Getting into a dummy load like this - circular, with fins - is not easy. The PL259 is on a flange and it won't unscrew or shift one iota. All my pliers are doing is damaging the flange.

'It's like a ship in a bottle', my wife chips in, observing my efforts. 'The other end must open'!

Well, yes, it must; I was just getting there. The non-plug end has a central brass plug just larger than a new penny, flush with the rest of the end. It can't have been screwed in; it must have been forced into place. It's not alien technology, so it must come out.



Pic. 2

Somehow....

BFI – Brute Force and Ignorance - gets a bad press, don't you think? Pic 2 shows my chosen access methodology. I can drill the plug and hoik it out.

One hole later, out flies the plug assisted on its way by a meaty screwdriver. Cortez had his men burn his boats; now I know how that felt.

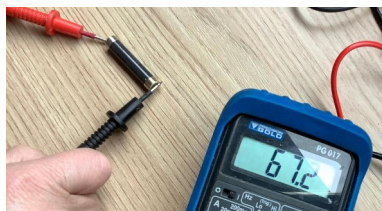
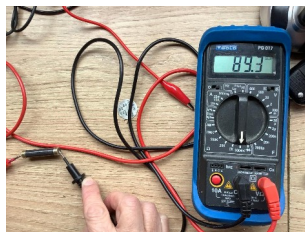
Inside the dummy load

Now I can see in, the 'ship and bottle' analogy is a good one. The contents are simplicity itself: a central brass spindle running from the PL259 pin to the now-gone brass plug.

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I remove the spindle, then remove the resistor, which is marked '50J' suggesting 50 Ohms, but it actually reads 89 Ohms (see Pic 3). The brass contacts show a black deposit, and do not feel clean.

A minute's work with some emery cloth gets the contacts shining. Pic 4 shows the real resistance has



Pic. 4

risen, over the years, to 67 Ohms. I've seen *Pic. 3* this happen before, but never to more than about 60 Ohms. This dummy load has clearly had a hard life.

To Repair or Rework?

Fixing this dummy load is not going to be possible. I'd need a 6 inch (RNARS is no place for metric units!) long box spanner just to remove and clean up the PL259, and even if I can reposition the cleaned-up spindle and resistor, how can I make a contact from the spindle end to the aluminium casing now the end-plug is gone? (Well I could have drilled through the aluminium and put some tinned copper wire across a diameter and soldered that to the brass spindle then pulled it tight before securing it with a pair of small screws into the outside of the finned casing, I thought later. But I'm writing this in piece in the vivid present tense and that hasn't occurred to me yet.)

I can scrap the casing but recycle the resistor. I have an off-cut of copper clad board from the Band Pass Filters project (which is still ongoing) that's just aching for a job, so I can mount the resistor on that with an RF socket. It's not 50 Ohms but that can be useful eg for checking the accuracy of VSWR meters.

(What I mean is, on a 50 Ohm load the needle on a VSWR meter hardly moves, so seeing variations from an expected 1.00 reading isn't easy. Whereas a 67 Ohms load should be read as VSWR 1.3 to 1.4 and differences from that are easily observable.)

But back to the rebuild. The addition of a diode and a capacitor will give me an absorption RF power meter - that is, one in which the RF power is dissipated in a resistor and the waveform rectified, allowing a DC measurement.

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A 50 Ohms load with 1W 'RMS' (in blips because expressing power in RMS is not strictly correct) coming in has 7V RMS (no blips; for voltage and current it is correct usage) voltage across it. That's 10V peak. For 10W in, this voltage is 23V and for 100W it's 70V. This voltage rapidly rises, so low-voltage resistors, diodes and smoothing capacitors won't do.

The rebuilt Dummy Load

Pic 5 shows the rear of my recycled 73 Ohm power meter. The original DL150 was rated 150W, but that wasn't continuous (and trading standards were less strict back then!) At 10W my resistor, missing its aluminium heatsink, gets warm to the touch so this is, at best, a modest power meter.



But, I hear you saying, it's not 50 Ohms; it won't be right. No: it won't be 'NASA' right. A 67 Ohm load will reflect 2.1% of power, so this simple junk box device this measures 97.9% of the power coming out of a radio. Even very expensive sampling-type power meters are not as good as that.

Components

The front has a BNC and two 4mm sockets.

The resistor needs to be held off from the board. I used hot glue.

I'm using a 100V Schottky diode because the forward voltage drop is only 300mV.

A germanium diode would do, for the same reason, but like so many 'old school' radio components, these are expensive and hard to find. For real nit-picker accuracy, this voltage has to be added back in to whatever the DMM sees.

My 100 nF smoothing capacitor is living on borrowed time, I admit. It needs to be 100V working voltage (at least) and this one is much too low. I shall have to be careful what radios I test this with!

Conclusion

My £10 hasn't been wasted. Useless as it was on arrival, I now have a useful dummy load which also measures RF power.

I have since bought another Silent Key dummy load. This one I'm told is new, and it certainly looks it, but I haven't done any testing yet. Lightning never strikes twice, right?

‘THE MAN WHO COULD DO EVERYTHING’³ CAPTAIN ROBERT RYDER RN, VC

Stephen Palmer, GM0EQS #2436

During the past few years, the author of this article has written a number of biographies. All have been about people of interest and achievement – and some have made a significant contribution to the life and history of the Falkland Islands. Just occasionally he has come across someone who’s life was so extraordinary, so packed with adventure and achievement, that it is hard to comprehend how one person can pack so much into one lifetime. Robert Ryder was such a person.

Robert Edward Dudley Ryder (known as ‘Red’ because of his initials; also known to family and friends as ‘Bob’)



‘Red’ Ryder

was a naval officer, and the recipient of the Victoria Cross. He was the captain and sailing master of the *Penola* 1934-1936 - the expedition ship of the British Grahamland Expedition (BGLE). During his time with the BGLE expedition he proved to be a consummate seaman and navigator, and the vessel made a number of visits to the Falkland Islands and South Georgia in the 1930s.



Penola

↪ Attributed to Jason Beattie, grandson of the captain of HMS *Campbeltown*: Giles Whittell; *The greatest raid – St Nazaire 1942: The heroic story of Operation Chariot*; Penguin Books; p21.

⁴ Charles Ryder oversaw the survey work on the Younghusband expedition to Tibet in 1904. During this expedition he measured the height of Mount Everest with remarkable accuracy as 29,002 feet (now given as 29,029 feet). See: Craig Storti; *The hunt for Mount Everest*; Pub. John Murray; 2021. Charles Ryder took many photographs during the expedition to Tibet. These photographs and his reports on the journey are available at the Ryder archives: <https://ryderarchives.weebly.com/tibet.html> also:

note, and he was an important influence on his son, passing on to him a love of map making and imparting a spirit of adventure.

The Ryders were a distinguished family who numbered among their ancestors an admiral and a bishop. He was a great-grandson of the Right Reverend Henry Ryder (successively Bishop of Gloucester, from 1815, and Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, from 1824) – who was himself the youngest son of Nathaniel Ryder, 1st Baron Harrowby.

Robert Ryder had two brothers; both of whom were killed in the Second World War. Major Lisle Charles Dudley Ryder (Royal Norfolk Regiment) was murdered in the Le Paradis massacre of May 1940 in France – and Major Ernle Terrick Dudley Ryder (Gurkha Rifles) who disappeared at sea off the coast of Sumatra, in February 1942, while evading capture by the Japanese army, after the fall of Singapore.

Robert Ryder was educated at Cheltenham College, excelling at sport – he was also top of his class in drawing and art. He later became an artist of considerable skill, before he entered the Royal Navy, in 1926, at HMS *Thunderer*, at Plymouth. At the end of his initial training, he passed out as the outstanding cadet of the year. He served as a Midshipman in the battleship HMS *Ramillies* from 1927 to 1929. During this period, he played rugby for the United Services XV and twice sailed as navigator, in ocean racing yachts, in the demanding Fastnet Race. He volunteered for the submarine service, and as a Lieutenant, and he was appointed to the submarine HMS *Olympus*, which was in refit in Devonport.

On 1 April 1930 the *Olympus*, (in company with HM submarine *Pathian*) sailed for Hong Kong to join the 4th Flotilla, as part of the China Fleet. Ryder, at the age of 22, was responsible for navigating both submarines throughout the lengthy passage. The two submarines arrived in Hong Kong on 6 June 1930 – exactly on schedule, and in record time for such a passage. Ryder was congratulated by the Commander in Chief for ‘his conspicuous zeal and thoroughness ... His excellence in navigation had come to his superior’s notice.’⁶



HMS Olympus

Ryder also commanded several expeditions. This included captaining the ketch *Tai-Mo-Shan*⁷ on a 16,217-mile voyage from Hong Kong to Dartmouth, England during 1933–

<https://ryderarchives.weebly.com/colonel-charles--ida-ryder.html>

⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Sir Francis Edward Younghusband, KCSI KCIE (31 May 1863 – 31 July 1942) was a British Army officer, explorer, and spiritual writer. He is remembered for his travels in the Far East and Central Asia; especially the 1904 British expedition to Tibet. Younghusband held positions including British commissioner to Tibet and President of the Royal Geographical Society.

⁶ *In command at St Nazaire – a reluctant hero; the life of Captain Robert Ryder VC*; Richard Hopton; Pen & Sword; 2011; p.14

⁷ *Tai-Mo-Shan* is named after the highest peak in Hong Kong. This classic yacht (as of 2022) is moored in Greece, and it appeared in the film *Mama Mia*. It was built in 1932 by the Whampoa Dock Company, in Hong Kong. She was very sturdily built from teak planking.

1934. Ryder personally supervised the design and construction of *Tai-Mo-Shan*, and in company with four other junior naval officers, he ‘chose to sail the wrong way around the world against the prevailing winds (via Japan, Alaska and the Panama Canal) and with no engine as insurance.’⁸ The passage back to the UK was later described as one of the greatest blue water voyages of the inter-war years – especially given the fact of the relative youthfulness of the crew, that they were sailing a largely untried yacht design - and that Ryder was the only one of the crew that had any worthwhile experience of ocean sailing. The voyage was much admired by the top brass in the Royal Navy – the Second Sea Lord (Admiral Sir Dudley Pound) travelled down from London to welcome the crew home. A telegram from HM King George V ‘welcomed the officers of the *Tai-Mo-Shan* on their safe arrival home after their eventful voyage from China.’⁹

The voyage had marked all five of the crew as resourceful, intrepid and adventurous young officers. Important men at the highest level of the Service had taken note. This reputation was more than justified during the war to come when between them the crew won a Victoria Cross, and no fewer than four awards of the Distinguished Service Order ... [two winning a DSO and Bar].¹⁰

During the voyage back to the UK Ryder learnt that the Admiralty was looking for ‘a Lieutenant capable of commanding and navigating a 112 ft topsail schooner for a three-year voyage to the Antarctic.’ Ryder immediately applied for the job, and he was appointed to be the master of the *Penola* – the expedition ship of the British Graham Land Expedition (BGLE). (Robert Ryder’s brother – Lisle – also joined the crew of the *Penola* as Second Officer. Lisle was an extremely proficient carpenter).

The British Graham Land expedition was a geophysical and exploration expedition to Graham Land in Antarctica between 1934 and 1937, under the leadership of John Rymill.¹¹ The expedition used a combination of traditional and modern practices in Antarctic exploration, using both dog teams and motor sledges as well as a single-engine aircraft for aerial surveys. The expedition was largely a privately sponsored Antarctic expedition, operating on a very small budget. Surveying and exploration mapped 1,000 miles of the Antarctic peninsula. The expedition became the benchmark for subsequent British scientific research in Antarctica – in the work of Operation Tabarin, the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS) and in the development the British Antarctic Survey (BAS).

⁸ *ibid* p.26

⁹ *ibid* p. 52

¹⁰ *ibid* p. 53

¹¹ In 1938, after completing the official account of the expedition Southern Lights, Rymill married Dr. Eleanor Mary Francis (17 June 1911 – 14 April 2003), a geographer whom he had met at Cambridge. They returned to Australia to live at and manage the Old Penola Estate, and Rymill served as a district councillor. During World War II he was commissioned in the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve. He died on 7 September 1968, like his father, as the result of a car accident, survived by his wife and their two sons and was buried at New Penola cemetery.

The BGLE expedition ship was an elderly three-masted sailing ship christened the *Penola*,¹² which had very unreliable auxiliary engines. Built in Brittany, France in 1908, the three masted topsail schooner (137 tons) was built for the Icelandic cod fisheries and named *Alcyon*. It was later converted into a yacht and named *Navaho*. BGLE purchased the schooner for £2,750. In good wind conditions she could average four knots when under sail, and on the occasions when the engine was used (with a following gale) she could average nine knots. As a result of the *Penola*'s shortcomings, seamanship of the highest calibre was required. The leader and members of the BGLE soon realised that Robert Ryder was an exceptional seaman. In later life Ryder considered the seamanship skills required by the *Penola* to have been his greatest achievement. *Penola* left St. Katherine's Dock, London, on 10 September 1934 and she arrived in Stanley on 28 November 1934. Stores, equipment, and husky dogs, which had been previously sent down to the Falklands via Montevideo, were awaiting their arrival at the Government jetty.

Characteristically Ryder was taken by the islands: 'The Falkland Islands are one of those places that attract me instinctively. They resemble the upper reaches of Dartmoor or the North of Scotland.' In view of the length of time he was destined to spend on the islands before the BGLE was over, this was just as well.¹³

John Rymill writes:

HMS *Exeter* and RRS *Discovery II* were in port when *Penola* arrived, and both gave us valuable assistance, for which we were very grateful. With help working parties from them we set about altering the rig of the *Penola* to one more suitable for working in the ice ... We reduced the windage by sending down the yardarms and two of the topmasts ... We shortened the bowsprit by sawing most of it off, only leaving enough to carry two headsails. These alterations very materially increased our efficiency as a motor ship, apart from reducing windage, it trimmed the ship more by the stern, giving the propellers a better grip and protection from the ice.

While in Stanley both the engines were completely stripped down in an attempt to improve their reliability. The engineer's report on the state of the engines was not encouraging. The bed on which the engines sat had been made of unseasoned wood, and they had warped and split badly, making the engines shift out of alignment and causing bad wear in the gearbox.

¹² The ship was named after the town in South Australia where John Rymill was born, and where he would subsequently be buried. She was originally called the *Navaho* and was built in Kerity, Finisterre, Brittany in 1908. She was renamed in 1934 when she was taken to the Antarctic for the British Graham Land Expedition of 1934-37. 166grt. Length: 32m. Beam: 8m. She was brought to Amble in 1938 when she was bought by the Fountains Abbey Settlers' Society Ltd (later known as the Fountains (Northumberland) Trust of Swarland House) to carry timber for their sawmills. She sank after a collision on the Clyde near Toward Point on 2 November 1940.

¹³ *Op cit*: Hopton; p.60

Captain Nelson from the *Discovery II* also allowed BGLE to take one his sailors, Duncan Carse¹⁴, who had joined *Discovery II* in England ... this was a great help, as we considered, after the experience of the voyage out [to the Falklands], that a ship's party of six would be insufficient when handling the *Penola* unsupported by the [landed] shore party.

With all the work on the engines and rigging, as well as being held up by financial troubles in England, we were not able to leave Stanley until New Year's Eve. Throughout our stay in this wonderfully hospitable colony, we met with every possible kindness, especially from Mr George Roberts,¹⁵ the Director of Public Works, who did everything he could to help us.

But as soon as the ship was clear of the Falklands it ran into very stormy weather, and the engines again shifted. The *Penola* was forced to anchor at Port Harriet. The only solution was the drastic step of blocking the beds with reinforced concrete. The ship returned to Stanley and the necessary cement was purchased. Rymill and Ryder then decided that in order not to lose the coming open summer season on the Antarctic peninsula to disconnect the engines and to carry on under sail alone – the engines could be repaired during the following winter. Fortunately, during their stay in Stanley, the ship's crew had taken all the sails to the Town Hall and laid them out for repair in the main hall. Robert Ryder's ship handling skills would now be tested in very difficult circumstances. To add to Ryder's concerns, it was discovered that the ship's foremast was rotten at deck level. Ryder's brother – Lisle – acting as the ship's carpenter, made a temporary repair.

The *Penola* sailed out of Stanley on 6 January 1935 – and the South Shetland Islands were sighted on 21 January 1935.

Alfred Stephenson, the expedition's surveyor 'was not alone in appreciating Ryder's skill as a navigator: 'Having crossed Drake Passage he found Smith Island in a fog, exactly where he expected'.¹⁶

Once various expedition bases were established Ryder took part in numerous exploration and surveying trips, and he accompanied John Rymill on Rymill's first long exploration trip using dog sleds. He made extensive and detailed maps and charts and was often found in the crow's nest of the ship directing its passage through the ice.

After establishing bases in the Antarctic, the *Penola* made several trips to the Falklands and to South Georgia during the southern winter months. The records of the expedition make it clear that the condition of the ship caused some disagreement between Robert Ryder and John Rymill. Ryder insisted that a major refit was required, but Rymill had no funds to cover the cost.

¹⁴ For more information about Duncan Carse see: https://falklandsbiographies.org/biographies/carse_verner

¹⁵ For more information about George Roberts see: https://falklandsbiographies.org/biographies/roberts_george

¹⁶ *Op cit*: Hopton; p.63

Penola left the Antarctic peninsula for Stanley on 12 March 1936, arriving on 24 March 1936. Ryder again insisted that a major refit was necessary, but again the answer was that there were insufficient funds available.¹⁷

Ryder recounts the journey and repairs thus:

We were somewhat short-handed for the trip ... but we kept up a steady 80-90 miles a day...During the night of 15 March ... the boom end of the mizzen fell off, leaving the boom swinging wild. It was not easy to stop ... it took three days to get things ship-shape again. And rather indicated that we were too short handed for emergencies of this nature ... At dusk we could smell the peat smoke from Stanley, 70 miles up wind of us, and at daybreak the following morning, 24 March, we rounded Cape Pembroke ... the wind was dead ahead ... we found our progress stopped ... it took us three hours to enter Port William and Stanley Harbour.

The friendliness of the Falkland Islanders impressed us all, and greatly added to joy of our arrival. Presents of such things as eggs, milk, vegetables, and flowers ... were showered upon us, and the hospitality and kindness throughout our stay in Stanley helped to make the time pass all too quickly. The day after our arrival we shifted berth to alongside the Government jetty ... here we could enjoy a feeling of entire security which we had not known for many months

During his stay in the Falklands Ryder made a number of visits to the Teal Inlet farm of Jack Felton¹⁸ - and he much enjoying riding out into Camp with Eileen, Jack Felton's daughter.

Fortunately, the Vestfold Whaling Company in South Georgia offered assistance, including free use of the company's floating dock. The repair facilities were located at Stromness Harbour, and it was the major ship repair yard on South Georgia, operated by Salvesen of Leith.

On 3 August the *Penola* sailed for South Georgia, arriving at Stromness on 12 August. The whaling stations, especially Salvesen, provided a great deal of help during the refit – including the use of the floating dock. It was found that the propellers had worn completely though their shaft bearings. New bearings were manufactured in the workshops at Stromness. Ryder recalled that:

Husvik spared us their best carpenter, a venerable Viking with a red beard, who filled us with admiration. The sight of him tackling large baulks of timber with his adze is not likely to be forgotten – one could not help wondering if he used the same instrument when shaving when the occasion arose ... we docked in the floating dock for eighteen days ... We got very fond of the whalers while we were in South Georgia. They seemed to us so human and full of humour and

¹⁷ The President of the Royal Geographical Society made a direct appeal to HM Government for financial assistance on 23 March 1935. In the event £3000 from the Dependencies Development Fund was granted to the expedition. See: ANT/GEN/1#12; Falkland Islands Government Archives.

¹⁸ For more information about Jack Felton see: https://falklandsbiographies.org/biographies/felton_george

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worked splendidly for us for which we were very grateful. We also found the whaling station and their equipment, their motorboat, and catchers of greatest interest.¹⁹

On 2 October the *Penola* sailed for the Falklands, arriving 1 November – a crossing of 30 days against prevailing winds – during which they sailed 2536 miles; the direct route would have been only 780 miles.

On 30 November 1936 Ryder wrote to Colonial Secretary advising FIG that he intended to strengthen the crew of the *Penola* for the final part of the expedition, and in particular during the long passage back to the UK. Three men would be paid as a crew member, and three would work their passage.²⁰

During their stay in the Falklands the crew took part in numerous Christmas activities, including a special horse race for the crew of the *Penola*.²¹ The ship stayed in Stanley until 29 December before reaching the South Shetland Islands on 17 January 1937.

Penola left for South Georgia on 14 March 1937, with the shore party embarked. The ship arrived at Grytviken on 3 April 1937. The next day Leganger Hansen²², Salvesen's manager at Leith, arranged to have the ship towed around to Stromness. John Rymill commented that:

We met with every possible kindness from the whalers, and on 17 April the shore party sailed for home in the *Coronda II*, a transport ship under the command of Captain Sinclair Begg²³. Our passages given to us by Messrs. Salvesen, which was only part of the generosity shown to the expedition by that firm.²⁴

The *Penola* sailed for the UK on 3 May 1937, arriving on 4 August 1937. She made the long passage almost entirely under sail. After a few days at Falmouth, the ship continued to her final destination – Portsmouth. 'After three years and 23,936 miles, *Penola*'s

¹⁹ John Rymill; *Southern Lights; the official account of the British Grahamland Expedition 1934-1937*; Chatto and Windus; pub. 19138 (reprinted by Knell Press; 1986) p. 260.

²⁰ Letter from Ryder to Colonial Secretary; 30 November 1936; SHI/VES/9#9; Falkland Island Government Archives. Ryder took six Falkland Islanders in total – W Halliday aged 33 as a cook; TG Hennah and S Barnes, both aged 17 as stokers who intended to join the Royal Navy on arrival in the UK; One of three others who were to work their passage was Denis MacAtasney who unfortunately contracted mild form of poliomyelitis and who required treatment at a specialist hospital. Thankfully he made a full recovery.

²¹ The Stanley Sports Association organised a Sports meeting dance on 28 December 1936 in the Town Hall, when the captain and crew of the *Penola* were guests of honour. They were presented with their prizes for winning a special horse race during the Sports meeting. See: *Penguin*; October-December 1936; P/PNG/13#79; Falkland Islands Government Archives.

²² For more information on Leganger Hansen see:
https://falklandsbiographies.org/biographies/hansen_leganger

²³ For more information on Captain Sinclair Begg see:
https://falklandsbiographies.org/biographies/begg_sinclair

²⁴ *Op cit*; Rymill; p.271

travels had come to an end.²⁵ Six weeks after her return to the UK, the *Penola* was sold for £1,700.

Rorke Bryan, in his book *Ordeal by ice: ships of the Antarctic* comments: ‘Although *Penola*’s contribution was limited by engine problems and lethargic sailing, her performance in ice and uncharted rocky shores was excellent’. Rymill described her as ‘an admirable seaboat’ – such success as *Penola* did achieve was in large measure due to the skills and professionalism of her sailing crew, especially Robert Ryder.

On 1 November 1937 John Rymill and Robert Ryder spoke at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) about the BGLE expedition. Many people congratulated the team on their achievements – and two in particular went out of their way to praise Ryder’s skill at handling the *Penola*. Sir Herbert Henniker Heaton,²⁶ the Governor of the Falklands said that he:

... had been all too aware of the problems confronting Ryder at Port Stanley. ‘As regards the *Penola*, the wiseacres of the Falkland Islands were quite satisfied that if the ship ever got south, she would never return.’²⁷

Admiral Sir William Goodenough²⁸ (past President of the RGS) spoke at the RGS meeting about the anxieties that Ryder faced as captain:

When one thinks of the many thousands of miles covered under sail, the visits to uncharted waters, the bad holding ground and unsafe harbours, and many gales of wind, I think we will all agree that it has been a fine display of reliance, of seamanship and of determination.²⁹

In 1939 Ryder was awarded the prestigious RGS’s *Back Award*³⁰ ‘for his captaincy of *Penola* and for his marine surveys.’ In October 1939 the King approved the award of the Polar Medal with Clasp to all members of the expedition.

On completion of the BGLE expedition Ryder returned to naval duties and when the Second World War started he was serving as a Lieutenant Commander in HMS *Warspite*..

On 8 October 1938 Ryder was unexpectedly appointed to his first naval command – as captain of HMS *Saltash* – a minesweeper, but two weeks later he was asked to return to HMS *Warspite* as Air Defence Officer and Second Gunnery Officer.

25 *Op cit*; Hopton; p.86

26 For more information about Herbert Henniker Heaton see: https://falklandsbiographies.org/biographies/henniker_heaton

27 *Op cit*; Hopton; p.91

28 Admiral Sir William Edmund Goodenough GCB MVO (2 June 1867 – 30 January 1945) was President of the RGS 1930-1933.

29 *Op cit*; Hopton; p.91

30 The *Back Award* was first given by the Royal Geographical Society in 1882 for applied or scientific geographical studies which make an outstanding contribution to the development of national or international public policy. It is named after the notable Arctic explorer Admiral Sir George Back.

Two weeks after the outbreak of war, Ryder was asked to volunteer for a secret mission, and he readily agreed. He was promoted to be the captain of the decoy Q-ship ³¹ HMS *Edgehill*, (formerly SS *Willamvette Valley*) which was later sunk by *U51*³² which had fired three torpedoes into the ship, in the Atlantic, 200 miles west of Ireland, on 29 June 1940. Ryder was adrift and alone on a makeshift raft of wooden planks, without food or water for three days and twenty-two hours before rescue. Ryder later confessed that ‘it was a very sad and shattering experience ... of a ship’s company of ninety, only twenty-six survived.’ Ryder’s confidential service record states that:

His fortitude and endurance are unbelievable and there are few men who would or could have survived close on four days hanging on to odd planks without food or water after the ship had received three hits from torpedoes.³³

On 10 August 1940 Ryder was appointed captain of the frigate HMS *Fleetwood* which was engaged on escorting merchant ships from the Thames, and Firth of Forth, around the north of Scotland, to Liverpool, prior to the merchant ships joining the Atlantic convoys. The ship was under constant attack from the air and from U-boats.

On New Year’s Eve 1940 Ryder was promoted to the rank of Commander and he relinquished his command of HMS *Fleetwood*, and he was then able to enjoy a few brief weeks of domestic happiness. Ryder married Constance Hilaré Myfanwy Green-Wilkinson on 26th April 1941. Hilaré (b. 15 May 1918) was the daughter of the Reverend Lumley Green-Wilkinson and his wife Myfanwy. Green-Wilkinson was the vicar of Lovel Hill, near Windsor; he had previously served as chaplain to Cosmo Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury. The wedding took place at St Peter’s Cranbourne – with Archbishop Lang officiating, assisted by the bride’s father. The Ryder’s later had two children - Lisle (b.1943) and Susan (b.1944).

On 1 February 1941, Ryder was appointed captain of HMS *Prince Philippe* - a converted Belgian cross-channel ferry, which was to be used to provide a platform for future commando operations. The ship was fast and seemed well suited to its future tasks, but it had a very inexperienced crew and proved to be a difficult vessel to handle in confined circumstances. On 15 July 1941, in thick fog, the SS *Empire Wave* collided with the *Prince Philippe* in the Firth of Clyde. Within nine hours of the collision the *Prince Philippe* sank – there was only one casualty and Ryder was the last man to abandon the ship. Although the subsequent Board of Inquiry criticised Ryder for failing to ensure proper collision drills had been exercised, he was found not guilty of hazarding his ship, and nor was he to blame for the collision itself.

³¹ Q-ships were decoy vessels, which were heavily armed merchant ships with concealed weaponry, designed to lure submarines into making surface attacks

³² The *U51* was commanded Kaptainleutnant Knorr, and the submarine made no effort to rescue survivors. The submarine was sunk by the Royal Navy in the Bay of Biscay on 20 August 1940.

³³ *In command at St Nazaire – a reluctant hero; the life of Captain Robert Ryder VC*; Richard Hopton; Pen & Sword; 2011; p.111.

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In August 1941 Ryder was appointed as Naval Liaison Officer on the staff of General Alexander, based at Wilton House. On 25 February 1942 Ryder was summoned to attend a meeting the Combined Operations HQ in London. He was late for the meeting and sat at the back of the room. Ryder later commented:

When I got into the room I could see at once that I was confronted with a formidable array of senior officers with a good deal of gold lace about.³⁴

He had not been in the meeting very long when, to his considerable surprise, Lord Louis Mountbatten, Chief of Combined Operations said:

Commander Ryder has been appointed to command the Naval forces under the Commander in Chief, Plymouth [for St. Nazaire Raid, codenamed ‘Operation Chariot’]

Ryder replied ‘Yes, sir’ I didn’t think that there was much else I could say ... I felt that all I had previously done led up to this ... I knew what I wanted. I could picture the whole action and had complete confidence to lead this force.³⁵

Ryder was appointed to be the naval force commander in the St. Nazaire Raid, codenamed ‘Operation Chariot’. The operation was a British amphibious attack on the heavily defended giant Normandie dry dock³⁶ at St Nazaire in German-occupied France, which was undertaken by the Royal Navy and British Commandos, under the auspices of Combined Operations Headquarters, on 28 March 1942. St Nazaire dry dock was targeted in order to deny its use to any large German warship in need of repairs, such as *Tirpitz*.

After a month of frantic planning and preparation, the obsolete destroyer HMS *Campbeltown*,³⁷ (commanded by Lieutenant Commander Stephen Halden Beattie³⁸ VC RN 1909-1975) accompanied by 18 small wooden

motor gunboats, crossed the Channel at night to the coast of France, and it was rammed into the dock gates. Robert Ryder led the flotilla of ships into the Loire Estuary from the bridge of the *Campbeltown*. He later transferred to the Motor Gunboat (MGB) 314.



HMS *Campbeltown*

³⁴ Giles Whittell; *The greatest raid – St Nazaire 1942: The heroic story of Operation Chariot*; Penguin Books; p25.

³⁵ *Op cit*; Hopton; p.126.

³⁶ The Louis Joubert Lock, also known as the Normandie Dock, is a lock and major dry dock located in the port of Saint-Nazaire in Loire-Atlantique, north-western France. It became known as the Normandie Lock because of its ability to dry dock the giant passenger liner ‘*Normandie*’

³⁷ HMS *Campbeltown* was a Town-class destroyer of the Royal Navy; she was originally the US destroyer USS *Buchanan*, which was one of 50 obsolescent U.S. Navy destroyers transferred to the Royal Navy in 1940.

³⁸ Beattie was awarded the VC for his actions during the raid. He was captured and interned as a prisoner of war until April 1945). He reached the rank of Captain before retiring from the Royal Navy

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The *Campbeltown* had been modified in Devonport Dockyard when she was stripped out internally to reduce her weight - and thus her draft - in preparation for passage through the shallow waters of the Loire Estuary. The ship was packed with seven tons of high explosive with a delayed-action fuse. The explosive was hidden within a steel and concrete case., which the Germans failed to find when they examined the ship. When the explosives detonated the following day, the damage was so great that the dock was out of service until 1948.

A diversionary air raid by the RAF was unsuccessful³⁹— partly because of low cloud cover and also because the instructions given to the pilots to reduce French civilian casualties to a minimum. The port was very heavily defended by more than five thousand German troops.

Once the commandos force (commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Newman⁴⁰ VC 1904-1972) had landed, they destroyed the docks pumping and winding machinery. The gunfire from the German defenders was so intense that almost all of the motor gunboats intended to transport the commandos back to England were either destroyed or put out of action. Many of the commandos were killed or captured.

A total of 611 men took part in the raid. 228 military personnel escaped back to Britain, but 169 men were killed (64 commandos and 105 naval personnel) and 215 became prisoners of war. German casualties included over 360 dead.

The frigate HMS *Atherstone* picked up Ryder and the other survivor from his gunboat at 0800 on the morning after the raid,

Ryder was exhausted. He was lucky to be alive but still torn up by having to leave so many men behind and having abandon to his gunboat – which was now leaking too fast to save ... the gunboat was holed at least a dozen times.⁴¹

Only three of the gunboats made it back to England under their own power. MGB 314, with Ryder onboard, was the last ship of the *Operation Chariot* force to leave St. Nazaire.

Ryder himself did not know for sure that the *Campbeltown* had done the trick until the Monday morning. It was especially welcome news. The previous day, by his own account, he had stepped ashore in Plymouth to be handed a bizarrely spiteful message from the Admiralty ... [which was] the confirmation that their Lordships considered him to be at fault for the loss of *Prince Philippe* in the North Channel in the previous year.⁴²

In recognition of their achievement, the military personnel that took part in the raid were awarded a total of eighty-nine decorations. Five Victoria Crosses awarded (including one

³⁹ Churchill was furious at the failure of the RAF to adequately support the raid. At a meeting after the War Churchill apologised to Colonel Newman for the RAF's failure.

⁴⁰ Newman was awarded the VC for his actions during the raid. He was captured and interned as a prisoner of war until 1945.

⁴¹ *Op cit*; Giles Whittell; p.189.

⁴² *ibid*; p.215.

to Robert Ryder), five Distinguished Service Orders were awarded, four Conspicuous Gallantry Medals, five Distinguished Conduct Medals, seventeen Distinguished Service Crosses, eleven Military Crosses, twenty-four Distinguished Service Medals and fifteen Military Medals. Four men were awarded the *Croix de Guerre* by France and another fifty-one men were mentioned in dispatches.

Along with four other men, Ryder was awarded the Victoria Cross (Gazetted 19 May 1942). The official citation for his award of the Victoria Cross reads:

The King has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the Victoria Cross for daring and valour in the attack on the German Naval Base at St. Nazaire. 'For great gallantry in the attack on St Nazaire. He commanded a force of small, unprotected ships in an attack on a heavily defended port and led H.M.S. *Campbeltown* in under intense fire from short range weapons at point blank range. Though the main object of the expedition had been accomplished in the beaching of *Campbeltown*, he remained on the spot conducting operations, evacuating men from *Campbeltown* and dealing with strong points and close-range weapons while exposed to heavy fire for one hour and sixteen minutes, and did not withdraw till it was certain that his ship could be of no use in rescuing any of the Commando Troops who were still ashore. That his Motor Gun Boat, now full of dead and wounded, should have survived and should have been able to withdraw through an intense barrage of close-range fire was almost a miracle.'

Ryder did not like the publicity associated with the newspaper reporting of the raid describing him as 'a national hero.' After his investiture at Buckingham Palace, and a brief conversation with the King, on 14 July, he slipped out of the Palace by a side door into Green Park - to avoid the press, crowds and his family. Ryder took part in the ill-fated Allied attack on the German-occupied port of Dieppe, on 19 August 1942. He also took part in the D-Day landings in June 1944.

In August 1944 he took command of the destroyer HMS *Opportune*, and within three days of taking up the appointment he was in action against E-boats that were attacking convoys in the Dover Strait. In December 1944 Ryder's ship was engaged in escorting Arctic convoys to Russia - several times the ship depth charged U-boats that were attacking the convoy. The destroyer made a total of five convoy trips to Murmansk - often in appalling weather. He was Mentioned in Despatches three times, and he was also awarded the *Légion d'honneur* and the *Croix de Guerre*.



Ryder VC

Ryder was promoted Captain on 30 June 1948 – he was just forty years old. Ryder later served as naval attaché at Oslo 1948-1950.

Following his retirement from the Royal Navy, Ryder stood for election to Parliament as the Conservative Party candidate for Merton and Morden at the 1950 general election. He was elected and served as a Member of Parliament for five years. Ryder failed to make his mark in Parliament and this period of his life proved to be both dispiriting and unfulfilled.

The impossibility of supporting a family on an MP's salary and his failure to make his mark in the Commons made his decision to leave Parliament almost inevitable.⁴³

In July 1955 Ryder became the Managing Director of the John Lewis Partnership, but after only three years in the post he resigned. Ryder then went into partnership in a chain of newsagents – which he greatly expanded from four shops to ten shops – that proved to be very profitable. In 1965 Ryder sold his share in the business and with the profits the Ryders bought the Old Vicarage at Wolferton, on the Queen's Sandringham estate, in Norfolk. He was occasionally a guest of the Royal Family, and he sometimes joined shooting parties on the estate. Prince Philip, knowing that Ryder was not a particularly good shot, once jokingly remarked “please don't pepper Prince Charles.” Ryder was an immensely practical man, and he spent a great deal of time on repairing various buildings, on maintaining his boats – and on his passion for art and painting. His Christian faith was the cornerstone of his life and he served as churchwarden of Wolferton Church between 1965 and 1977. Robert and Hilaré moved from Norfolk to Inkpen near Newbury in 1977. Hilaré Ryder died on 28 June 1982 aged sixty-four.

Robert Ryder died on 29 June 1986, while sailing on his yacht *Watchdog* during a trip to France. His ashes are buried in Headington Crematorium, Oxford. At his Memorial Service in London on 2 October 1986 the address was given by Bishop Launcelot Fleming, the former bishop of Norwich. Fleming at one time was the geologist on the BGLE expedition, and the two men had become life-long friends. The bishop said:

That he was aware of the need to curb [his] tendency to eulogy or extravagant praise which would have been anathema to Bob Ryder ... he was not only a supremely humble man, but in certain aspects a very private man.⁴⁴

Bishop Fleming did, however, draw the congregation's attention to Ryder's:

Enterprising and adventurous nature and his rigorous self-discipline ... strong sense of duty ... resolution and great courage ... His friends would testify to his straightforward integrity and honesty, and his single mindedness and as well to his utter humility.⁴⁵

One obituary noted that Ryder was ‘brave almost beyond belief; he was as resolute as he was reserved and relentlessly self-effacing’. He is remembered in a bench that sits outside

⁴³ *Op cit*; Hopton; p.203.

⁴⁴ *ibid*; Hopton p.209

⁴⁵ *ibid*; Hopton p.209

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the porch of St Peter's church in Wolferton, where he was churchwarden for twelve years. It bears the inscription: 'to the memory of Captain Robert Ryder VC RN; a skilled and daring seaman; a true leader and a Christian Gentleman.'

MORE PHOTOS FROM 30TH CELEBRATIONS



Andrew GOAMS receiving a Challenge Coin on behalf of Fareham ARS



Julia GOIUY Horneadean & District ARC receiving a Challenge Coin from Joe G3ZDF with Doug GW4BEQ HDARC President in the background



Joe G3ZDF presenting a Challenge Coin to RSARS members Rich G0ZEP Martin 2E0HVE & Lewis M6FCW

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PLEASE write clearly and use block CAPITALS

Photocopies of this form are accepted

Call-sign | RNARS No: _____
Name: _____
Address: _____
Post Code: _____
Telephone: _____
Email: _____

Advisable to check before ordering as to availability in your size

| Item Description | Size | Colour | Qty | Price | P&P | Sub Total |
|---|------|--------|-----|-------|-----|-----------|
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| | | | | | | |
| Total Payment £ | | | | | | |
| Enclose cheque payable to: <i>Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society</i> | | | | | | |

Overseas members, please add £5 to cover additional postage.

If the delivery address is different to the address above send orders to:

Please allow fourteen days for delivery and while these prices are correct when going to press, prices do vary and are subject to change

Email to Mike (tallyman666@gmail.com) or post to Commodities, RNARS, Bldg. 512, HMS Collingwood, Newgate Lane, Fareham PO14 1AS

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RNARS NETS

| UK | LOCAL TIME | FREQUENCY | NET | CONTROL |
|-----------------|-------------|--|---|------------------------------|
| Daily | 0001-0400 | 145.725 | Midnight Nutters | M0WRU |
| Sunday | 0800 | 3667 | RNARS SSB net(news at 0830) | G0GBI |
| | 1030 | 7085/3748 | RNARS Northern SSB net | Robin MM6CXJ |
| | 1100 | 7020 | RNARS CW net | G4TNI |
| Monday-Saturday | 1030-1330 | 7085**/3748 | The Bubbly Rats Net | GX3WTP/G0GBI/ G0OKA/M0ZAE |
| Monday | 1400 | 3575 | QRS CW Net | G0VCV |
| | 1900 | 3748 Primary 7088 (secondary) | North West SSB Net(News @ 2000) | G0GBI |
| | 1930 | 145.400 (S16) | RNARS Cornish VHF net (Falmouth/Lizard) | G4WKW |
| Tuesday | 1600 | 7068/3740 | Tuesday HQ Net | GB3RN |
| | 1900 | 7028/3528 | RNARS CW Net | G3RFH |
| Wednesday | 1400 | 3748 | Stand Easy Net | G0GBI |
| | 1700 | DMR | TG23527 | M0LIH |
| | 1900 | 3748 | Wednesday Net | G0GBI |
| Thursday | 1900 | 3542 | Scottish CW Net | ??? |
| | 2100 GMT | 1835 | RNARS Top Band CW Net | G0CHV/G4KJD |
| | 2000 | 145.575 (S23) | RNARS Scottish 2m Net | GM0KTJ/P |
| Friday | 1600 | 10118 | RNARS 30m CW Net | SM3AHM |
| Saturday | 0800 | 3748 | G0DLH Memorial Net | G0VIX |
| DX NETS | GMT | FREQUENCY | NET | CONTROL |
| Sunday | 0800 | 7015 / 3555 | MARAC CW Net | PC4E |
| | 1430 | 21410 | RNARS DX Net | GM7ESM & W1USN |
| | 1800 | Echolink | RNARS DX Net | Connect to K8BBT |
| | 1900 | EQSO | VE Net when condx bad | VA3ICC |
| Monday | 0930 | 3615 | VK SSB Net | Suspended UFN |
| Wednesday | 0118 / 0618 | 7020 | VK CW Net | “ |
| | 0148 / 0648 | 10118 | VK CW DX Net | “ |
| | 0800 | 3620 | ZL SSB Net | ZL1BSA |
| | 0930 | 7020 | VK CW Net | Suspended UFN |
| | 0945 | 7090 | VK SSB Net | “ |
| Thursday | 1330 | Zoom | | Details from Henry M0ZAE |
| | 1430 | 21410 | RNARS DX Net | GM7ESM & W1USN |
| Saturday | 0400 | 7090 | VK SSB Net | Suspended UFN |
| | 1330 | 7020 | VK CW Net | “ |
| | 1400 | 7090 | VK SSB DX NET | “ |
| | 1430 | 21410 | RNARS DX Net | GM7ESM & W1USN |

