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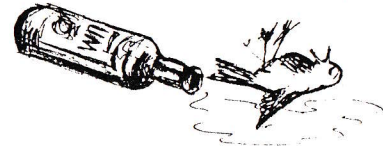


NORTHERN LIGHT



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
OF THE NORTH RUSSIA CLUB
No. 5

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12/86

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It is my privilage and pleasure to express, in this Christmas time issue of Northern Light, my warm good wishes for a Happy Christmas and good New Year to all our readers and members of the North Russia Club.

It has been a stirring year in the Club's affairs to be followed, I hope, by an equally active one in 1987.

My personal regards to you all.

W. R. K. a. b.

President

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

May I, on behalf of my wife and myself wish you all a very Happy Christmas and Health and Happiness for 1987. For our Club, may we continue to enjoy the good feeling and fellowship that we have experienced over these last two years.

We of the North Russia Club have something special, let's keep it that way. My regards to you and your families

Dennis Whitehouse



All illustrations are by Les Lawrence.



YOUR LETTERS

First, one from Canada
to our Chairman:

Dear Denis,

Will you please convey
to our new found friends
in the North Russia Club,
our sincere thanks for a
very enjoyable evening on
July 19, 1986.

My wife and I appreciate you welcoming us
so openly and I am honoured to now be a member
of such a great group.

As chairman of H.M.C.S. Nene's Club I speak
for the whole crew when I say we'd be happy to
assist anyone coming to Canada for a visit.

Again, many thanks for your kindness and
we'll be sending information for your newsletter
from time to time.

Yours truly,
Al Turner.

One from the Treasurer:

Once again, thanks to our Secretary Chris
Tye we all enjoyed our Second Annual Dinner &
Reunion, which according to the various members
spoken to on the following morning, had been a
great success.

I am honoured at being appointed treasurer
which has taken some of the work load off Chris.

May I thank all who participated in the
Raffle, as a result the club funds are better
off by £86.

Would you please note that all cheques and
Postal Orders sent for various reasons should be
made payable to 'NORTH RUSSIA CLUB'

Best Wishes,
Eric Rathbone.

And from the Raffle Bosun:

Could you please thank all of those who
donated prizes for the Reunion Raffle, specially
Arthur Goldsmith, Ron Phelps, Eric Rathbone, Bill
Gleeson, George King, Peggy Squires and my wife
Molly.

continued/over



Your 'Up Spirits' tot ilea was a marvellous
ilea Dick, I'm sure all the 'lads' enjoyed it
and hopefully brought back pleasant memories.
It helped make our Special Night a great
success. Cheerio mate,
Don Page.

Now excerpts from three letters from Cyril
Elles of Bromley to our secretary regarding the
wearing of the Commemorative Medal.

".....from Buckingham Palace my enquiries
led me eventually to the Protocol Department at
the Foreign Office. These are the people who
advise the Queen on Foreign decorations. We are,
officially, not allowed to wear it, not because
it is Russian but because medals awarded more
than 5 years after the event do not receive
authorisation.....they may be accepted, as a
memento. Although our medal commemorates the
40th Anniversary of the end of the war, the
British ruling is that the War is the event, not
the Anniversary.....as far as I am concerned
if there is a pin on the ribbon I shall wear
mine at any local 'do' where medals are worn an
to the Devil with Protocol. But, if I should
ever be invited to a big function, then I think,
discretion would be commonsense. After all, if
the Queen finds out I'd lose my chance of an
invitation to a Garden Party at the Palace and I
might get 10 days in the Tower instead.

Editor's comment: I understand from a friend that
some Army veterans received a similar medal from
the Spanish Government commemorating the Civil
War, with similar restrictions. They wear the
medal at reunions of their local association but
not on parades such as Armistice Day. I think we
could adopt the "win 'em and wear 'em" policy
and at least wear them at N.R.C. reunions.

Your views on this topic please, members.

From George Harman of Wimbledon:

"Firstly, a big Thank You to Chris for the
prompt attention in making me (an ex-Royal
Artillery gunner) a member of N.R.C."

We hope to use excerpts from your rough log-

-book of your trip to Murmansk, and from the Maritime R.A. Memento in a future Northern Light. (Editor)

From Harry Ingle of Ulverston:

Dear Editor, I went to the funeral of a very good friend on Friday, Bill Daley was the originator of "HMS Edinburgh Survivors Association", 21 years ago, to commemorate the sinking of our ship on 2nd May, 1942, on Russian Convoy. Every year he and his wife Joan, who died 3 years ago, held a reunion on the nearest weekend to the 2nd May.....Each year Joan made a collection on behalf of the Royal Hammersmith Heart Care Unit Hospital in London, who now have a ward named HMS Edinburgh with plaques over every bed in our honour. As Hon. Sec., Bill, with Joan, worked his heart out for us all, only fading with a broken heart after Joan died. He was a big man in every sense.....a worthy upholder of the Royal Navy's traditions of being the world's best and most efficient Seamen.

As our members grew older, most of them are now 70 or over, and found it hard to travel, the Plymouth and Southern members started a Southern Branch of our Association, with Arthur Start as the Hon. Sec. who will now take over the main duties of our Annual Reunion.

In closing, when Bill Daly "requested the pleasure of our company" it always was a pleasure to meet a brave and gallant shipmate - he will be sorely missed by all who knew and met him.

In memory of that great comradeship I will be proud to accept the Gold Medal from the Soviet Ambassador. From a sad shipmate and very

ordinary signalman,
Harry Ingle.

From Bob Morris of Cardiff:

Now sir, to stir up a little niggle amongst our members, I wish to point out that HMS Onslow (Capt. D 17) completed 21 convoys to and from the

continued on page 13/

A PRESS CUTTING FROM THE "EMPIRE NEWS"
Sunday, March 14th 1943

MATCHLESS IS HER NAME

This is the story of a destroyer's first year at sea - a story of daring, endurance and achievement.

One of the new 'M' Class destroyers, she was commissioned in February 1942, and since then she has escorted three Russian Convoys and one Malta Convoy; acted as a screen to units of the Home Fleet; fought Italian cruisers and destroyers in the Mediterranean; picked up more than 200 survivors and survived 269 air-raids in Malta.

So quickly did she move from base to base that for three months mail for her ship's company failed to catch up with her.

As soon as she was ready for war she was ordered to escort a convoy to Russia. It was in this convoy that she had her first taste of air-attack.

When a cruiser was sunk by enemy action while on convoy duties in Arctic waters it was this destroyer which took off 200 survivors. For five days the destroyer had on board more survivors than the number of her own crew; 40 officers were quartered in the wardroom but throughout the passage she managed to give everyone hot meals. During this operation 10 out of 15 dive-bombing attacks were directed at her.

All within the same month she was steaming in the icy Arctic and sweltering in the sun of the Mediterranean. She was in the famous June convoy to Malta in

which two Italian cruisers and five destroyers appeared. For an hour she helped engage the enemy, attacking an Italian destroyer until the enemy scurried out of range, and then shifted target to a cruiser until she ran into a smoke-screen.

"We could hear the cruiser's shells going over us and see the splashes from shots falling short" said one of the destroyer's officers. "There were attacks in plenty. I saw an enormous silver bomb whizz across in front of the bridge, it missed the ship and all we got was a splinter through the hull

By the time she had returned to home waters and been directed to escort duties with more Russian Convoys the Lieut-Commander J. Mowlam R.N. was wearing the ribbon of the D.S.O. for his work in the Mediterranean.

In a 70 m.p.h. gale not so long ago, the destroyer's motor boat was washed clean over the guard rails. For 24 hours no one could go on deck. Heavy seas dented the armour plating on a gun shield and tore off a hatch cover. "It was the worst gale I've been in" said an officer, who had been in three ships since the beginning of the war. "We were escorting a 10,000 ton merchant ship and in those seas she looked like a small coaster" The merchant ship could not cope with the weather and both ships returned to harbour.

Newspaper cutting supplied by John Horton,
(ex MATCHLESS)

Editor's note: Matchless went on to become a veteran of the Kola Run and to play a prominent part in the Battle of North Cape.



L A U G H O F T H E
M O N T H .

The dairy industry was not without humour during the wartime rationing days. Here are a few examples of the notes left for the milkman or sent to the dairy.

"I have posted the form by mistake before my child was properly filled in"

"Please send me form for supply of milk for having children at reduced prices"

"Please send me cheap milk as I am expecting mother"

"I have a baby 12 months old thanking you for same"

"I have a baby two months old fed on cows and another child"

"Please send me form for cheap milk. I have a baby 3 months old and did not know anything about it until a friend told me"

"Sorry to be so long filling in the form but I have been in bed for two weeks and did not know it was running out until the milkman told me"

"This is my sixth child. What are you going to do about it?"

"Please leave an extra pint. Pay you tomorrow, in bed"

"I've just had a baby, please leave me another one each day"

"I'm sorry about the dog bite, but he'll get to know you after a few months, like he got to know the poor gas-man"

T H E N A M E ' S T H E S A M E

Our shipmate Bill Johnston (ex-Tracker) is now employed at Fylingdales Early Warning Station, also known as Tracker Site. Here is an article which was published in the R.A.F. Fylingdales Base Magazine 'The Triball'. I am sure that it will interest you matelots just as much as it did the Brylcream Boys.

Yes indeed the name in question is 'Tracker' - essentially the reason for Fylingdales very existence, but to me something extra - a nostalgic look back down memory lane to 1943, when 46 years ago I joined HMS Tracker an American built escort carrier in Belfast Lough, as a Communications Branch Rating not quite 21 years of age.

As Tracker Site seeks to probe the skies for alien foes - so HMS Tracker was built to probe the oceans and seek out enemy craft, mainly U-boats. So, the old and the new shared a common cause.

She was built in the Pensacola Ship-Building Company's Yard in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. and leased to Britain for the duration of the war. Under the White Ensign, with a crew of about 500, of 14,000 tons, speed 16 knots and a flight deck only 420 feet long, carrying 20 aircraft, initially Swordfish and Seafires, later Wildcats and Avengers, she took part in numerous Atlantic convoys and anti-U-boat patrols, in conjunction with the Anti-Submarine Escort Groups, in particular the Second, led by the famous Captain Walker of the Starling, noted for his skill in hunting down the U-boats which preyed on the convoys, Britain's vital lifeline of supplies in food, materials, munitions, etc.

HMS Tracker could remain at sea for several weeks duration, the smaller Escort Group Sloops could not, until the arrival of

the Escort Carriers, who could refuel them at sea and thus prolong the duration of our anti U-boat sweeps to give the convoys greater protection. Prior to the advent of HMS Tracker and her sister ships, land based RAF and U.S. Air Force planes could not give adequate air protection in mid-Atlantic and on the frozen hell of the Russian convoys, so that the air cover from the Escort Carriers at last closed the gap, which the U-boats had used as their most fruitful killing ground in the heavy destruction of Allied shipping. Together with the improved methods of Convoy Support Groups of sloops, frigates and corvettes, at long last the Battle of the Atlantic and the dreaded Russian Run was being won.

HMS Tracker did her job with a pretty fair degree of success, patrolling the Atlantic wastes in all kinds of weather, from near calm to Force 9 and 10 gales, and too, on the Russian Convoy Run, she had her success in attacking the U-boats. She put into Russian waters for a brief spell, but I did not chose to go ashore, as I had already spent about two years based ashore there, in Murmansk and Polyarnoe, before joining Tracker, and did not especially have any great desire to renew acquaintanceship with the inhospitable land. That is a long and sorry tale to recount, with all it's own dramatic details.

HMS Tracker and her five sister ships, along with about 30 or so escort vessels, patrolled the Bay of Biscay end of the English Channel during D Day and after, to prevent German vessels from entry or departure during the vital D Day Assault Force landings.

My last trip aboard her was on a comparatively peaceful convoy to Gibraltar, thereafter, she was taken off convoy duties and put on to ferrying aircraft and

supplies, and her ship's company reduced by two-thirds accordingly. She was a happy ship, with a good crew and a good record. Her crest depicted the head of a Tracker Red Indian Scout - a fitting mascot indeed. I, like many others, was sorry to leave her, as we did, in dock, at Glasgow.

Just as those who man Tracker Site today have a fine record of efficiency, so your old namesake HMS Tracker in her day had an equally good scoreboard. I like to think that a little of her spirit has settled among the North Yorkshire Moors and that the Tracker Red Indian Scout is up there in the Big Sky, adding his lookout skills to our modern radar.

So you have a tradition to follow you Tracker men, going back to the wartime years, when that other Tracker hunted the foe with equal intensity, and a fair measure of success.

She returned to the USA after the war and was converted into a cargo liner, sold to a South American line and renamed 'Corrientes'. She was eventually broken up in Belgium in 1962.

Bill Johnston (ex Ldg.Coder)

R E M E M B R A N C E 1939-1945

As I stood to hear "The Roll" being called
 This Remembrance Day in November
 My memory recalls those names which each year
 Seems harder to remember.
 Friends, Pals and Comrades,
 Too numerous to name,
 Who remind me of schooldays or at
 Work, or at a game.

Something we shared as lads growing up,
 Or even on service when the going was tough.
 Be it desert or jungle, mountains or fields,
 From cloudless sky, down to the 'Cruel Sea'.
 I see them all now, as their faces flash by,
 And I say to myself -

"There, but for the Grace of God, go I".

(Fred Vaukins, Peel, Isle of Man)



M O R E L A U G H S

A couple of stories from Tom Upton, he says the first one is true!!

During the winter of 1940 when WRNS were buying up all available serge to make trousers, the following O. in C's Signal was trans-

mitted to Supply Officers :

"WRNS CLOTHING IS TO BE HELD UP UNTIL THE NEEDS OF SEAGOING PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN SATISFIED"

(Tom says the queue was four miles long! We didn't know you could see so far behind you Tom!)

And another one from the same source :-

A three-badge Barrack Stanchion went home on leave and his son said to him, "What makes your voice so rough Dad, is it the rum they give you?". "No, son," said Stripey, "It's the water they bugger it up with".

From another source:

A young O.D. was trudging through Pompey dockyard with bag and hammock, on his way to his first ship. He asked a dockyard matey, "wheres the urinal, mate". The prompt reply was, "how many funnels has she got, son".



WHO'S THIS ?----->



F O C U S O N
H.M.C.S. NENE.

Shipmate Al Turner, one of our Canadian members has kindly supplied me with the 'NENE' Re-Union Handbook. A 52 page, well produced book containing many facts and photographs. Any N.R.C. member may borrow this from the Editor. (Stamp please).

H.M.S. (later H.M.C.S.) 'NENE'

Anti-Submarine River Class Frigate built at Smiths Yard, Middlesborough.

Laid down 20th June 1942. Launched 9th Dec. 1942

Commissioned 29th Mar 43. Completed 8th Apr. 43

Displacement 1354 tons. Length 301'4"

Beam 36'8" Draught (Fwd 10'5") (Aft 14'3")

Two Shaft Reciprocaing Engines. Shaft H.P. 3,500

Speed 18 knots. Endurance 13,000 at 10 knots,

7400 at 15 knots. Two HA/LA guns. 4 x 20mm Oerlikon guns. Two depth charge rails, four throwers and 150 depth charges.

May 1943 temporarily allocated to R.C.N. manned by R.N. crew.

June 1943 joined R.C.N. Support Force at St. John's,

25 Aug. 43 attacked by JU88 with HS293 radio-controlled glider bomb - no damage.

19/20 Nov. 43 with HMCS Snowberry sighted and stalked U-boat and together with HMCS Calgary sank U536, taking 16 POWs including Kapitanlieutenant Rolf Schauenburg.

Dec. 1943 Re-allocated to 6th RCN Escort Group.

Jan. 1944 part of Operation 'Stonewall' rescued survivors from torpedoed HMS Tweed.

24 Feb. 44 with HMCS Wasquesui attacked and sank U257 taking one officer and 14 ratings prisoner of war.

26 Mar. 44. Arrived Halifax, Nova Scotia to be recommissioned with RCN crew.

29 Nov. 44. Left Scapa with Escort Group 9 HMCShips St John, Nene, Monnow, Stormont and Port Colborne and Escort Group 20 (R.N.) escorting JW62 to Murmansk.

8 Dec. 44. Arrived Murmansk with convoy intact.

10 Dec. 44. Left Murmansk with RA62 (E.Gs 9 & 20

11 Dec. 44. E.G. 20 detached from convoy to escort torpedoed HMS Cassandra back to Kola Inlet.

12 Dec. 44. Shot down German reconnaissance plane, crew of four picked up by Monnow. Ten torpedo carrying JU88s attacked, no hits from 20 torpedoes fired.

Feb. 1945. Damaged by own depth charges whilst carrying out 'Creeper Attacks' off Scapa.

May 1945. Part of escort of JW67 the final convoy to Russia. Detached from convoy with HMCShips Loch Alvie, Monnow, St. Pierre and Matane to escort the surrendered Trondheim base of 15 U-boats, oil tankers, supply ships and the King of Norway's Yacht to Loch Erboll in Scotland.

27 May. 45. Sailed for Sheerness.

11 Jun. 45. Returned to R.N. for 'B' Reserve.

Dec. 1946. Reduced to 'B2' Reserve.

May. 1947. Towed to Harwich.

May. 1953. Towed to Barrow in Furness.

Aug. 1953. Towed to Breaker's Yard at Briton Ferry, South Wales.

LETTERS CONTINUED:

"HEALTH FARM" area of Polyarnoe including the last one. On many occasions HMS KEPPEL was in company but I'll wager she didn't complete as many, I doubt if any other ship topped that, although perhaps HMS MILNE came close as she used to be on the other convoys, coming home as ONSLOW was going up. Can anyone from MILNE let us know?

P O E T ' S C O R N E R

A BURIAL AT SEA

The ship lies still,
 The day is sullen, cold -
 A shipmate's death o'ercasts it's
 gloomy spell,
 The snow falls fast and all around
 lies white -
 Silent we stand, to bid our last farewell.

How well we knew him
 Who lies before us - dead,
 No more his voice throughout the
 messdeck rings -
 The flag he served, his body now
 enfolis,
 As shroud, his dirge the lone sea breezes
 sing.

Our prayers intoned
 last rites to him we pay,
 This Seaman, who in life met death
 so brave -
 The volleys fade, and he is gone from us,
 To seek his lonely grave.

The ship moves on,
 Silent, the ranks now break,
 And if we speak his name in days to be -
 What shall we say of him when others ask,
 Simply the age-old words - He died at Sea.

Bill Johnston

(Written in 1947 but never yet published)

"Over the seas our galleys went
 With cleaving bows in order brave
 To a speeding wind and a bounding wave,
 A gallant armament."

(Robert Browning - The Wanderers.)

AND A CORNER FOR THE CHOIR.

SONG OF THE 'O's.

(With tune of the Harrow School Song.)

("Forty Years On")

Forty years on, from the Hun and the weather,
 Shorter in wind, but memory long,
 Those lads of the "O" boats,
 Now grandads together,
 Meet once again, for a chat and a song.

Cast then your minds back,
 To days of those convoys,
 Iced up above, and freezing below,
 Gaily ignoring the tinfish and bombs boys,
 Not ten, twenty, thirty, but forty years ago.

Long years have passed,
 And our memories diminish,
 But in our hearts the truth will remain,
 The battered old "O" boats,
All there at the finish,
 Ready and willing to sail once again.

New Year's Eve dawned on that cold Arctic Ocean,
 Through mist and fog, came 'Hipper' and Co.
 After our convoy, but they had to take on,
 'Orwell', 'Obedient' and leader 'Onslow'.

Forty years ago then,
 When we were all young men,
 We could not know we would meet here today,
 Older and bolder, but all in good order,
 So long lads, shall we go on our way.

From: Phil Vine (ex-Onslow)

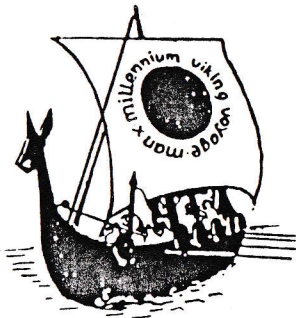
Q U O T A T I O N S

"I consider the protection of our trade the
 most essential service that can be performed"
 (Admiral Lord Nelson, 1804.)

"Others may use the ocean as their road, only
 the English make it their abode"
 (Edmund Waller, 1659.)

Odin's Raben

Cards accurate replica
of a Viking Longship



THE BOATHOUSE
THE QUAY
PEEL
ISLE OF MAN
Telephone 0624-84-3300

N.R.Cs. OWN VIKING

Visitors to Peel in the Isle of Man could quite easily bump into a character in full Viking's Rig of the Day. But dont panic, there is no need to lock up your wives and daughters, he is not intent on rape, pillage and plunder. He is, in fact, George R. Cowley, Viking King of Man, Curator of the Viking Boathouse and, a member of N.R.C.

"Odin's Raven" sailed the 1500 miles from Trondheim to Peel in 1979 as part of the celebrations to mark the island's Millennium. The boathouse is open to the public during the holiday season and George says, "Only an ex-matelot could do this job. I have met quite a lot of them coming through, then we start 'swinging the lamp' about Atlantic, Malta and Russian convoys and start fighting the war all over again."

George, you can expect visits from fellow N.R.C. members in future, I am sure.

Q U O T A T I O N S

"It is upon the Navy under the Good Providence of God that the safety, honour and welfare of this realm do chiefly depend"

(King Charles II - Articles of War)

"Our trade must be exceedingly exposed for want of convoys and cruisers.....for want of frigates" (Lord Sandwich, 1778.)

A B E L F A S T M O N O L O G U E

Now I'll tell you a seafaring story
Of a lad who won honour and fame
He was one of the crew of the Belfast
Bill Terrell Aye! That was his name

Now one day, him and Capt. Parham
Were boxing the compass, as sailor lads do
When up rushed Admiral Burnett with spyglass
And pointing said "Here take a screw"

We all looked where he was pointing
And saw the Scharnhorst oh! oh!
Admiral Burnett quite crude and respectful
Said,"Capt. Parham, yon is the foe"

"What say we attack 'em," said Capt. Parham
And Admiral Burnett said "Nay, not today"
Bill Terrell said "Lets toss up for it"
And Capt. Parham said "O.K."

They tossed, it was heads for attacking
And tails for t'other way about
Bill had lent them his double headed penny
So the answer was never in doubt

And when it came down head side upwards
We were in for a do, that is plain
Bill said "Shiver me timbers"
And Capt.Parham kissed Admiral Burnett again

Then we got flags out of locker
And strung a signal up high
It's all about Belfast and duty
But lads thought they were hung up to dry

Then we got guns ready for action
And that gave us trouble enough
They hadn't been fired all the summer
And breech blocks were bunged up with fluff

Bill's gun wasn't arf a corcker
Shells six or seven inches round
And they wasn't no toy shells neither
They weighed nigh on 165 lbs

Bill taking two of the largest
Was going to load, double for luck
When a hotshot came through the port hole
And cordite sticks it struck

Aye! There wasn't arf an explosion
Filled all the crew with alarm
When out through the port hole went our William
With shells and cordite under each arm

Just then along came the Bosun
Looking around, said "where's Billyo?"
And crew said, "He's taken two shells with him
Gone to sink the foe"

"Will he be gone long?" said the Bosun
And crew said, "as how
If he's back as quick as he left us
He'll be back any minute now"

Meanwhile, Bill treading water
And doing his utmost to float
Shouted through noise of battle
"Won't somebody lower a boat"

First up to top
And down again he would go
This up and down kind of existence
Made everyone laugh except our poor Billyo!

And when he could stand it no longer
And at last he came up to top
He said, "if someone come to save me
I'll let these shells and cordite drop"

It was Capt. Parham that first went to save him
And said he deserved the V.C.
But seeing he never had one handy
He gave him an egg for his tea

And when Scharnhorst was done for
And our ship was safely in dock
All crew saved up their coupons
And bought Bill a spanking fine cast iron clock

(Bill Terrell, ex-Belfast) With apologies to
Stanley Holloway

ALL SHIPMATE'S TOGETHER

(by the Editor)

'Six Bells' are sounded on the ship's bell, followed by the call 'Up Spirits'. No one has time to make the quip 'stand fast the Holy Ghost' before the officer in charge gives the welcome order 'Splice the Mainbrace'.

No, we are not reminiscing on days gone by, but reporting on the commencement of the Annual Reunion Dinner Dance at Nottingham's George Hotel on 18th October.

The ship's bell complete with North Russia Club inscription was provided by some of our members from the West Midlands, the Duty Quartermaster duties were carried out by Dennis Whitehouse and yours truly acted as Rum Bosun. The all important 'splicing' order was made by our president Captain Ken Clarke. Eighty eight members (and a couple of ladies who claimed to be ex-WRNS) quickly filing past the rum tub to draw their tot of Pusser's 'neaters'.

Thirty minutes later it was 'Hands to Dinner' and a total of 146 guests and members moved to the dining room where they were individually introduced to our principal guests, Mr & Mrs Alexei Nikiforov from the Soviet Embassy.

Before saying Grace, Chris Tye asked all present to introduce themselves to all others at their table. An excellent meal followed washed down with excellent wines and a great deal of nautical banter!

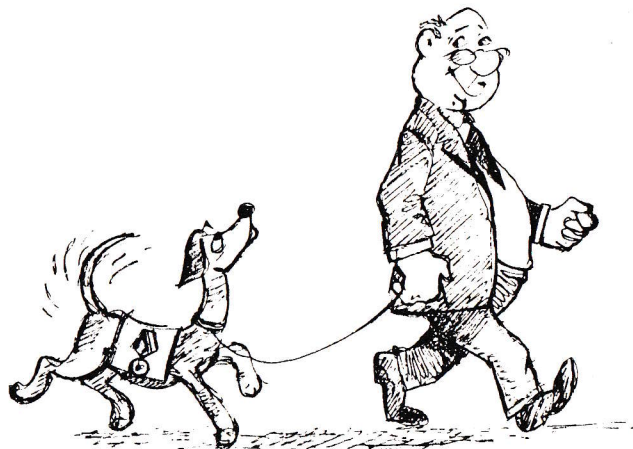
The after-dinner speeches were very interesting, space does not permit me to report them in full, however they are all recorded on tape, these may be obtained on loan from Chris. The two highlights of the evening in my opinion came during the

Chairman's speech. First, the solemnity of the North Russia Club Prayer followed by the toast and remembering of 'Absent Friends', second, and most pleasing, a presentation to Chris Tye, in appreciation of all the work he has done on our behalf. Quite independantly, Shipmate Haydn Pyne had purchased a piece of limited edition Coalport from the 'King and Country' series, depicting a Jack Tar with bosun's call. This of course led to the one and only time that we have ever seen our secretary at a loss for words.

Then followed the evening entertainment and members proved that they had not changed their dancing habits - there were one or two Fred Astaires, several with a distinct nautical roll, and the majority who danced on two left feet. Dancing finished at 1 am. and all joined in with Auld Lang Syne, the National Anthem and Land of Hope and Glory.

I will refrain from reporting on those who occupied the bar until 4 am. Drunken lot!! Undoubtedly a smashing reunion which will have to be moved to a larger venue to accomodate us all next year.

Any member who would like to be associated with the Coalport presentation are invited to send their small contribution (£1.00 maximum), direct to Haydn Pyne, 14 Grosvenor Court, Fairfax Road, Teddington, Middlesex. All subscriber's names will be recorded on a presentation card which Haydn has.



WHO'S WEARING IT !