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**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

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PRINTED BY KAMPRESS AT  
GREEN DRAGON LANE, ST. MARY STREET, BRIDGWATER, SOMERSET, TA6 3EL.



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH RUSSIA CLUB

12/93



ANOTHER BATTLE OF THE NORTH CAPE  
 with acknowledgement to Frank Armitage Hdq Cook '0'

D.C.B.

Once again, you, the contributors, have excelled yourselves with the stories and reports for this "North Cape" edition. After editing 34 editions I thought I was immune to the headache of "what to publish and what to file away for a rainy day!" Not a chance, the headache was bigger than ever - pass my rum bottle please Peg!!

You will find twenty-three pages of "North Cape" reading and I have tried to keep repetition to the minimum. However, I am sure you will agree with my decision to publish the complete London Gazette "Report of the Battle by Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser. This official report will raise a few eye-brows I am sure. Mine were raised when I read (Quote) "There was an unpleasant sea and conditions in DUKE OF YORK were most uncomfortable, few people obtained any sleep". So all of the participating destroyer and crews can join me in the chant, "Hardships! Hardships you B.....s! You don't know what Hardships are!!!"

Just as big a thank you is due to those of you who find that their contribution is not published in full, or has been placed in the ready-use locker.

I can feel more headaches coming on - early response for the "Flower Class Corvettes" edition due out next March, are already arriving!

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We know we have some members with eye-sight problems and we are looking into the possibility of transferring the Northern Light script on to audio tapes. If you would be interested in this service please let the editor know as soon as possible.

You will also find on a later page that Frank Pearce has produced a series of Battle Tapes. I have listened to the "Trinidad Convoy" tape and found it most interesting.

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**Who was the youngest member on the Arctic Convoys?** Many of you misinterpreted the request, by just quoting your date of birth. We had to relate this to the first convoy you sailed in! For example, two members born in the same year, but one may have taken part in a 1941 convoy whilst the other would be much older if he did not do the run until 1945. Also you 17 year olds can forget it, you were old hands! We have several M.N. lads who were 15 years old, and R.N. 16 years old Boy Seamen in the 'Big Ships' and Battle Class destroyers. We will probably be shot down in flames by naming these two

**DAVID MURPHY** was 15years, 4 months and 24 days when he set sail as a Deck Cadet on EMPIRE BYRON in PQ12, and **FRANK HOWARD** was 15years, 7 months and 26 days when he sailed on MARYLYN in PQ11. Now, I fully expect to get someone writing to say "My discharge book states that I was just 15 when I signed on, but I had put my age on by 12 months to get to sea under the Red Duster!"

**But why are we researching this? You were all men on that dreaded run - it was all the same whether you were 15 or 50!**

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**THE COLOUR SUPPLEMENT!** The coloured pull out centre pages of this edition are to become a regular feature and will always include the latest or special 'club news'. This supplement features the various Christmas Messages from your officers and others. Also you will find an Appeal, and a full list of prizes for our Grand Spring Draw, together with other items of Stop Press news.

*AD Jacques  
Editor*

**OUR NEW HON. TREASURER & WELFARE OFFICER**

Following the sudden death of Shipmate Eric Rathbone, committee have made the following appointments, which are valid until the next A.G.M.  
**HON. TREASURER:** E.S.R. (Ron) Phelps, 89 Tyle Teg, Garden Suburb, Burry Port, Llanelli, Dyfed SA16 OSR. (Tel: 0554 834935).  
**WELFARE OFFICER:** A.D. (Albert) Horne, 30 Hamble Road, Sompting, Lancing, Sussex BN15 0ES. (Tel: 0903 76466).

Albert has filled the position vacated by Ron, who was our Welfare Officer for 8½ years. Both shipmates have vast experience in similar positions within the R.B.L., R.N.A., and other ex-service organisations.

They look forward to being of service to you all, please give them your support and co-operation.

**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 1-4-93 TO 30-9-93**

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Subscriptions		Audit Fee	75.00
Life Members (34)	2040.00	Honoraria	1350.00
1993/94	3885.50	'Standard' equipment	15.95
1994/95	144.00	Payments from Welfare	479.35
Bank. Deposit a/c Interest	7.97	Payments to A.C.M.T.	66.90
Donations Received	764.13	Purchase of Slops	1345.60
Payments for A.C.M.T.	76.90	Costs Reunions held	2316.13
Sale of Slops	1969.26	"" Future Reunions	58.00
Income Reunions held	2627.30	Northern Light	3684.72
"" Future Reunions	2269.50	Committee costs	719.80
		Postage, Stationery, and Telephone	1474.69
		Excess Income over Expenditure	2198.42
	<u>£13784.56</u>		<u>£13784.56</u>

Cash at Bank 1/4/93 £15147.66  
Add Excess Income over Expenditure £ 2198.42  
Cash at Bank 30/9/93 £17346.08  
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The Hon. Treasurer has asked that the above accounts should be published and to issue a few words of caution. He states that although the bank balance of £17,346 looks very healthy, a large slice of that figure is already allocated. Approximately £4,000 is Life Membership subscriptions which will be progressively used in the years ahead. There is £3,000 of members advance payments for various events and reunions. In excess of £5,000 is allocated to the Welfare Fund and a smaller amount to our 'Distressed Members' Fund. Before the end of the Financial Year we will have the expense of two editions of Northern Light - with the increase postal charges which will be in effect by the time you read this. These two items alone will almost certainly exceed the present Excess Income figure of £2,198.42 giving us a deficit or the year's working. He also states that future statements will show the Welfare Account as a separate figure. (Thanks Ron!)

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DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS  
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**WEDNESDAY 8 DECEMBER 1993:** "CHRISTMAS LUNCH" at HMS DRAKE - why not go back to Jago's Mansions for 'big eats'. See Page 3, of last edition of Northern Light or phone Peter Skinner on 0237 431481.

**SUNDAY 12 DECEMBER 1993:** "CHRISTMAS PARTY" in Senior Rates Mess, HMS EAGLET, Princes Dock, Liverpool. 1130 to 1500. Phone Dick Squires on 051 487 9567.

**THURSDAY 13 JANUARY 1994:** Thanet area members' meeting, at Royal British Legion / Royal Naval Association, Margate, Kent. Contact E.Sharpe, 8 Southwood Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 0AA.

**SATURDAY 12 MARCH 1994:** HMS "BELLONA" reunion at Victory Services Club, Marble Arch, London. "Chummy Ships" invited. Contact Arthur Willis on 0932 564383.

**SATURDAY 26 MARCH 1994:** Annual Northern Dinner Dance at Stretton Hotel, North Promenade, Blackpool. Contact Les Jones at 35 Neargates, Charnock Richard, Chorley, Lancs or Tel: 0257 791632. NOTE: The draw for the Grand Spring Draw prizes will take place during the evening.

**FRIDAY/MONDAY 8/11 APRIL 1994:** HMS "CUMBERLAND" reunion in Great Yarmouth. Non members of Cumberland Association welcome. Tel: Tom Ponder on 0223 840188.

**SUNDAY 24 APRIL 1994:** Proposed date for Dedication of ACMT's Font at St. Nicholas Church, HMS DRAKE. See ACMT report on page 37.

**MONDAY/TUESDAY 25/26 APRIL 1994:** "Mid-Week Break" at China Fleet Country Club, Saltash, Plymouth. See page 3 of blue supplement for full details. Any one for golf?

**SATURDAY 30 APRIL 1994:** Proposed date for Dedication of ACMT's Arctic Memorial, incorporating HMS ROYAL ARTHUR's mast, in the Old Church Yard, Liverpool Parish Church. As part of Battle of the Atlantic week end in Liverpool.

**SATURDAY 21 MAY 1994:** Annual Southern Buffet Social Evening at the Victory Club, HMS NELSON, Queen Street, Portsmouth. 1800 to 0100. Further information when available, from Mervyn Williams on 0703 775875.

**"D-DAY" CELEBRATIONS:** (See Hon. Sec's letter in supplement). Members seeking more information are advised to contact the D-Day Society, 9 South Parade, Southsea, Hants PO5 2JB. Members from the North Wales are may be interested in the the D-Day Celebrations at Llandudno on **WEDNESDAY/THURSDAY 4/5 MAY** which are being organised by Wrexham Royal British Legion and include a Beach Memorial Service, Military Displays, Bands, Concerts, etc. Contact Kevin Blanchard on 0978 312823.

**SATURDAY 23 JULY 1994:** Annual London Weekend Supper Dance at the Gascoyne Rooms, Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London. Contact Chris Tye on 0634 232884. Please note that the committee wish to try a different date and venue for the A.G.M. in 1994 and it is not scheduled to precede the above event as it has done in previous years. See Stop Press for further information.

**SUNDAY 24 JULY 1994:** Annual Wreath Laying Parade and Service at the Russian Memorial, Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey. Followed by Buffet Lunch in Sergeants' Mess, at Pirbright Camp. Contact Peter Skinner on 0237 431481.

**SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER 1994:** Annual Dinner Dance at the Swallow Hotel, Eagle Drive, Northampton. **More details in next edition.**

**WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 1994:** 10th Anniversary of Formation Reunion Dinner (Members Only). At Trafalgar Room, Victory Services Club, Marble Arch, London. 1800 to 2400. Contact Chris Tye: 0634 232884.

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MAY 8TH 1995.

MAY 8TH 1995

MAY 8TH 1995

The 50th Anniversary of VE-DAY - "Britain will celebrate" - "Europe will celebrate" - In fact, the whole World will celebrate! But how would you like the North Russia Club to celebrate? We already have invites to participate in the celebrations in Archangel, Murmansk and Jersey. But surely, our biggest celebrations must take place here in U.K. Please give your ideas to the committee - we will consider them all!

SUPPLEMENT

TO

The London Gazette

Of TUESDAY, the 5th of AUGUST, 1947

Published by Authority

SINKING OF THE GERMAN BATTLE-CRUISER SCHARNHORST

ON THE 26th DECEMBER, 1943.

The accompanying Despatch was submitted on the 28th January, 1944, to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty by Admiral Sir BRUCE A. FRASER, K.C.B., K.B.E., Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet.

Be pleased to lay before The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty my despatch of the battle of the 26th December, 1943, off the North Cape which culminated in the destruction of the German battlecruiser SCHARNHORST. All times are Zone minus one.

PRELIMINARY DISPOSITIONS.

2. After proceeding to Kola Inlet and providing battlefleet cover for JW55A I returned with Force 2 (see paragraph 17) to Akureyri to refuel preparatory to covering convoy JW55B.
3. With the safe arrival of JW55A I felt very strongly that the SCHARNHORST would come out and endeavour to attack JW55B.
4. Fortunately my small force had now been in company for nearly a fortnight, we knew each other and had practised night encounter tactics together.
5. Before sailing on 23rd December, I had a final meeting with Commanding Officers at which I stated my intentions and stressed on this occasion that every officer and man must be doubly sure that he knew his night action duty. Such a reminder would hardly seem necessary except that within the Home Fleet there are frequent changes of officers and men and, with constant escort requirements, adequate training is not easy to achieve.
6. Should the SCHARNHORST be encountered I had decided:-
  - (a) To close the enemy, opening



fire with starshell at a range of about 12,000 yards.

(b) To form the four destroyers in my screen into sub-divisions and release them in time to take up positions for torpedo attack.

(c) To keep JAMAICA in close support of DUKE OF YORK but with freedom of action to take drastic avoiding action and open the distance if engaged.

7. The endurance of my destroyers did not permit continuous cover to be given for the whole passage of the convoy and my intention was to reach the covering position at a speed of advance of 15 knots when the convoy was east of Bear Island. This would allow me to spend some thirty hours in the area.

8. Force 2 sailed at 2300 on 23rd December, and in the early morning next day carried out a last practice attack using JAMAICA as target.

9. Meanwhile JW55B had been located by enemy air the previous day and during the morning of 24th December, was being continuously shadowed.

10. Although German surface forces had never before made a sortie to the westward, the convoy which had reached the position 70°40'N.03°10'E, at 1200 was entirely unsupported and I was uneasy lest a surface attack should be made.

11. At 1400 on 24th December, I therefore broke W/T silence and reversed the course of the convoy for three hours increasing the speed of Force 2 to 19 knots. If the enemy surface forces had searched to the westward this step would have had little effect in bringing the convoy closer, but it would have prevented the convoy being located by them before dark.

12. There was no further development that day and the original intentions for the covering force were resumed.

13. The JW convoy was not, however,

making its scheduled speed and it appeared that the RA convoy was passing Bear Island without being contacted by the enemy. Shadowing of the JW convoy together with this fact implied that U-boats if present, might be concentrating on the JW.

14. I therefore requested Rear Admiral, Destroyers, Home Fleet to take the following action if he thought it desirable:-

(a) To divert the RA convoy to the northward clear of the area.

(b) To detach four Fleet destroyers from RA55A to JW55B. This was successfully carried out.

15. I now felt confident that if the SCHARNHORST attacked the convoy, Force 1 and the escort destroyers would either drive her off or inflict damage which would give me time to close.

16. During the night of 25/26th December, the Battlefleet steamed eastward at 17 knots. There was an unpleasant sea and conditions in DUKE OF YORK were most uncomfortable, few people obtained any sleep.

17. At 0339 Admiralty message timed 0319 was received in which Admiralty appreciated that SCHARNHORST was at sea. The stage was well set except that if SCHARNHORST attacked at daylight and immediately retired, I was not yet sufficiently close to cut her off. At 0400 the dispositions of Forces in the Bear Island area were as follows:

**(a) JW55B and Through Escorts.**

In position 73°31'N. 18°54'E. steering 070 at 8 knots. 19 merchant ships escorted by ONSLOW (Captain J.A. McCoy, DSO, RN), ONSLAUGHT (Commander W.H. Selby, DSC, RN), HAIDA (Commander H.G. de Wolf, RCN.), IROQUOIS (Commander J.C. Hibberd, DSC, RCN.), ORWELL (Lieutenant-Commander J.A. Hodges, DSO, RN.), HURON (Lieutenant-Commander H.S. Rayner, DSC, RCN.), SCOURGE (Lieutenant G.L.M. Balfour, RN.), IMPULSIVE (Lieutenant-Commander P. Bekenn, RN.) and GLEANER (Lieutenant-Commander F.J.S. Hewitt, DSC, RN.), and the following ships belonging to Western Approaches Command- WHITEHALL, WRESTLER, HONEYSUCKLE, and OXLIP. This escort had also been recently reinforced by the following ships from RA55A - MUSKETEER (Comm-

ander R.L. Fisher, DSO, OBE, RN.), OPPORTUNE (Commander J. Lee-Barber, DSO, RN.), VIRAGO (Lieutenant-Commander A.J.R. White, RN.) and MATCHLESS (Lieutenant W.D. Shaw, RN.)

**(b). RA55A and Through Escorts.**

In approximate position 74°42'N. 05°27'E. steering 267° at 8 knots. 22 merchant ships escorted by MILNE (Captain I.M.R. Campbell, DSO, RN.), METEOR (Lieutenant-Commander D.J.P. Jewitt, RN.), ASHANTI (Lieutenant-Commander J.R. Barnes, RN.), ATHA-BASKAN (Lieutenant-Commander J.H. Stubbs, DSO, RCN.), and SEAGULL (Lieutenant-Commander R.W. Ellis, DSC, RN.), and the following ships of Western Approaches Command - BEAGLE, WESTCOTT, DIANELLA, POPPY and ACANTHUS.

**(c). Force 1.**

In approximate position 73°52'N. 27°12'E. steering 235 at 18 knots. BELFAST (Captain F.R. Parham, RN, wearing the flag of Vice Admiral R.L. Burnett, CB., DSO., OBE, Commanding Tenth Cruiser Squadron), NORFOLK (Captain D.K. Bain, RN.), and SHEFFIELD (Captain C.T. Addis, RN.).

**(d). Force 2.**

In position 71°07'N. 10°48'E. steering 080 at 24 knots. DUKE OF YORK (Captain the Honourable G.H.F. Russell, CBE., RN., wearing the flag of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet), JAMAICA (Captain J. Hughes-Hallett, DSO., RN.), SAVAGE (Commander M.D.G. Meyrick, RN.), SCORPION (Lieutenant-Commander W.S. Clouston, RN.), SAUMAREZ (Lieutenant-Commander L.W. Walmsley, DSC., RN.), and STORD (Lieutenant-Commander S. Storehill, R.Nor.N).

18. As JW55B had been consistently shadowed and reported by U-boats and aircraft throughout its passage, and RA55A was apparently undetected, I appreciated that SCHARNHORST would make for the former convoy.

19. While breaking W/T silence would give away the fact that covering forces were in the vicinity I decided that the safety of the convoy must be the primary object.

20. The following action was therefore taken:-

(a) The convoy was diverted to the north in the hope that the change

of course would make it more difficult for the SCHARNHORST to find it.

(b) CS10 was ordered to report his position and D17 that of the convoy.

(c) My position, course and speed was indicated.

21. On the course and speed of Force 2 and in the following sea my destroyers had much difficulty in avoiding broaching to and the DUKE OF YORK's bows were constantly under water.

22. At 0628 I altered the course of the convoy to 045 and, having received CS10's signal timed 0540 giving his course as 235, I ordered Force 1 to close the convoy for mutual support, as I wished CS10 to have destroyers with him. CS10 altered course to 270 at 0712, in order to approach the convoy from the southward and avoid, in the event of action, steaming into the strong south westerly wind and heavy seas. At 0815 after receiving the position, course and speed of the convoy from D17, the course of Force 1 was adjusted to 305 and speed increased to 24 knots.

**FIRST CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY BY FORCE 1.**

23. At 0840 BELFAST's radar picked up the enemy at 35,000 yards, bearing 295, when in an estimated position 73°35'N. 23°21'E.; at this time CS10 expected the convoy to bear 287, 48 miles. At the same time D17 estimated that the enemy's position was about 36 miles bearing 125 from the convoy.

24. In BELFAST the range of the main echo shortened rapidly and at 0900 a second echo was obtained bearing 299 at 24,500 yards. This second echo remained on a steady bearing and was held until 0930 when, from its estimated speed of 8-10 knots, CS10 considered that it was probably a merchant ship from the convoy and disregarded it. It may well, however, have been one of the enemy destroyers, detached to shadow the convoy, which are mentioned in paragraph 30, below.

25. At 0915, by which time Force 1 was formed on a line of bearing 180 the main echo bore 250 at 13,000 yards, speed approximately 18 knots. Force 1 altered to a line of bearing

160 and at 0921 SHEFFIELD reported enemy in sight bearing 222, range 13,000 yards.

26. At 0924 BELFAST opened fire with starshell and five minutes later Force 1 was ordered to engage with main armament. At 0930 Force 1 altered to 265 and NORFOLK opened fire at a range of 9,500 yards but had to drop back to clear BELFAST's range. At 0938 Force 1 altered to 105 and at 0946 to 170 by which time the range had opened to 24,000 yards and the enemy had altered course to 150 steaming at about 30 knots.

27. NORFOLK alone of Force 1 continued firing until about 0940. She claimed one hit with her second or third salvo and this has since been confirmed by prisoners as a hit either in the crow's nest or the bridge port director which caused several casualties. Other observers consider that she scored a further hit on the forecandle without doing very much damage but prisoners have not yet confirmed this. The 6-inch cruisers did not open fire during this phase of the action and the enemy may at this time may have been deceived as to the number of cruisers in Force 1 and thus made a second attempt to attack the convoy. From prisoners' statements, however, it seems that SCHARNHORST had been expecting to engage two or three cruisers.

28. After NORFOLK ceased firing Force 1 pursued the enemy to the southward but the range continued to open with the enemy's speed at 30 knots. At 0955 the enemy altered course to the north east and CS10 at once appreciated that he was trying to work round to the northward of the convoy and attack again. Possibly this was the result of an exhortation from Admiral Doenitz which appears to have been received and read to the ship's company at about this time. In the prevailing weather conditions, with wind force 7-8 from the south west, Force 1's maximum speed was 24 knots and as that of the enemy was estimated at 28 to 30 knots CS10 decided that Force 1 must get between SCHARNHORST and the convoy. Force 1 therefore altered course to 305 at 1000 and to 325 at 1014. Six minutes later contact with the enemy was lost when he was bearing 078 at 36,000

yards and steering to the north east at about 28 knots.

29. During this engagement the convoy was turned to the northward by D17 on my instructions at 0930; it remained on that course until 1030 when, realising that CS10 had lost touch with the enemy and was closing the convoy, I ordered D17 to turn it back to 045. CS10 had previously asked for six destroyers to be detached to Force 1 but D17 received my signal timed 0937 (ordering only four to join Force 1) before they were detached and so MUSKETEER, MATCHLESS, OPPORTUNE and VIRAGO (36th Division) left the convoy to join CS10 at 0951.

30. Throughout this first engagement I had appreciated that enemy destroyers might be in company with SCHARNHORST. In fact no visual contact with them was reported by any of our forces throughout the whole operation, though many unidentified destroyer radar echoes persisted during the day. From prisoners' reports, however, there seems little doubt that SCHARNHORST had three destroyers in company with her and that before Force 1 first made contact these destroyers had been sent ahead to shadow, report and if possible attack JW55B. Prisoners also state that the destroyers did make contact with the convoy and signalled that they had done so by Very lights before Force 1 engaged. If this is so neither the destroyers nor the Very lights were seen by the convoy escorts who reported nothing unusual until they sighted BELFAST's starshell at 0925. It may be that when SCHARNHORST was engaged these destroyers withdrew from the convoy either to assist her or make good their escape.

**SECOND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ENEMY BY FORCE 1.**

31. Force 1 closed the convoy and was joined at 1024 by the 36th Division. At 1045 Force 1 passed through position 73°49'N. 21°58'E. and five minutes later made radar contact with the convoy bearing 324 at 28,000 yards. The cruisers commenced zig-zagging 10 miles ahead of it with the 36th Division disposed ahead of Force 1 as a screen.

32. At this time I appreciated that

Force 2 would have little chance of finding the enemy unless some unit regained touch with him and shadowed. I informed CS10 of this at 1058 but as weather conditions gave the enemy an advantage of 4-6 knots in speed he rightly considered it undesirable to split his force by detaching one or more ships to search, feeling confident that the enemy would return to the convoy from the north or north east.

33. At about noon I found myself in a difficult position on account of the destroyers' fuel situation. I had either to turn back or go on to the Kola Inlet, and if the enemy had turned for home by this time there was obviously no chance of my catching him.

34. The convoy remained on a course of 045 but at 1122 I ordered D17 to use his discretion regarding its course and at 1155 he altered round to 125 to keep Force 1 between the convoy and the enemy.

35. Force 1 was still zig-zagging ahead of the convoy. NORFOLK had reported a radar contact at 27,000 yards at 1137 but had lost it a few minutes later and by 1200, when the convoy was turning to 125, Force 1 was in 74°11'N. 22°18'E. steering 045 at 18 knots. Then at 1205 with the convoy about 9 miles on the port quarter of Force 1, BELFAST made contact with the enemy by radar at 30,500 yards, bearing 075 and I knew now that there was every chance of catching the enemy.

36. CS10 concentrated the 36th Division on his starboard bow and at 1219 altered course to 100; the enemy course and speed was estimated at 240, 20 knots. A minute later SCHARNHORST appeared to alter slightly to the westward, at 1221 SHEFFIELD reported enemy in sight and Force 1 was ordered to open fire at a range of 11,000 yards.

37. At the same time the 36th Division was ordered to attack with torpedoes. Unfortunately weather conditions, which reduced the destroyers' speed and also the enemy's hurried retreat, prevented them from getting within range. MUSKETEER opened fire on the enemy at a range of 7,000 yards at 1222 and

continued firing until 1236. During this time the range was never less than 4,100 yards and SCHARNHORST retiring at high speed was not considered to be a possible torpedo target.

38. This second action, fought by the cruisers at ranges from 4½ to 8 miles, lasted about 20 minutes and for the second time SCHARNHORST was effectively driven off the convoy by Force 1's determined attack. The enemy quickly withdrew; his course altered around from west to south-east and the range began to open as his speed increased from 18 to 18 knots. Several hits were claimed by the cruisers during the opening salvos. Only one, which struck the port side aft and did not apparently explode, has been confirmed by prisoners but MUSKETEER from a distance of 4,500 yards considers there were others. Prisoners were agreed that the cruisers' fire was unpleasantly accurate and filled the air with fragments.

39. At 1233 NORFOLK received one hit through the barrette of "X" turret, which put the turret out of action and the magazine was flooded as a precaution; a second shell hit amidships. All radar became unserviceable except Type 284 and one officer and six ratings were killed and five ratings seriously wounded. At the same time an eleven inch salvo straddled SHEFFIELD and several pieces of shell described by CS10 as "up to football size" came inboard; fragments also penetrated the ship at several points.

40. By 1241 the enemy was on a course of 110 at 28 knots and the range had opened to 12,400 yards. CS10 decided to check fire and shadow with the whole of Force 1 until SCHARNHORST could be engaged by Force 2. Force 1 therefore increased speed to 28 knots and at 1250 the enemy range and bearing were steady at 13,400 yards, 138°.

The 36th Division to the westward of the cruisers continued to pursue the enemy in line ahead, their range opening to 20,000 yards then remaining steady.

**SHADOWING OF THE ENEMY BY FORCE 1.**

41. For the next three hours SCHARN-

HORST's course was to the south east and southward. Prisoners state that by this time she had given up all idea of attacking the convoy. Force 1 shadowed and reported SCHARNHORST from a range of 7½ miles and slightly to the eastward of the enemy. As he was retiring on such an advantageous course for interception by Force 2 the cruisers remained in close company and did not attempt to engage, shadowing instead by radar from just outside visibility range.

42. The 36th Division to the westward of SCHARNHORST and rather further astern closed the range slightly but owing to the heavy sea was unable to close to attack and were later stationed to the westward (in accordance with my signal time 1559) to guard against SCHARNHORST turning in that direction and breaking back to the convoy or to Altenfiord. Had this happened neither DUKE OF YORK nor my destroyers could have kept up against the head sea.

43. Despite her damage NORFOLK kept up with Force 1. At 1603 she was obliged to reduce speed to fight a fire in a wing compartment but she rejoined the Force at 1700.

44. At 1610 SHEFFIELD dropped back and reported that her port inner shaft was out of action and her speed reduced to ten knots for half an hour, but by 1621 she was catching up again at 23 knots. However, the delay, and her reduction in speed, prevented her from rejoining Force 1 until 2100 and for the rest of the action she remained some 10 miles astern conforming to the general movement of the battle.

45. At 1640 Force 1 made radar contact with Force 2 at 40,000 yards on a bearing of 176 and CS10 received my order to open fire with starshell at the same time. The range of SCHARNHORST from BELFAST was then 19,300 yards. BELFAST opened fire at 1647 with starshell and four minutes later Force 1 observed Force 2 engaging the enemy.

**MOVEMENTS OF FORCE 2.**

46. Acting on the enemy reports of Force 1, Force 2 had been steering throughout the day to intercept.

47. The exemplary fashion in which CS10 with Force 1 shadowed the enemy until Force 2 made contact had given me all the information I required. At one time I feared that our respective positions might be in error but D/F bearings indicated that the approach was being made on a steady bearing.

48. Soon after 1000 three enemy aircraft shadowing from the starboard quarter at about 8½ miles had been picked up by radar and D/F. One was heard making enemy reports and was in radar contact for nearly three hours after which it was heard intermittently by D/F until about 1400; it either then lost touch or returned to base.

49. During the first two engagements by the cruisers the composition of the enemy force was not clear as the earlier radar reports from Force 1 had indicated that SCHARNHORST might be accompanied by destroyers. When CS10 had confirmed that only one heavy unit was present I decided to engage on similar courses with JAMAICA in support, opening fire at about 13,000 yards, detaching the destroyers of the screen to make a torpedo attack.

50. At 1400 I appreciated that if the enemy maintained his course and speed Force 2 would engage him at 1715. In the event he altered round to the south soon afterwards and was first picked up by DUKE OF YORK's radar at 45,000 yards at 1617, bearing 020. A radar report was made including my position (my signal timed 1617).

At 1637 destroyers were ordered to take up the most advantageous position for torpedo attack, Force 2's screen having been formed into subdivisions on either bow shortly after DUKE OF YORK first obtained radar contact.

51. The range closed rapidly and BELFAST was soon picked up astern of the target. DUKE OF YORK's Fire Control Radar found the target at 1632 at 29,700 yards when the enemy appeared to be zig-zagging on a mean course of 160. At 1642 the enemy seemed to alter slightly to port. Two minutes later Force 2 altered to 080 to open "A" arcs and at 1647 Belfast opened fire with starshell, followed at 1648 by DUKE OF YORK. At 1650 DUKE OF YORK's starshell illuminated the

enemy, Force 2 opened fire with main armament and my first enemy report was timed 1650.

(Admiralty footnote:- "A" arcs are the arcs on which all guns of the main armament will bear, thus allowing them to fire simultaneously at the enemy)

#### FIRST ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ENEMY BY FORCE 2.

52. When DUKE OF YORK and JAMAICA opened fire at 12,000 yards there was every indication that SCHARNHORST was completely unaware of their presence. Although I assumed that reports of the aircraft which had shadowed Force 2 earlier in the afternoon would have been passed to her, SCHARNHORST was closed on a steady bearing and prisoners confirm that she made no radar contact. When first sighted her turrets were reported trained fore and aft, she did not immediately engage Force 2 and her opening salvos were erratic. Prisoners state they had been told they would not have to engage anything larger than a cruiser and were badly shaken when informed that a capital ship to the southward was engaging them.

53. The enemy altered round at once to the northward and DUKE OF YORK to 060 to follow and to avoid torpedoes which the enemy, had he been alert, might have fired. As SCHARNHORST turned to the northward BELFAST prepared to fire torpedoes and then with NORFOLK engaged her with main armament as she altered round to an easterly course, probably to avoid Force 1 and to open her "A" arcs. By 1708 SCHARNHORST was steady on an easterly course and engaging DUKE OF YORK and JAMAICA with her main armament. Her tactics were to turn to the southward, fire a broadside and then turn end on away to the east until ready to fire the next, making DUKE OF YORK's gunnery a difficult problem.

54. The situation as the chase to the eastward began showed DUKE OF YORK and JAMAICA to the southward of SCHARNHORST pursuing her and adopting similar tactics. Astern of SCHARNHORST, Force 2's screen SAVAGE and SAUMAREZ on her port quarter, and SCORPION and STORD on her starboard quarter, crept slowly ahead to deliver their torpedo attacks, taking

individual avoiding action from time to time when engaged by the enemy though this, for reasons given later, was not often, until they closed to 10,000 yards.

55. To the northward BELFAST and NORFOLK engaged the enemy turning away to the east until 1712, while she remained within range; SCHARNHORST replied to the cruiser's fire with two salvos. These two cruisers then followed the enemy to the eastward keeping to the northward of him. SHEFFIELD was still astern of Force 1 and dropping slowly back owing to her reduced speed.

56. The 36th Division to the north westward of the enemy altered round at 1700 to follow SCHARNHORST to the east and crept forward to the northward of her to delivery their torpedo attacks. MUSKETEER hoped to synchronise these attacks with those of Force 2's screen but owing to a technical failure in MUSKETEER's W/T equipment she was never in W/T touch with SAVAGE and Force 2's screen delivered their attack nearly 40 minutes before the 36th Division reached the target area.

57. DUKE OF YORK probably obtained hits with her first and third salvos which prisoners state were low down forward (a hit which may have put "A" turret out of action as it did not fire again) and on the quarterdeck close to "C" turret. Little is known of other hits on the enemy during this first engagement but it seems certain that DUKE OF YORK obtained at least three, the last of which caused underwater damage and eventually reduced the enemy's speed. SCHARNHORST's own gunfire was erratic to begin with but improved in speed and accuracy as the range increased until, between 17,000 yards and 20,000 yards, DUKE OF YORK was frequently straddled and there were many near misses.

58. JAMAICA, keeping six cables astern of and slightly to one or the other quarter of DUKE OF YORK, conformed to the flagship's movements. She opened fire at 1652 at a range of 13,000 yards and continued firing as opportunity offered until 1742 when the range had opened to 18,000 yards. At this range she considered her blind fire as doubtful value and

liable to confuse DUKE OF YORK's radar spotting. JAMAICA claimed one hit during this engagement.

59. By the time JAMAICA ceased firing all cruisers were out of range and the destroyers had not yet been seriously engaged by the enemy. The gun duel between DUKE OF YORK and SCHARNHORST continued until 1820 when SCHARNHORST ceased firing at 20,000 yards probably due to a hit by DUKE OF YORK which reduced her speed, although this was not apparent at the time. DUKE OF YORK checked fire at 1844 when the range had opened to 21,000 yards.

#### FIRST DESTROYER TORPEDO ATTACK BY SCREEN OF FORCE 2.

60. At this time it seemed quite probable that SCHARNHORST would escape and much depended on the four "S" class destroyers. At 1713 they had been ordered to attack with torpedoes and I could now see them on my radar very slowly gaining bearing on SCHARNHORST waiting for her to make an appreciable alteration of course to allow them to attack. By 1820 they had closed in to 12,000 yards but were gaining little. At this time they started to forge ahead and this must have been due to DUKE OF YORK's hit which reduced SCHARNHORST's speed and has already been referred to. This is borne out by the radar plot and the fact that she ceased firing at this time.

61. As the effect of this was not apparent for some time I had already decided to turn towards the Norwegian coast, hoping the enemy would also lead round and so give my destroyers a chance to attack. When, however, I saw the speed reduction I turned in straight at the SCHARNHORST.

62. By 1840 the first sub-division (SAVAGE and SAUMAREZ) astern of the enemy and the second sub-division (SCORPION and STORD) on her starboard beam had closed in to about 10,000 yards. At time SCHARNHORST opened up a fairly heavy though ineffective fire on SAVAGE and SAUMAREZ which the two destroyers returned when the range closed to 7,000 yards. That both sub-divisions were not by even heavier fire and considerably earlier on appears, from prisoners' statements, to have been due to muddled

handling of SCHARNHORST's A.A. and secondary armament. When DUKE OF YORK first engaged the enemy SCHARNHORST's A.A. armament (4.1 in. guns' crews and below) were ordered to take cover, leaving only a skeleton crew at the guns and this order never appears to have been countermanded. The secondary armament, on the other hand, seems to have suffered from considerable disagreement between the ships' gunnery officers, resulting in a series of contradictory orders.

63. While the first sub-division to the north-westward, and still closing rapidly, was drawing the enemy's fire, the second sub-division closed in apparently unseen and certainly unengaged from the south-eastward. At 1849 the enemy, his speed now definitely reduced, was illuminated by the first sub-division's starshells and was considered by SCORPION to be altering course to southward. This alteration may have been to avoid torpedoes fired by STORD who at this moment was turning to fire. SCORPION immediately turned and fired 8 torpedoes at 2,100 yards and STORD 8 at 1,800 yards. SCORPION claimed one hit, STORD none, probably due to the fact that SCHARNHORST combed the tracks. SCHARNHORST continued to alter round to starboard after this attack thus placing the first sub-division, attacking a few moments later, in an excellent position on her starboard bow. The second sub-division was engaged by the enemy's secondary and lighter armament while retiring but the firing was wild and no damage was incurred. Both destroyers replied to the enemy's fire and scored several hits on her superstructure.

64. At 1851 SCHARNHORST was clearly seen by the first sub-division in their own starshell to be altering to a southerly and then, after the second sub-division's attack, to a south westerly course. SAVAGE with SAUMAREZ on her starboard quarter both hastily trained their tubes to starboard and turned in to attack at 1855 when on the starboard bow of SCHARNHORST; SAVAGE fired 8 torpedoes at a range of 3,500 yards and SAUMAREZ, under heavy fire and only able to train one set of tubes owing to casualties and damage, 4 tor-

pedoes at about 1,800 yards. Both destroyers came under heavy fire from the enemy's entire armament as they attacked and both ships returned the fire as they retired to the northward. SAVAGE was undamaged but SAUMAREZ suffered damage, fortunately above the waterline, and casualties. Shells passed through her director and under her range-finder director without exploding but she suffered considerable splinter damage which reduced her speed to 10 knots on one engine only. One officer and ten ratings were killed and eleven ratings wounded. Three hits were observed from SAVAGE and one from SAUMAREZ. From subsequent analysis it seems probable that the first subdivision scored three hits altogether though it is not possible to say from which destroyers the torpedoes were fired.

65. This gallant attack was practically unsupported and carried out, particularly in the case of the first subdivision, in the face of heavy fire from the enemy. Three heavy under water explosions were heard in DUKE OF YORK and six in BELFAST during this time. Prisoners state that at least three hits were scored and that the ships company were generally aghast at the relentless attack by what turned out to be four destroyers. They attributed the success of the attack mainly to the bad handling of SCHARNHORST's secondary and A.A. armament. One torpedo appears to have hit in a boiler room and damaged a shaft which immediately reduced the enemy's speed to 22 knots; another is said to have flooded several compartments aft. After their attacks the destroyers withdrew to the northward and SCHARNHORST steadied temporarily on a southerly course, still making good about 20 knots though this speed slowly decreased as Force 2 closed in from the west to re-engage.

**SECOND ENGAGEMENT BY FORCE 2.**

66. During the destroyer attack Force 2 closed the enemy rapidly and as the destroyers withdrew to the northward, DUKE OF YORK and JAMAICA re-engaged at 1901 at a range of 10,400 yards, the enemy still steering to the southward.

Soon afterwards NORFOLK opened fire but checked after two salvos owing to difficulty in finding the right target. Hits were immediately scored while the enemy continued to fire at the retiring destroyers. After five minutes, when SCHARNHORST had been repeatedly hit and fires and flashes from exploding ammunition were flaring up, she shifted her secondary armament fire to DUKE OF YORK at a range of 8,000 yards. During this second engagement she apparently engaged DUKE OF YORK and JAMAICA only occasionally with part of her main armament.

67. After this the battle was soon over. Between 1901 and 1928 the enemy's speed was estimated to decrease from 20 to 5 knots. At 1915 BELFAST opened fire on her at a range of 17,000 yards and a few minutes later she steadied on a northerly course. At 1928 fire was checked in DUKE OF YORK to enable BELFAST and JAMAICA to deliver their torpedo attacks.

68. Little information is forthcoming from the prisoners about this part of the action as they were not unnaturally stunned by the success of our destroyer attacks and the pounding which their ship was receiving. They have, however, been able to account for at least ten of DUKE OF YORK's hits during this period.

69. Of the enemy's main armament, 'A' turret does not appear to have fired at all during this second engagement probably due to damage early on; 'B' turret, although damaged and filled with smoke, seems to have functioned intermittently until shortly before the ship sank; 'C' turret was believed by prisoners to have continued firing right up to the end. Most of the crews on the secondary and A.A. armament are thought to have been killed during this second engagement with DUKE OF YORK and by the time the final torpedo attacks came resistance was practically at an end. Prisoners state that the Captain had sent his final signal to Hitler, assuring him that SCHARNHORST would fight to the last shell, and that the Admiral and Captain had then shot themselves on the bridge, though as regards the Captain this is not borne out by

SCORPION's evidence (paragraph 77).

**TORPEDO ATTACKS BY BELFAST AND JAMAICA.**

70. At 1919 I ordered JAMAICA, and at 1920 BELFAST, to close the enemy, who by this time appeared to be almost stationary, and sink her with torpedoes. Both ships at once closed. JAMAICA fired three torpedoes (one of which misfired) to port at 1925 at a range of 3,500 yards but no hits were claimed, probably due to an under-estimation of the enemy's speed. BELFAST fired three torpedoes to starboard at 1927 and claimed one hit which was unobserved and considered unlikely. Both cruisers hauled round to fire their remaining tubes, JAMAICA engaging the enemy with main and secondary armament while doing so and scoring several hits. SCHARNHORST replied with wild fire from secondary armament and light weapons, causing no damage. Enemy fire had ceased before JAMAICA fired three torpedoes to starboard at 1937 at a range of 3,750 yards with the enemy broadside on and almost stopped. Two hits were claimed but were not observed as the target was completely hidden by smoke; they are considered probable as underwater explosions were felt after the correct interval. When BELFAST turned to fire her port torpedoes at 1935 she found such a melee of ships and fire around the target that she altered round to the southward to await a more favourable opportunity. She came in again for her final attack at 1948 but on firing starshell to illuminate the target it was clear from the surrounding wreckage that SCHARNHORST had by this time sunk.

**TORPEDO ATTACKS BY THE 36TH DIVISION.**

71. Throughout the foregoing engagement while SCHARNHORST was fleeing to the eastward the 36th Division, starting its chase well to the westward and therefore well astern of the other forces, had been tracking the enemy by radar and slowly gaining bearing on a parallel course some miles to the northward. As previously mentioned an attempt had been made to synchronise the attack with that of Force 2's screen, but unfortunately MUSKETEER



never gained W/T touch with SAVAGE. Although MUSKETEER's action in attempting to synchronise attacks was correct, SAVAGE would have been justified in proceeding with his attack as it was essential that SCHARNHORST's speed should be reduced at the earliest possible moment.

72. When SAVAGE's division delivered its attack the 36th Division was still a long way astern and despite the SCHARNHORST's alteration of course to the south westward nearly forty minutes elapsed before their own attack was delivered. However the range closed rapidly and the 71st Sub-Division (MUSKETEER and MATCHLESS) and 72nd Sub-Division (OPPORTUNE and VIRAGO) arrived in the target area at approximately the same time that BELFAST and JAMAICA were completing their first torpedo attacks. At this time SCHARNHORST, steering an erratic course, was altering around from the north east to the south west, but by the time the two sub-divisions fired she was fairly steady on a south westerly course and almost stopped. The destroyers closed from the north and astern of the SCHARNHORST on a similar course.

73. The 71st Sub-Division attacked the enemy on the port side, MUSKETEER led the sub-division in and at 1933 fired four torpedoes to starboard at a range of 1,000 yards, observing two, possibly three, hits between the funnel and the mainmast. She then withdrew to the westward. MATCHLESS followed MUSKETEER in but was less fortunate. Shortly before the attack a sea had hit her mountings while the tubes were being trained and had strained the training gear. As the attack developed the tubes had to be trained from port to starboard and before this order could be passed a heavy sea, struck MATCHLESS' bridge and broke all communications with the tubes. The training gear being strained, the order to train to starboard did not reach the tubes in time to be carried out. MATCHLESS therefore hauled round without firing and came in to attack again on the enemy's port bow but by this time the SCHARNHORST had sunk and she joined SCORPION picking up survivors from the wreckage.

74. On the starboard side of SCHARNHORST the 72nd Sub-Division led by OPPORTUNE attacked at the same time. OPPORTUNE fired four torpedoes at 1931 at a range of 2,100 yards and claimed one unobserved hit; two minutes later she fired a second salvo of four torpedoes at a range of 2,500 yards and claimed a further unobserved hit. VIRAGO followed OPPORTUNE in and at 1934 fired seven torpedoes at a range of 2,800 yards and observed two hits. The Sub-Division then retired to the westward, VIRAGO opening fire on the enemy while still visible.

75. The hits scored by the 36th Division are again difficult to assess as some were not observed and as the cruisers were attacking at about the same time; five hits in all is considered the most probable assessment. Little information is available from prisoners, most of whom were engaged in abandoning ship, but SCHARNHORST seems to have taken a list to starboard and they therefore consider that most of the hits were on her starboard side. One prisoner has confirmed three hits from the same destroyer, possibly MUSKETEER or SAVAGE.

SINKING OF SCHARNHORST.

76. Three cruisers and eight destroyers were now in the target area and DUKE OF YORK steered to the northward to avoid the melee. All that could be seen of SCHARNHORST was a dull glow through a dense cloud of smoke, which the starshell and searchlights of the surrounding ships could not penetrate. No ship therefore saw the enemy sink but it seems fairly certain that she sank after a heavy underwater explosion which was heard and felt in several ships at about 1945. JAMAICA, MATCHLESS and VIRAGO were the last ships to sight her at about 1938; at 1948 when BELFAST closed to deliver a second torpedo attack she had definitely sunk in approximate position 72°16'N. 28°41'E.

77. JAMAICA rejoined DUKE OF YORK to the northward while BELFAST, NORFOLK, and most of the destroyers searched the area until 2040, during which time SCORPION picked up thirty survivors and MATCHLESS six. SCOR-

PION reported subsequently that the Captain and the Commander were seen in the water seriously wounded; the Captain was dead before he could be reached, the Commander grasped a life-line but succumbed before he could be hauled in. Soon after 2100 SHEFFIELD rejoined Force 1 and I ordered all forces in the area to proceed independantly to Kola Inlet where they arrived without incident throughout 27th December.

78. The 36 prisoners picked up by destroyers were transferred to DUKE OF YORK at Kola Inlet and were provisionally interrogated on board during the ships return to Scapa. No officers survived, the most senior of the prisoners being of the equivalent rating of Acting Petty Officer.

CONDUCT OF OFFICERS AND MEN.

79. The conduct of officers and men throughout the action was in accordance with the highest traditions of the Service.

80. Earlier in the day, the resolute attack by Force 1 to drive off the enemy undoubtedly saved the convoy and their subsequent shadowing was invaluable to me in my approach.

81. DUKE OF YORK fought hard and well having drawn, for over an hour and a half, the whole of the enemy's fire. She was frequently straddled by near misses, ahead, astern and on the beam. Both masts were shot through by 11 inch shell which fortunately failed to explode.

82. That she was not hit was probably due to masterly handling aided by accurate advice from the plot. There is no doubt that the DUKE OF YORK was the principal factor in the battle. She fought the SCHARNHORST at night and she won.

83. This in no way detracts from the achievements of the "S" class destroyers who with great gallantry and dash pressed in unsupported, to the closest ranges, to deliver their attacks, being subjected the while to the whole fire power of the enemy. Their resolution and skill shortened the battle and ensured the sinking of the ship.

84. In general the speed of wireless communication and the exceptional performance of radar reflects the greatest credit on the personnel concerned and in this night battle contributed in great measure to its success.

85. Plotting arrangements in the Fleet Flagship worked well and were of great assistance both to me and the ship. I myself alternated between the plot and the Admiral's bridge, the Chief of Staff remaining in the plot. I feel very strongly that the officers in the plot must always be in closest contact with the Admiral who should obviously be on the bridge.

86. Although failings in material and personnel were few during this action it should of course be remembered that the enemy inflicted very little damage on our ships and they were not therefore extensively tested under adverse conditions.

87. I should also like to record that the accurate and concise information supplied by the Admiralty in the early stages of this operation was of great assistance.

88. I have forwarded sep rately my recommendations for honours and awards as a result of this action.

(Signed) BRUCE FRASER  
Admiral.

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THE OFFICIAL REPORT AS PUBLISHED IN THE "LONDON GAZETTE" HAS BEEN REPRODUCED IN UNABRIDGED FORM. COPY WAS SUBMITTED TO "NORTHERN LIGHT" BY LEN PHILLIPS EX "OPPORTUNE" (Memb. No200)

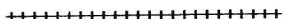
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EXCERPTS FROM "THE BATTLE OF NORTH CAPE"  
By Ernie Dodson, ex-BELFAST. Memb. N° 635

BELFAST was my first sea-going ship. After a traumatic journey from ST GEORGE, Isle of Man, in charge of eleven other boys including five wild Irishmen, we did finally arrive at Scapa Flow in mid June 1943, only to find BELFAST at sea on convoy duty. We spent the night on WW1 veteran IRON DUKE. The following day, we were welcomed aboard our own ship.....then spent many months on convoy duties to and from Russia, and carrying out patrols in northern waters .....essential to the war effort, but rather boring. Apart from an odd Dornier shadowing us, and the false alarms from U-boat alerts, we saw nothing.

Then, late on Christmas Day 1943, the following broadcast was made by Admiral Robert Burnett, "Men, this is the Admiral speaking. I believe that SCHARNHORST is either at sea, or is making ready to sail from her lair in Norway. It is therefore my intention to draw my cloak across the Hun's doorstep. If any of you know any prayers, say them now. As Lord Nelson conveyed to his men some 138 years ago, I know that I can count on your full support. God bless you all, good luck. God save the King".....the battle ensued.. .....Of SCHARNHORST's 1,839 complement, only 36 were picked up by SCORPION and MATCHLESS, but many more were seen to drift away and perish in the oily, icy waters of the Arctic.

WHY SCHARNHORST DISCHARGED HER DESTROYER ESCORT BACK TO THEIR BASES IN NORWAY REMAINS A MYSTERY TO THIS DAY. BUT TO HER CREDIT I MUST SAY THAT SHE NEVER GAVE UP. SHE FOUGHT TO THE LAST SHELL AGAINST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS.



EXCERPTS FROM "NORTH CAPE, DECEMBER '43"

By Jack Clarke, ex DUKE OF YORK. Memb. N°1212.

Jack's five, excellent pages of factual information has been shortened because of repetition with the London Gazette article.

.... the first part of December's convoy sailed from Loch Ewe on 12th with their escorts..... the second part sailed ten days later.

Meanwhile the C-in-C was getting ready to sail in DUKE OF YORK in company with JAMAICA and four destroyers..... The German High Command were not aware that the Allies had cracked their codes, so that when SCHARNHORST sailed with four destroyers the C-in-C had all the relevant information at hand. The C-in-C sailed through to Kola Inlet, consequently DUKE OF YORK was the first R.N. capital ship to visit North Russia. After a couple of days they sailed for Iceland and arrived at Akureyri on the morning of 23rd. They refuelled and sailed again just before midnight. On Christmas Day the Captain spoke to the ships' company over the broadcasting system telling us that SCHARNHORST was at sea and that we were looking for her, consequently Christmas would be a little late. After news like that I don't think many of us felt like celebrating Christmas and of course, the weather did not help. There was only one topic of conversation, and comparisons between her armament and ours. Early on Boxing Day the Captain spoke again, saying we could expect to be in action shortly.....

..... NORFOLK received a lot of attention from SCHARNHORST because each time she fired she provided the enemy with a brilliant target through not having flashless cordite (as BELFAST had)..... At 1650 when DUKE OF YORK fired her first salvo of starshell, they lit up directly above SCHARNHORST, her guns were still fore and aft, obviously not expecting company. I was on the starboard side of the flag deck and someone shouted, "She is on the port side". I went to the back of the flag deck and saw this beautiful looking ship, not realising what was about to happen and that in three hours she would be no more. The Yeoman of the Watch brought us back to earth, telling us to get back to our stations. I got back to the forrard part of the flag deck, just in time to hear the 14 inch fire gongs sound. There were six of these guns immediately below us - the noise was colossal! The two biggest white ensigns in the ship were flying from our mastheads..... The flash of SCHARNHORST's 11-inch guns could be seen each time she

fired, but we couldn't see the shells coming towards us, for which we were thankful! During the heat of the battle a rattle of bits and pieces fell on the upper deck of the flagship. A shell had severed several stays of the foremast and damaged the radar aerials... In spite of the bitter weather and what was going on, the Radar Officer climbed out of the Radar office situated two thirds of the way up the foremast, repaired and corrected the aerials and lined them up ready to operate. Another shell had damaged a strut on the tripod of the mast. During this lull in the fighting the destroyers were ordered to attack with torpedoes, but the heavy seas that were breaking over them made conditions difficult to say the least. The Norwegian STORD was the first to go in, she went so close it was thought that she was going to ram the enemy..... At 1930 firing was checked on DUKE OF YORK, who had fired over 70 broadsides of her main armament of 10 guns, but due to defects all guns did not fire every time. By now SCHARNHORST was blazing, lying low in the water, but still afloat. At 1945 she heeled over and sank, but her last moments were shrouded in smoke and none of the British forces were to be witness to it..... The signal "Splice the Mainbrace" was sent out to the fleet, and those old enough were to enjoy an extra tot of rum! ..... A big part of the threat to our shipping had been cleared, but we had already paid a big price with the losses of our Naval and Merchant ships in those waters..... The return voyage to Scapa was a hurried dash and we were to suffer from the action of the seas. Ladders on the starboard side of the superstructure were buckled and twisted and several anti aircraft guns on the fo'c'sle were wrenched from their moorings. If the sea can do damage like that to a ship of 40,000 tons, then it is left to the reader's imagination what it did to the smaller escort ships of a mere 2,000 tons. On entering the fleet anchorage at Scapa, in line ahead with Battle Ensigns flying at the masthead, ships present gave us a cheer. Christmas was a little late that year!..... We sailed south to have repairs completed in a Naval Dockyard, some of the 14-inch guns needed rebores. The empty shell and cordite cases were taken away, which incidentally took 12 railway wagons!



NORFOLK'S HEROES  
From "Destroy Scharnhorst"

In NORFOLK, the surgeons and their staffs were busy, and already some men had won their battle honours.

Leading Canteen Assistant G.H.J. Jewitt, who had been flung to the deck by the blast of the direct hit on "X" turret, had immediately picked himself up and, ears ringing from concussion, had gone determinedly about the business of tending severely wounded shipmates, bandaging the flow of blood from the wounds of men who, only a few days ago he had served with cigarettes and "nutty".

Within the smashed and twisted casing of "X" turret, stepping carefully over the bodies of his shipmates, Marine C.G. Hardy moved like a man in a daze - he had been there when the 11-inch shell arrived. To avoid the risk of further damage from explosions, and meanwhile totally ignoring his own personal safety, Marine Hardy removed the cordite from the rammers.

He was aware that the cordite might explode at any minute while he shifted it, but he forced the thought to the back of his mind and continued with the chore his self-discipline had imposed on him. There was a stench of smouldering, of burning, within the turret.

The risk of fire had necessitated the flooding of the magazine below. Two Stoker Petty Officers, Growden and Pilkington, organised fire-fighting and pumping parties which worked wonders, so that Commander (E) was soon able to report to the Captain that "everything seems to be under control, sir".

SAUMAREZ' HEROES

SAUMAREZ had been subjected to several very near misses. A frightful hail of shell fragments swept over her weather decks, ricocheting

off the steel decks and torpedo tubes, piercing bulkheads and striking down an officer and twenty-one ratings at their Action Stations. The ship continued with the torpedo attack.

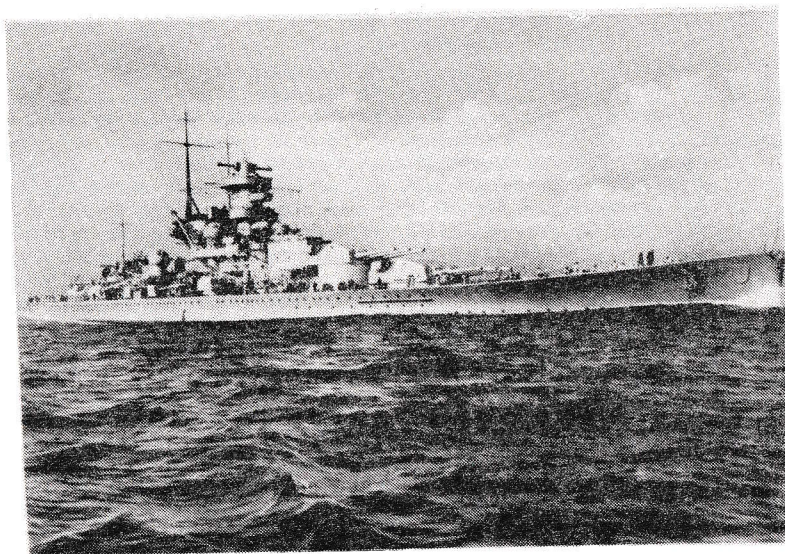
However, no torpedoes would have been fired but for Petty Officer Wilkes, the Torpedo Gunner's Mate. Standing at the tubes, Wilkes found himself in the very centre of a hurricane of shell splinters which swept the deck like a deadly scythe, cutting the crew down where they stood. He rounded up the surviving, concussion-dazed shipmates with, "Come on, the skipper's started the attack, we've got to get some tinfoil overboard". There were only enough torpedo "numbers" left standing to man one set of tubes, and anyway the other set had enough splinter holes to put them out of service.

Having established communication with the bridge by voice pipe, he obeyed the order "Fire One", then "Fire Two". At this moment another SCHARNHORST salvo exploded in the sea and again the air was filled with whining, jagged fragments. At Wilkes's side was Ordinary Seaman K.L. Bostock who, after giving a gasp of pain but, white-faced with the shock of his wound, refused Wilkes's order to go below for attention from the Surgeon - "Not till the fish has been fired from my tube P.O."

SAUMAREZ had not been hit below the waterline, but she had nevertheless, shipped a lot of water through the holes in her side, as she rolled and lurched in the rough seas. C.P.O. Cadwalleder calmly organised heel and trim damage control parties. The cool, incisive manner in which he gave his orders in passages lit only by emergency lighting and knee-deep in salt water made the mere idea of panic seem absurd.

Chief E.R.A. used some choice language as he saw the temperature gauges showing a steep rise, combined with a sudden drop of oil-pressure: the forced-lubrication system had been damaged by shell splinters. His anxiety was reduced by finding two frantically-working men who had already located the leaks and were plugging them up at an incredible rate. E.R.A. 3rd Class, R. Walker, and Stoker 1st Class, J.F. Clements, did their job well and fast enough to allow SAUMAREZ to steam onward at ten knots on one engine.

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" S C H A R N H O R S T "  
(Photo courtesy Tom Bethell, ex-SAVAGE)

ABOARD "SCORPION"  
By Eric Parry, ex Killick H.S.D.  
(Later Petty Officer S.D.I.)

The First Sub-Division of SAVAGE and SAUMAREZ attacked SCHARNHORST from 7,000 yards with eight torpedoes and missed - SCORPION and STORD attacked from starboard and fired six torpedoes each and scored two hits on the enemy. SAUMAREZ was being hit repeatedly, and having lost two officers and twenty one ratings we closed with her to help; but were instructed to "stand off", and carry on with further torpedo attacks on SCHARNHORST.

Later it was terrible to see her sinking, we engaged in picking up survivors, one of the thirty I helped from the icy waters was Gunther Jorle who seemed an arrogant 'bugger' when he was taken to our mess deck. He started to cry and when I approached him again, he pulled away and rose to his feet and hit me a feeble blow on the chest. On being transferred to DUKE OF YORK, he left his ship-mates and came over to shake my hand, saying something in German which I took as "thanks for your help" or from a matelot's point of view, it could have meant "Bollocks" - I never saw him again.

Although on Sunday February 8, 1970, I answered an article in 'The People' the challenging question - "Could you love your enemy in War"? I related this story of all those years ago and won First Prize of £25 and received many letters from various parts of Germany in response to it, together with this from someone named Eugen Diemer - "IM GEDENKEN AN UNSERE AM 26:12:1943 IN NORDMEER GETALLENEN KAMARADEN WUNSCH E ICH ALLEN SCHARNHORSTLERN UND IHREN NEUES KAKR"!

I have no idea what it means - possibly "If you want a 'Duff' make one"! but seriously although a survivor in the "Med" in 1941 - those few days at Christmas 1943 on the way to Russia, put the wind up my jacksie!!!

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THE SURVIVORS

To continue our "Battle of North Cape" epistle we use a short chapter from the book "The Drama of the Scharnhorst" by Fritz-Otto Busch.

Upon release from captivity, P.O. Willi G6dde (the senior of the survivors) placed the following report at the disposal of his former First Officer, Captain (retired) Giessler.

Arrived in the flagship, we first took our four seriously wounded men to the ship's sick bay. Then we were taken to the quarters which were to accommodate us until we arrived in England. As senior in rank I was made responsible by the Commanding Officer of the Royal Marines for the order and cleanliness of the quarters.

Any requests on our part had to be referred to the interpreter, a young ship's doctor, with whom I had several long conversations. I put this question to him:

"What is your opinion of the battle and the sinking of the SCHARNHORST? Could the sinking of our ship be avoided?"

The English officer replied: "Although actually I ought not to, I can tell you that after the action Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser called the ship and staff officers together and said: "Gentlemen: The battle against the SCHARNHORST has ended in victory for us. I hope that if any of you are ever called upon to lead a ship into action against an opponent many times superior, you will command your ship as gallantly as the SCHARNHORST was commanded today".

"I have nothing to add to those words of our Commander-in-Chief. But please keep this to yourself for the moment; you can tell your friends later on. And now I have to inform you that the Commander-in-Chief wishes to see the survivors this afternoon at three o'clock. Would you therefore have your men ready at that time? As senior in rank you will have to give the commands. Have them stand to attention and give the proper salute according to German routine. Suitable clothing will be provided."

We were accordingly issued with striped civilian trousers, blue jerseys and slippers. We also received shaving kit and combs so that we could put up a good appearance.

Shortly before 1500 hours I had the men fall in. Punctually at

1500 hours bugles sounded through the ship and the British Commander-in-Chief entered our room with his staff. I gave the command and we saluted. The British Admiral took up his stance about three feet in front of our ranks, his officers behind him. The Commander-in-Chief raised his hand to his cap and all the officers, among them the Captain of the DUKE OF YORK, followed his example. For a full minute they honoured thus in silence their vanquished opponents. We all realised that this mark of respect applied not to us personally, but to our proud ship and her gallant dead.

Then Admiral Fraser reviewed each rank - because of the restricted space we were drawn up five ranks deep - and, accompanied by an interpreter, talked to practically every man, asking him his age, profession, where he lived, why he had joined the navy, etc.

Finally he stepped in front again and said, "We honour a brave opponent even if he has been beaten. The British people harbour no hatred against you. Have no misgivings about being taken to England. Just do as you are told and you will be all right."

We repeated our salute, the British Commander-in-Chief and his officers returned it and left the room. I shall never forget the solemnity of that moment.

The next day we had to present ourselves again when we received a visit from the ship's Captain and officers. The Captain told me on this occasion that the Commander-in-Chief had ordered that the prisoners were to be well treated and were to have the same food, etc. as the crew. We were to be given every possible comfort.

During the passage from Murmansk to Scapa Flow we were allowed to exercise on the upper deck and between the aircraft-hangars and were much photographed by war reporters and members of the crew. We were given excellent treatment the whole time we were in DUKE OF YORK. Six men of the Royal Marines acted as guards, after some initial reticence, we were soon on friendly terms with them.

I should mention that in Murmansk, when we were taken on board the DUKE OF YORK, and during the passage, we saw welding repairs being carried out in this ship and in other large units. As our quarters on the lower deck were placed about midships and we had to pass several compartments many times a day on our way to the wash-room and toilets on the battery deck, we were able to confirm that the ship had many battle scars, some of them quite considerable, as for instance the torn bows between the battery and the lower deck. I asked the English doctor, our interpreter, if the ship had received any direct hits.

"That, of course, I must not tell you," he replied. "But one thing I will say; we hadn't a dry spot anywhere on the battery or lower decks. We had to keep the electric and hand pumps going day and night. Does that satisfy you?"

For six whole days and nights after our rescue I could not sleep. No sedative prescribed by the doctor had any effect. Only after putting in to Scapa Flow did I sleep for two or three hours aboard an old patrol vessel. Our own men behaved splendidly, each seeking to help the other. Eventually we were separated in London where we had to pass through several interrogation camps. Eight men later went to Canada and twenty-seven to the United States. Sträter, I heard later, was exchanged.

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**WHERE'S MY TOT?**  
Asks Charles Brown

I was aboard MUSKETEER (Capt.R.L. Fisher) on 25th and 26th Dec. 1943, I remember it vividly. But I can't remember drinking my tot on either day!!

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NORTHERN LIGHT SUPPLEMENT

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR GREETINGS

From Our Patron, Rear Admiral A.B. Richardson, CB. RN (Rtd):

I was absolutely delighted when Peter Skinner suggested that I pen a short Christmas greeting to you all in this issue of Northern Light. As you are probably aware, the Senior Service generally discourages serving officers from "writing to the press". But now, having retired, and in my first year as Patron, what better way to make up for lost time.

Having served at sea for most of my thirty-three years, and with more trips to Northern Russia than most, either as the Naval Attache, or on visits such as DERVISH 91, I have acquired a huge respect both for the North Russia Club and all it stands for,

as well as the conditions that prevail in that part of the world, both ashore and at sea. Although as yet, I have not had the chance to meet as many of you as I would wish, may I take this opportunity to say how very pleased I am to be your Patron, and how much I look forward to joining in as many events as I can. In the meantime please accept my warmest and very best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

From Our President, Chris B Tye:

In May 1984, seeking an old shipmate, who was with me in Russia - seems a long time ago! As a result contact was made with 35 "Russian" veterans who, in November the same year, at a re-union aboard HMS BELFAST, became the founder members of our unique North Russia Club. A large oak tree has grown from that little acorn.

As we enter our tenth year, we have 1,400 plus, members throughout the country and overseas and, surprisingly, still a few more turn up each week.

It gives me a real "buzz" to see so many at our re-unions, reliving the "hard" and occasional "fun" times of World War II and the Arctic Campaign of which we were all a part.

To this, our large "Ships' Company" I send my heartfelt and sincere good wishes for a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous, Healthy, "Lamp-Swinging" New Year, during which we will still continue to be "calling Old Shipmates".

From the Chairman/Editor, R.D.(Dick) Squires, M.B.E.:

Being the season of good-will and knowing you read enough of my ramblings throughout the year, I refrain from typing a long letter. Suffice it to say, on behalf of Peg and I, a very Happy Christmas, with Good Health, Good Luck and Sincere Good Wishes for 1994. "Up Spirits".

From our Hon. Secretary, P.A.(Peter) Skinner:

Another year astern of us, and a new one on the horizon. What have we achieved and what have we to look forward to?

Looking back over the last twelve months, we have had a succession of very successful reunions, most of which have become annual events in your own particular "neck of the woods", and others of a "one off" nature. Perhaps the most memorable this year was the BA'93 week in Liverpool. It was an event the like of which we will never see again, and involved an enormous amount of organisation spread over a long period of time. We owe our chairman, Dick, a great debt of gratitude, for all the work he did on our behalf, in obtaining a generous allocation of tickets for various events where they were in short supply. He had an unenviable task of allocating those tickets in as fair a way as possible, and there must have been some disappointment.

continued over:

We also welcomed as our Patron, Rear Admiral Bruce Richardson CB, RN, now retired. Those of you who were in Murmansk/Archangel for the Dervish '91 reunion, will remember that Admiral Richardson flew his flag in HMS LONDON, and was a great help to us on that occasion. HMS LONDON herself is currently in the Adriatic, as part of the group supporting HMS FEARLESS.

Looking forward to 1994, dates and venues for most of the usual reunions have already been booked, and no doubt will be published in this and following editions of Northern Light. 1994 will of course see the 50th anniversary of D-Day. We as a club will not be arranging anything in particular, as of course, as Arctic Campaign Veterans we were not, as a group directly involved. Many of us did take part in that operation, and will be joining with other groups in the events organised for the commemoration. Foremost amongst these events will be the sailing of the three Liberty ships, refurbished for the occasion for the United States Armed Guard veterans, under the leadership of Charles Lloyd. Charles will be remembered for his Standard Bearing activities during the 1992 International Reunion.

Finally, I wish to thank all those who express their appreciation of my work for the club both by letter and telephone. I can assure you that it is very much appreciated. Nina and I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.  
From the Membership Secretary, L.A.(Les) Sullivan:

Despite the loss this year, of 30 members who have "Crossed the Bar" and 56 who did not renew their membership, the membership stands at 1423. This means that we have recruited 160 additional members between December and December. So, NRC is not fading out by any means!

With thanks again to all of those members who have made donations to the welfare funds, postage, etc. My wife now wishes to join me in wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year - along with continued membership of OUR CLUB.

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#### THE NORTH RUSSIA CLUB APPEAL 1993-94

At the last two committee meetings, disappointment and frustration have been expressed at the slow progress in the production of the Arctic Campaign Memorials, particularly those at Liverpool and Chatham and to a lesser degree the one at Devonport. This is not the fault of the trustees of the Arctic Campaign Memorial Trust who, can only allocate finance when it is readily available. They also have to satisfy the Charity Commissioner's control documents. Therefore, bearing in mind that we have not held a Christmas Draw this year, which has disappointed a number of supporters including some who generously donate excellent prizes, it has been decided that we organise a GRAND SPRING DRAW in aid of N.R.C.'s Memorial and Welfare Appeal. All funds raised will be donated to specific memorials, as well as a smaller amount to our own welfare fund - this will appease those amongst you, who do not wish to contribute to "lumps of stone or granite!" (members' words not mine). We have agreed to this attempt with A.C.M.T.'s knowledge and the funds that are raised will be allocated by our committee. The following list of prizes will surely interest you and your friends. Let us get these memorials and others completed as a legacy that we can leave behind in memory of the shipmates who did not return from the Arctic wastes and waters.

R.D.SQUIRES MBE, Chairman.

#### THE PRIZE LIST

- FIRST PRIZE: 7 Day Holiday for 2 persons in Jersey with return air fares from U.K.  
 SECOND PRIZE: 7 Day Self Catering Holiday for up to 6 persons in a Gozo Farmhouse.  
 THIRD PRIZE: 3 Nights Holiday for 2 Adults in Bodelwyddan Castle, North Wales. Fully catered.  
 FOURTH PRIZE: Large Seascape oil painting by an Archangel artist. Delivered.  
 FIFTH PRIZE: Pair Royal Doulton Lead Crystal Sherry Glasses.  
 SIXTH PRIZE: Half Lamb ready for Freezer. (Starboard side half!)  
 SEVENTH PRIZE: Half Lamb ready for Freezer. (Port side half!)  
 EIGHTH PRIZE: Boda Porta (Swedish) Glass Tankard engraved with name and Crest of winner's choice.  
 NINTH PRIZE: Box of Personalised Stationery  
 TENTH PRIZE: ACMT Pack: Certificate, Lapel Badge, Blazer Badge, Tie, Ladies Scarf, Personal Organiser, etc.  
 OTHER PRIZES: Rum, Whisky, Free NRC Life Membership, etc.  
 ADITIONAL: Framed Water colour painting of North Cape.

Several of the donors have requested that their names are not published, we have consequently refrained from using any names. But, we record a big vote of thanks to them all.

**PLEASE TRY TO SELL YOUR BOOKS OF TICKETS, BUT IF UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO DO SO, PLEASE RETURN THEM TO THE PROMOTER - OUR AIM IS TO SELL ALL TICKETS THAT WE PRINT. PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHEQUES/POSTAL ORDERS PAYABLE TO "NORTH RUSSIA CLUB APPEAL"**

.....

We have received news that a member is prepared to carry out a very special sponsored event in 1994 for the club. We call it more a sponsored feat than event!!!! At his suggestion, we are keeping it under our hats until the next Northern Light.

We also have an offer from a member's son to 'Run the London Marathon' for us, but again, details will be published next Spring!

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#### THE CHINA FLEET COUNTRY CLUB

**A Proposed Week-end Break  
25 and 26 April, 1994**

Many of you who have served in the Far East over the years, will remember the China Fleet Club at Hong Kong, and will no doubt, have spent many a happy hour there. You will also know that with the proceeds from the sale of the original Club, a brand new one has been built at Saltash, just over the river Tamar from Plymouth. The club is open to all serving and ex service members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and is set in ideal surroundings with views over the river estuary. It is a very modern building, but very comfortable. Facilities include Bars, Badminton, Fitness Classes, Jacuzzi, Launderette, Pool Tables, Sauna, Skittles, Squash, Table Tennis, Volleyball, and last but not least, a magnificent 18 hole Golf Course. For the golfers among you, the course does not appear to be too hilly, but can be described as undulating. It is set out in two nines, both measuring 3,007 yards from the front tees and 3,173 yards from the back, with a par of 72.

Accommodation is in a series of bungalows and one-story apartments which are well appointed.

over.

Page "D"

I have been able to arrange through the Sales and Marketing Executive (Mandy Henn, who is the daughter of NRC member, Shipmate Reg Waller of Gosport) a short-break holiday. For £25 per person sharing per night (minimum two nights) to include Full English Breakfast - 3 course Table D'Hote Dinner - Overnight Accommodation.

The dates that have been pencilled in for this short-break holiday are 25 and 26 April. This will follow on from the date now set for the Dedication of the Memorial Font in St. Nicholas Church. (See details on page 37)

Should you be at all interested in this proposed event, please let me know straight away, so that I can assess the viability of it all. In particular, let me know if you are interested in the Golf. If there are sufficient numbers, perhaps we can organise a competition amongst ourselves.

My address and phone number once again, is:- P.A.SKINNER, THE ANCHORAGE, BURSCOTT, HIGH CLOVELLY, BIDEFORD, DEVON EX39 5RR. TEL: 0237 431481.

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S L O P S

Ties (Printed motif).....	£ 6.00
Blazer Badges	£ 8.50
N.R.C. Enamelled Brooches	£ 3.00
U.K./Russia Lapel Badges	£ 1.50
Blue Nose Certificates.....	£ 6.00
Medal Holders (Plastic).....	£ 1.50
Beret Badges.....	£ 5.00
Wall Banners (Silk).....	£ 4.50
Windscreen Sticker.....	3 for £ 1.00
Key Rings (Leather with NRC brooch).....	£ 2.00
Key Cases (Leather with Gold NRC Logo).....	£ 2.00
Coasters (Box of four, Blue or Maroon).....	£ 2.75
"Convoys to Russia 1941-1945" books.....	£10.00
Russian 40th Anniversary Miniature Medals.....	£ 9.50
Xmas Cards (HMS Belfast & Standard).....	12 for £ 2.00
Lapel Badges (White <u>or</u> Red Ensign).....	£ 1.35

All p. & p. extra from Jack Dusty, 70 Nickleby House, All Saints Road, Portsmouth, Hants PO1 4EL.

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THE "V" & "W" ASSOCIATION

Formed just over six months ago, the V & W Association now have over 200 members. Did you serve on one of those trusty old destroyers? I did, on VIMY, but only for 8 months in the South Atlantic and Caribbean, thank God! The association is in the course of organising a week-end reunion next June, in Liverpool. The provisional dates are Friday 24th to Monday 27th June.

They are now sending out newsletters and are planning a magazine which will be produced on a yearly basis. Should you require more information please contact the Secretary: John Lawton, 3 Bridgeway East, Pentre Maelor, Wrexham, Clwyd LL13 9RB (Tel 0978 661422) or the Chairman: C.W.(Stormy) Fairweather, Stable Cottage, Colchester Road, West Bergholt, Colchester, Essex (Tel 0206 240614).

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A ROYAL MARINE ABOARD NORFOLK

(This short excerpt by Joffre Swales, N°1118, is taken from his new book "The Life & Music of RMB X1522", which is reviewed on a later page in this edition).

For some time I shouted: "Transmitting Station - "X" Turret! Transmitting Station - "X" Turret!" But no reply came from our fellow marines manning that position.

Enlightenment came from a gunner in the adjacent "Y" (seamen's) turret. "X" Turret is afire and abandoned, and their magazine has been flooded! The marines down there must have had it!"

Badly shaken with the impression that many of our lads had perished, we blindly carried on with our tasks.

The remainder of our guns were still blasting, but smoke was creeping from the air ducts in our station. Fortunately we were not informed that a fire was raging amidships.

It afterwards transpired that we had sustained two serious hits. Because our cordite was not flashless the Germans could range on our gunfire; consequently we became their prime target. A shell had crashed through the barquette below the marines' turret, badly burning the gunners and igniting the cordite. With the risk of a major explosion and possible loss of the ship, an order was given: "Flood the magazine!"

Petty Officer Bill Griffiths (a Pembrokeshire man) was one of the damage control party stationed below X Turret, and he received that fateful message. Later he told me his story.

Some hours before the action, the ships padre, Rev. Kenneth Matthews, requested that the marines' magazine might be opened up so that he could deliver sandwiches to the men. The heavy hatch cover was operated by a chainblock. Through some defect or other, the hatch could not be opened for over half an hour, and Bill exclaimed, "I hope to God that this hatch cover will open much faster if the ship commences sinking!"

He told me, "When I received the order to flood, I realised that the marines were doomed if I did not act quickly, I opened the valve and rushed to the hatch. It seemed that an invisible power was at work. Now I opened it with no bother; smooth as butter". I shouted to the lads, "Youngest first!" The next few moments are too emotional for me to recall". I gathered from him that, remarkably, the magazine did not flood until all marines had been evacuated; the valve was defective.

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A ROYAL MARINE ABOARD DUKE OF YORK

(by E. Dennis Chapman)

.....we chased and fought until SCHARNHORST was out of action. We then set off for the Kola Inlet.

When we took the prisoners on board they were checked by the medical staff, clothed and fed, etc., and were housed in the schoolroom in the forward part of the ship. They were very concerned about their fate, because they knew they were in a Russian port and they thought we would hand them over to the Russians - they were scared to death. We reassured them that that was not our intention, and that they would be interned in the British Isles, they accepted this only after we sailed from Kola.

We marines had the duty of standing guard on them, ..... some were taken to the sick bay with minor injuries and suffering from exposure. I don't think any were any seriously injured. One of the survivors was named Johnny Merkle, and he was a vociferous character, we very soon found out that he had lived in the U.S.A. for many years prior to the war in 1939. He openly boasted that he had been a member of a gangster outfit. I think he said Al Capone's, perhaps another member can confirm this. However, he was not very popular with his comrades. Some could speak a little English but Merkle spoke American very well.

With one or two exceptions they were glad that there was no more war for them, they expressed themselves very well about that.

Most of them stated that they were surprised when we opened fire

on them, they had been under the impression that they were up against a light cruiser squadron. This apparently, was the reasoning of their commanders after the first encounter with Norfolk. When DUKE OF YORK opened fire we caught them napping, we also hit them with the first broadside. During the action we had an occasional commentary from the bridge on the progress of the battle, and when it was announced that SCHARNHORST was on fire and dead in the water, a cheer went round the ship. It was only then that we realised how long we had been in battle - three and a half hours, and I thought to myself, if it was wild and noisy for us on DUKE OF YORK, what had it been like for them? What had it been like for the 10th Cruiser Squadron? or for the destroyers? some of whom had fatalities amongst their crew.

When we returned to Scapa Flow we settled on to our berth of tins (herrings-in, etc), and a drifter came alongside and the prisoners were transferred, on their way to the mainland, and I presume, to a P.O.W. Camp.

I must mention that shortly before we went into action we were informed that we were engaging SCHARNHORST and not TIRPITZ as we at first thought.

FOOTNOTE: I enclose a copy of the signatures of thirty-one of the survivors, five were either sick or would not sign). The signatures of Admiral Bruce Fraser and Vice-Admiral Robert Burnett are also included.

I was surprised to see that the Germans were, like us, mostly young men and not some sort of supermen, blonde giants - just ordinary beings like us.

We, and them, are a lot older now and yearn for peace throughout the world, but will it ever come, I wonder?

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AN A.B. GUNLAYER'S RECOLLECTIONS  
George 'Geordie' Gilroy aboard SAVAGE.

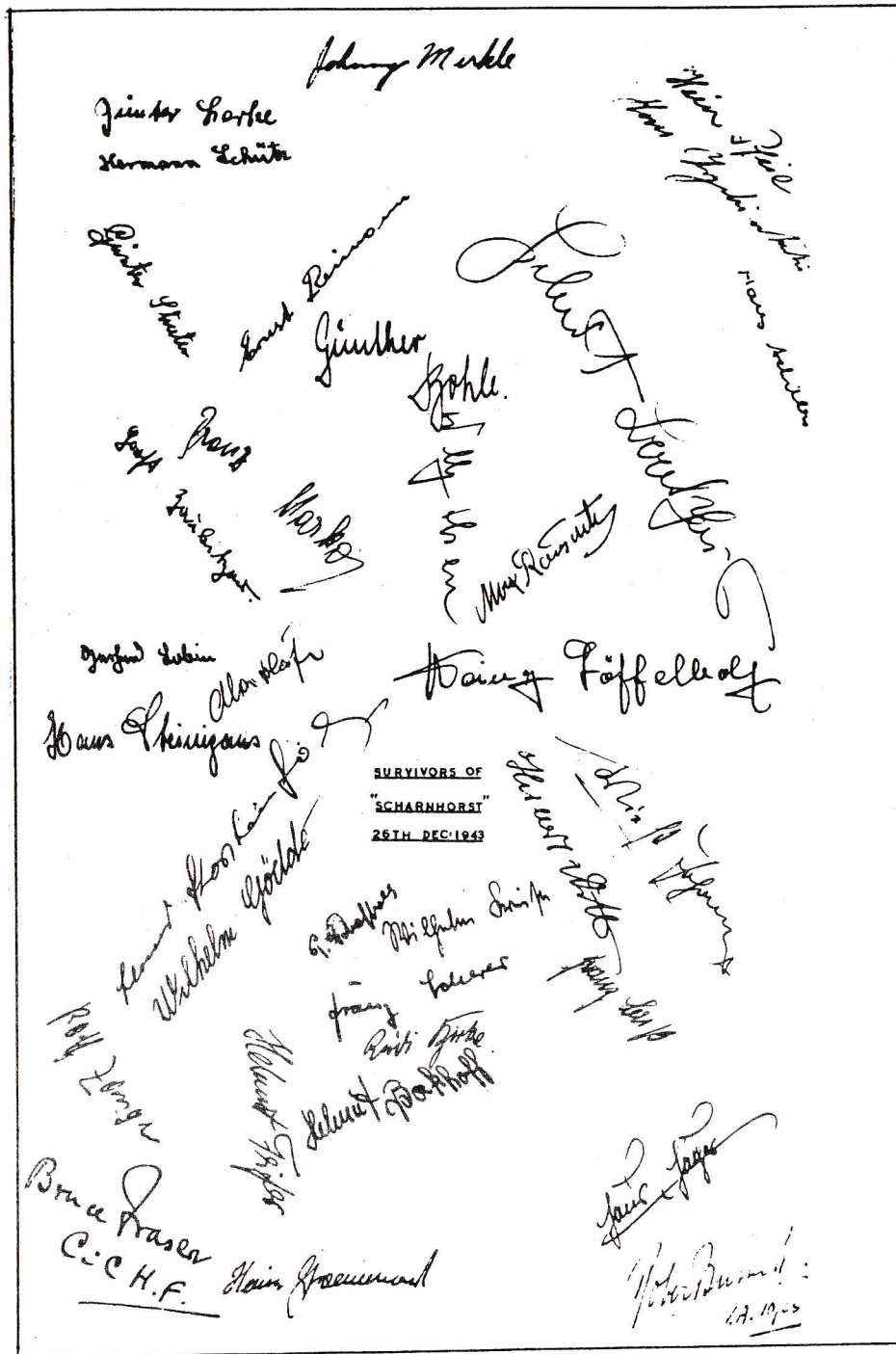
.....Christmas Day was a Saturday and saw us steaming towards North Cape, the weather was foul and bitterly cold as usual. On 26th (St. Stephen's Day - not Boxing Day as it was Sunday), in the early morning we increased speed..... The weather worsened to about Force 7, and life got very unpleasant below. As the day progressed we went to action stations and were to remain there until SCHARNHORST had been sunk.

at about 1630 I heard DUKE OF YORK's gunfire, and guessed that we would soon be in action. It was now dark, SAVAGE was going flat out in a heavy sea, zig-zagging as she went. SAUMAREZ was astern of us. I sensed that we were near the enemy but I could not see what was going on around me as I had to watch my gun indicator. I was trained to ignore everything except my dial.

For about two hours we kept up this wild zig-zag chase and at about 1845 came the order "gunlayer's firing". I immediately thought that we must be at very close range because the gun director could not depress any further. Our little destroyers were engaging an enemy battle cruiser at less than a thousand yards range! For the first time in the battle I was able to look outside through my gun sight. I could not believe my eyes as they focused on the starboard side of a huge ship just a few hundred yards away. I could easily make out the name "SCHARNHORST" on her side. My first impression was how beautiful she looked - all silver in the cold arctic light. I could see men on the upper deck very clearly and they seemed so close that I could almost reach out and shake hands with them! At that time I could see no obvious damage to her and there were no fires to be seen. She seemed to be sailing perfectly normally and was attacking us heavily with her guns at uncomfortably close range. Her big 11" guns were not firing. Luckily we sustained no real damage or casualties, I believe this was due to the good seamanship of our skipper.....

.....my turret fired about eight rounds before turning hard-a-starboard to fire our torpedoes. As we turned at speed SAVAGE heeled to port and the sea rushed in over the gunwhales and up to my knees. My heart sank as I thought that we had been hit and were sinking. (I had been on the destroyer LIGHTNING nine months earlier when she had been torpedoed). I thought that my luck had finally run out for there was little chance of survival in those icy waters.....

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CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGES OF CONGRATULATION ON THE SINKING OF "SCHARNHORST" WERE RECEIVED BY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

FROM HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

"Well done DUKE OF YORK and all of you. I am proud of you"  
GEORGE R.I.

The following reply was made to Admiralty for H.M. The King:-  
"With humble duty we thank Your Majesty and we are proud to think that the ship associated with your name and the Fleet that you personally commanded at sea in August have concluded a successful action"

FROM THE PRIME MINISTER.

"Heartiest congratulations to you and the Home Fleet on your brilliant action. All comes to him who knows how to wait"

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

"The sinking of the SCHARNHORST has been great news to all of us. Congratulations to Home Fleet"

FROM MARSHAL STALIN (addressed to the Prime Minister).

"I send you personally and also to Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser and the gallant sailors of DUKE OF YORK my congratulations on this splendid blow in sinking of SCHARNHORST"

FROM THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY.

"Grand, well done"

FROM THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY.

"Please convey my congratulations to all who serve under you.  
The War Cabinet have asked me to convey to you and to the officers and men of the ships concerned their hearty congratulations on the tenacious defence of the convoy and the brilliant pursuit and sinking of the SCHARNHORST"

FROM THE RUSSIAN NAVAL STAFF.

"The Peoples Commissar for the Navy, Admiral Kuznetov and the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Stephanov, send their congratulations to the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, Admiral Fraser, on his victory which was due to his determined and able action"

FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF U.S. NAVAL FORCES IN EUROPE.

"We have just received a despatch from the Commander-in-Chief U.S. Fleet, in which he has asked this office to convey to the Admiralty the U.S. Navy's hearty congratulations on the sinking of the SCHARNHORST. Admiral King further requests that this is passed to the Home Fleet"

THE AWARDS AND GONGS

Excerpts from "Destroy the Scharnhorst"

(A paper back published in 1962, price 1s.6d.)

Honours and awards were subsequently showered on the British and Norwegian officers and men who had played prominent individual roles in the action. Sir Bruce Fraser was appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, and Admiral Burnett was made a Knight Commander of the British Empire.

The Commanding Officers of DUKE OF YORK, JAMAICA, BELFAST, SHEFFIELD and NORFOLK each received the Distinguished Service Order, as did the "S" Class destroyers' Captain (D) in SAVAGE, Commander Meyrick. The gallant, hard hit little SAUMAREZ received a total of two Distinguished Service Crosses, two bars to DSC's, one Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (for Petty Officer F.W.J. Wilkes), seven Distinguished Service Medals and nine Mentioned in Despatches.

In NORFOLK, the other ship which had carried on with the job after sustaining a severe battering, the individual gallantry of Leading Canteen Assistant G.H.L. Jewitt and Marine C.G. Hardy resulted in their being among the eight ratings to be awarded Distinguished Service Medals.

The Norwegians in the destroyer STORD, in addition to being honoured by their own monarch, had their superb fighting-spirit recognised by their comrades-in-arms by the award of a Bar to the Distinguished Cross already held by the STORD's captain, Commander Storehill, who was, several years later, to rise to be Commander-in-Chief of the Norwegian Navy.

King Haakon of Norway was able to return the British compliment by solving a problem posed by Bruce Fraser's natural wish, on being elevated to the peerage, to assume the distinguished style and title of "Lord Fraser of North Cape." The problem arose from the fact that the North Cape of Norway was foreign territory, and the title thereof could not be granted to the British admiral by his own sovereign.

On hearing of this difficulty, the King of Norway immediately caused the freehold of his country's most northerly headland to be transferred to Fraser's ownership and, when greeting the British Admiral on the occasion of his first post-war visit to Norway, made a genial remark to the effect that he, King Haakon, was delighted to meet his new landlord.

The Russians' reaction to the outcome of the battle was to decorate Admiral Fraser with their rarely-bestowed Order of Suvorov (First Class), an indication of their personal regard for the British Commander-in-Chief.....

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**SCHARNHORST - the statistics.**

The ship was built as part of the 1935-36 programme. Launched at Wilhelmshaven on 3 October 1936, two months before her sister-ship GNEISSNAU was launched at Kiel.

Standard displacement 26,000 tons; full load displacement 32,000 tons.

Overall length 741 feet, beam 98.4 feet, draught 25 feet.

150,000 h.p., speed 30 knots (reached 32 on trials).

Geared turbines, high pressure boilers with small tubes.

Total weight of armour protection 12,517 tons.

Thickness of armour: Armoured belt 12 inches reduced to 5 inches and 3 inches at extremities: Two armoured decks 4.3 inches and 2.4 inches:

Main armament turret: 13.8 inches and 9.8 inches: 5.9 inch turrets 5.9 inches: Conning-tower 13.8 inches.

Armament: Nine 11-inch guns; twelve 5.9s; fourteen 4.1s; sixteen 1.45s (AA) in twin mountings; six 21inch torpedo tubes, in two triple mountings, one on each side of the upper deck; Catapult for aircraft (two usually carried).

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50TH ANNIVERSARY MEMORIAL REUNION  
OF REMEMBRANCE and RECONCILIATION,  
IN WILHELMSHAVEN, GERMANY.  
(By Tom Bethel, Memb. N° 1300)

The SCHARNHORST ASSOCIATION, mindful of the difficulties in arranging a large reunion on December 26, held an international gathering on 1st to 4th October 1993. There were several British veterans at the reunion, including, myself Tom Bethel, with my SAVAGE shipmates, George Nye and Leslie Tanner, John Baxendale and John Wass of SCORPION, Denis Wells of MATCHLESS and NRC's Deputy President, Bob Davis of WOODCOCK. Some of our wives were also able to attend. Also in attendance were members of DUKE OF YORK, JAMAICA and the Merchant Navy, plus some of the remaining survivors of SCHARNHORST.

There was a very moving service in the Naval Cemetery in Wilhelms-haven where, a German Rear Admiral addressed all present in English, thanking us all for coming. The survivors have now become great friends of the ships companies of SAVAGE, SCORPION and MATCHLESS, and we have been invited to attend the 51st reunion at Andernach next May.

George, Les and myself hope to meet some of the survivors on board BELFAST on November 14th and spend some time with them afterwards. It is good that after 50 years we can meet in this way and become good friends. I have taken a video of the ceremony at the naval cemetery, and of the drive through the naval yards in Wilhelmshaven, and of the entertainment we attended with the SCHARNHORST 'family'.

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SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE and RECONCILIATION

The Service, on board BELFAST, on Sunday 14th November, will be on the Quarterdeck, at the same time as the Cenotaph march. Attendance is limited to 250 for safety reasons. It will be conducted by the Chaplain of the Fleet, the address will be given by John Beardmore (NRC N°235) and is printed below. R.D.Squires MBE, will lead the Act of Remembrance with the Ode to the Fallen. More than sixty NRC members have received invitations from the Director of the Imperial War Museum to attend. Unfortunately, this edition will be printed before the date. A report will be included in the next edition. Editor.

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THE ADDRESS AT THE SCHARNHORST SERVICE  
OF RECONCILIATION ONBOARD H.M.S. BELFAST  
ON REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 14 NOVEMBER 1993  
(By John Beardmore)

The passage of the last decade of the twentieth century inevitably has brought a succession of fiftieth anniversaries of major events of the Second World War. In 1990 we commemorated Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain the following summer British veterans returned to Archangel and marched behind the Royal Marines Band of HMS London as onlookers six deep wept openly in gratitude and remembrance of Dervish, the first convoy carrying to Russia.

Only last year the cities of Glasgow, Liverpool and Portsmouth honoured the fiftieth anniversary of the tragedy of Convoy PQ17, and an international reunion of Russian convoy veterans who had come from worldwide to remember, while two memorial windows of the Arctic Campaign Memorial Trust were dedicated in Portsmouth's crowded Cathedral by the First Sea Lord.

Later that year we remembered El Alamein and Operation Torch and only this May, under Royal patronage, the great port of Liverpool commemorated the Battle of the Atlantic, when Royal Naval and Royal Marine veterans were joined by those of the Royal Canadian Navy and other Commonwealth and Allied Navies, by the Merchant Navy, by RAF Coastal Command and by the Navies of our great wartime allies the United States and Russia, all of whom were greatly moved by the warmth of welcome extended to them by over a million people who had turned out that memorable weekend to line the streets of Liverpool. And it was only right and proper that the loudest cheers should be for our Merchant Navy, whose 5,000 merchant ships and 30,000 merchant seamen and DEMS personnel who were lost in the Atlantic Ocean and the Barents Sea bear witness to their sacrifice.

Our memories of half a century ago must inevitably be mostly of a personal nature. Who of us can ever forget the anguish at seeing a torpedoed oil tanker blazing away against a night sky, or of hearing the drowning cries of her crew engulfed in a sea of fire? Or of watching helplessly as Convoy PQ17 was prematurely scattered in the Barents Sea that fateful American Independence Day?

There are of course, happier memories, like the enormous pride and patriotism that one felt at the magnificent sight of the battleship HMS Prince of Wales steaming at 22 knots through a convoy of 72 merchant ships somewhere south west of Iceland following the signing of the Atlantic Charter, flying the signal "Good Voyage Churchill", and of seeing the great man standing on the bridge with his arm raised and his hand extended in his famous 'V' sign, as the shouts of "Good Old Winnie" rang out from the convoy and its escorts.

Or a few days before Christmas and the Battle of North Cape, watching Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser as he was then, being piped ashore from the corvette Poppy onto a snow-covered jetty at Polyarnoe where, gathering up a fistful of snow, he hurled it at his Chief of Staff, thereby confirming to us something that we already knew - that here indeed was the most human and humane of Admirals.

The war ended, we returned to an uneasy peace but the passing years have brought their own measure of reconciliation, atonement and hope. Russia, a difficult wartime ally, has finally become a friend, and Germany - a one time enemy - has been a valued ally and partner for over forty years. But for us the 'comradeship of the sea' healed all wounds a long time ago. I was reminded of this when I received from Herr Wolfgang Kube of Koblenz, a warm invitation to join the fiftieth anniversary reunion in Wilhelmshaven of those now remaining of the 36 Scharnhorst survivors out of a crew of 2000 who, that Boxing Day night, were plucked from the icy waters of the Barents Sea by the destroyers Scorpion and Matchless in what was the last great sea battle between capital ships for all time.

We shall never forget the lads who were left behind, nor their comradeship - for we were granted a life that was denied to them. We are told that we were heroes but that is a word we do not understand. We only know that we were the lucky ones who came home, and we little thought that with God's will and a bit of luck there might even have been a hand on one's own shoulder, and that 50 years later we might meet again the shipmates and companions with whom we had shared and survived the perils of the Arctic Campaign all those years ago.

The English poet A. E. Houseman wrote:

"Life to be sure is nothing much to lose

But young men think it is....and we were young"

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Seven of the thirty-six survivors (in white coats), taking the fresh, arctic air, on board DUKE OF YORK, during passage to Scapa Flow. (Photo courtesy of Tom Waiting, Memb. N°1215)



Another WWII "Jack Kettle" postcard.

EXPLOITS OF A FLEET AIR ARM OFFICER  
(By Dennis H. Grace, Memb. N°1000)

I joined the "Y" Scheme in January 1942 after passing the interview and medical. I was 21 years old and had been in the Home Guard, 8th London Battalion since leaving school.

I volunteered to join the F.A.A. for training as a pilot. Posted to H.M.S. St Vincent, Portsmouth for seamanship instruction, I came in contact with C.P.O. Willmott, a true 'Cockney' drill N.C.O. He drilled a Squad of us for 14 days to take part in a money raising, "Warships Week" in Windsor. I being over 6 feet tall became the right marker! You can imagine his voice bellowing across the parade ground when one of us dropped his bayonet when the Squad had been ordered to FIX BAYONETS!! We took a coach to Windsor and followed by the Royal Marines and a detachment of the Grenadier Guards, we marched round the Royal Town of Windsor, concluding with a march into the Castle grounds where Princess Elizabeth (as she was then) took the salute. I, of course, being the right hand marker did not turn my eyes! at the end of the day we were still quite fresh compared with our Marine and Army friends.

On completion of our concentrated 8-week course, we went to Elmdon, the airport of Birmingham, in order to commence our elementary flying training on those wonderful little aircraft, the Tiger Moths. After ten hours dual instruction, my instructor relinquished the controls and got out of the aircraft. I was on my own to do one circuit and landing! It was a rather bumpy landing but the next one was a better effort.

Next door to our grass runway, the Stirling bombers were being made, and I remember that sometimes a Stirling taking off nearly blew our little Tiger Moth away.

While billeted at Stonebridge, our residential quarters for the course, my father bought me a 250c.c. Panther motorcycle, on which I travelled home to London on week end leaves. One weekend, I sustained a puncture in the rear wheel. Fortunately, the local policeman at the village where the puncture occurred, took the bike into the station, had it repaired and phoned me when it was ready for collection. After successfully completing the course, we were sent by Atlantic convoy to Monkton, Nova Scotia, via New York, then on to Kingston, on Lake Ontario, to take the advance course, both day and night flying on Harvard II aircraft. We commenced our course in Canada on August 3, 1942 until November 20, 1942. We had about a week's leave during which three of us; my future brother-in-law, a friend named Dick Goadsby and I (we were nicknamed the Three Musketeers), hitch-hiked to New York along the Hudson River basin, getting car lifts all the way, as well as great hospitality as it was about the time that U.S.A. was entering the war - also, we were in British naval uniform and "Thanksgiving" time was on. We were invited to have drinks and meals by people of British (or English) origin. We stayed free at the local Services Club. We had a Thanksgiving meal at the finest restaurant in New York, went to the Carnegie Theatre where we saw "Arsenic and Old Lace", visited the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building and saw the French liner LA FRANCE in the harbour lying on it's side after capsizing following a serious fire on board! We eventually finished our short break in New York and hitch-hiked our way back up the Hudson River via Niagara Falls and Buffalo City, back to Kingston.

We completed our day and night flying course at Kingston and on 20 November we travelled down to New York where we embarked on the liner QUEEN ELIZABETH to return to U.K. We reached U.K. in about 4½ days zig-zagging across the Atlantic and avoiding any U-boats by the superior speed of the liner. We carried some 17,000 U.S. servicemen on board, in fact, a whole division of black army personnel! We had two main meals per day, which entailed queuing most of the day!

After docking in the U.K. we went on leave over Christmas, returning to Donibristle, near Dundee, for a short course of flying British types of

planes, e.g. Masters I and II trainer monoplanes, the Albacore and of course, the Fairey Swordfish. I remember we used to visit Dundee where at a certain restaurant we could purchase a 'steak' meal - how, I do not know? Especially considering the wartime rationing.

In February 1943, I was posted to Arbroath to HMS CONDOR and spent a year in training observers in navigation. At this time I became engaged to my future wife, who was serving in the Motor Transport Section of the WAAF at York. We were married on December 20, 1943 in S.E. London - our banns were read in York Minster as well as Tulse Hill in London.

I had one mishap while waiting to take off from the main runway. My engine oiled up and as soon as I was airborne, at about a height of 50 feet, the engine cut out and we landed with some force. Some damage was sustained and I received a reprimand, although I considered the delay in take off was the fault of the control tower. I spent quite a happy time at CONDOR, training observers and later, after the war, it was one reason why I opted to be trained for a teaching career. At Arbroath we did quite a lot of night flying over the sea and on our return from a navigational flight, on crossing the coast, I always increased height as there were many high hills inland and the observer might have miscalculated our position. On 26 February 1944 we were posted to Inskip, near Blackpool, to join 766 Squadron. On this course, my observer was trained to operate some new equipment called sonor-bouys. These, 3 or 4 at a time, were designed to be dropped in a pattern in the area where U-boats were travelling submerged or had dived on being detected by aircraft. These sonor-bouys relayed the sounds of running engines and the observer was trained to distinguish the sound of a submarine's engines compared with destroyers, etc. I at the same time was engaged on bombing, navigation exercises, formation flying, deck landing and various other skills both in the daytime and at night. At this time my wife was still stationed at York and one day, about six of us flying Swordfish aircraft were sent on a triangular navigational exercise. I was the first to take off and the others followed in turn. After the completion of the exercise I was the last to land back at the airfield! The reason for this was that I diverted from my course and flew over York, and over my wife's M.T. Section who recognised the plane. The irony was that my wife was engaged on a driving assignment that day and never saw me! But no one could understand why I was last to return to the aerodrome!

On 19 May, 1944, I flew out to the old flat top ARGUS, stationed in the Clyde to practice deck landings. I successfully completed 6 day, and 6 night landings - quite a feat having only practiced on a marked out area on a runway at Inskip! The three of us, observer, air gunner and I, were next posted to Maydown, 744 Squadron, where we carried out many simulated attacks against U-boats fitted with the 'Schnorkel' breathing apparatus. We did this on Lough Neagh, the largest lake in Northern Ireland.

On 10 August, 1944, we were ordered to join VINDEX at Stornaway in the Hebrides. We set off to the mainland, and caught the ferry from the Kyle of Lochalsh to Stornaway; only to discover that the carrier had left! We spent the night with the RAF sleeping in unaired beds and returned to the mainland, being flown to Inverness and thereafter to Hatston. We finally joined the ship in Scapa Flow, where our air gunner, P.O. Hawkesworth, was informed that he would not be required in 825 Squadron, as the Swordfish aircraft had all been converted to carry the latest radar scanner equipment below the fusilage under the engine.

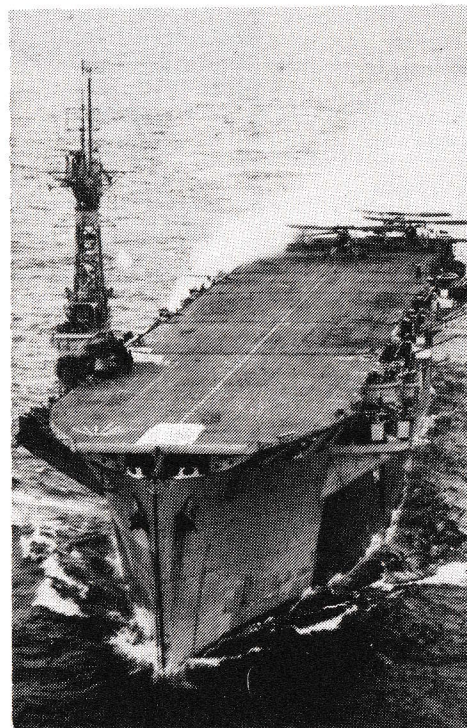
These Swordfish aircraft were nicknamed "Pregnant Swordfish" while the radar system was called A.S.V - X. This new equipment further restricted the amount of room in the rear cockpit and hence the air gunner became redundant! What a shame! He was a nice fellow, but we never saw him again. Perhaps he may read this account and make contact with us? Having joined VINDEX, the convoy under the command of Rear Admiral Dalrymple Hamilton sailed from Loch Ewe to the Kola Inlet.

Soon after the convoy sailed, we were sent off on a night time exercise to familiarise ourselves with procedures, especially take offs and landings at night, as this was our first experience of operations aboard a carrier. While flying this mission above the convoy, IT HAPPENED!!

I must explain that I was 6ft 3ins tall, with long legs and the switches for arming depth charges, rockets, flares, etc. were in front of my knees. Accidentally, whilst flying towards the carrier, I released a flare, which lit up the whole convoy!!!! Awful thoughts of Court Martial entered my mind as I prepared to land on VINDEX. After a successful landing I was summoned to report to the bridge where the Captain, Cmdr (Flying) and the Admiral himself, were assembled.

I thought to myself, "Now for it"! To my relief, after my admission of fault, I was given a verbal reprimand, and then the assembled officers had a good laugh! But the incident could have been very serious indeed had the convoy been in an area of U-boat attacks. The sequel to this episode was that the personnel were not pleased with me, as all the switches in the cockpits of every Swordfish aircraft had to be moved to the right hand side.

Our greatest enemy was undoubtedly the atrocious weather. It was very tiring waiting on standby in all our cumbersome clothing for the weather to improve. Anyway, after 2 hours on a patrol, flying at 2000 feet, our hands were very cold and stiff, even though we had silk gloves, covered by woollen gloves, covered by leather gauntlets. Also, the tight wet suit covering our flying clothing did not help our blood circulation! Suddenly, there was an Asdic report from an escort. The C.O. Lt.Cdr. Sheffield and his observer took off to find and attack the U-boat which was sunk. My observer and I were ordered to take off and escort their Swordfish back to the carrier as they might have to ditch through



H.M.S. VINDEX

shortage of fuel. Fortunately they returned safely and later the C.O. received the D.S.O.

Unfortunately, while we were flying above the convoy as it entered the Kola Inlet, LAPWING an escorting frigate was torpedoed and was sinking fast as we flew over it. The convoy could not stop in this dangerous area, and there was nothing we could do to help. We prayed and in great sadness flew back to the carrier.

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WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE  
THAT THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS HAVE  
"CROSSED THE BAR"

\*\*\*\*\*

REST IN PEACE

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C. H. FOWLER	of Beeston	HARRIER
D. T. WITTS	of Ludlow	TRACKER
G. MERCER	of Westhoughton	WOODCOCK
P. J. SPICER	of Chichester	OPPORTUNE

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Letters of condolence have been sent to relatives of our departed shipmates and where possible, the club has been represented at funerals.

We extend our sincere thanks to the dependants and friends who made donations to N.R.C. Welfare Funds in lieu of flowers.



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ENSIGN DRAPES

We now have a stock of ensigns suitable for use as coffin drapes. These are White Ensign, Red Ensign and R.A.F. Ensign. Should you require to use one of these at a shipmate's funeral, please phone either the chairman on 051 487 9567, or the Hon. Treasurer on 0237 431481.

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FROM DINAH RATHBONE AND FAMILY

Thank you all most sincerely for the numerous cards and letters I received after my dear husband Eric suddenly left us. Every card and letter were such a comfort to me and my family.

A special thank you to those who travelled far to attend Eric's funeral. He would have been so proud of you all, as I was.

Thank you all who gave donations in memory of Eric to the British Diabetic Association. I am assured this will be used to help the children, the money so far amounts to £301. This was Eric's wish.

Thank you to the committee members for their generosity. I wish you all continued success and hope very much we will all meet again.

Dinah Rathbone and family

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WELCOME ABOARD

- 1765. MURPHY David SS EMPIRE BYRON  
Lindisfarne, The Hummicks, Dock Lane, Beaulieu, Hants SO42 7YU
- 1766. ROBERTS Patrick W.L. CAMPANIA  
20 Bartington Park, Warrington Road, Bartington, Cheshire CW8 4QU
- 1767. PARRY Alan G. COOKE  
17 Joynson Street, Miles Platting, Manchester M10 8JD
- 1768. THOMAS George SCYLLA  
14 Mopsa Way, Coolbellop, Western Australia 6163
- 1769. SCOTT Albert E. SCORPION  
54 Beaufort Avenue, Blackpool, Lancs FY2 9HG
- 1770. McWILLIAM James J. OFFA  
116 Lynton Crescent, Widnes, Cheshire WAB 7NT
- 1771. HARVEY William H.C. SHEFFIELD  
20 Pevensey Road, Bognor Regis, Sussex PO21 5NS
- 1772. DUGDALE Reginald D. BOLTON CASTLE  
40 Redbridge Hill, Southampton, Hants SO1 4LY
- 1773. REILLY Joseph P. ONSLOW  
23 Copy Lane, Oatton, Lancaster, Lancs LA2 9QZ
- 1774. WRAY Arthur ANGUILLA  
162 Manor Square, Dagenham, Essex RM8 3RX
- 1775. BUXTON Jack WHIMBRELL  
18 Landmark Road, Salcombe, Devon TQ8 8NY
- 1776. ROBERTS Geoffrey L. VIRAGO  
113 Church Road, Brightlingsea, Colchester, Essex CO7 0QJ
- 1777. RYAN Allan P. SS TREHATA  
13 Hewitt Drive, McLaren Vale, S.A., Australia 5171.
- 1778. SWAIN Kenneth E. BICKERTON  
27 Howard Road, Reigate, Surrey RH2 7JE
- 1779. WILLAN Joseph LONDON  
37 Lymm Avenue, Lancaster, Lancs LA1 5HJ
- 1780. MILLS Colin RESOLUTION  
17 Girvan Street, Riddrie, Glasgow G33 2DP
- 1781. BERTSHIN Christian F. MARNE  
82 Elmfield Road, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 2JL
- 1882. STURT William G. SS BOTAVON  
Trinity House, Long Road East, Dedham, Colchester, Essex CO7 6BS
- 1683. LEITCH Geoffrey ONSLAUGHT  
16 Collingwood Avenue, Blackpool, Lancs FY3 8BZ
- 1784. OVENS Meyrick Adam OBEDIENT/NAIRANA  
The Old Manse, Legerwood, TD4 6AT
- 1785. SHEPPERD Cyril ULYSSES/DENBIGH CASTLE  
17 Thornside Walk, Gateacre, Liverpool L25 5PH
- 1786. WOODMAN Henry J. ANSON  
29 Kings Road, Lancing, Sussex BN15 8EB
- 1787. WARD Edward O. STORD  
Rose Hill, Smithy Lane, Long Whatton, Loughborough, Leics. LE12 5BE
- 1788. CULVERWELL John BADSWORTH  
208 Taylor Avenue, Waynesville, NC28786, U.S.A.
- 1789. JONES William E. OCEAN GYPSY  
8 Old Hall Road, Maghull, Liverpool L31 5LZ
- 1790. QUINN Albert E. LARK  
59 Hawksmoor Road, Liverpool L10 7LY

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS AND AMENDMENTS TO MEMBERSHIP LIST

- Nº 426. F.COLLETT to 56 Walsworth Road, Hitchin, Herts SG4 9SX
- Nº 632. S.MASTERS to 23 Albert Road, Bracknell, Berks RG12 2AG
- Nº1099. S.NORTON to Flat 71, Seabright, West Parade, Worthing, W. Sussex
- Nº 259. D.HIGGINS to 27 Green Lane, Little Common, Bexhill on Sea, Sussex BN11
- Misprint in last edition Nº1761 Should read EADE not Bade.
- Nº1381. V.JARVIS ships should read ILLUSTRIOUS (878 Sqdn) CAMPANIA/VINDEX (813 Sqdn)

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MEMBERS' LETTERS  
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From Bill Johnston, Memb. N°40 - N.P.100:

On page 28 of the September edition of Northern Light, a member from Australia referred to shore based N.P.100 correspondents as being largely over-critical of the Russian people. I should like to refute this allegation, as I feel he is in some confusion on this matter.

Rightly, he praises the Russian hospital staff for their caring attitude to the Convoy wounded, despite the acute shortage of drugs, dressings, etc. But it was the Stalinist regime who refused, time and time again, to allow the British to establish their own hospital ashore, to deal with the Convoy injured, and so relieve the Soviet medical amenities of the task. It was only after threatening them with the withdrawals of the Convoys that we eventually won our point. But even then, I believe they placed restrictions on what our doctors could undertake in the matter of surgery. So, our criticisms were not against the Russian people, but at the regime, with it's harsh rules and often grim attitude to their own people.

I served ashore from January 1942 until June 1943, eighteen months in all. We saw political prisoners marched under armed guard to work unloading at the docks in Murmansk. Our house-keeper there reported twice weekly to the NKVD (now KGB). They attempted to censor our incoming mail from home, our phones were tapped. We had to get passports to get reliefs from home, and we were their allies!

I could go on but feel I've made my point. Our criticisms were against the regime, not the people, towards whom we felt nothing but sorrow for their plight under such hard living, and admiration for their heroic struggle against a common enemy. But the Soviets were against any undue fraternisation with their citizens, and they did not tell them of the Allied assistance that cost R.N. and M.N. personnel so dearly.

Now, new friendships have grown up between our two nations, and the people are told the true story of those distant days. For this we are heartily glad, but I felt it only right to give some idea of life ashore in North Russia in those wartime days.

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From Frank Collett, Memb. N°426 - DELHI/DIDO:

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Northern Light N°34, especially "Response N°3" in the "Away from Kola" series. I was serving on DELHI and 23 November 1939 was my 20th birthday. DELHI was, as Shipmate Crowshaw wrote, an old First World War cruiser and totally unfit for service. She had been in reserve for many years and was manned mainly by reservists, I was an AB ST and during the Rawalpindi action was closed up at action stations on the starboard aft torpedo tubes. We knew little of what was going on. Only that the RAWALPINDI had been sunk and we were looking for a pocket battleship. We stayed at action stations for hours in the darkness, without any warm clothing. We had our number threes and an oilskin coat. Like NEWCASTLE, it was fortunate for us that we never contacted any of the German Fleet. Although I must say, having already served on the first commission of SHEFFIELD, a sister ship of NEWCASTLE, I know which ship I would have preferred to be on. The gunnery on DELHI was pathetic to say the least, and later in the South Atlantic when we tried to sink a Vichy cargo ship that was adrift and on fire, we finally had to resort to one of our old Mk4 torpedoes, because the guns just could not hit the stationary target. After we returned to Scapa, we were quickly back on patrol again and the RAWALPINDI sinking was overtaken by other events, such as the sinking of ROYAL OAK.

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**AN APPEAL\*\*\*HELP\*\*\*S.O.S.\*\*\*MAYDAY\*\*\*** Survivors of the CAPE CORSO are sought by the sister of Able Seaman Frank Hayes, JX312050. Contact Amy Cotton, Framroy, 17 Chancel Way, Monk Bretton, Barnsley, S.Yorkshire S71 2HS. CAPE CORSO was bombed and sunk on 2 May 1945 in PQ15.

MORE MEMBER'S LETTERS  
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From Tony Clarke, Memb. N°128. (HMS JASON)

Twice recently in N.L. 32 & 34, the Seine Bay Tragedy has been mentioned. To me it was of great interest, because I was there on JASON, she is not mentioned in the report in N.L. 32, nor were the two trawlers who were working with us - which grieves me somewhat!! - so to put matters right

We, I suppose were the "lucky" ones ? - we remained upright, although looking like a colander.

Much for my sins! - I kept a day to day diary in those hectic days, so to add a P.S. to the incident - Whilst picking up survivors, and sorting out the tragedy of BRITOMART, HUSSAR, and SALAMANDER, the German shore batteries began firing at us - much to our disgust! - SALAMANDER who had no steerage way, with her stern blown off, was drifting towards shore, so our first job was to lay a smoke screen between us and the enemy, then take her in tow away from danger.

By this time, help had arrived in answer to our W/T signals. An R.A.F. rescue launch was first on the scene, followed by two sweepers, a destroyer, and a little later by M.T.Bs and tugs. We left them to deal with the situation, and slowly headed back to the beachhead with SALAMANDER in tow.

My last recollections of the scene was of HUSSAR's bows just above water, and poor old BRITOMART, still floating but upside down.

We had two killed and ten wounded on JASON - but compared with the others - if ever our ship (and she was a lucky ship!) had a protecting hand, she certainly had one that day!!

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From David B Craig, Memb. N°885 (SS DOVER HILL)

I can make no claim to being on the Russian Convoys as having first sailed as a cadet at 15 years of age in 1940, I was an old man of 17 when I set out for Russia in Convoy JW53. However, I can claim to be the first British or Allied veteran to return to Murmansk after the war.

Murmansk was a closed city till 1980 when I arrived with the first party of British tourists on 6 February. Tours of the city did not include visits to the war cemeteries at that time. As my main reason for coming was to find the grave of a friend who was killed during our stay there in 1943. I contacted the Intourist Manager who arranged for a taxi to take me up to the cemetery where I found three graves of men from our convoy.

My recent trip on the MV RUSS was my 6th time back to Murmansk and there are two reasons for this. One, I feel I owe it to the men we left behind to visit their graves, and two, I have many good friends in Murmansk and find the people there are the kindest and most warm hearted I have ever met.

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**QUESTION: Are we still paying money to America for helping us out in WWII ?**

**ANSWER:** YES. U.K. is still paying up!! On December 6, 1945, a financial agreement was made in which we took out two loans. These were the U.S Line of Credit and a Lease Lend. The debt at March 31, 1993 was, \$1,357,249,068.16. On December 31 each year two payments are made, one on each loan.

The payments made on December 31, 1992, were: U.S. Line of Credit - \$99,854,122.05 principle, \$19,482,127.05 interest; Lease Lend - \$15,615,609.87 principle, \$3,046,489.45 interest. Irene Campbell, H.M. Treasury.

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BOOK REVIEWS

**"THE LIFE & MUSIC OF RMB X1255"**  
We blew, and they were shattered.  
By Joffre Swales MBE, (NRC N° 1118)

This easily read book, tells the lifetime story of one of our members, who was first 'hooked' on music at the age of four, right up to the present day when we find him still addicted! Much of the story is devoted to the war years when Joffre served on KING GEORGE V and NORFOLK as a Royal Marine bandsman. His musical life in the post war years is even more interesting, particularly his involvement with dance bands, orchestras, chamber and jazz groups. Then follows visits to Russia, Siberia, Mongolia, China, Hong Kong, New York, oh, I nearly forgot - and the Vatican with a youth orchestra to play for the Pope!

A hard back, 270 pages, well illustrated, it is a 'snip' at £9.95 plus £2.00 p & p. But, if you quote your NRC Membership number, Joffre will waive the post and packing charge. To our lady readers I say, "It will make a good Christmas present, you will find it contains just a little matelot's (or in this case, bootneck's) language, but you have heard it all before!

Order from Singing Saw Press, 2-6 High Street, Havorfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Wales SA6 12DJ.

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**"A DABTOE'S STORY"**  
By Eric Smith, (NRC N°1194)  
ISSN N°1-85634-336-7.

This is a well written and enlightening book - just the job for you Jolly Jack bookworms! Eric recounts his story with refreshing clarity and it is a worthwhile read. He starts before the Second World War when he joined the Royal Navy as a Boy Seaman (memories!!! Ed.) Then follows vivid accounts of his experiences during those dark days, with a clear picture of the occupational duties and routine of the Seamans (Dabtoes') Branch.

The photographic illustrations are of excellent quality and certainly enhance the book.

A semi-stiff backed book of 157 pages. The U.K price is £6.95 plus £1.25 p & p. Available from the publishers, Excalibur Press, 138 Brompton Road, London SW3 1HY. Also available from W.H.Smiths, Menzies, Naval Books and some local libraries.

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**AUDIO CASSETTES**  
GREAT NAVAL BATTLES OF W.W.II.  
By Frank Pearce (NRC N°929)

Frank Pearce, author of "THE SHIP THAT TORPEDOED HERSELF", "LAST CALL EDINBURGH", and other books has now introduced his first list of Audio Cassettes featuring Great Naval Battles of WWII. The available titles at £6.50 each, post free, are:

- Sinking of the Bismark
- The Battle of Midway
- The Destruction of Scharnhorst
- Battle of the River Plate - Graf Spee
- H.M.S. Trinidad - Fated convoy to Russia
- Pearl Harbour Did Roosevelt allow it to happen.

From Frank Pearce, 61 Longmead Road, Windmill Green, Paignton, Devon TQ3 1AX.

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\*BATTLE OF NORTH CAPE ANNIVERSARY\*

**SCHARNHORST ACTION PLOT REDUCED  
PRICE OFFER, FOR LIMITED PERIOD**

TO ENABLE AS MANY SHIPMATES AS POSSIBLE TO HAVE AN AUTHENTICATED NUMBERED COPY OF THIS MOST RARE AND HISTORIC DOCUMENT THE PRICE WILL BE REDUCED FROM £16.50 TO ONLY £11.50 POST FREE. IT WILL INCREASE IN VALUE AS TIME PASSES. CHEQUES MADE OUT TO A.C.M.T. SEND TO R.J.WREN SECRETARY, 13, SHERWOOD AVENUE, POTTERS BAR, HERTS. EN6 2LD.

**OUR FONT IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR CHRISTENINGS AT  
St NICHOLAS CHURCH, HMS DRAKE, PLYMOUTH.**

**SEVERAL BABIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN BAPTIZED  
SINCE THE BLESSING ON SEPTEMBER 28th 1993.  
WE ARE NOW NEEDING TO BUILD UP OUR FUNDS  
FOR THE SILVER CHRISTENING BOWL CONTAINING  
THE INSCRIPTION AROUND THE INSIDE RIM.**

**IN MEMORY OF THOSE LOST IN THE  
ARCTIC CAMPAIGN 1941-1945**

THE SILVER BOWL WILL BE DESIGNED AND MADE BY STUDENTS IN PLYMOUTH COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN. THE DEDICATION WILL TAKE PLACE ON THE 24th APRIL 1994. IF YOU WOULD LIKE AN INVITATION PLEASE CONTACT ME A.S.A.P. S.A.E. PLEASE.

WE CAN ALL BE VERY PROUD OF THIS VERY SPECIAL MEMORIAL THAT FORMS A REAL LINK WITH OUR SHIPMATES KILLED IN ACTION AND LYING ON THE ARCTIC SEA BOTTOM FORGOTTEN, BUT FOR THE EFFORTS OF THE REMAINING VETERANS

**YOU AND OUR FRIENDS AND PATRONS.**

IT IS TEMPTING TO REPEAT A FAMOUS MESSAGE BUT WITH A TWIST AS FOLLOWS.

**A.C.M.T. WOULD LIKE EVERY ARCTIC VETERAN THIS  
DAY TO DO HIS DUTY..SUPPORT YOUR TRUST!**

**WE MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER OUR SHIPMATES**

ALTHOUGH MANY VETERANS HAVE GIVEN DONATIONS AND OTHER SUPPORT TO THE 'TRUST' MANY THAT COULD, HAVE NOT, AS OUR LISTS WILL SHOW AND I WOULD URGE YOU TO HELP BEFORE TOO MUCH TIME GOES BY, WE HAVEN'T MUCH OF IT LEFT.

FUND RAISING IS A VITAL PART OF OUR OPERATION AND CANNOT BE LEFT TO JUST A FEW AS AT PRESENT, I AM THEREFORE ASKING THAT OUR VETERANS CONSIDER SEVERAL WAYS OF HELPING.....

- BEQUEATHMENTS (Never had one yet)....COVENANTS...Further details enclosed.
- CHARITY FAIRS...CAR-BOOT SALES...BEER-MUG COLLECTIONS...RNA DONATIONS...
- SERVICE CLUB DONATIONS...LOCAL AUTHORITY GRANTS...EMPLOYER/ EMPLOYEE
- SALARY MATCHED PAYMENTS...IN LIEU OF FUNERAL FLOWERS (Very personal)
- DONATIONS (in lieu of flowers at Funeral).....DONATE A ROUND OF DRINKS (or drink halves for one night at the Club)....ADVERTISE IN LOCAL PAPER YOUR UN-WANTED ITEMS (often free).....GO ON A DIET BY FASTING ONE DAY A WEEK AND DONATE SAVINGS TO A.C.M.T. Will make you feel fitter physically and mentally AND DO THE TRUST SOME GOOD TOO.
- FRANK HOWARD IS TO ORGANIZE A COLLECTION AT THE CITY PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY CONCERT HALL WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF THE CITY COUNCIL.
- ALMA PHILLIPS KNITS SAILOR DOLLS (They are lovely and have gone to various Countries) ALMA HAS RAISED QUITE A LOT THROUGH HER NEEDLES FOR ACMT.
- STAN ROGERS USES HIS ARTISTIC TALENTS ON BEHALF OF THE TRUST AND JACK CLARKE IS WORKING ON A SECRET PROJECT TO COLLECT FUNDS ABOARD A MAN OF WAR....OUR PRINTER IS ALWAYS DOING SPECIAL WORK FOR US AND MOST OF IT AT NO PROFIT TO HIMSELF.
- SEVERAL RAFFLES AT CLUB SOCIALS HAVE DONATED TO A.C.M.T. AND THIS IS OF VERY SPECIAL INTEREST AS IT DEMONSTRATES THAT YOU ARE ALL BEHIND US.

A.C.M.T. ACHIEVEMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:-

FIXED MEMORIALS.

MURMANSK MEMORIAL EIGHT FOOT HIGH OBELISK LENINGRADSKY PARK...

TWO WINDOWS IN PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL....

FLAG-MAST GARDEN of REMEMBRANCE STARTED IN LIVERPOOL...

CHRISTENING FONT IN PLYMOUTH(Bowl to be completed 1994)...

ILLUMINATED SCROLL OF ARCTIC CAMPAIGN FOR HMS DRAKE CHURCH.

PROJECT STARTED CHATHAM GARRISON CHURCH STAINED GLASS WINDOWS.

225 VETERANS CERTIFICATES NOW IN PLACE IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES ALL TELL ABOUT ARCTIC HEROES

\* SPECIAL 18"x36" STEEL, COPPER AND WOOD PLAQUES of ARCTIC CAMPAIGN PLANS DRAWN UP FOR MANUFACTURE. TO BE PLACED IN CLUBS AND CHURCHES. LIVING MEMORIALS.

NOTTINGHAM. TONI WAUL OLYMPIC GYMNAS TIC TRAINING

MURMANSK. ALEXANDRA MELECHKO EXCHANGE VISIT. Ex SCHOOL 51

DUKERIES . EXCHANGE WITH MURMANSK. SCHOOL 51

MURMANSK. EXCHANGE WITH DUKERIES COMPLEX.

LONDON. EXCHANGE WITH MOSCOW SCHOOL 79.

MOSCOW. EXCHANGE WITH LONDON CHRIST CHURCH SCHOOL, FINCHLEY St PETERSBURG. SVETLANA KORNIENKO ENGINEERING TRAINING B.RAIL. LONDON

THE FINANCIAL POSITION:-

AMOUNT COLLECTED FROM EVERYWHERE TO 31.12.92. £16,391.76.

OFFICE OVERHEADS. postage, stationary, phone, general	£0219.56.
MATERIALS photocopies typewriter usppies	£0036.66.
MEETINGS.	£0042.00.
FUND RAISING COSTS. items for sale, packing, postage, printing	£2061.93
EQUIPMENT COSTS.	£0461.00.
CASH spent on Fixed and Living Memorials to date 31.12.93.	£4005.60 *
COMMITMENT to Projects 12 and 13.	£0900.00 *
ASSETS.	
CASH. CARRIED FORWARD to 1993	£9110.00 *
SUM OWING (INLAND REVENUE)	£0200.10
STOCK AT VALUE goods for sale	£3869.96
EQUIPMENT AT VALUE. office equipment	£0300.00

NOTE. THIS IS NOT A BALANCE SHEET. Details from Accounts submitted to Charity Commission.

IT WILL BE SEEN FROM THIS THAT THE A.C.M.T. IS IN A HEALTHY POSITION PROVIDING FUND RAISING CAN BE CONTINUED ALL THE OBJECTIVES PLANNED WILL BE MET EVENTUALLY.

THE MAIN NEED FOR SUPPORT IS THE LIVERPOOL PROJECT 13, THAT HAS A SHORTFALL OF £9,500.00 IN ITS PLANNED BUDGET. £5,000 HAS BEEN SET ASIDE FOR THE FLAG POLE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE, BUT £14,500 IS THE ESTIMATED COST.

WE ARE HOPING THAT THE RESIDENTS OF THE CITIES OF "PLYMOUTH AND LIVERPOOL," WILL DONATE TO THE MEMORIALS FOR THEIR CITIES IN PARTICULAR THE SERVICE PEOPLE THROUGH THEIR CLUBS. ARCTIC VETERANS CAN MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

WE MUST HAVE YOUR BACK UP TO GET THIS JOB DONE ON YOUR BEHALF SO PLEASE DON'T LET US DOWN, WE ARE A VERY SMALL GROUP WORKING HARD FOR ALL ARCTIC VETERANS.....ie...YOU.

DONATIONS BY COVENANT PRODUCE AN EXTRA TAX CREDIT of 25% FOR ACMT		
ANNUAL DONATION.	OVER 4 YEARS	OVER 7YEARS
£25	£133	£233
£50	£267	£467
£85	£453	£793
£100	£533	£933
£500	£2665	£4665

OBTAIN YOUR COVENANT FORM FROM R.J.WREN 13, SHERWOOD AVENUE POTTERS BAR, HERTS, EN6 2LD Tel. 0707 655846.

ON BEHALF OF THE A.C.M.T. TRUSTEES AND COMMITTEE I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY OF WISHING YOU HEALTH AND HAPPINESS, ESPECIALLY AT CHRISTMAS TIME.

*Ron Wren*

S T O P P R E S S

**SOUTH-WEST MEMBERS' DINNER:** The 10th "Birthday" Dinner of South-west area members, will again be held at Keyford Elmes Hotel and Restaurant, Frome, Somerset, on Wednesday 16th March, 1994. 1930 for 2000 hrs. This will be a "Special Birthday Event" All interested members should contact **E.J.(Curly) Morris, 54 Green Lane, Frome, Somerset BA11 4JU**. Accommodation is available at the venue. Please book your B & B through "Mike" the Manager. Other B & B facilities are available in the area.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.

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**THE NINTH ANNUAL DINNER DANCE:** Took place at the Swallow Hotel, Eagle Drive, Northampton, on Saturday 23 October 1993. A total of 138 members and wives attended and the general opinion was that the whole event was an enjoyable and excellent event. Many members arrived in time to visit Northampton Naval Club during the afternoon where they were guests of the local R.N.A., some of them and a few others enjoyed the arrangements so much that they decided to stay at the hotel for an extra day.

The chief guests were our patron Admiral Bruce Richardson, CB, accompanied by M/s Kitty Barclay and the other invited guests were Mr & Mrs David Watkin of Royal Mail Public Relations. The evening started with our patron giving the "Splice the Mainbrace" order at the rum tub - this also included sherry for the ladies.

An excellent dinner was served prompt at 1900 by a cheerful and efficient staff and the speeches that followed were light-hearted, interesting and not too long. Our patron expressed his sincere pleasure in being able to attend the function and thanked everyone for the wonderful welcome he and Kitty had received.

The evening's programme produced entertainment of a varied form. Mainly dancing to the tunes we all knew, with monologues, songs and frivolity. The high spot was our girl's choir singing Lilli Marlene to different words, (no, not the words you sang in Flotta Canteen!).

A vote of thanks must be recorded to Les Jones who arranged the whole event and to Bill Ford who acted as M.C. for the evening.

NOTE: The same venue and band have been provisionally booked for the corresponding date in 1994. It has also been suggested that the club's annual general meeting should be held during this week-end. This can only be done in 1994, by waiving the time-limit rule. Does anyone object? If so, please contact the Hon. Secretary without delay.

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We regret that space does not permit full reports on the reunions held on board SS SHIELDHALL in Southampton, and at HMS Eaglet in Liverpool. Both were very successful events.

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COPY FOR THE NEXT (FLOWER CLASS CORVETTES) EDITION OF NORTHERN LIGHT SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR NOT LATER THAN MID-JANUARY, 1994. (28 Westbrook Road, Gateacre, Liverpool L25 2PX).

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