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NORTHERN PRAVDA  
Archangel

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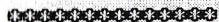
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### FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Firstly, and most important, a big 'Thank You' from Peggy and I to all of you who sent greetings messages, cards, (and bottles!), on the celebration of our Golden Wedding. We tried hard to keep it a strictly family affair, but no success - the Buzz got round and we were very pleased to share our big day with many of you.

Secondly, our sincere congratulations to Sir Ludovic Kennedy on his Knighthood announced in the Birthday Honours List. As many of you know, Sir Ludovic has done sterling work for us, particularly when we had real problems with awards of Commemorative Medals. His interest in our club is much appreciated and we all know that the honour is well deserved. We sent him a letter of congratulations on your behalf.

"THE REAL COLD WAR" Our President's book, or, as he prefers to call it - 'The book about you', is on the slipway at last. This after almost ten years of effort, with days, months or even years sacrificed or lost in the interests of other work for our club. from the days of our formation until the present time. All good things are worth waiting for. I am sure that many, many of you will now fill in the enclosed pre-publication order form to ensure early delivery and avoid disappointment.

Some newer members are still asking us to apply on their behalf for the award of the Soviet Commemorative Medal. These medals can now only be obtained by personal application in writing to M.O.D. So, save yourselves any unnecessary delay (but there is bound to be some) Make your application to: Director of Pay & Pensions, Medals Section, Centurion Building, Grange Road, Gosport, Hants PO13 9YZ.

As your chairman I gain a lot of satisfaction from the fact that new entries to our club continue to out-number the losses suffered through Crossings of the Bar, etc. I am sure that there is a long life left in our unique club yet. Some members have expressed concern that activities and interest will wane once all of the 50th anniversary celebrations have passed. Inevitably, 'Old Father Time' will catch up with us all one day. But we can take an example from the Old Contemptibles - they kept going for many years after their fiftieth, so why shouldn't we? We have never enrolled 'Associate Members', preferring to keep our club unique. Guests are always very welcome at all of our functions nevertheless. Wearing my other (editor's hat) I personally hope to keep the editorship for many years yet - unless of course, you ever decide that a new face (or typing fingers) are required.

As we approach our tenth birthday, I am sure that we must say 'Ta' to the boys from Polyarnoe and Archangel in Naval Parties 100 and 200 who launched us in 1984. At least we can now say "Barrack Stanchions" do have some use after all. The advertisement that started it all is published on page 26.



**EDITOR'S NOTES**

We hope that your postman will deliver this edition in time to meet the 'September' publishing date. We had it practically ready to go to print in mid-July, but met one or two snags in producing the final draft copy.

The contents are a little different from previous editions, which meets our aim of giving you plenty of variety. It is also hoped that the clearer type will help you enjoy your reading.

Many thanks to all our contributors, whether you be a regular or just an occasional or one-off scribe. There must be many more of you who could produce something of interest for us all. This is one instance when you can be of service by being a volunteer! The themes for the next four issues are as follows;

**N.L. No 39: December 1994: "SURVIVORS"** - we expect some unusual and interesting stories from you, we already have some. Were you a survivor of EDINBURGH?, TRINIDAD?, DENBIGH CASTLE?; GOSSAMER?; one of the dozen 'EMPIRE' boats that were lost?, were you landed in the Kola ports and have an odd story to tell? Were you rescued without getting your feet wet? It is important that your stories are recorded not only for our own members as the Northern Light is also filed in the British Library as well as in several universities and museums.

**N.L. No 40: March 1995: "CONVOY PQ18"** - a theme that we had intended to use ages ago. We have numerous members who served on the ships in this horrific convoy in September 1942. Come on lads, your stories please.

**N.L. No 41: June 1995; "V.E. AND V.J. DAYS"** This edition is to be published between the 50th anniversaries of these two momentous days, so where were you? and what were you doing? I know that many of you had moved on from Russian convoy duties to the Far East - I had! We remind you of that famous epitaph on the memorial at Kohima:

"When you go home, tell them of us and say,  
For your tomorrow, we gave our today!"

**N.L.No 41: September 1995: "HOSTILITIES ONLY"** The date will now be nearing the 50th anniversary of when you began to look forward to a demob suit (and trilby) and the approach of Civvy Street again - you all did a great job, so this Northern Light is to be dedicated to all H.Os. It's over to you lads, you have a free choice. There must be an H.O. somewhere who has waited more than 50 years to tell my fortune!!!

Of course, we will still require your other contributions and articles, to keep the Northern Light on an even keel. Also, if any of you have ideas for special themes, please let me know.

RDS Editor

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**ARE YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID FOR 1994 ?**

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**FORTHCOMING EVENTS, TOURS, & REUNIONS**

**FRI/SAT.21ST/22ND OCT. 1994:** TRAFALGAR NIGHT, A.G.M. and ANNUAL DINNER DANCE at The Swallow Hotel, Eagle Drive, Northampton. Hotel Tariff - Special Rates for N.R.C. members on 21/22/23 October, state N.R.C. membership number when booking. Les Jones has special booking forms for accommodation and dinner, together with printed directions to venue. SAE please - Les's address etc on page 2.

**PLEASE ARRIVE IN TIME FOR A.G.M. (see separate pamphlet with this edition). PROPOSALS AND BUSINESS FOR A.G.M. SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE HON SECRETARY AT LEAST 28 DAYS PRIOR TO MEETING.**

**SUN.13TH NOV. 1994: REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY - CENOTAPH MARCH:** We will again be marching in the Arctic Convoy group together with our colleagues from the Russian Convoy Club. You are reminded that passes are required to gain access to the assembly point on Horse Guards Parade. Applications for passes to be made to Peter Skinner, NOW!

**WED 23RD NOV. 1994: 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF FORMATION, PRESIDENT'S BUFFET LUNCH & REUNION** at The Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, Marble Arch London, 1100 to 1600. Members Only, but guests welcome. Bookings to the President, Chris B Tye, address etc on Page 2.

**SAT/SUN 26/27 NOV. 1994: 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF FORMATION DINNER & SOCIAL** at The Bradford Hotel, Tithebarn Street, Liverpool. 4 course dinner, Followed by entertainment by the 20-strong Merseyside Barber Shop Singers (two 30 minute spots) and Nineteen Forties Disco. Accommodation available at hotel. Event will include a wreath laying service at the Arctic Campaign Memorial & Mast at Liverpool Parish Church and a tour of the original Western Approaches Headquarters at Derby House (now renamed Walker House). Booking forms may be obtained from Dick Squires or Les Jones - addresses on page 3. Book early, numbers limited for accommodation (47 en suite rooms).

**WED.7TH DEC 1994: "OGGIE LAND" CHRISTMAS LUNCH IN THE SENIOR RATES MESS AT H.M.S. DRAKE.** £15 per person. 12 noon for 1300. State car registration, make and colour if using own car. Book with Peter Skinner.

**JERSEY REUNION 1995:** At the direct invitation of Bob Smale, NRC member and proprietor of the Hotel, arrangements are being made to hold the third re-union of North Russia Club in the Channel Island of Jersey. Details of itinerary are yet to be finalised but the venue is the same as for our previous two visits - THE WESTHILL HOTEL.

A full programme will be arranged with excursions, Remembrance Parade for the 50th Anniversary in Europe as well as the 50th Anniversary of Liberation Day. There will be entertainment in the hotel each evening. The dates are May 6 to 13, (or 7 to 14 where required). Numbers will be limited to the capacity of the Hotel. Full details will be announced soon but to assist with planning, anyone interested should contact Les Sullivan NOW. Address on page 2.

**TOURS TO MURMANSK, ARCHANGEL, POLYARNOE AND ST PETERSBURG 1995:** All details are not yet to hand but the plan is for NRC & RCC to travel to St.Petersburg (early May), to take part in the Russian Navy's preliminary programme for Victory Day, as guests of the Russian Navy (Admiral Kasatanov). Thence the party will split, with participants going to the port of their choice, i.e. Murmansk or Archangel, to be there to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Victory Day. Full programmes are being arranged in both cities. If your choice is Archangel please contact Bob Allan, The Moorings, Swinehill, Harlaxton. Grantham, Lincs, stating that you are a NRC member. All other enquiries to Dick Squires or Peter Skinner - page 2.

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DAILY HERALD - Saturday January 9, 1943.

### IT'S JUST A DAY TO JACK

Reuter's special correspondent with the Home Fleet, Arthur Oakeshott, who recently travelled to Murmansk on the previous spectacular Arctic convoy, tells the story of a trip in a British destroyer - typical of the day-by-day operational round of the men who keep the northern convoy lanes open.

We were the leading destroyer of a force escorting a battleship and cruiser. I will call her "M."

One of the latest of the "Lightning" class, she is not much longer than six London buses placed end to end - and not much wider either.

It is only hinting at the force of the gales in the depths of the northern waters to say that hundreds of tons of icy water would crash on the deck of our little ship in one wave - a wave that tore off capstan covers or snapped a steel stanchion as if it were a carrot.

Every few minutes, for days on end, wave after wave pound the deck, causing "M" to shudder from stem to stern, roll from one side to the other.

Then, shaking herself, she would resume an even keel, only to meet another wave, and the whole performance would be repeated over and over again. This continued for days on end.

#### NEVER DRY

During watch changing, officers and men have to make their way forward to the bridge, all the time in peril of their lives; an wave after wave seemed bent on sweeping them into the sea.

Again and again officers and men would return to the comparative comfort of "below decks" and dry their sodden clothing at electric heaters, but go on watch again before any degree of dryness had been obtained.

Every few minutes colossal

waves would smash over the fo'c'sle and drench everyone, from the skipper to the look-out men.

Water would stream down the hatches and ladders, which have to be open all the time, and flood living quarters to the very bowels of the ship.

Hammocks and blankets, stowed away at "lash up and stow", were soaked, and in these men had to sleep whenever sleep was possible.

And all the time the howling of the wind, the crash of tons of water, the ship's creaks and groans of protest as she took the buffeting.

"M" would top a monstrous wave, with her screws racing in the air, then hit the water again with a crash and dive deep down into the trough.

Through all this maelstrom of storm and gale, wind and weather, we maintained contact with the "battle wagon" by lamp.

Each man I saw coming off the bridge at the end of his watch would have salt encrusted round his eyes. Salt cellars could have been filled with what I saw on men's faces.

But how cheerful the men were! On one mess deck they had their Christmas turkey strung up and were plucking.

#### CAROLS - AMID GUNS

Late on Christmas Eve we came back to port and lashed up to an oiler for refuelling for another trip.

When all was "buttoned up," we retired to the wardroom for cocoa. Suddenly we heard music and went up on deck.

We found a party of sailors accompanied by one man on a cornet - singing Christmas carols. It had gone midnight and was Christmas Day now.

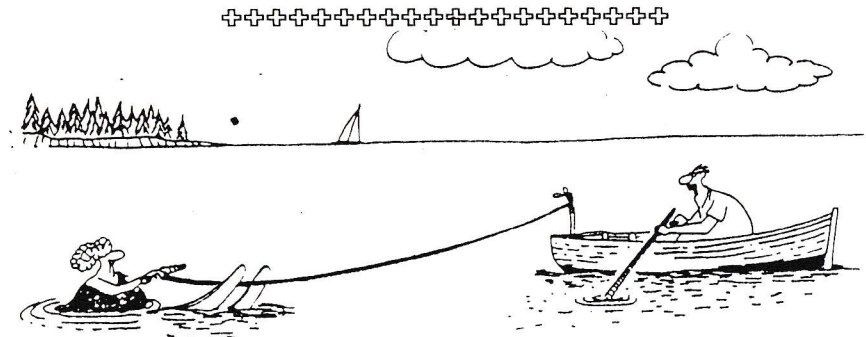
And these men sang - they sang "Silent Night, Holy Night" standing on a gun platform.

Number One (the First Lieutenant) said to me just before we retired to bed: "I'm afraid this has been very dull for you, Reuter. Just a routine trip with nothing to write about."

It was the routine - the routine of the men of the destroyers who do all the dirty jobs, facing gale, hurricane, typhoon, snow, wind, sleet, rain and icy cold. They grouse but they never complain (there's a difference you know).

And then the men in destroyers were deprived of "hard lying money" because it was decided that modern destroyers were too comfortable to merit the payment.

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**"READY?!"**

DECK OFFICER ATTEMPTING TO GET UNDER WAY

YOU CAN'T GET ALONG WITHOUT THE ENGINE DEPARTMENT!



From Submariners Times. (S.O.C.A. Merseyside Branch)

The love of a beautiful maiden  
And the love of a strong true man  
And the love of a baby unafraid  
Has existed since time began.  
But the greatest love, the love of loves,  
Even greater than that of a mother  
Is the tender, passionate, infinite love  
Of one drunken sod for another.

The provenance of the above is lost in the mist of time,  
wish I could claim responsibility for it.

Mick Jones.

DUNDEE EVENING TELEGRAPH 27 November 1945

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**IN THE WAKE OF THE RUSSIAN CONVOYS**

By J.P.Derriman, Radio Officer on the Liberty Ship Samtucky.

There has been peace for half a year now in the stormy waters of the Arctic, where the great Allied convoys fought their way to North Russia during four years of war. Despite all that has happened since to shorten our memories, to travel that grim route again is to realise what a tremendous victory they gained.

I have just returned from a voyage to Archangel and Murmansk aboard the Liberty ship Samtucky, which berthed at Dundee on Saturday. She was the first British vessel to bring cargo to the North Russian ports since the famous convoys ended with VE-Day.

We sailed from Britain at dawn one October morning, and the sun caught the red of our Ensign, as the Liberty ship sailed down the Tees. Our holds were full to the combings with British machinery, and on deck, lashed down against the Arctic storms were piled massive generators, destined for Soviet power-stations.

Already as we passed the Scottish coast there came warning by radio of our first gale, sweeping down across Scapa. For hours we fought our way northward through a rough, heaving swell, until finally the sea calmed again to a sullen Western Ocean roll.

With the Shetlands astern of us, we reached what was one of the worst points of the convoy route, where the enemy had attacked in full force with U-boats and bombers from the bases in Denmark(?) and Norway. Now, our only danger was from the mines which still remained, dislodged by the heavy weather,

and drifting with the currents.

It was not until we rounded North Cape, the northernmost point of the Arctic voyage, that we had our first fall of snow, while you in Britain were still enjoying a warm October. By evening the ship was blanketed with white, and the men on watch were glad of their heavy duffel-coats.

At this turning-point in the 2,000-mile course, the rocky shores are so treacherous that even in peace-time vessels must travel far off-shore. There was only the grey ocean to remind us of the great events that had been; of the valiant ships and men that were lost, and of the yet greater number that won through to deliver their vital cargoes.

Then one evening we sighted the first distant lights of the Russian coast, and by morning we could see the bare, rocky, snow-covered shore. In another twenty-four hours, the Samtucky had crossed the narrow White Sea, and reached the entrance to the North Dvina River, on which Archangel stands.

We steamed up the broad, muddy stream, already beginning to freeze; on either side stretched the vast, flat, pine forests, and later the great timber yards with their log villages, that surround Archangel's port.

We could picture the thankfulness with which the wartime convoys reached their destination, vessels battered by shrapnel, their seamen weary through long battle with the enemy and with the Arctic

elements.

Archangel is a big, open straggling town, nearly all its houses are built with timber from the surrounding forests. Even its highways and pavements are of wood, already thickly carpeted with snow when we arrived. The bitter wind would come upon you, whistling round the street corners, searching out every gap, causing even the Russian passers-by to draw their furs more closely about them. Across the river, at night, you could see the sparks rise from the stoves warming the coaches of the Moscow express.

The city shows little sign of war damage - the German bombers penetrated here on only one or two occasions - and the fine theatre and other modern buildings remain intact. Everywhere now were men of the Red Army, stationed at this outpost, waiting for demobilisation. The Samtucky herself was being unloaded by a labour battalion from far off Bessarabia - peasant soldiers, longing to return to their southern farms. Travelling on the Dvina ferry one jostled shoulders with members of gallant units, soldiers who had fought at Moscow and Kiev, and men and women who had survived the bitter sieges of Leningrad and Stalingrad.

The streets were peopled with hordes of children, for shortages of teachers makes it impossible for all the pupils to attend school at the same time. Happy and sharp-witted, like children anywhere, though sadly under-sized through the privations of war, they begged for last gifts of "gum" and British cigarettes as they skated or ski-ed along the streets, or passed us on their parents' bumpy sleighs.

When the Samtucky left for Murmansk, the wide arm of the Dvina in which she was lying was

completely frozen: a great expanse of ice, on which you could walk with safety. The ship echoed with the pounding of the broken ice floes as she passed through the channel broken for her by a Russian tug, and when we reached the open sea the stillness was cut by the eerie crackling of the thin sheet-ice that covered the water.

Two days later, Murmansk, its scattered buildings grouped at the foot of a semi-circle of low hills, lay white and silent around us as the Samtucky took the last of her homeward cargo. The docks, which for four years had dealt with score upon score of ships each month, and through which supplies for the Eastern Front had flowed in a continuous stream, now seemed strangely deserted.

Many Murmansk people were wearing proudly the blue and white ribbon of the medal for the defence of their city, a reminder of the days when the Germans reached a point only 30 miles away, and the nerve-racking air-raids were almost continuous.

At last, after a month in the Russian ports, the Samtucky was ready to sail for Britain.

Only the next morning, in the Barents Sea, we ran straight into the teeth of a full Arctic gale. For 48 hours the ship could make little more than steerage way, as the wind blew with hurricane force, and the waves towered 30 feet high. They crashed and crashed again upon the decks as the vessel swayed giddily and shuddered. The sky was heavy with storm clouds, and the days were now but six hours long in these latitudes.

Then, as we approached North Cape again, the glass rose and gradually the weather cleared. Our orders came by radio, "Proceed Dundee"; and we

made all speed for home.

And so the voyage was over. This month for the first time since 1941, the White Sea harbours will be allowed to freeze unhindered, and no icebreakers will open the way for shipping before the spring thaw. With the closing of the British Naval Mission, whose last members returned aboard the Samtucky, Britain's part in the famous Russian supply line

is at last ended.

There is now peace where the Arctic battles were fought and the hazards of the ocean are almost the only perils which remain. But as long as Britons remember the gallant deeds of the Merchant Navy in this war, the memories of the Russian convoys and their crews will live.

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BOSTON GLOBE - NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE - February 22, 1946  
(End of the war and 'PQ17 cover-ups begin!)

### BRITISH LEFT 38 SHIPS TO U-BOATS

A merchant seaman who arrived here Wednesday on the GRIPSHOLM told a harrowing story today of the utter route of a Murmansk-bound convoy by submarines and German torpedo lanes in July 1942.

At the time, Berlin reported the sinking of all 38 ships in the convoy. Allied sources never confirmed the reports, but today offered no objection to the publication of the story as told by Walter Stankiewicz.

According to Stankiewicz, he was a member of the crew of the freighter CARLTON, travelling in a convoy guarded by a large British escort that included 14 destroyers and heavy cruisers. Early in July, as the convoy passed through the North Atlantic, the escort left the merchant ships. It was Stankiewicz's understanding that the fighting ships pulled away to engage in battle with the German battleships GNEISENAU and SCHARNHORST, although it is now known that the two Nazi ships were badly damaged and tied up at the time.

Unprotected, the convoy was subjected to fierce attacks in which the Germans "had their

pickings" the seaman said. 34 ships were sunk in attacks carried on by unmolested subs and planes. Stankiewicz was rescued by a torpedo plane, and imprisoned in Germany. Another seaman, George Allan Rigins, of Norfolk, Va., was repatriated with him Wednesday. He corroborated his friend's story.

#### STORY CALLED "NONSENSE"

LONDON, Feb 22, 1946. (AP) An American merchant seaman's story that British escort ships abandoned a Murmansk bound convoy in July 1943, was ignored officially by the Admiralty tonight but unofficially naval officers described it as "arrant nonsense".

In a case like that, the practice when attacked has been to disperse the convoy while escort vessels try to break up the attack, officers said. This occurred on that occasion, it was said, and it was unlikely one merchant ship would know what was happening elsewhere in efforts to evade and break up the attack.

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## THE OBSERVER

No.7,985

LONDON, SUNDAY JUNE 11th, 1944

PRICE 2d.

### SECOND FRONT OPTIMISM RISES IN RUSSIA

Iris Morley Observer Correspondent  
MOSCOW, June 10

The joy of the Russian people at the materialisation of the Second Front is not only profound, but apt to overflow into glowing speculation about the war being over by the winter.

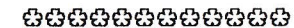
The Russian has no lack of confidence in the Allies' power to inflict a smashing defeat on the enemy. Perhaps to temper this surge of optimism, all the newspapers carry very detailed accounts of the immense difficulties involved, and, for the first time, fully explain the role of sea power in such operations.

In the past, the average Russian has, not unnaturally, never understood the difficulties involved in crossing 20 miles of water and landing on enemy-occupied territory, and has been inclined to attribute the delay necessary for preparation to mere procrastination.

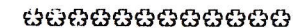
#### NO DISTINCTION

The newspapers make no distinction between American and English contributions to the invasion, but it is generally assumed that as General Montgomery is in command, the bulk of the first invasion troops are British infantry, and that, later, the majority will be American.

Speeches of Allied leaders



From the Daily Telegraph:...MEAT SHORTAGE - MINISTER UNDER ATTACK  
From Liverpool Daily Post.....NO WATER - SO FIREMEN IMPROVISE  
From Business Day, South Africa.....BIG DROP IN RAINFALL  
From Weekend Australian.....ONE LEGGED RAPIST STILL ON THE RUN



are fully reported: President Roosevelt's prayer makes a rather startling appearance in "Pravda," but the King's speech is not reported.

Demian Bedney, the veteran Bolshevik poet, greets the Allies in "Red Star" with a verse of which this is a rough translation:-

*"Scarce has Rome fallen, a glorious milestone,  
When, on the verge of France,  
we see*

*Brave men cut a swathe of combat*

*Nor fear the barrier of the sea.*

*Now let us quote the Ancients' valedictory:-*

*"Forward, good friends, God grant you Victory."*

#### REAL ALLIES

The "Red Star" also publishes the following from Ehrenburg:- "Heroes of Stalin-grad and the Dnieper are proud of their Allies. Seasoned soldiers with all their soul greet the comrades in arms - the weavers of Manchester, students of Oxford, metal workers of Detroit, clerks from New York, farmers from Manitoba, and trappers from Canada - come from afar to put an end to Nazi tyranny."

In general, this is a moment when foreigners in Moscow find themselves elevated to the status of real Allies in the eyes of Russians. It is a pleasant experience.

"NORTHERN PRAVDA" - 3RD AUGUST, 1991.

### "PLUCKED FROM THE SEA"

An article by Captain Yuri Zhukov, reviewed by L. Shmigelsky.

*It was a very kind and helpful thing that Captain Yuri Zhukov did when he devoted a large part of his article to the memory of his colleague Captain Anatoly Sakharov. And not only because he received a British Naval decoration.*

A wonderful professional and an extra-ordinary personality, utterly devoted to the sea, this son of Archangel, sailor by birth, in 1953 on the bridge of his ship lost his life when he was just 48. Sakharov had been only 27 years old when on the recommendation of the famous Arctic seafarer, Captain A.K. Burke, he was appointed captain of the motor schooner Belukha. By the end of the 30s he commanded a deserved authority among those who sailed the Arctic seas.

(Left) CAPTAIN A.SAKHAROV, DSC. Captain of SS Stalingrad during Convoy PQ-18.



His time as captain of the Stalingrad during the voyage of convoy PQ18 in September, 1942 was not Sakharov's first encounter with this passenger-freighter, which was purpose built for the Arctic Ice Route at the Baltiysk Factory in Leningrad. In 1939/40 the Stalingrad with Sakharov as captain, took part in the epic rescue of the Sedov, supplying fuel and fresh water for the ice-breaker I Stalin, as it broke through to the marooned vessel. The incident took place one stormy, arctic night. Conditions were extremely hazardous but the operation went without a hitch. After the expedition all those even indirectly involved in it - seamen, scientists, pilots - all received a government

award. All, that is, all except the captain of Stalingrad and his crew. Sakharov went through a lot for his command.

Sakharov simply did not know how to defer to people. I.D.Papanin himself took a dislike to him. The specific reason was the captain's failure to turn up at a meeting arranged by the expedition leader at Barentsburg on Spitzbergen to mark the end of a successful trip. Sakharov was ill, but Papanin saw it as a provocative act, a failure of discipline, and ordered his expulsion from the Arctic Sea Route Company. (It is true that he reinstated Sakharov in his old job six months later.) But the powers that be did not like the way Sakharov strongly resisted their proposal that

the Stalingrad, which was then in need of repair, should be loaded up with a full cargo of coal for Murmansk. The captain could not be swayed in matters affecting professional judgment.

Sakharov was given command and ordered to take Stalingrad to U.K. for a refit and re-arming and then return northwards with one of the convoys. The ship reached Scotland safely. But then it was PQ-18, and that fatal day, 13 September, 1942, when at 9 am Stalingrad was struck by a torpedo in 'Death Corridor', between Spitzbergen and Bear Island. Without exaggeration, the actions of the captain during those few minutes, which may be described as heroic, are very well described in Yuri Zhukov's article.

Sakharov was an extremely modest man. He left behind no notes or memoirs and he rarely wrote home from all his overseas voyages. But when he got home from his trips he told his wife Aleutina Fyodorovna all about what had happened to him. Many years later she recalled almost everything her husband had told her at the time, including of course the morning of 13 December 1942, He told her he had at first decided to go down with the ship. Only the thought of his family, his four little daughters, persuaded him to jump into the sea when the bridge was only eighteen inches above the water.

In the Archangel Regional State Archives there is a surprising document - Captain Sakharov's report of the trip written on 24 September 1942, three days after the arrival in Archangel of the survivors of the crew of Stalingrad. The whole of the period was recorded from memory by Sakharov in that four-page A4 document, all the ships official records having been lost. In it were recorded

the dates of every arrival and departure, precise details of every cargo, totals of cash spent abroad in pounds sterling and Icelandic crowns, and a mass of other figures. And this after all he had been through.

About himself and the actions of the crew of the Stalingrad during that last voyage the captain writes in astonishingly modest terms. In conclusion, I consider it my duty to state that neither I personally, nor the ship or its crew at any time let down our country's good name while in foreign ports.

And what did the top brass say to the captain of a ship lost in a convoy, 66 of whose crew and passengers out of a total of 87 had been saved? According to Aleutina Fyodorovna he was greeted with the question, "Why did you come back without your ship?" After this, of course, any more work for Sakharov from the steamship company was out of the question so he became a ships pilot.

How different was the value placed by these guardians of naval tradition on the achievements of a captain of a Soviet merchant ship when compared with the British. A few months after the events described the British Embassy in Moscow announced to the Soviet Government the award to Captain Sakharov of a military medal for valour "in that he, with other Soviet seamen, volunteered to act as a lookout on board a British naval vessel which made its way safely to Archangel.

But the recipient himself for a long time knew nothing of the award. It was not until May 1944 that Ship's Pilot A.N. Sakharov returned home, according to Aleutina Fyodorovna, with some newspaper or other and said, "Look, medals for marshals and generals and one for me



Pravda announced that on May 10 the British Ambassador to the Soviet Union, A K Kerr, had invited the Soviet Foreign Minister V M Molotov to the Embassy in the presence of Soviet and Allied officials and military representatives had presented to him a large number of British medals and decorations "awarded in 1943 by His Majesty King George VI to sergeants, officers and generals of the Red Army and to sailors of the Soviet Merchant Navy".

In all 185 medals were awarded. Special reference was made to the fact that additionally "His Majesty was pleased to confer the Distinguished Service Cross upon Captain A N Sakharov of the Soviet Merchant Navy and the Order of the British Empire, 5th Class upon E A Puzyreva, for courage displayed during enemy attacks upon a convoy en-route to the Soviet Union from Great Britain." (E A Puzyreva was a passenger on Stalingrad. She was a translator at the Soviet Consulate in London. Seen after her rescue she began to help the medical staff on board the British ship. Ed.)

### HUMOUR IN UNIFORM

From the "Anchor Light" Monthly paper of the U.S. Merchant Marine, World War II - San Pedro, California

Like other branches of the service, the Merchant Marine were short handed during World War II. On a ship I was a crew member of, we went from Norfolk to North Africa delivering war material. The entire Steward Department were Chinese, not one spoke English. The trip was longer than planned and we began to run out of certain supplies. One of these was toilet paper. To give notice of this, the Chief Steward posted a notice in the heads. Evidently he used a Chinese -English dictionary. His notice read as follows:

"If you do not toilet, do not use paper, because soon finish"

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*One "Paper jumper is jumping for you!*

*Have you sponsored him yet?*

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MOSCOW SPUTNIK MAGAZINE - January 1992

### "A WALTZ WITH THE QUEEN MOTHER"

By Konstantin Lyubimov. Secretary, Northern Convoy Veterans in Russia. (Sputnik Magazine is a Young Peoples Gazette)

#### DESTROYERS ARE AS VITAL AS A BREATH OF LIFE.

From the summer of 1941 I had served as an artillery systems electrician aboard the destroyer Razumny. This type of ship was the most common during the Great Patriotic War and they took part in more raids and convoys than other surface vessels - and sank more often, too!

In 1944, the Soviet Northern Fleet was faced with a shortage of destroyers. In the three years of war the Nazis had two, leaving only five in commission. Following the tragedy of PQ-17, three of them were to meet Allied convoys off Bear Island in the Barents Sea, where the Soviet zone of responsibility began. That was an indispensable condition on which the convoy set out from Iceland.

Destroyers were as vital as the breath of life. Just then the question of dividing up the Italian navy, which had surrendered, arose between the Allies. One third of the Italian ships were intended for the Soviet Union. But the war made the Mediterranean Sea seem like a million miles from Murmansk. Then Churchill promised to loan Stalin eight destroyers of His Majesty's Navy until the end of the war. The former First Lord of the Admiralty took such a step with suspicious ease, warning, however that the destroyers were not the most modern, although they could do their war work. Taking counsel of Admiral Kusnetsov, the people's commissar of the USSR Navy, the land generalissimo accepted the offer. We soon grasped the meaning of Churchill's warning from our own experience.

On April 29, 1944, I was among some thirty men from the Razumny on the deck of a U.S. Liberty ship. Another seven transport ships carried sailors for the rest of the destroyers. Five transport ships carried the crew for the British battleship Royal Sovereign, which had just been repaired in the United States and was about to be turned over to the Soviet Union. We had over three thousand, well trained and hardened sailors and officers and formed the most valuable load on the return convoy RA59.

#### DINNER WITH A TORPEDO

The convoy had a very strong British naval cover. However, it suffered its share of losses. Around Bear Island, a Nazi reconnaissance plane, Heinkel 111, appeared in the sky, having taken off from a base in occupied Norway. A Hurricane plane quickly took off from the flight deck of an aircraft carrier, and the escort ships barked with their rapid-fire pom poms. The Nazi plane was soon hit. Leaving a trail of smoke it left the convoy and disappeared somewhere over the Norwegian Sea. Nevertheless, it had performed its duty: within fifteen minutes the Fuehrer's "submarine admiral" Doenitz no doubt had on his desk the Heinkel's death radiogram. RA59 ceased to be a secret from the Nazis.

On May Day, the US crew gave us a present. For dinner we were given individual pilot rations hermetically sealed and rolled in tin-foil. The chicken in jelly and bitter chocolate were eaten immediately. Through ignorance the packet with the word "chewing gum" on it was swallowed, too. Then we emerged

from the hold, where the sailors were, on to the deck. As soon as we lit our cigarettes (someone who knew English joked: "The chewing gum will make your guts stick together"), there was a thunderous roar and a transport ship in the neighbouring column split in half. A pillar of water shot up above the masts. That was a torpedo.

The ship's bow plummeted to the bottom with the entire Canadian crew aboard her. The stern section with the men from the destroyer *Dostoyne*, remained afloat. From a distance of 500 metres we clearly saw the men jumping overboard but we could not render them any aid. During the war transport ships were duty bound to get as far away from torpedoed ships next to them as quickly as they could, ignoring the cries of those who were floundering in the ice-cold water. Experience showed that a transport ship which defied this rule unavoidably fell the next victim. It is the duty of warships to save people in wartime.

And a frigate and destroyer approached the scene. Forming an arc around the stern of the Canadian transport ship, they began to depth charge the submarine sending her to the bottom. But our men in the water suffered hydraulic shock - a terrible experience. We lost fifty men, a quarter of a warship's crew: Those who caught nets cast by the escort ships were bleeding from their ears - their eardrums had burst. We headed westwards, but the British behind us took a long time finishing off the ill starred ship to prevent her falling into enemy hands. The Canadian ship stubbornly refused to sink under the torpedo and artillery coups de grace.

#### VENERABLE OLD SHIPS

After several days we reached Glasgow. Then, travel-

ling overland, we came to Newcastle where the ships were to be handed over to us. Approaching Albert Dock, we saw a forest of masts - 46 destroyers, eight of them intended for the Soviet Union. But as soon as we saw these destroyers our hearts sank. They had been built in 1916-1917.

These destroyers had a fairly edifying history. Learning what German unrestricted warfare was like during the First World War, the Americans rushed to produce a large series of cheap destroyers. They did not have time to show their worth in battle and were mothballed.

Twenty-five years later the British found a use for them. At the beginning of 1940 kind Uncle Sam de-mothballed fifty ships and, under a Lease-Lend agreement, gave them to the British in exchange for British bases in the colonies.

Two of them sank 'naturally' when crossing the Atlantic. That left forty-eight. The fate of another two was related to us by the British hand-over crew. They were filled to bursting with explosives, their steering wheels were securely made fast, and they were directed towards Dutch sea walls to sink the shore batteries of the Bosche. The Allies concluded their story quite in the tradition of English humour. They said it was good that we came to take them away so soon, otherwise the "clever-boys" in the Admiralty would have finally confused the destroyers with torpedoes.

Now these old ships were turned over to us. I served aboard the destroyer *Deyatelny*, which the Americans had called *Lincoln* and the British the *Churchill*. She had four funnels, two masts and just one gun. The Allies had no use for these ships so they were giving them to us. We had no other choice, but to take these old

vessels.

We chose those ships least riddled with rust and cockroaches. After a great deal of work, we found such vessels and helped by the sailors of the hand over crew and British shipyard toilers, began to accustom ourselves to this "new equipment". Since we Russians knew barely any English and the Britons spoke barely any Russian, working issues had to be invented as we went through the four months of our stay in Britain.

#### NAVAL LOVE

The good relations which arose between us defied all pre-war patterns. For instance, sailors of His Majesty's Navy (incidentally, "mercenaries of international imperialism"!) turned out to be fine lads, who treated us wonderfully. After all, when we shared common convoys and fought a common enemy, we all stood an equal chance of finding an unmarked grave somewhere between Jan Mayen and Bear Islands. Whereas our class brothers, the British proletarians, were fairly restrained towards us. But one thing they said made us hopping mad: they said that in good old England beetroot soup, which was commonly served in the Soviet Navy, was fed exclusively to pigs. Now I can see that it was an innocent statement of fact. But we misinterpreted it and grew indignant: We are fighting a war, and their pigs are gobbling beetroot soup!

However, we soon realised that we should not have got so angry with them. We had occasion to see that Britons too, were forced to tighten their belts during the war.

The pier where the *Deyatelny* lay at anchor was located near a large dock in which battleships were built. Every morning, as recorded in the regulations, our sailors

went on deck and, in full sight of the whole shipyard, lined up for limbering-up exercises. Being our ship's P.T. organiser, I commanded: "One-Two".

Soon our exercises attracted young women shipyard workers. The sight of Russian sailors stripped to the waist clearly made them feel cheerful. They soon began to tease us by showing us their own physical exercises, none too modest. When I, for instance, ordered: "Leg Swings One-Two", the girls pulled their skirts up to their necks and began to dance a rakish Can Can. Then, the sailors eyes were glued to the girls, which the latter liked still more. The appeal of shapely legs (for some reason all girls wore red stockings) on our women-hungry men, naturally did not help to keep their morale at the proper level.

"SIR" FOR FIVE MINUTES.

Unlike some fellows I did not have a close relationship with an English woman, but once I happened to dance with one. It happened at the very end of our stay in the British Isles. By that time we had already accepted the destroyers and even tested them at sea.

On July 17, we awaited the official hand over of the ships. On the occasion of such a solemn event both the British crew and the Soviet wore full dress uniforms. Waiting around with nothing to do, the two crews amused themselves by boxing.

A Soviet Lieutenant anti-aircraft gunner was outpointed by a red haired Englishman. In my case, however, things seemed to move towards victory. Carried away by our fight, we overlooked the approach of a long motorcade of Rolls Royces. Our public referee cut our round short, announcing a 'Drawn Battle', but our audience had already turned their eyes away from us and, in response to a command, had rushed to occupy

their places in the line.

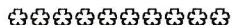
A lady in a grey costume and a hat emerged from one of the motor cars. She was immediately surrounded by a retinue, among whom I recognised only the Mayor of Newcastle. The lady waved her glove, and to the strains of Rule Britannia, Britannia Rules the Waves, the Union Jack was slowly lowered and then the Soviet anthem was played and our Naval flag flew up the flagstuffs.

After the command "At Ease" the crews were invited for a farewell lunch with Rum. Lingering on the pier, I suddenly found myself in the very middle of our officers, who were being introduced to that highly placed lady. Wondering at the name of our Rear-Admiral Fokin, which must sound strange to an English ear, she noticed me. Either because my face seemed familiar to her (after all, I had given such a thrashing to a sailor of the Royal Navy) or for some other reason the lady smiled and said that she would like to dance a Farewell Waltz with an ordinary Russian sailor.

Although I was overwhelmed I carefully took her hand (a naval orchestra was playing a waltz), and we made

two or three circles. My partner was an excellent dancer even on the pier, but then I suppose I also put up a decent show. In those days we could dance a waltz too.

A bit later, the King's gifts began to be circulated. Everyone received a white camel-hair blanket, two cartons of cigarettes - Kent and Chesterfield - and a tooth brush. To me however, a British officer handed me two blankets, four cigarette cartons, and two tooth brushes. What is the source of such generosity? I was taken aback for the second time that day. The officer said that one blanket came from King George and the other from the Queen. He asked me to remember that day - the day I danced with the Queen of Britain. Many years later I was reminded of this occasion by British convoy participants on their visit to Moscow for the celebration of the forty-fifth anniversary of the Victory of the Anti-Hitler coalition. Back in Britain, they sent Eliz-abeth, now the Queen Mother, my letter of congratulations on her jubilee. A mere eight days later she replied to me via her secretary, saying that she still recalled that funny episode.

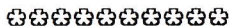


**THE "PARA-JUMP"** HAVE WE HAD YOUR SPONSORSHIP YET -  
SEND IT DIRECT TO THE HON. TREASURER.



Which caption is most applicable?

- He cant be a matelot if he volunteered.
- Did the pilot say pull it, or shove it?
- I've changed my mind!
- Bloody Mad!!!
- I wanna go to the Heads!
- Cough up yer ackers, its all for the Welfare Fund.



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## NORWEGIANS IN THE CONVOYS TO RUSSIA

By Ian A Millar, Special to Western Viking.

When the Allies decided to bring vital war supplies to the Soviet Union during World War II the success of the effort fell squarely on the shoulders of the Allied merchant seamen and naval forces.

The convoys were routed up around the North Cape of Norway thence into various North Russian ports. The convoys became known as the *Murmansk Run* and it took its toll of ships and men. As the convoys neared the Norwegian Coast there were others awaiting their arrival, others determined that they would never reach a safe harbour.

Sailing out of the ports of Narvik and Tromso, the U-boats of the German *Kriegsmarine* roamed the expanse of the Norwegian and Barents Seas in search of Allied shipping and it was not long before they returned to base flying the little white pennants from their periscopes indicating the tonnage of the Allied ships they had sent to the bottom.

Perhaps of greater concern were the aircraft that flew out of bases at Stavanger and Banak. These long range bombers could cover almost all of the northern campaign area and they chalked up their share of tonnage.

For those who made the *Murmansk Run*, the Germans were only one enemy to contend with as very often the sea and elements managed to accomplish what bombs and torpedoes failed to do. Men whose ships were sunk found themselves in a most unforgiving sea which often took their lives in a matter of minutes; indeed, if men were not pulled from the sea quickly they perished. We can only grasp at the anguish that men aboard the ships must have

felt as they sailed by men screaming for help in the water and unable to stop due to standing orders.

Icebergs, storms and sub-zero temperatures made the voyages difficult for the crews. Long hours at the guns brought on battle fatigue, yet the seafarers knew well that to falter in any way meant the destruction of their ships. The Allies lost 104 merchant ships and 22 warships - the Germans lost 36 warships including submarines. While the loss of ships was great it pales in comparison to the hundreds of seamen lost in those ships.

It was into this scene of harsh winds and exploding bombs and torpedoes that Norwegian seafarers sailed. As their country's flag snapped in the wind, they sailed alongside their allies as they had done since the start of the war. For these men the thoughts of a home they could not return to, yet so close must have been ever present.

On February 1, 1942, the Norwegian tanker *Noreg* sailed in Convoy PQ-9/10 from Iceland and arrived in Murmansk on February 10. This was the first of 8 convoys to and from North Russia that the *Noreg* was to take part in. This convoy, the only one with a double number designation i.e. 9/10, was escorted in part by the Norwegian whalers *Hav* and *Shika*. Later in Convoy RA-60 which departed Kola Inlet in September of 1944, she would witness the torpedoing of the American Liberty ship *Edward H. Crockett* and the British vessel *Samsuva* by the German U-310.

Although convoys at times managed to make the passage to

Russia without seeing any action, this was not the case of PQ-15 which sailed from Iceland in April of 1942. The convoy was found and under constant attack from May 2 onward by German aircraft and U-boats. Taking part in this battle were the Norwegian destroyer *St Albans* and submarine *Uredd*. Tragedy struck this convoy when early on the destroyer *HMS Punjabi* was sunk in a collision with *HMS King George V* and later a Polish submarine which was operating outside her designated area was attacked and sunk by *St Albans* and *HMS Seagull*. The price exacted from merchant seamen is well shown in the loss of *SS Cape Corso*, a Canadian merchant ship - of her crew of 56 men, only six survived and of that number, three were wounded.

The Norwegian tanker *M/T Marathon* sailed in Convoy JW-62 and the Convoy Commodore Captain E. Ullring, a Norwegian, sailed in the British merchantman *Fort Boise*. Also in this convoy providing protection for the merchant ships was the frigate *Tunsberg Castle* and the corvette *Eglantine*. Although *Marathon* made this passage unscathed, she was to find some excitement on the return voyage in Convoy RA-62. This convoy came under air attack and the guns aboard the *Marathon* took part in fighting off the determined torpedo bombers. It was not to be a lucky day for the Germans and when they flew off they were less two of their number. On December 12 in this same convoy, the Norwegian corvette *Tunsberg Castle* was mined and sunk.

Convoy JW-63 sailed from Scotland at the end of December 1944 and the Norwegian vessels *Norfjell* and *Idefjord* took part. In the convoy was the well known Norwegian destroyer *Stord*. Luck was not to hold for *Norfjell* when later she was torpedoed while underway to join returning convoy RA-64. She was in the

White Sea when the U-968 found her and sent her to the bottom. *Idefjord* fared better and did make the passage in RA-64 which might also be known as the refugee convoy. Previous to the passage of RA-64, a number of British destroyers made a run to the island of Soroy and took off the entire population of 500 people and brought them back to Murmansk. The refugees were divided among the merchant ships returning in RA-64. The worst storm of the entire northern campaign struck this convoy and severely damaged the American Liberty ship *Henry Bacon*. The *Bacon* had 19 Norwegians from Soroy aboard when she was disabled and found by German torpedo planes. The American seamen put up a gallant fight shooting down five of the German planes but the odds caught up with them and the *Bacon* was mortally wounded. There was only room for so many in the lifeboat and even in times of war it was women and children first. All of the Norwegians were put in the boat and saved. Many of the crew of the *Henry Bacon*, including the Captain and Chief Engineer, gave up their places in the boat so that the refugees might survive. They knew without question that they were going to perish with their ship in the cold Arctic Sea.

There were at least twenty Norwegian merchant and naval vessels that made the convoys to North Russia doing their part to get the supplies through so that the Russians could sustain the defence of their country and eventually turn the tide of battle against the Germans. The very last convoy took place in May, 1945 and Norway was represented by the vessels *Egero* and *Kronprinsen*. As FDR said, "Look to Norway", and indeed even in little known convoys to North Russia the brave seafarers of Norway prevailed.

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### SOVIET PROPAGANDA FOR BRITISH SEAMEN

*From a Special Correspondent*

1 *The great northern seaports of Archangel and Murmansk have been during the war the only uncurtained windows into ordinary life inside Soviet Russia.*

A Catholic journalist recently returned from these ports was awed by the hold of the secret police, the ignorance of the Soviet citizen of world affairs, and the elaborate propaganda organisation directed at the British and American seamen.

Since the Allied convoys to Arctic Russia ended with victory in Europe, few travellers have visited the northern U.S.S.R. I have just returned from a voyage to Archangel and Murmansk, in the first British vessel to bring cargo to these ports since hostilities ceased.

Here in these northern towns I found the rule of the Secret Police severe, and living conditions gradually recovering from a wartime state not much better than that of the Occupied Countries. Religion appeared a matter of complete indifference, and entirely in the background. Prostitution had increased greatly. Despite the war the local educational standard had remained high, and an elaborate system for spreading propoganda among British and other foreign seamen had continued throughout.

While the Arctic seaports are hardly typical - with their timber-built towns, cut off by huge wastes of marsh and forest-land, they are especially interesting as having been Russia's main channels of contact with Western Europe during four years of war.

The city of Archangel, with its surrounding villages, is reputed to have a population of 300,000. A main centre of monastic life in old Russia (an Archangel Testament of the 11th century is one of the treasures

of the Lenin Library in Moscow), the town, still a provincial capital, now has only two churches remaining open. In Murmansk there are none.

*By the Soviet Constitution of 1936, religious education is not forbidden provided it is given outside school hours. I made enquiries as to the present situation in this matter, through Intourist, the Government Agency to which every traveller or tourist is referred for information. There a charming young lady had difficulty in grasping what I wanted. Finally she told me that, so far as she knew, there was no religious activity of this kind locally, though in any case such matters would come under a committee of the provincial government.*

NO DEMAND

It appeared that the general attitude towards religion was simply a complete lack of interest. Everyone with whom I spoke, however, was at extraordinary pains to repeat that "persecution was non-existent," while explaining at the same time that the Government could and did make use of its freedom to spread their materialist propaganda through schools, press and radio! To many of my questions as to religious activity in the Soviet Union, the answer was given, perhaps with some truth, that the number of

"believers" was now so small that there was now no "demand" for further concessions.

It was striking that in these important gateways to Communist Russia, where the Soviet authorities endeavour to give a good impression even to such transient visitors as merchant seamen, almost every activity was dominated by the Secret Police. Though most Allied seamen arrive with a feeling of friendly admiration for the part played by the Russians during the war, intercourse between Russians and foreigners is in general discouraged, and every visitor is kept under vigilance.

The possibility of obtaining any detailed information as to prevailing conditions, except through official channels, is in practice, rendered extremely difficult. It appears that the Government are finding some difficulty in reconciling the returning men of the Red Army to the necessarily low Soviet standard of living, and this no doubt is an additional cause for police activity.

HIGH LEVEL OF EDUCATION

*In both Archangel and Murmansk, many of the peasant class have reached a high level of education under the Soviet system, and the proportion of university students is remarkable. In these ports, a haven of refuge for so long to the gallant seamen of the Arctic convoys the people are actually more than normally curious about British affairs. I was asked many questions as to the new Labour Government, but I found that Russia's own policy, such as the recent demands of M. Molotov for concessions in the Mediterranean area were quite often unknown to my questioners.*

Even during the worst days of the war, when the port of Murmansk itself came near to capture by the Germans, Allied seamen found a warm welcome at the seamen's clubs run by V.O.K.S. (the Soviet organization for "cultural relations with foreign countries"). It has not been so generally realized, however, that these clubs have been an ideal channel for Communist propaganda, a fact which Russians had in mind from the beginning.

Books are distributed and lectures given in English by trained workers. Perhaps the most ingenious, if crude method is that of the "reading contest". The seamen taking part are given selected passages of Soviet literature to read to their assembled comrades, one of whom is appointed judge. Marks are awarded for clarity, expression, etc., but since every competitor may receive a book prize, and all have had to listen for an hour or so to Soviet propaganda, everyone leaves satisfied.

For the first time for four years, no Allied ships will visit the White Sea ports all this winter. The Russian Government will employ no icebreakers. The British and American Naval Missions have returned home, both from here and the ice-free port of Murmansk.

Local people deplore the loss of even this slight contact with Western Europe, and it is possible that conditions in northern Russia, have been affected more than the Soviet authorities would care to admit through the necessary co-operation and association in these seaports during the war.

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SEATTLE TIMES - January 30, 1994.

### Sailor, Bride, re-united after 49-year wait.

From Associated Press - LONDON

In November 1944, British sailor, William Greenhalgh waved goodbye to his Russian bride of one night and told her they would soon be together in Britain. It took nearly 50 years for her to make it.

When they met, he was a Royal Navy telegraphist on a rescue vessel assigned to World War II convoy duties and based in Archangel. She was a book-keeper.

The day before Greenhalgh sailed for Britain, he married Alexandrovna Rasheva, whom he calls Shura. They had a one-night honeymoon. The next day, Greenhalgh stood on deck, peering through borrowed binoculars at Shura, who stood on a hill waving and smiling. They were both 19 and sure their separation would be short.

But Soviet dictator Josef Stalin's demands made it impossible for the British to give visas to Shura and other Russian wives of British servicemen.

In 1946, Greenhalgh received a note from her saying she still loved him. He also learned that she had been sentenced to 15 years in a

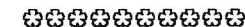
Siberian labour camp for staying in Moscow without permission. Until 1951, he kept pressing the Foreign Office for information but there was no news.

Then, last June, he received a phone call from a re-searcher working on a British TV series who told him Shura was alive and still thought about him. "I was astounded," he said. "After such a long time, it was unbelievable."

In December, the TV Station flew Shura and her 16-year-old daughter to London.

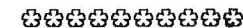
"We just hugged each other. She was just the same woman I had fallen in love with 50 years ago," he said, adding they planned to get married again this year. Her second marriage lasted two years. He never remarried.

"It's been heartbreaking to be separated for all these wasted years, and I think now of the life we might have had together and especially the children we could have had," he said. "But being back with her after 50 years is like a fairy tale come true."

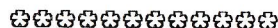


**CONVOYS TO RUSSIA by Richard Woodman:** Following the insertion of the order form with Northern Light No 35 we are delighted to report that 126 members purchased this wonderful 532 page book. This has put a smile on our treasurer's face - a cheque for £472.50, commission from the publishers.

However, there are a number of errors which may be of interest to purchasers. The author has kindly made this available to North Russia Club. Should you require a list please contact Dick Squires - SAE would be appreciated.



HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBS?



FROM THE R.N.A. YEAR BOOK 1992/1993

**THE MATTELLOT'S TEN COMMANDMENTS**

With acknowledgements.

A RECENT PRESS CUTTING - PAPER UNKNOWN

EXPLOSIVES  
By Jim Worsdale

A new report on the explosives-laden wreck of the **Richard Montgomery** in the Thames Estuary will soon go to the Government.

It is likely to trigger renewed, angry debate over whether or not there remains serious threat to large areas of Essex and Kent including Southend and Sheerness.

The author of the report believes there is potential danger of a major disaster. He will repeat the claim in his new findings - even though various experts and Government ministers have denied this many times.

The extensive dossier on the sunken wreck, dubbed the **Dooms-day Ship** after news of her deadly cargo was first revealed, could form the basis of a book. It would be sold in the United States as well as here because the **Richard Montgomery** was one of the **Liberty Ships** built in America.

Nearly 3,000 came off the production lines - merchant ships to carry cargo in wartime. And the **Richard Montgomery**, built in Jacksonville, Florida, was loaded with bombs, fuses, ammunition when it sank in the Thames, five miles off Thorpe Bay, 50 years ago this summer - August 20, 1944.

David Cotgrove, Essex county councillor, lifelong sailing enthusiast and the man compiling the new report, spotted the upper structure of the stricken ship on a Sunday morning just hours after she went down. She had been stranded and broke her back in the Sheerness Middle Sand.

He said, "I probably know more about the remaining cargo

than those who have issued findings in the past for the Government. I disagree with them about the amount still aboard, its location and condition.

I also have detailed information about a similar problem faced elsewhere off the English coast some years ago. Little got out about an explosion that had considerable impact on a distant town, but I have suspicions about the reasons for that exercise and secrecy.

The **Montgomery** has settled deeper in the Thames bed over half a century and it is correct there has been no problem, as experts predicted. But I believe we have been lucky. The risk has never gone away - although it has been dismissed on a number of occasions".

Mr Cotgrove, when chairman of Southend Chamber of Trade's local affairs committee, was one of three who made an official, detailed study of the **Doomsday Ship** for a major report published in 1972. The others were David Atkinson, now an M.P. in Bournemouth and historian Richard Baker.

They were summoned for high level talks with ministers and senior civil servants and told it would be best to leave the wreck alone as too unsafe to tamper with.

The latest in a series of Government ordered surveys was carried out two years ago. Mr Rifkind then Transport Minister said: "I have decided the site should remain a prohibited area under the protection of Wrecks Act 1973 and that no attempt be made to clear it or its cargo".

ooo000ooo

1. Thou shall not scrounge, neither thou swing the lead, lest thy resting place be in the 'oggin, where the fishes and whales do quench their thirst.

2. Thou shall not take the name of thy Buffer in vain, lest thou hast thy name inscribed on an S.241, and be placed under a course of jankers.

3. Honour the Pay Bob and the Crusher all the days of thy service, that thy credits may be remembered, yea, even as the hands of Egypt.

4. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but on the seventh thou shalt do twice as much.

5. Thou shalt not fill thyself to overflowing with beer, or by Royal Warrant thou shalt lose much pay, and the Jaunty shall number thee amongst his transgressors, and thou shalt not see the Promised Land for many moons.

6. And if it comes to pass, that by thy zeal, and by the sweat of thy brow, there is any mention of thou being elevated to the dizzy heights of Acting Able Seaman, lo, thou shalt journey unto the place of the Big Noises, called the Fleet Club, and thou shalt crave that they accept liquid refreshment at thine own expence.

7. Fritter not away thy worldly goods in the pursuit of Banker, Nap or Pontoon, lest

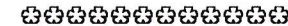
the avenging voice of the Duty Officer be heard in the land saying, "Render unto me thy name, and let the shekels remain where they lie."

8. Thou shalt not kill. If thy cook grieveth thee, thou shalt not swipe him, hip or thigh, neither shalt thou draw him one off; but thou shalt go to the Caboose of the Heads-man and crave audience of him with much weeping and gnashing of teeth. He will open his mouth, and words of wisdom shall flow forth, and the next it shall be twice as bad.

9. Thou shalt not covet nor take unto thyself thy neighbour's kit nor yet his blanket. Neither shalt thou borrow anything of the owner thereof if he be not present, lest thou hast thy sin visited upon thee by the hand that blacketh eyes.

10. And when it comes to pass that thou art time expired, lo, thou shalt embark upon the waters, and journey upon them for many moons, until thou reachest the Promised Land, which is called Blighty. There shalt thou take unto thee strange raiments, and shalt be known in all the land as a civvy. There in the land of Blighty thou shalt study a certain "dole" and the drawing thereof; and lo, thy shalt rest from thy labours, and rest thy aching bones.

ooo000ooo



HAVE YOU SPONSORED THE PARA-JUMP ?

As Tommy Handley might have said "Dont forget the (sky)diver"

DAILY EXPRESS - MONDAY, APRIL 28, 1941 - Price One Penny  
**ORANGES TODAY ARE A 5 TO 2 CHANCE.**

Express Food Reporter KENNETH PIPE

Disappointment awaits three out of every five people who queue at greengrocers' shops in London this morning in the hope of getting oranges.

Any belief that oranges are plentiful will be killed immediately.

In the provinces it is doubtful if one person in ten will get oranges.

A shipload of Spanish oranges arrived in England last week and was distributed throughout the country. London was allocated 26,000 cases - about 8,000,000 oranges - which were unloaded at Covent Garden on Saturday.

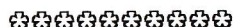
This morning whole-salers will divide the con-shipment and allocate the fruit to retailers.

Those who are lucky will find the supply limited to two or three oranges each.

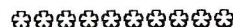
"It is no good thinking that anyone can run round a corner to the greengrocer's and get supplies as they did in peacetime. Lots of people won't get any at all".

*"Later on the position may be easier. We hope to get more ships through from Spain, and in a month or two we should be getting supplies from South Africa."*

The Spanish oranges, smaller than the African and American sorts, will be sold at the controlled price of six-pence a pound - roughly two-pence an orange.



*"And they went down to the seas in stout ships hewn of oak, and a wild tempest roared, and the oceans opened up and he beheld the three badge denizens lurking in the deep..." ERIC DAVIDSON.*



NAVY NEWS, MAY 1984

# CALLING OLD SHIPMATES

**HOW  
N.R.C.  
BEGAN.**

Mr. Chris B. Tye, 5 Begonia Avenue, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 6YD, tel. 0634-32884, is anxious to contact Ldg. Tel. Alex Downing, who served with him in Naval Party 100, on service ashore in North Russia 1943-44, and accompanied him with a rating named Andy, on a journey to Moscow in 1942.

## TANKS & CARNATION MILK

By Morris O Mills No 256: Apprentice Merchant Seaman:

There were many heroic and unsung deeds of valour performed by Merchant Seamen during World War 2, but, how many, involved swimming in Carnation Milk whilst chasing a runaway Army Tank?

My ship, SS NEW WESTMINSTER CITY, left New York in early December, 1942, loaded with ammunition and tanks for Russia, and crated Carnation Milk for the U.K. The crates were stowed in No2 Main Hold and the tanks in the Tweendeck, secured to ring bolts. Once clear of the land we run into one of the worst Atlantic storms recorded. The ship was labouring badly, plunging her head deep into the oncoming seas and rolling in a sickening manner onto her beam ends. Lifelines were rigged and it was a case of one hand for the ship and one for yourself.

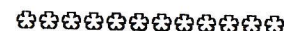
Above the cacophony of the storm we became aware of an ominous, persistent dull thudding coming from No2 Hold, as though someone was striking the ship's bottom. Obviously, something had broken loose and it was not long before the Mate called us out. Sheltering in the lee of the bridge the Mate shouted his instructions above the fury of the storm. "Come on, lads, we have got to go for'ard into the masthouse and down into the tweendeck". Picking the right moment and, literally, taking our lives in our hands, we made a mad dash for the masthouse, a brief struggle with the door dogs we were in before the next sea swept over the deck. Down below the sound of the gale was muted and gave way to the metallic screech and grind of tanks straining at their shackles. By the harsh light of the cluster lamp we saw a gaping hole in the tweendeck hatch where a tank had broken loose and smashed it's way through on to the crates below, which it was steadily reducing to pulp as it rolled around with the ships motion.

There was no arguing with the Mate, we knew we had to get down there into the debris of smashed crates floating in a nauseating, sticky pool of Carnation Milk that washed every way with the violent motion of the ship and, somehow, lasso the monster before it went through the ship's side. How we did it I will never know but, armed with ropes, wires, and large baulks of timber, and after many submersions; and desperate leaps to safety as the tank made vicious lunges, we finally succeeded and the deckhands retired battered, bleeding and soaked in milk, to wash down in a bucket of sea water.

In view of the damage sustained we were diverted to Sydney, Nova Scotia, where the cargo in No 2 Hold was discharged leaving a filthy, stinking pool of Carnation Milk in the bottom of the hold. A large iron bucket was lowered and as we saw the Boson approach we instinctively knew our fate. "Right you bunch of shirkers, strip down to your dungarees and start baling that muck out".

Well, at first we treated it as a joke and there was much sky-larking, contents of buckets intended for the large bucket would accidentally miss its mark and drench a shipmate causing much hilarity. We had great difficulty maintaining our feet on the slippery deck and there were frequent falls with comedians pretending to do the breast stroke but, after several hours of this back breaking labour we rapidly lost our sense of humour.

Needless to say, no one received any medals. My reward was ninepence an hour overtime which, considering my then constant state of poverty, was of more value to me than all the medals. Strange to relate, I still like Carnation Milk.



# ARE YOU GOING ASHORE, BUNTS?

Continued from last edition.

By Maurice Cross.

I collected my second 'war wound' in Lowestoft (the first was in Guzz after a skinful of local farmers' home brew. A near miss mine explosion when sweeping off the French coast, D-Day plus a few months, had to our great joy, shoved the boat about a bit, necessitating a drydock repair. The south coast docks being full, we ended up in Lowestoft.

First, I sought to renew a friendship with a very squeezable Wren I knew there in 1942. So I called at her house in town and knocked at the door. It was opened by a very tall, brutal looking Royal Marine Commando. "Yes?" he said. Good grief I thought, what shall I do? If I ask for Cathy, he might be her boy friend or even her husband! and I could be spread all over the street in small pieces. So I said I was looking for George Green. "Doesn't live here" he snapped suspiciously and slammed the door.

I thought afterwards, perhaps he's nothing to do with Cathy - but there are small risks and there are damn great risks - especially if there is a Royal Marine Commando involved.

To get back to this war wound. Four of us found a lovely pub just outside the town on the Yarmouth road. On a pleasant evening, you could take your drink across the road and lean on the sea wall gazing across the rocks to the sea. We all agreed that this is how the sea should be seen - from the shore, with a glass in your hand!

On one such evening, we saw and heard a Flying Bomb chugging towards the town area. An army Bofors gun on the pier head opened up and scored a hit, because the red propulsion flame ceased.

We all raised a cheer for the army gunners, when suddenly we were petrified by a loud rushing roaring, as a huge black, bird-like shape passed over our heads - we frantically dived behind the wall.

It was the Flying Bomb turned off course by the army gunners. It knocked off the pub's chimneys and exploded in the field beyond with a tremendous bang - blowing out all of the pub's windows and lifted tiles and the roof off the Gent's toilet.

"I've been hit! I've been hit!" I yelled, a searing pain in my nose and face, with blood everywhere. "No you havn't, you silly sod" said the shaken Sparks, "you probably caught your nose on the wall as you ducked - because that's where I banged my bloody head"

Mopping our wounds, we went to give a hand in the pub. The injuries were mostly shock and cuts from flying glass. The landlord and his staff were tearing up sheets to cope with the bleeding. The most traumatised victim was the chap who, he claimed, had been breaking wind just as the roof was blown off. He was taken away in shock, shouting "It couldn't have been me, it couldn't have been me" - poor chap.

"I think we'd better stick to the town", said Jock, "it's a bloody sight safer!"

## THE 'MIGHTY' FLYNN

Some sing-songs can be downright dangerous. In a Grimsby pub some Welsh pongoes finished off the evening with that most magnificent of U.K. anthems 'Land of my fathers'. It's a lovely melody but I only know the first two lines, so I usually "La!,la!" the rest. That evening, without due thought, I sang the English rugby

version of the chorus - "Whales, whales, ruddy great fishes are whales". I was suddenly seized by a front-row forward type who appeared to be a bit needled about my "Whales" in lieu of Wales. But just then a shipmate, the Mighty Flynn arrived. His huge hands gently parted us, as he said "Now we dont want any frigging about, do we lads?". The Welshman took one look at Flynn and heartily agreed. 'Rocky' Flynn was raised round the Mersey dock-side and was renowned for his shore-going exploits, sometimes returning from leave under escort. He wasn't basically bad, he just got a little touchy after a few pints.

When some drunks tried to crowd him off the pavement in Leeds, in the general melée one of them ended up through Burtons' shop window.

On Crewe station, Flynn was trying to board a train, when three Yankee G.I's tried the old trick of filling all the windows and shouting "no room here fella". Flynn could see the empty seats beyond them and lost his temper (Crewe did that to you!). He aimed a punch at the guy at the door, who unfortunately pulled up the window at the same time - thereby acquiring several pieces of glass in his chin.

At the Defaulter's Table, Rocky always had this air of genuine injured innocence. "They tried to push me off the pavement, Sir. I couldn't have that, could I, Sir!" Or, they wouldn't let me on the train, Sir. You wouldn't want me to be adrift from leave, would you Sir?"

Mind you, us lesser mortals were sometimes glad of Flynn's large presence. We were alongside in Ipswich (I didn't even know they had docks in Ipswich!) having our anti-German radar baffle gear fitted for D-Day. Lots of Pongos were in town, they had returned victorious from North Africa, only to find that all the local crumpet had been snapped up by their free-spending American Allies. So things were a bit tense in town, with the British and American MPs working overtime.

In one crowded pub I was taking drinks back to my oppos, when I accidentally jogged the arm of a GI, spilling his drink. He was obviously in a boozy, belligerent mood and followed me. A large finger prodded me "You wanna watch it fella, cos I'm in the mood to bounce somebody around!" "Hells bells, he's big" I thought, sweating buckets - but just then the cavalry arrived, or rather Rocky Flynn did. He interposed his great bulk between me and the GI, "You 'aving trouble Bunts?" he rasped. The American took one look at Flynn's battle-scarred face and quietly melted into the crowd.

"Thanks Rocky, have a drink on me" I gasped with relief. "That's OK, we got to look after you Buntin' Tossers or we wont get any buzzes, but I'll be round tomorrow for sippers, maybe gulpers!" A huge grin transformed his ugly mug as he rejoined his mates.

On our last night ashore, we went to the same pub only to stand by the same GI. He saw me, grinned and said "Sorry about the other night fellas, but I'd just got a 'Dear John' letter from my girl back home in New Jersey, so I got a skinful aboard - I'm not usually such a mean son-of-a-bitch; drinks are on me fellas. Say, who was that rugged character who stepped between us, you should send him over to the States, he'd frighten all hell out of Joe Louis".



USE YOUR SLOP CHIT - KEEP JACK DUSTY BUSY!





### JUST A RUN ASHORE

By Gordon Ralph (No 1729) ex VINDEK

Past Ailsa Craig, steaming up the Firth of Clyde, through the boom to drop the hook off Greenock.

Hammocks stowed ... all the dobie-ing done in a bucket ... water boiled by courtesy of the galley's steam lance ... tidley collar faded to the palest blue, with matching white dicky front ... together with extra wide bell bottom trousers, all pressed to perfection ... now for the long anticipated run ashore!

Gangway out and rigged ... 'Libertymen Ashore' piped. The coal burning fishing drifter, emitting black smoke from its single stack, now alongside and ready to take aboard a gang of young, virile, female and/or alcohol starved, matelots for a night ashore! ... so, stand-by Scotland.

All aboard, cast off and away ... into Greenock harbour; matelots leap ashore, through the dockyard gate, dispersing to each one's chosen destination.

For my mates and me, we headed for Glasgow ... into the pub ... a few foam-topped pints and a chat with anyone around ... followed by a knees-up in a Sauchiehall Street Dance Hall.

The night ended with heads-down in a 'real bed' at 1/- per night, Salvation Army Hostel.

An early morning shake ... quick cup of tea ...and back to Greenock.

The drifter waiting alongside the harbour wall, cast off at 0730 with it's load of bleary-eyed, Half-knackered matelots, returning to various ships, including ours - VINDEK.

It was a very grey, damp and only half-light morning, with fog over the water restricting visibility.

At the end of the wall was a hut ... a flag pole, one red and one green flag ... and a bunting-tossing Wren! who's job it was to signal by hoisting the appropriate flag, indicating when it was clear for boats to emerge from the harbour into the main seaway.

Up went the 'green flag' ... 'Full Ahead' signalled the skipper in the wheelhouse ... and out we went into the Clyde ... turning about 10 degrees to port ... steaming through the fog towards our ships.

I was standing near the starboard side of the wheelhouse, when there was a sudden loud and continuous rattling noise ... I looked up and saw the Skipper frantically spinning the wheel Hard-a-Port ... almost at the same time, looking ahead, I saw bearing down on us from out of the fog, the hull of a large cargo ship ... about to run us down.

The drifter slowly responded to the helm and it's starboard bow struck the starboard side of the ship ... I grabbed the side of the wheelhouse as we heeled over, almost Port-gunwhale under.

The drifter, after the impact, slid down the starboard side of the hull and off it's stern. Swiped clear ... like a Hereford Bull with one swish of it's tail dislodging an irritant gnat!!

It all happened so quickly and yet seemed in slow motion ... I thought ... "Christ, Gordon! you're in for a long swim" ... and for some time most of us suffered from that medically described symptom ... relaxed bowel!

The loud oaths and profane obscenities used to describe the actions of that bunting-tossing Wren, I must leave to your imagination ... but by this time we had long since disappeared into

the fog, well from her view or earshot ... she was probably quite unaware of the event.

I looked up into the wheelhouse, there was the Skipper, dressed in a thick seaman's jersey, cap pulled well down, sucking his briar pipe ... quite cool and unconcerned ... all back to normal.

We eventually touched against our ship's gangway and clambered aboard ... down to the mess! "Had a good run ashore?" our mess-mates asked.

And now, in my comfortable closing years with material possessions and rheumatism, I sometimes ask myself ... "Would you like to go back and be 18 and often broke again?" ... the answer ... it must be "YES". ... A Good Ship, Good Mates, Good Luck and an excellent Service.

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### REFLECTIONS 1950-1994

THE KOLA RUN - CONVOYS TO RUSSIA

By Peter Crowshaw (Our Australian Liaison Yeoman)

I stood by the rail one balmy night  
Watching the waves in the Australian Bight,  
The soft caress of a Pacific breeze,  
A million stars and my mind at ease  
As I thought again of those days of yore  
On the bridge of ZAMBESI, off to war,  
To the frozen wastes of the Arctic Sea  
In a convoy bound for what had to be  
The very last place that God made - Kola Bay  
Guarding the ships of the Merchant trade.  
Where pack ice growled and bergs were formed  
In winter's gloom the blizzards stormed.  
Where Northern Lights made a dancing veil  
While sirens sounded an eerie wail  
From stricken ships far from home  
No rescue came for some.  
Many were lost in the Barents Sea  
Blasted by U-boat they couldn't see  
And planes too numerous by far,  
Many brave souls Crossed the Bar.  
War lasted much to long for some  
Many young lads didn't get home to Mum  
Just kids of seventeen -  
Think what they might have been!  
Now those days are past and here I stand  
At the rail of a ship bound for land  
That the war didn't touch, at least not much,  
Only Darwin felt the brand.  
But for a while it was Touch and Go,  
Nearly lost to a yellow foe  
As close as the Coral Sea,  
But fate meant it not to be.  
We made many good mates in those years of war  
Some we met again on this distant shore,  
Though our navy bonds we can share our cares  
For now we're known as the 'Polar Bears'.  
So when you see the White Berets  
Among the marchers on Anzac Days.  
Those are the lads who made it home  
From the storm tossed wastes of ice and foam  
Up to the land of the 'Midnight Sun'  
We gave it a name - 'The Kola Run'.

**MEMBERS' LETTERS**

From Robert Gottshall, Doylestown USA (No 1277)

**WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO MR WADE?** Alister Wade, a tall mountain of a man from Harlan County, Kentucky, answered his country's call for older, experienced Marine engineers to man the great number of Liberty ships being built.

A veteran of the first Great War sailing aboard troopships to the U.K., Mr Wade met a very beautiful English girl (his words) and romance followed. Unfortunately when World War I ended so did Mr Wade's transportation to England, and the subsequent decline in the number of U.S. flagged ships stifled his romance - he never married.

As the fortunes of war often change, 25 years later the J.M.CURRY, bound for Russia via Iceland was rerouted via Liverpool, and Mr Wade was drawn by destiny to meet the same woman he had not seen in all those intervening years. Wade jumped ship with suit case in hand and disappeared into the gloom of wartime blacked-out Liverpool.

His last words of wisdom were, "When you all find the right girl don't hesitate, get hitched.

A year later, on board another Liberty ship unloading at Cardiff I met a Welsh Land Army girl, and knowing her for just a few days got married. We recently celebrated our 50th anniversary. I hope Mr Wade, wherever he may be was as fortunate.

-----  
From William F Ryan, Melbourne, Florida. (Liaison Officer in USA)

**THE LUCK OF THE IRISH** Charlie Romandetti, the owner of Shooters' Restaurant/Intracoastal Marina, invited me to a Saint Patrick's Day party at the restaurant. I told him I normally do not attend this kind of function. We let it go at that.

In the late afternoon I was approached by a mate of mine, who just happens to be a retired Chief Petty Officer of the US Navy. He asked me what time I was going to show up at the party. Because he was going, I decided to go also.

I arrived early as usual, and Charlie said we would have to sit at the bar. The local radio station, WMMB, from Melbourne, was having a Key Club party for it's members. They had a small combo playing Irish music, of course. They also had a genuine Irish singer from Cape Cod, Massachusetts!

I should have realised that something was going on, because I began to see a lot of my friends from the Marina. I passed it off, as everyone is Irish on the 17th of March!

At about 1845 hours, Charlie asked me to go with him to where Larry Brewer the head honcho of the radio station was broadcasting the events. I thought Charlie was going to introduce me to Larry, so I went along, just to make him happy.

All of a sudden, Larry Brewer starts to read from a paper he was holding. Then it hit me, he was talking about Command Sergeant Major Ryan landing on Omaha Beach, on 6 June, 1944. He talked about a few more facts about my earlier service life.

At this time, as you can imagine, I was not only surprised, I was embarrassed. All of the people in the audience were around my age, and no doubt had all served in WWII.

After Larry finished reading, he pulled out two envelopes. He then informed the audience, that the management of Shooters' Restaurant and the Intracoastal Marina were going to pay my way over

and back from France, so I could attend the 50th Anniversary of the D-Day Invasion.

At this time, the two envelopes with the cheques, were presented to me. Needless to say, I was almost at a loss for words.

I'm not sure, as to what I said. I'm sure I recognised and thanked Charlie Romendetti and the management, for this very kind gesture. A mate of mine was supposed to record this event. As is always the case, the recorder malfunctioned. That means we will never be able to prove what I said on the spur of the moment.

I can remember only one other time in my life, that I was caught completely off guard. That was also a result of Charlie's manoeuvring. It occurred during a show that was being put on in honour of our veterans.

All in all, I can't think of a better day than Saint Patrick's to receive such a wonderful gift.

At the risk of repeating myself, it has to be -  
**"THE LUCK OF THE IRISH"!**

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From K. Winter of St Helens. (No 1453). ex-PALOMARES: In the last edition (page 12), J.R.S. White asks, "What happened to NORFOLK's Walrus and her crew"? The plane landed near PALOMARES when her crew realised that NORFOLK had departed. It was taken in tow by PALOMARES and towed to Novoya Zemlya and then to Archangel (not Murmansk) as previously stated. It was landed ashore and placed on a railway flat, apparently it was thought to be part of the convoy's cargo. The observer - a Leading Seaman, was billeted on our mess-deck and the Pilot in the wardroom. But I do not know what happened to the crew after our arrival at Archangel.

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From Bill Johnston of Whitby. (No 40). ex-Naval Party 100: I often wonder if anyone from Naval Party 100 has any surviving copies of the original "Northern Light" which was produced in Polyarnoe. I know I had some part in it's make up, but alas, have no copies to recall those times.

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From Jim Forbes of Manchester. (No 37). ex-SCYLLA: Remember my letter re RHODODENDRON and the "oppo" I had aboard her going back to the early days of the war? (page 18, March 1994 edition).

However, unbelievably and quite 'out of the blue', yesterday I received a letter from my fellow 'Jack Dusty' - Shady Lane! Needless to say he was as thrilled as myself. If only he'd been a member of N.R.C. we would have made contact much sooner, however we have obviously a lot to yarn about. In the meantime, many thanks in helping me to find him.

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From John Riley of Stockport. (No866) ex-LOTUS: The death of Commander Harry John Hall was published in the Daily Telegraph on 26th May. John Hall was C.O. of LOTUS from April 1942 to September 1943, which included PQ17 for which he was awarded the D.S.C. John Hall did not join our club, by the time I traced his whereabouts he was almost blind and could not move about very much. He was a fine Skipper and Gentleman.

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### CORRESPONDENCE

Including letters from non-members.

From Mrs F M Jenkins of Guildford: "I have read and re-read the current edition of your excellent magazine "Northern Light", it was loaned to me by P.O. D. Tuffin. Through Don, I have learned many things, from what life was like at sea in the convoys, in bitter cold weather conditions, to learning about "Crossing the Bar". Some of the tales are sad, others really funny. It's amazing how any one could find humour in such dreadful conditions, but our lads did.

I was a twelve year schoolgirl on D Day in 1944, and so my memories of that time were mainly, - "will we now get bananas and oranges?" items missing during strict rationing. It was some time before these items appeared though.

May I through your magazine, say a sincere "Thank You" to all our brave lads, who gave their all. Finally, is there ever a flag day for the R.N.? I always give to the R.A.F. and Army collections, but have never seen one for the navy.

Please find enclosed a small donation to the Welfare Fund if there is one.

Sincerely yours, Elizabeth Jenkins.

From Captain J.D.Brook, 11 Old Place, Boston Road, Steaford, Lines NG34 7HR:

Following a telephone conversation with, and at the suggestion of Mr. Sullivan, I write to seek your help - so blame him! (Let me know and I won't take him out for the beer I promised him next month!!!)

Seriously, permit me to introduce myself. I am ex Merchant Navy (mostly tankers) and doing some research on a certain Arctic convoy - PQ 17 (I can hear you groan here in Lincolnshire - "Not that one again. People will think that was the only one that went".

I am interested in the memories of living conditions, food, personal observations on (at the time) the 'other lot' (i.e. the Merchant Navy from an R.N. point of view and vice versa). Also problems sending/receiving mail. What radio programmes they listened to etc.

As I understand the R.N. did not keep a list of crews aboard their ships I am trying to put together a crew list for each ship. The ultimate aim is to record as many details about each ship as possible.

Whilst Mr Sullivan has kindly said he would let me have a list of your members (who were involved) to whom I could write, would you also ask your members if they would mind taking the time to respond to this request and let me know what they remember.

There are a number of special points of which I am interested:

- a) Does anyone know why VICTORIOUS never launched her aircraft to protect the convoy?
- b) Is any member able to provide details of radio equipment used; frequencies (intra ship, to/from aircraft, with Admiralty in London); reception quality?
- c) Ratings/Officers' pay scales?
- d) Any specifications on armament (copies of original documents appreciated - especially things like PAC, depth charges, etc)?
- e) Loan of any photos which will be copied and returned?

When I have compiled everything I shall ensure your organisation receives a copy.

For your information I am enclosing a copy of the list of ships in which I am interested in receiving ANY information.

Yours faithfully, J.D.Brook.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Captain Brook's list includes all close escort ships including minesweepers, trawlers, submarines and Aux.A.A.ships as well as all merchant ships which departed from Reykjavic.

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### REUNIONS & MEETINGS

**MONDAY 9TH MAY:** Following the successful 'Bucket Collection' held at Ford Motor Company's Halewood Plant, reported in the last edition, a group of about a dozen of our members were invited back on 9 May for a guided tour (by train!) of the huge factory. A good time was had by all. On the same date 15 members were invited to a reception at the Russian Embassy to celebrate the 49th Anniversary of Victory Day. Again, our Russian friends made us most welcome and a very enjoyable hour and half ensued. Would you like to add your name to a list of possible invitees to any future visits to the Embassy - if so, let the Chairman know.

**SATURDAY 21ST MAY:** The Southern Reunion Buffet at the Victory Club in Pompey Barracks was, once again, a very successful evening. Numbers were down slightly - 61 members and guests were in attendance. The usual splendid 'big eats' and an excellent disco were provided by the mess. A raffle and other fund raising made our treasurer happy too - with a cheque for £189.00 to the club's Welfare Fund. Well done lads, a special vote of thanks to John Rousell who organised the event in the absence of Mervyn Williams who was on holiday in New Zealand.

**TUESDAY 24TH MAY:** Six of our members (John Rousell, J.Robinson, W.Harvey, L.Rishman, J.Richardson and 'Jack Dusty' S.Bateman) were invited to visit the Russian "Kilo" Class submarine No.4321 berthed at H.M.S. DOLPHIN at Gosport. They were met at the gate by the R.N. Liaison Officer and taken to DOLPHIN's wardroom to meet the Russian Group Commander, and Captain Stephanovich and Public Relations Officer Vladimirovich as well as the Captain of DOLPHIN and the Padre. They then proceeded to the Fieldhouse Memorial for a short service and wreath laying ceremony. Following this they boarded the Russian submarine and taken on a guided tour before adjourning for a buffet lunch with the usual vodka and wine. Gifts were exchanged between our members and the crew and the visit was filmed by Sky T.V. and shown on a news broadcast..



WITH THE RUSSIAN BUFFET COMMANDER AND COMMANDING OFFICER AT DOLPHIN

Richard Gillies (No 1397) reports on the 26th Destroyer Flotilla's Annual Reunion which coincided with the D-Day Celebrations at Portsmouth (Good idea to stick to your long established week end dates! Editor.)

SATURDAY 4 JUNE: We all met at the Naval Memorial on Southsea Common. Considering the dreadful weather the attendance was wonderful. The Service conducted by Rev Martin Morgan with cadet buglers was very moving. After polishing our medals and sprucing ourselves up we all ended up wearing raincoats and sporting umbrellas, standing in several inches of water - but it was well worth it! In the evening we all attended the Victory Club at HMS NELSON. Thanks to Jack Greenwood, we all had a tremendous evening - Up Spirits, raffles, dance and buffet. Shipmates 'swinging the lamp' and bringing back many vivid memories. The numbers are increasing each year! I understand from Jack Greenwood and Chris Tye it was around three hundred.

SUNDAY 5 JUNE: the Drumhead Service. After an early rise, it was a glorious morning, sun shining brightly through the windows, it made us quite happy after Saturday's monsoon. We all met Jack at the Veteran's meeting points and made our way through the mud to our seats at the Drumhead Service. What a turnout it was, we all looked tickety boo, with medals polished, trousers pressed, shoes shining - a splendid sight to be seen! The 26th D/F stood out a mile!!! We all sat together at the Service, it was very moving. The Royal Family, President Clinton, Kings, Presidents, and Prime Ministers of different countries, made it something extra special

After the Ceremony the 'walk about', this is when the 26th Destroyer Flotilla and North Russia Club were recognised.

I was standing in the front by the ropes with some of my shipmates from MYNGS. The Queen passed saying what a lovely day, followed by the Duke of Edinburgh, he stopped, looked at me and said "I see you have the Burma Star. Where did you serve?" I replied that I was serving in MYNGS at Singapore and Johore Dockyard, also that I met Lord Louis Mountbatten there, he had boarded MYNGS and spoken to the Ships Company and now 50 years on I was talking to his nephew.

The Duke of Edinburgh than pointed to my lapel and asked "What is that badge for?" pointing to the North Russia Club badge. I explained who we were and the Club was getting larger all the time. After one or two other questions the Duke moved on. But at last our badge has been recognised by the Royal Family.

My shipmates and I felt very proud to represent both the 26th D/F and the NRC. Thanks to you and the committee, and of course the efforts of Chris Tye this would never have come about. When one looks back at the hundred or so original members and now it is more than a thousand. It must tell us that we all have something in common. It is a wonderful thing 50 years on, and yet it only seems like yesterday as all young lads together - we are still together - it cant be bad!!

The atmosphere of togetherness was tremendous it ran deep, sympathy, sorrow and sadness, also grief for our fellow shipmates who have 'crossed the bar'. With sad and happy individual thoughts from each of us.

I am sure we shall never forget this weekend, just like we have never forgotten the war years in our ships with our fellow shipmates and our wartime experiences and sorties.

Thanks to NRC and the publishing of Northern Light we can still uphold the tradition and comradeship we enjoyed many years ago with our shipmates.

On behalf of all of us I am sure they will agree with me that each year gets better and better. We wish the committee and editor all the best of luck with the future publications - we are all behind you and thank you all, for your hard work and precious time you allocate to our cause.

R.J.Gillies "Myngs".

MONDAY 6TH JUNE: Our Hon Secretary Peter Skinner, Membership Secretary Les Sullivan and one or two other members were privileged to attend a luncheon on board HMS BELFAST, as part of the D-Day landings commemorations. Part of the day's activities was the firing of the forward 6" guns at 1130, carried out by a volunteer crew from London Division RNR. Naturally, reduced charges were used, but enough noise was made to wake anybody within a considerable distance. Whilst awaiting the firing, our Membership Sec. noticed one onlooker wearing the Russian 40th Anniversary Medal and, on speaking to him found that he was not a member of North Russia Club ... but he is now! a very welcome addition to our ships company. After the firing a very convivial half hour or so was spent in the wardroom and annexe with no shortage of "refreshments". We were then called to muster in the main dining hall and were delighted to find that since our fairly recent visit to the ship for a committee meeting, the hall (or original Seamens messdeck) had been completely repainted and carpeted. With ten round tables it was a really resplendent scene. An excellent luncheon was enjoyed by 120 guests of the Director General of the Imperial War Museum, Dr. Alan Borg. Speech making was kept to a minimum and a couple of hours soon passed in general conversation ... mainly recalling where we all were, and what we were doing on 6th June, 1944.

Les Sullivan N.P. 100.

From our Ramsgate/Margate lads: You will be pleased to know that we are still 'steaming along' with our bi-monthly 'get-togethers' quite successfully, with an average attendance at the Mountbatten Room, Royal British Legion, Margate of 15-17 members plus Ladies; and as the "Welcome Aboard" pages in Northern Light state, we are still enrolling new members from this area.

The recent D-Day Commemoration enabled two of our group - namely Harry Allen (No 1409) and Bernard Bailey (No 1690) to take part. They sailed on M/V MIKHAIL SCHOLOKOV, sister ship of M/V RUSS - several of you will remember her! The ship moored at Caen, and there the veterans aboard were presented with bunches of flowers, donated by the ship, for placing on the graves when the veterans visited the cemetery at Ryes. Afterwards they travelled to the Memorial Service on the beach at Arromanches followed by the March Past attended by Her Majesty.

Some crew members of RUSS were aboard MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV and they asked to be remembered to their old 'shipmates'

Dick Sharpe. ex-ANSON

From Peter Allen in the West Country: A visit to RFA FORT GEORGE and HMS LONDON: --- Seven of us, led by Peter Skinner, the Club secretary, met at Camel's Head gate to Devonport dockyard for a two-ship visit which turned out to be a unique occasion.

We were greeted by Cdr Peter Moran, ship's surgeon on the RFA FORT GEORGE, our first port of call. She was alongside after refurbishment and was due to sail on July 25. She is enormous, a real leviathan of a ship weighing in at 32,000 displacement tons. From the dockside it is like looking up at a cliff face of a skyscraper.

They don't much care for the tag but it really is like a supermarket of the sea. They prefer "one-stop shopping" for such items as replacement helicopters complete with spares. She can disgorge 10,000 tons of diesel fuel; 3,000 tons of aviation fuel and 3,000 tons of fresh water.

Cdr George, a witty and urbane man, wearing his other hat as public relations officer, took us into the wardroom (which would not disgrace a three-star hotel) for coffee and to meet the ship's captain, Capt. Tony Pitt, DSC. He got his gong in the Falklands campaign and is shortly to complete 40 years service with the RFA. Naturally he is immensely proud of his spanking new ship which should have come in at £100 million but is finishing up costing £250 million. No wonder "Razor" Rifkind is slashing about.

There were originally to be seven of these supply ships but the Ministry said enough was enough and called it a day at two, FORT VICTORIA being the other of the class, FORT GEORGE carries 120 RFA personnel and 20 RN members and in emergency with flights embarked and full stores aboard - the complement would be 250. Five-a-side football can be comfortably played on the flight deck. There is no one in the engine room when at sea! The navigating officer showed us all the modern marvels of the bridge with it's sophisticated equipment which included a satellite-linked, hand-held, navigating device no bigger than the TV channel-changer in your living room. It even had a small screen and we were told that before very long the size of the instrument would be reduced to that of a wrist watch. Sad, though, on turning the device over, to see that it was made by Magnavox of the USA. But not to worry, British ingenuity has come to the rescue of the bridge staff who, because of the size of the vessel (204 metres long x 30 metres beam) cannot see the bow or over the sides, and use a device of which Heath Robinson would be proud: two broomsticks lashed to a rail just forward of the bridge to enable the navigator to judge the rate of turn. (They have become acceptable as Government equipment - at least I think so because they have been meticulously painted battleship grey!)

Our stay aboard FORT GEORGE lasted three hours and you needed to be fit to cope with the steep ladders and companionways. Not surprising then, that one of our members, decided to forego the visit to HMS LONDON which was in drydock, with all its attendant climbing about both aboard and down in the dock itself. (But then, Maurice did have a foot chopped off rather brutally in Murmansk in 1942).

LONDON's engineer officer, Lt.Cdr. Ted Main took charge of us for the rest of the day and showed us what was going on during the ship's £30 million repair period. (Note: they do not use the word 'refit' any more). Everywhere we went LONDON was stripped to the bare bones without even a coat of paint. They were waiting for the self-polishing outer coat to be applied to the hull to prevent barnacles clinging to the surface. (No more swinging on a cradle with a paint pot and brush, Jack!)

LONDON, whom we saw in all her glory at Archangel three years ago, docked on March 1 into the tender hands of DML Ltd and is due to undock on October 17. The move aboard by the crew is due on November 23 and she is supposed to be ready for sea on January 23. We'll see!

She gets a new skipper, Capt. Brooks, in September and until then Lieut. Hanley is executive officer. But the real driving force behind the "refit" is Ted Main. A workaholic whose eyes are everywhere and who misses nothing, he took us round his ship for two hours and it was made all so interesting by him, we could have gone on for another couple of hours. He told of the usual problems with the dockyard mateys which led us old hands to realise that things had not changed much since our days when we had to go "in Dock" during the war.

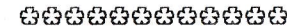
At the end of our detailed tour a quick wash and brush up led the way to a welcome cold pint in the wardroom of HMS DRAKE. Then dinner co-hosted by Ted and Jonathan made a pleasant end to what can be seen as a unique day.

As we left we looked at the gleaming all-white HMS HECLA, the survey ship. Perhaps Peter has in mind another day out soon?

Peter's postscript: It was a very hot day and it is a tribute to my colleagues' stamina that at more than 70 years of age they kept going from 1.15 to gone 2100 without seeming to flag. As a junior of 69 I found my knees beginning to buckle by about 1830.

Peter Allen ex-SHEFFIELD

THE LONDON WEEKEND 1994: The Supper Dance at the Union Jack Club on Saturday 23rd July was again a great success despite a small decrease in the numbers attending. It was good to see several new faces, and particularly to welcome our patron Admiral Bruce Richardson and his lady, Kitty. Welcome Sir, Welcome Ma'am. Our resident entertainers, The Minchellas nearly gave our president/organiser a heart attack on his birthday, as their arrival was delayed by thirty minutes. We were also pleased to welcome two of our widows, Mrs Biddy Skelton widow of our late Vice Chairman and Mrs E. Lawrence - you are always welcome ladies. A successful raffle produced a generous donation to the club's Welfare Fund. The following day, Sunday 24th July saw sixty-five members and ladies attend our annual visit to Brookwood Cemetery to hold a short service at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Russian Memorial. The service was again conducted by ex-Chaplain of the Fleet, the Reverend Basil O'Farrell. A new departure this year was that individual, red spray carnations were provided for the ladies to place on the memorial. The week end was rounded off with an excellent buffet lunch in the Staff Sergeant's Mess at Pirbright Camp, courtesy of the Brigade of Guards.



A "THANK YOU" MESSAGE  
(Received by the President)

I would like to thank all North Russia Club members, who I met up with on 23rd July this year at the Buffet Dance. For making it a most enjoyable evening.

It was so nice to see you all again and to know that I have so many friends.

*God Bless You all  
Bridley Skelton*

### CROSSED THE BAR

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE FOLLOWING SHIPMATES HAVE BEEN CALLED TO HIGHER SERVICE.

- |                                    |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| F.A.BICKNELL of Chatham            | BERRY      |
| G.BAKER of Chichester.             | VINDEX     |
| H.G.CLEMENTS of Worthing           | CUMBERLAND |
| M.S.FRISE of Melksham, Wilts       | VICTORIOUS |
| J.E.INGHAM of Rogerstone, Gwent    | CAMPANIA   |
| G.W.JESSOP of Ruddington, Notts    | BELLONA    |
| Canon L.MACMANAWAY of Co.Down N.I. | TARTAR     |
| W.E.McNEILL of Peacehaven.         | WESTCOTT   |
| F.WILLIAMS of Birkenhead.          | SHEFFIELD  |

+++++

It was quiet as we gathered, just the other day,  
 When we received the solemn news, of one who passed away.  
 His work is done, his span is run,  
 His journey is at an end.  
 We are proud that we have known you,  
 Farewell to you ..... Old Friend

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We are still compiling our list of sick visitors. Any able bodied member who is prepared to help if and when required, is asked to contact the Hon. Secretary, or Welfare Officer. Their addresses and phone numbers are on Page 2.

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### ROEDEAN OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

Are you an ex-VERNON (R) Officer or Rating?

During World War Two, Roedean School - the most exclusive and expensive girls school in the country - was taken over by the Royal Navy, and used to provide advanced training on electricians and torpedoes. Courses lasted between one week (shortest), and six months (longest), and between April '41 and June '45 some 31,000 Officers, NCO's and Ratings passed through the school, in it's role as an extension of HMS VERNON.

On 20 July 1994, fifty-four of these 'scholars', now septuagenarians, returned to Roedean School to attend the first function of the recently-formed Roedean Old Boys' Association, (R.O.B.A.) - the brainchild of Sam Morley, of Northaw in Hertfordshire.

A pre-lunch reception on the school lawns was followed by a superb lunch, during which the school was toasted - in Pussers Rum - by the 'ancient mariners', who were in turn then toasted by the Bursar on behalf of the school's staff.

The first R. O. B. A. plaque was presented to the school - incorporating the school crest. In return, each member attending received a memento of the occasion in the form of a ribboned card with a brief history, and photos, of how Roedean School fared under the Royal Navy. After a tour of the school, the group went to have tea, at St Dunstons, where most had also attended R.N. electrical courses during the war. Altogether, a memorable and nostalgic day for those who attended this first R. O. B. A. function.

Above information was supplied by James R.B.Hinton NRC No 1147, ex-SCOURGE, who adds in his covering letter - An extraordinary experience - whilst strolling along Brighton Sea Front, contemplating whether to bus or taxi up to Roedean School, I ran into fellow N.R.C. member Jim Wood. You will remember that we were two of the eleven Brits who sailed on the SVIR in the Dervish '91 convoy. Jim was also heading for the function at Roedean.

Strangely enough, it was only on 6 July 1994 that I had earlier bumped into Jim - this time on the beaches at Arromanches during the parade and march past ceremony. He was in the next row but one to me and the party I had taken to France from the 23rd Destroyer Flotilla.

Thought these coincidences might be of interest.

J.R.B.H.

ADDRESS FOR R.O.B.A. enquiries: Sam Morley,  
 113 The Ridgeway,  
 Northaw,  
 Potters Bar,  
 Herts EN6 4BG.

(Tel 0707 872720)

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**AHOY THERE, SHIPMATES**

We welcome the following new members

- 1856 BRADY John F. BEACON HILL  
329 N.E. Cullman Court, Port St Luge, Florida 34983, U.S.A.
- 1957 GRAY Sidney T. PREMIER  
40 Spring Lane, Colden Common, Winchester, Hants SO21 1SD.
- 1858 BARR William Q. SAMTIDWAY  
43 Douglas Drive, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside L46 6BT.
- 1859 MACDONALD Ian C. SCOURGE  
Higher Hill Farm, Butleigh, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 8TW.
- 1960 HEMSLEY Victor A. ALYNBANK  
117 Strelley Road, Strelley Nottingham NG8 3HS.
- 1861 FENTON George S. SWIFT  
106 Sheddocksley Drive, Mastrick, Aberdeen AB2 6PJ
- 1862 CURRIE George POPPY  
30 Mountside, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 2DP
- 1863 CROCKATT Douglas A. BYRON/PEACOCK  
Paddock House, Sicklinghall, Wetherby, Yorks LS22 4BT
- 1864 BANN Colin H. MILNE  
7 Bollinbrook Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 3DJ.
- 1865 BURROWS Douglas R. WRESTLER  
5 Fortescue Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 8XF
- 1866 MALBON John F. CAMPANIA  
Flat 6 Dorothy Court, 16 Wilson Road, Southsea, Hants PO5 1PD
- 1867 HART Henry W. KGV  
7 Westfield Close, Normanby, Middlesborough, Cleveland TS6 OHX
- 1868 CASBOLT Henry J. ANSON  
12 Bologne House, The Grange, Bermondsey, London SE1 3EE
- 1869 PARRY Norman RENOWN  
28 Tregarne Close, Morryston, Swansea, Glamorgan SA6 6PR
- 1870 GRIFFIN Charles W. USS BIBB  
202 Scenic View Drive, Ft. Thomas, Kentucky, USA 41075
- 1871 PERKINS H A. DSM NORFOLK  
32 Croft Avenue, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2HT
- 1872 GARSIDE Charles ALYNBANK  
7 Coombe Cottages, Bluebell Lane, East Grinstead, Sussex/
- 1873 ALLEN Douglas SOMALILAND /RH19 4PF  
25 Walcot Square, London SE11 4UB
- 1874 LINGARD Sidney G. BENTINCK  
16 Hebden Avenue, Woodlands Park, Warwick, CY34 5XD
- 1875 HALE Hugh G. MAURITIUS  
42 Derham Road, Bishopsnorth, Bristol BS13 7SB
- 1876 PRICE Alfred G. BROKE/VIDETTE  
31 Park Street, Pembroke Dock, Wales SA72 6JG

**CHANGES OF ADDRESS**

- 1607 ANDERSON F. to 14 Gateside Road, Galston, Ayrshire KA4 8EH
- 432 BRALEY C.W. to Pembroke House, Oxford Road, Gillingham, Kent
- 1068 FERRIS W.E. to Ione, Baughurst Road, Baughurst, Basingstoke  
Hants RG26 5LL.
- 1706 GARDINER L.G. to 58 Norwich Road, Cromer, Norfolk NR27 0HD
- 1463 MARSTON J.E. to 10 Sevenoaks Drive, Castledean Park,  
Bournemouth, Dorset B07 7 JQ.
- 545 WATT D.C. to 41 Gary Place, Ardler, Dundee, Scotland.  
SEE STOP PRESS FOR MORE

**'MORE CORRESPONDENCE'**

A letter that makes the editor's job worthwhile and gives us all renewed faith in the younger generation:

Dear Mr Squires,

We read with interest Geoff Shelton's article entitled "Up Spirits" in the June edition.

Being the proud grandchildren of Eric Rathbone the ex-treasurer of the North Russia Club, who sadly passed away last year, we have listened and learned with great interest over the years to the stories told by our grandfather about his experiences and of his shipmates whilst stationed in Russia.

We feel that despite that one day the Northern Light will cease, it will always continue to exist through the stories passed on through the remaining generations.

This will ensure that the light remains flickering for many years to come, and although the flame will not burn as bright, there will be an everlasting warm glow that will never cease to be.

Please continue telling the stories to enable Northern Light to never "remain silent" and always be remembered and spoken of.

Kind Regards,

Sarah and Craig Edwards.

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**AN OPEN LETTER FROM A. C. M. T.**

To Passengers who sailed on M.V. RUSS, 13 August 1993.

**WHO'S GOT OUR MONEY ??????????????????**

Dear Shipmates,

Did you sail aboard M.V. Russ on the Arctic Convoys Cruise last August 13, 1993. (Cruise Code PCC04). If you did, you may be able to help our Charity to recover approximately £147.00 collected for the Arctic Campaign Memorial Trust after the Service on August 15th 1993.

The Reverend Arthur Birtles has told me of several people who were involved. This includes Saga Management people, North Russia Club people and others. Several shipmates from NRC and RCC have told me about the collection at the Sunday Service after the stop at Bergen, Norway, August 15th. 1993. It was agreed by those present that the ACMT was to benefit from this. Almost one year has passed since kind people made their donations to the ACMT was to benefit from this. Almost one year has passed since kind people made their donations to the ACMT to help us in our work of remembering our lost Shipmates by creating Memorials to them. The money donated to A.C.M.T. has not been received, I have therefore no option but to take every course of action to recover the money that rightfully belongs to our Trust.

If anyone is able to throw any light on this matter you would be making a very worthwhile contribution and perhaps be helping to prevent other such unfortunate affairs developing.

PLEASE CONTACT ME, RON WREN CHAIRMAN A.C.M.T. (IN CONFIDENCE)  
AT. 13, SHERWOOD AVENUE, POTTERS BAR, HERTS. EN62LD. TEL.0707 655840.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

Ron Wren. (Unsigned) 11th August 1994

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## STOP PRESS NEWS

**THE SPONSORED PARACHUTE JUMP** Our tame "Sky-Diver" is feeling fit and raring to go. The jump will take place during September as the weather permits. If you wish to witness the jump, please phone either Chris Tye, Dick Squires or Peter Skinner, for updates. But more important - get out the Sponsorship Forms you received with the last Northern Light and return them with your donation, no matter how small. Should you have mislaid your form please send your contribution with a short covering note stating "PARA-JUMP". An effort of this nature in aid of our Welfare Fund is worthy of your support. We also hope to have a video (and/or postcards) of the jump.....Good Luck Gus!

**THE 4TH R.A.F. NORTH RUSSIA REUNION:** The Reunion is ON. It is to be held at the Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, Marble Arch, London on Thursday 29th September, 1994. Past reunions were held at Hendon, Rugby and Duxford. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ending of the war in North Russia, a number of Russian Veterans from the 2nd Guard Regiment, who were stationed in the Murmansk region, have announced that they will attend the reunion, to renew relationships and exchange messages of goodwill. There is not much time for bookings, so contact PETER FEARN, BROQUET INTERNATIONAL, 54 REGENT STREET, RUGBY, WARCS CV21 2PS. Tel 0788 540068, as soon as possible.

**THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF FORMATION DINNER.** A further development for this event which is published on Page 5, is that the President has organised a 21 seater mini-coach from the Medway and London area to Liverpool. Depart Saturday morning, returning Sunday evening. Contact him if you are interested - he can also arrange the accommodation.

**ADD TO CHANGES OF ADDRESS, ETC. (Page 42)**

750 BURGESS T.W. to Flat 27, Irwell House, Cowpe Road, Waterfoot,  
Rossendale, Lancs BB4 7DQ  
1504 GOODING G Post Code change to: TN23 5BP.

**BPF/EIF 50TH ANNIVERSARY (V-J DAY) REUNION** Did you go out East after the Arctic? Many of you did! The 50th Anniversary Reunion will be held in the Portsmouth Area, 1st/2nd/3rd SEPTEMBER 1995. So you British Pacific Fleet / East Indies Fleet members should contact one of the following for further information:

R.N. SHIPS	FLEET AIR ARM	OVERSEAS	MERCHANT NAVY
Mansel Evans	Dennis Gardiner	Gerry Purnell	Frank Manning
Bryn Deryn	116 Folly Lane	164B Green Lanes	2E Valley Rd
Lon-yr-Eglwys	Stroud	Sutton Coldfield	Kenley
St Brides Major	Gloucestershire	West Midlands	Surrey
Bridgend	GL5 1SX	B73 5LT	CR8 5DG
Mid Glamorgan			
CF32 0SH			

**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF DEFEAT OF GERMAN ARMY IN THE ARCTIC REGION**

The North Russia Club will be represented by seven members at the celebrations in the Kola Peninsula in October, as specially invited guests of the Regional Veterans Committee.

**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBS? THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST NORTHERN LIGHT!**

**FULL MEMBERS £7.00: (OVERSEAS £10.00): LIFE MEMBERSHIP £60.00.**



as well as White. It was hoped that we would soon be able to get some Forage Caps.

R.Wren said that in recent weeks some disturbing things had been said about the A.C.M.T. and made a strong statement in it's defence. He went on to describe the arrangements now in hand for a Font Memorial in St Nicholas Church at HMS DRAKE, Devonport. Difficulties were being encountered with the Liverpool Memorial, and more funds are required. The A.C.M.T's relations with the Russian Convoy Club were not good, and R.Wren described them as being "patchy".

Any Other Business

A speaker from the floor asked if we would consider making donations to Charities, and in particular to an Ex-Service Mental Welfare Charity. Various views were expressed on the subject, and in particular that it would establish a precedent. The Chairman asked that the views expressed be kept In House.

R.Smale made an impassioned plea for the Club to make strong representations to the Government, for us to be allowed to wear the Commemorative Medal along with our Campaign Medals. Others supported this view, and it was agreed that the committee would discuss the subject at a later meeting.

The meeting closed at 1645hrs.

CHAIRMAN

FINANCE

*IT WAS INTENDED THAT THE 1993-1994 "STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND BALANCE SHEET" WOULD BE PUBLISHED IN THIS PAMPHLET.*

*HOWEVER, WHILST FINALISING THE ACCOUNTS OUR HON. TREASURER WAS 'TAKEN INTO CUSTODY' BY PARAMEDICS AND RUSHED TO HOSPITAL. THANKFULLY HE HAS NOW BEEN DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL AND WILL BE RETURNING TO DUTY IN A FEW DAYS. THE ACCOUNTS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, AND WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE NEXT NORTHERN LIGHT.*

*R.D.Squires 10/8/94*  
*R.D.SQUIRES M.B.E.*  
*Chairman.*

NORTH RUSSIA CLUB  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In the 'Squires' Suite at Swallow Hotel, Northampton  
Saturday 22nd October, 1994, at 1430 prompt.

AGENDA

- a). Prayer, 'Absent Shipmates' and apologies for absence.
- b). Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 24th July, 1993.
- c). Annual Committee Report by the Chairman.
- d). Hon. Secretary's Report.
- e). Hon. Treasurer's Report and presentation of audited accounts for the last Financial Year.
- f). To consider proposed amendments to Constitution.
- g). Election of Officers and Committee. Appointment of Auditor.
- h). To review Subscription Rate if recommended by committee.
- i). To consider payment of Honoraria.
- j). Other matters of business.

PLEASE BRING THIS NOTICE WITH YOU IF  
ATTENDING:

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Held at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London.  
On Saturday, 24th, July 1993

The President opened the meeting at 1430hrs by welcoming all those present. He then led the meeting in the North Russia Club Prayer, and observed a short silence in memory of our Departed Shipmates.

Apologies for Absence were received from 9 members, and were accepted.

Minutes of the 1992 Annual General Meeting were read, accepted as a true record and signed.

There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report Chairman R.D.Squires was pleased to be able to report an excellent year. It would be impossible to cover all events, but would cover the main items.

The year started with the AGM in Liverpool - the half-way stage of the International Reunion, for which thanks to Peter Skinner - and continued on with the Annual Dinner Dance at Northampton (in the Squires' Suite), the Northern Reunion at Blackpool, Southern Reunions at Portsmouth, South Wales and Frome, as well as the regular events in Liverpool and the U.J.C. Meetings had also taken place at two new venues in Margate and Plymouth. In May, due to the generosity of Bob Smale, there was a return visit to Jersey where a wonderful time was had by all. 1993 also saw the BA93 Commemoration on Merseyside, and this was well supported by NRC members.

Northern Light is still of much importance to members, but costs continue to rise - e.g. the last issue cost almost £1500 or nearly £1 per member.

There is however, as with all organisations, a "grey area", and that for us is our relationship with the Arctic Campaign Memorial Trust. Your committee knows that my predecessor, Norman Batchelor, shared this view. This, despite the fact that we co-operate and try to nurture the A.C.M.T.'s aims far more than other clubs or organisations do. I now question the wisdom of electing a person to the committee, solely because he is an official of A.C.M.T., thus giving him a vote on all N.R.C. matters, whilst we have no influence or control over the matters of a registered charity. Indeed, one Officer recently stated that "we don't even get consultation - just confrontation".

On that controversial note the Chairman closed his report, and stated that he would offer himself for re-election this year, but not at the 1994 A.G.M. He would however, be available for re-election as Editor.

Hon. Secretary's Report P.A.Skinner opened his report by saying that he had taken over from his predecessor with some trepidation. The problem was, how to follow such a prodigious worker - such an enthusiast for the North Russia Club. His worry had, however, been short-lived. He had been eased in gently and gradually by Dick Squires, as he handed over responsibility for more and more tasks

until he now felt, that should the members so wish, when it came to the election of Officers, that he was ready to serve at least another 12 months. He hoped he had been able to silence the critic who had cast doubt on his ability to carry out the responsibilities of Hon. Secretary, following his involvement with the 1992 International Reunion.

We have had another eventful year. All the usual Reunions had been well attended, and new groups are meeting in Kent and in Devon/Cornwall, the latter having had a "short notice" visit to HMS. LONDON. Arrangements were in hand for a Christmas Lunch to be held in HMS DRAKE, and negotiations were in hand for a mid-week break to be held at the China Fleet Golf & Country Club at Saltash.

Closing his report, the Secretary thanked all those who had written or telephoned with words of encouragement, not only for himself, but for the Committee as a whole.

Hon. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Annual Accounts  
Opening his report, E. Rathbone read through the annual accounts, explaining various items of income and expenditure. Northern Light was still the major item of expenditure, with costs still increasing. The treasurer was again grateful for the many donations that members made by way of a "little extra" on subscriptions. Although the situation at the moment was satisfactory, and there would be no recommendation for an increased subscription, he would be keeping a close watch on the bank balance.

Honoraria It was agreed by all members present that the Hon. Secretary - Hon. Treasurer - Editor - Membership Secretary, should receive £300.00 each.

Election of Officers and Committee

President: C.B.Tye

Deputy President: J.R.Davis.

Vice Presidents: Captain F.A. Collins.

Captain S. Farquharson-Roberts.

Jon Wenzel.

Chairman R.D.Squires.

Vice-Chairman E.Skelton.

Hon.Secretary P.A.Skinner.

Hon.Treasurer E.Rathbone.

Committee:

D.Brooke; L.Sullivan; M.Williams; S.Bateman;

D.Allen; A.Byrne; R.Wren; A.Horne; R.Phelps;

W.Ford; L.Jones; T.Adams; G.Shelton; J.Rousell;

and J.Clärke.

Sub-Committee and other Reports

L.Sullivan gave the up-to-date membership figures - 1406 - with 165 subs still outstanding. We now had 60 Life Members. £1250.00 had been received by way of "extra" subscriptions, and this had been put to the Welfare Fund. In the 9 years of our existence, 170 had "Crossed the Bar", 56 in the last 12 months.

L.Jones reported on the arrangements for the Annual Dinner which were now well in hand. 23rd October is the date, at the Swallow Hotel, Northampton.

S.Bateman announced that we now had Red Ensign badges in stock