Chairman’s Chatter– Ken Satterthwaite

Things haven’t stood still since the last newsletter. We on the Committee have been working through various drafts for the Constitution which was one of my aims put forward at the AGM in April. I think we are now just about there and as soon as it is finished a copy will be sent to each member for comment before it is put to the AGM next April for approval.

A number of us met up at the unveiling of the Destroyer Memorial at Chatham on 14th November and it was good to see our Standard paraded there, one of only seven standards on parade.

As you will know from the television reports, the Armed Forces Memorial at Alrewas was opened by H.M. The Queen last month and I hope that many of you will sometime find your way to the National Memorial Arboretum to see it and our Cossack tree.

The Christmas season is now almost upon us so, as this will be the last newsletter before that, may I wish all our members a very happy Christmas and New Year.

Membership Matters

Membership

Each time a newsletter comes out these days it seems that we have lost another Shipmate or two so it is always a sad event too. Since our last newsletter in August we have had the sad news about the passing of another two of our members. Their obituaries are given below.

Two more members have not responded to letters regarding their subscription and regrettably we have had to terminate their membership. Despite much activity by our new Membership Secretary, no new members have joined in this period.

Membership now stands at 251, made up as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full/Life Members</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>15 L03, 142 D57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Members</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorary Members</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>251</td>
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Obituaries

Shipmate John Batty

John Batty, who joined the RN at HMS Ganges in 1948, served in Cossack (D57) on the 1949-51 commission as a Telegraphist, passed away on 3rd October 2007. John and his family emigrated to Australia in December 1969 and he went to work for an insurance company in Sydney. After visiting Adelaide which he and Joy loved, he arranged a transfer to the company’s office there. Later he was offered the post as a lecturer at the University and started on a new career.

However, his wife Joy suffered a heart attack and they were advised to move to a warmer climate, so they moved to Kingston on the outskirts of Brisbane to be nearer his son, John jnr. Joy died in 1994.

Some time about 2004 John went out of circulation and it was only later that we heard he had been admitted to a clinic for treatment of skin cancer. In 2006 John jnr and his wife decided to come back to UK and John snr came with them. Sad to say though, he was almost immediately admitted to a nursing home in Blackpool suffering from severe dementia and it was there he died.

Many of our members will remember John from the series of hilarious and informative “Tales from Down Under” he wrote for the newsletter. One of them is re-printed in this newsletter as a tribute.

Due to a medical appointment which he could not cancel, our local Shipmate could not attend the funeral. Our sincere sympathies and condolences were sent to John jnr and the family.

Shipmate Captain Spencer Drummond, DSC, RN

Spencer Drummond, who served in Cossack (D57) on the 1947-49 commission as a Lieutenant, passed away on 12th October 2007. He went on to command HMS Cassandra in 1961, to serve as Staff Officer (Operations) on the staff of C-in-C Plymouth and as Executive Officer in HMS Tiger.

On retiring from the RN he became a schoolmaster and followed that profession until retirement. A devote Roman Catholic, he was very much involved in parish affairs.

He was the very proud father of two sons and three daughters and doted on his many grandchildren all of whom attended the funeral at St. Peters RC Church, Winchester, together with his wife Cecily, on Friday 26th October.

The church was full of family and friends, and with many who had known him during his service career. These included a number from the HMS Cassandra Association who piped the Captain over the side as the coffin left the church on completion of the service.

Shipmate Peter Harrison attended to represent the Association and Associate Member Mrs. Betty Day also attended.

A sympathy and condolence card was sent to Mrs. Drummond on behalf of the President and Members of the HMS Cossack Association.
The Membership Secretary

You may notice that on the list of Officers of the Association on Page 1, S/M Doug Parkinson has now taken over as Membership Secretary. He will now be responsible for keeping the membership records, for chasing you for your subscriptions and will send out membership cards, etc. S/M Peter Harrison will continue as the Secretary for general matters.

Many of our members pay their subscriptions at the same time as paying for their reunion hotel charges via Peter Harrison and, where this is convenient, may continue. He will inform the Membership Secretary of any subscriptions received this way.

REUNION 2008

As mentioned in the last newsletter, our Chairman, S/M Ken Satterthwaite, was looking into the possibility of having a small parade on the Sunday morning on the square in front of the hotel.

His contact with the Mayor’s office in Worthing threw up a number of difficulties, the first being a need to provide £10,000.000 public liability insurance, then a requirement for a police presence and the need for two St. John Ambulance men with the parade. The cost of the insurance would be between £350 and £500 and the first aid people would also have to be paid for.

Discussion between the Secretary and the Chairman concluded that the costs and other difficulties meant it was probably not worth proceeding further. The facts and our conclusion were therefore put to all the members of the Committee for their views and they unanimously agreed. It is with much regret therefore that we have to say that again there will be no parade next year.

Booking forms for the reunion will be sent out with the next newsletter, probably in January. Don’t forget to keep the dates clear though - 11th to 14th April 2008 - put them in your diary.

CENOTAPH CEREMONY 2007

No one asked to attend the ceremonies this year at the Cenotaph so there was no Cossack contingent this time.
THE DESTROYER MEMORIAL 1939 - 1945

As mentioned by our Chairman, a number of us met up at Chatham on Wednesday 14th November for the unveiling of the Destroyer Memorial. S/M Peter Taylor was to play a prominent part in the ceremonies, parading our Standard to good effect. In addition to Peter Taylor, S/M Ken Satterthwaite, S/M John Bishop, S/M Geoff Lane, S/M Peter Harrison, S/M Pat Gaffney, S/M Alec Kellaway and Hon. S/M Alan Edinborough and most of their wives were there.

Having registered ourselves on arrival we were asked to take our seats adjacent to the Cavalier by 1055. It was a freezing day and it was with some relief when the ceremonies got under way with the arrival of the Civic and Naval dignitaries. These were followed by the Dean of Rochester and the Chaplain of the Fleet, then the Royal Marine Band, the Naval Guard and the Queen’s Colour of the Royal Navy marched in. The Alert sounded and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh arrived, escorted by the Vice Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Viscount De L’Isle, and Admiral Sir Ian Garnett, Chairman of Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust.

After the Royal Salute the Duke of Edinburgh inspected the Guard and Colour Party and was then introduced to the Civic and Naval dignitaries. Admiral Garnett welcomed everyone and then asked the Duke to unveil the Monument.

This was followed by a service of dedication after which the Duke viewed the Monument with the Sculptor, Mr. Kenneth Potts, before being escorted on board HMS Cavalier whilst the Band, Naval Guard and Colour Party marched off.

Those who had been invited to the lunch in the Museum then made their way there whilst the rest of us were left to our own devices. Back in No. 5 Shed, still freezing, hot dogs were available for purchase! Some of us had hoped to have lunch in the restaurant by the Visitor Centre but for some reason it was not open, nor was the Visitors Centre. A lost opportunity methinks.

Alan Edinborough, whose father was lost when Cossack (L03) was sunk, had been selected by the organisers to be a representative of those who lost relatives on destroyers sunk during World War Two. He and his wife Jean attended the special buffet lunch and Alan was introduced the Duke of Edinburgh. A very good choice I think (read Alan’s article “If Only” later in this newsletter). Alec Kellaway, who served in Cossack L03 and Pat Gaffney, who worked as a volunteer on refurbishing HMS Cavalier, also attended the lunch.

It is also understood that one of our Associate members, John Gritten, also attended the lunch and was introduced to the Duke. John served in HMS Afridi with the, as then, Captain Vian. When the Duke of Edinburgh spoke to Alan Edinborough and Alan explained his connection to the Cossack, the Duke said “I’ve just met someone else from HMS Cossack” and, to the consternation of his escorts, dashed back up the line to identify John Gritten and then back again to Alan!

The Cavalier and the new Monument make a very fitting memorial to those 142 destroyers lost during World War II and to the more than 11000 men lost in them. It was a privilege to be there for the unveiling and dedication and a visit is recommended.

Thanks to Ken Satterthwaite we have some decent photographs taken at the event. These can be seen on pages 16 and 17 and at the top of page 18. The photograph on page 17 shows the memorial sculpture to good effect, with survivors being rescued from
a ship which has been sunk. Our survivors from L03 would have recognised this scene from when they were rescued from the sea by the Legion and the Carnation in 1941.

If you can, make the trip to Chatham to visit the Memorial - it will be worth your while.

The Skjelfjord Memorial

Now to another memorial. In August we received details of a project to make a memorial at Skjelfjord in the Lofoten Islands, Norway. Those of you who remember the history of Cossack (L03) will know that the ship was badly damaged at the second battle of Narvik and, after limping down the fjord took shelter in Skjelfjord to try to effect repairs. With help from the local people she was made sufficiently seaworthy to make her way back to the UK and to fight another day. Cossack was one of a number that sheltered there.

The memorial will consist of a commemorative stone in a raised area of Skjelfjord where visitors can view the area of the fjord where the allied ships lay in May 1940. It will also have a parking area nearby, benches available for visitors to sit and an exhibition case will tell a short version of the local war history. The cost of the project is estimated as £18,000 and we have been asked to help towards this.

Your Committee were all in favour and suggested that we should pay for a bench seat with a brass plaque denoting that it was sponsored by the HMS Cossack Association. This idea was given to the organisers and has been favourably received. They will contact us again when detailed costs have been calculated. They also want to talk to us later about the opening of the memorial and we suspect that they will ask some of our members to attend.

The memorial will be completed some time during 2008 with the labour being provided by the local inhabitants. Your committee support this project wholeheartedly and feel that we should make an immediate start on an appeal to you, the members, for money to achieve it. The Chairman (Ken Satterthwaite) has pledged the sum of £10.00 to kick the fund off and the Secretary, Peter Harrison, will match it. Please send a cheque, made payable to HMS Cossack Association, for whatever you can afford to the Secretary who address is on page 1 of this newsletter. Thank you.

Now, S/M Alan Quartermaine reports on the 8th Destroyer Association Reunion:

EIGHTH DESTROYER ASSOCIATION 19th REUNION, SCARBOROUGH, SEPTEMBER 7th, 8th AND 9th.
(‘C’ Class Destroyers on the China Station)

Friday, 7th September. At 1400, the committee and Association Shipmates met in the Regency Room at the Spa Centre to make final arrangements for the week-end and to discuss any outstanding problems caused by the health and safety requirements and increasing bureaucracy that had made things difficult for the previous year’s remembrance parade.
Committee members gave updated reports based on the last committee meeting at Leamington Spa. At 1500, our Chairman introduced, Commodore Paul Sutermeister, who had recently agreed to be our new president, Commander Oliver Wright and Admiral John Hervey having to resign due to ill health. Commander Sutermeister, a communications specialist, who had served in HMS Caesar in the 1960s, mentioned some of his experiences since then. Unfortunately, Commodore Sutermeister had a previous engagement at Eden Camp and was therefore unable to participate in this year's reunion.

The evening's activities began in the Ocean Rooms of the Spa Centre at 1930. The Lady Mayor of the Borough of Scarborough welcomed the Association to the Borough and its facilities and she and her consort were then taken around the hall by the Chairman to meet all the members. During the lamp-swinging session that evening, Shipmate Mick Farrington produced his usual ship in a bottle and a miniature rum tub were raffled and raised £265.50 for the Association's funds. Thanks are due to Pat Farrington and Joan Meredith for selling the raffle tickets. The music group "Yorkie" once again provided the entertainment for the evening.

Saturday 8th. The morning dawned fine and sunny and sharp at 1000 hours, Shipmate Frank Leach (Cossack) opened up his slops chest in the foyer. Frank was soon busy and in a hectic session his sales reached £601.50! Meanwhile, the Archivist set up his display for the last time, he having resigned from the job. As usual, the displays were well laid out and covered Flotilla and Squadron activities from 1945 to 1963. Some holiday makers passing by were encouraged to venture in and were persuaded, Del Boy style, to make purchases of key rings, etc. Meanwhile, our new treasurer was busy collecting subs.

The bar was closed and the AGM began at 1300 with the Piping Party piping in our Chairmen and the Association and ships' standards into the Ocean Rooms. The Chairman opened the meeting and our Padre gave the exhortation and said a short prayer. Our Welfare Officer then read out the roll call of departed shipmates. At the end of the Secretary's report, the Secretary announced that, after 12 years in the job, he intended to resign to spend more time with his family. The Treasurer reported that our finances are in good health and proposed that subscriptions remain at £6.00. The Slops Officer reported that he had not had much to do during the year but, as mentioned above, at the reunion his orders and sales had reached a staggering £601.50! The Archivist gave his final report, saying that after 11 years in the job he thought it time for a new mind to apply itself to the task. So far, no one has volunteered in spite of the large number of members available. The job would be very suitable for two people to manage, making the task a little less onerous. The Recruiting Officer announced that recruiting had been slow this year but he will continue his endeavours to keep the numbers up. However, new members have included 3 from Australia, 1 from New Zealand, 1 from Canada and 1 from the US Navy. The Editor of China Chat said he required interesting topics to go in the next edition and asked members to send him what they could.

Our founder member, Shipmate George Toomey, who started the Eighth Destroyer Association at Southend 19 years ago, gave a brief resume of his achievements, namely raising the Pearl Harbour Association, the 8th DF Association and the Cossack Association. I think that credit goes to George that if it wasn't for his energy years ago we wouldn't be here today to meet old shipmates from long ago. On completion, George received a rapturous applause.

The main topic of discussion for the AGM was the venue for next year's reunion - and possibly that for subsequent years - and a new contract with the Spa Centre. Slips had been
issued outlining the possibility of going to Coventry or Bridlington or staying at Scarborough, making the members think the subject through. There was much discussion and several members made useful points in support of the various options. In the end, a motion was put to the floor for Scarborough. This was voted on and carried unanimously.

The AGM was brought to a close with the traditional order, "Splice the Mainbrace" and Shipmate Tony Dixon and his merry men set about dishing out the tots.

The evening's entertainment commenced at 1930 with 291 members and guests present and went on until midnight, with the raffle, dancing to Doug Stewart and a very good comedian, Tony Barton, entertaining the members. The L.A.D.S. (Ladies Afternoon Drinking Society) led by Jo Bishop, took on the job of organising the main raffle with 58 prizes on view. The total collected was £690.30 which is, I understand, a record amount. The L.A.D.S. also donated an extra £80.00 that they raised by auctioning off those raffle prizes that were unclaimed. (In RN terms the L.A.D.S. deserve to get a VG Superior on their 264s). The verdict on the evening from many members was "Very good - the best reunion so far".

The Cock, for the most members present, was won this year by the HMS Cossack crowd. Well done!

Sunday 9th. Early in the morning, the Archivist and hook rope party were at the Spa Centre to take down and stow away the displays. Our annual memorial service took place at St. Martin On The Hill at South Cliff. Twenty-five standards lined the church approach at 1215 waiting for the arrival of the Chairman and VIPs. The church was a full house as usual and this year the service was conducted by the Reverent Tony Hill and our own Padre, Canon Ralph Mayland, VRD*, RNR. The Chairman once again read the names of those who had passed over the bar before buglers played the last post and reveille. The collection raised the sum of £259.14, which is shared equally between the church and the local RNLI.

On completion of the church service, at about 1330 all hands fell in in St. Martin's Avenue for the parade to the Spa Centre. Once again, the parade was led by our adopted band, TS Cleopatra, the Harrogate Unit of the Sea Cadet Corps. The band was followed by the 25 standard bearers and two platoons of members. Number 1 platoon was commanded by Shipmate J. Stanley (Cossack) and number 2 platoon by Shipmate T. Davis (Carysfort). The parade was escorted by traffic police, the local Motor Cycle Action Group and the Coast Guard Range Rover. The salute at the Spa Centre was taken by the Mayor of Scarborough and Shipmate George Toomey.

At the Spa Centre our Welfare Officer, Chris Hooper and his two assistants, together with newly-joined members of TS Cleopatra, collected £237.50 for the band. Our M.C., Shipmate Eddie Guest then took charge of the Ships Operatic and Dramatic Society (SODS Opera). During the SODS Opera, £50.00 was swept from the deck and was put into the Welfare Fund. After the SODS Opera, about 50 members and their wives gathered on the dance floor for community hymn singing, which included We Are Sailing and finished with Land of Hope and Glory.

That's all from me; see you all at Scarborough on the 12th, 13th and 14th of September, 2008, God willing.  

_Shipmate Alan Quartermaine_
What is a Killick?

Alan Quartermaine also penned a piece for the last newsletter entitled “After Cossack - 1951-1952-1953” and that produced a question from Kath Andrews. Kath said that her late husband, S/M Fred Andrews, used to refer to some of his shipmates as “a Killick this” or a “Killick that” but she never really understood what a Killick was. Alan’s article also referred to Killick so she wrote in to ask for an explanation.

As most of us who served in the RN know, a Killick was a Leading hand - but why killick, where did it come from? And, like most of us I suspect, I didn’t know. We just accepted its usage. There was no reference to it in the Seamanship Manual so I turned to the Internet, where else? A quick Google and there it was. Not a reference to its use in the Navy but to the fact that it was an old term for a small anchor or stone attached to a line to anchor a boat.

Since the badge for a leading hand was a small anchor it is therefore easy to see the connection.

We learn something new every day! Thanks for asking Kath.

___________________________________________________________________________

IF ONLY
(by Alan Edinburgh)

I have often wondered if I would have followed my Father’s footsteps and gone to sea like him if he had survived the war. My Father joined the training ship EXMOUTH just before he was 15 for sixteen months, then served in the Merchant Navy till 1937, when according to mum, if he gave up the sea and found her a house she would marry him. I believe he then joined the RNVR. At the outbreak of war dad was working at Harwell so did not get called up till 1941. His first and last ship was then HMS COSSACK.

While growing up I looked to my uncle Jack my dad’s brother, an ex PO in the navy and my mum’s brother, uncle Ted, an ex Sergeant in the army, who both lived very near us, for Fatherly advice and the many clips around the ears for being naughty. When reaching school leaving age, uncle Jack suggested that I try to enter the navy as a boy recruit, as nearly all the Edinboroughs were naval, but uncle Ted said no, he is coming with me in the Post Office. All I wanted to do was earn some money to help mum out, so it was the Post Office for me.

The years sped on, I met and married Jean in 1964 and we had two children. The year was 1973, I was now a foreman on the PO Telephones and things were quite comfortable. Two of my work mates were chatting one lunch time about not having anything to look forward to at weekends, so it was decided that we should join the RNVR. In those days the Post Office allowed you two extra weeks leave a year to attend. One of the lads was ‘Sailor Toms’, a man of many a year service, the other was Dave who was in his early twenties. So off we went up to HMS CHRYSANTHEMUM on the embankment in London. I was surprised at the number of lads there and thought they all cannot work for the PO, looking for extra leave. We started to fill in these forms when this officer asked me if I was ex service. I said “No”, so he told me to follow him. Sailor and Dave asked what was happening. I replied, “he has seen my surname, so I reckon I'm officer material”. There I was stood in front of another officer, this one with much more gold on his sleeve, so I thought he must be quite important. What a shock I had when he told me that at 32 years I was too old to join. The next thing I
remember was being escorted off the ship by two chaps who thought they were Admirals. I have since been told that all PO's act like that! I remember telling them not to have a war next week, as I would be too busy to go. Because I could not go, Sailor and Dave didn’t go either. The RNVR will never know what they missed that day. So ended my Naval ambitions. It was a few months later, another of our colleagues who belonged to the TA suggested we make inquiries about the TA. I went along on my own to find out and the first thing I heard as I walked into the Barrack room was, “THAT MAN, GET A HAIRCUT”. I must admit I did look quite pretty in those days with my long dark hair on my shoulders. Lucky for me the Post Office stopped giving the extra leave so all my service ambitions came to an end.

The year is now 1991, Sailor informed me he had read about the HMS Cossack Association in the Navy News and that I should make inquiries. I must admit I did nothing straight away. Meanwhile Sailor had got in touch with George Toomey, telling him about me. George then invited me to the reunion at Crawley in 1992. That was one of my better decisions in life because I met you, the HMS Cossack Association. Now after 15 years, going on many cruises to get some sea-time in, listening to many stories and learning to drink and stay up late, I am still not a shipmate. But I am proud to be a COSSACK, and dad would have been proud at that.

You may have noticed that in the earlier piece about the Destroyer Memorial I referred to Alan as “Hon. S/M”. I hope you will agree with me that we should make him so.

Following in father’s footsteps

In the last newsletter we had S/M Peter Marchant’s story “That’s my boy” in what I hoped would be a series of “Following in father’s footsteps”. Unfortunately we have only had two but there must be more out there. So, come on and let us know yours.

Anyway, now we have the second, this one from S/M Alastair Gordon (D57 1958-60).

Ahoy Peter,


Reference items for the Newsletter on children following their fathers footsteps, much to our surprise my son Neil joined the R.N.R. at HMS Camperdown as a Young Officer whilst studying at Dundee Technical College. After graduation in 1990 he entered BRNC Dartmouth for training and on completion he undertook Flying Training but unfortunately could not complete the course having perforated an ear drum.

However all was not lost The Great Purple Empire took pity and accepted him as a graduate entry. He did his Young Officers Fleet-time on HMS Sheffield and in May 93 joined RNEC Manadon for

In July 95 he joined HMS Invincible as a Section Officer, serving in the Adriatic on NATO peacekeeping operations. From then on he had a varied selection of appointments:

July 97 HMS Ark Royal, MEO - preparing the ship for refit and to be towed from Portsmouth to Rosyth.

July 98 RNAD Coulport - Engineering Maintenance Manager.

Sep 01 Back to HMS Invincible as Senior Watchkeeper, this included taking her through an extensive refit and returning her to front-line service.

Jan 04 RN Student Presentation Team as Team Leader.

July 05 UN Military Observer in Sierra Leone, also promoted to Lieutenant Commander (see picture below).

Mar 06 Joint Services Command and Staff College (JSCSC)- RN Intermediate Staff Course.

May 06 JSCS - Maritime Directing Staff on the Joint Services Warrant Officers Course.

April 07 Offered a Full Term Commission, which he accepted.

The future:-

May 08 MEO's Designate Course.

Aug 08 Back to sea as an MEO or Snr Engineer.

With a wild cat
In
Sierra Leone
Thanks Alastair, you must be very proud of your “little” lad.

A RETURN TO NORWAY
An account of a trip to Namsos, Norway
May 15th to 19th 2007
by Ken Robinson

Earlier in the year I was invited to join a party travelling to Namsos to commemorate the obliteration of the town by German bombers in April 1940. The visit was to coincide with the national day of Norway on May 16th.

Other members of the party were:-

1. John Gritten, secretary of the “Friends of Namsos War Memorial Committee”. He was a Stoker in HMS AFRIDI, sunk during the evacuation of Namsos in May 1940. Later he became a Lieutenant RNVR (Official Naval Reporter).
2. Anda – John’s wife.
3. Lawrie Douglas, whose father served in HMS Acheron during the Norwegian campaign. Lawrie also served in the RN post-war.
4. Larry Hazell, representing the HMS Mohawk Association.
5. John Morrison, Flight Sergeant RAF, shot down near Trondheim during a raid on the Tirpitz in 1942. He was a prisoner of war until May 1945.
7. Pauline Hayes – Barry’s wife.
8. Forbes Wilson, grandson of the Captain of HMT Rutlandshire which was bombed and sunk off Namsos on 20th April 1940.

All but Barry and Pauline Hayes flew from Heathrow, Barry and Pauline from Newcastle. I had to travel the day before and stayed the night with Anda and John Gritten in Kensington. The flight to Trondheim was via Oslo where we met up with Barry and Pauline. From Trondheim we travelled to Namsos in cars, about 100 miles. On the way we stopped at the Falstad Memorial and Human Rights Centre which was formerly a P.O.W. camp, housing mainly Russians and Jews who the Germans used as slave labour in the forests around Trondheim. Many died from ill treatment. We also had a meal provided at Falstad.

On arrival at Namsos we settled in at the Borstad Hotel.

Wednesday 16th May.

We were taken by our Norwegian hosts on a boat trip to Skingen Island where a number of ships, including the Rutlandshire and the French destroyer Bison had been sunk. A wreath was dropped in the water and a memorial service held. All on board each also dropped a single rose into the water. Lunch was provided on shore. In the
afternoon we returned by boat to Namsos, a two and a half hour journey, with coffee being provided on board.

The evening was spent at Namsos Cultural Hall where we attended a symphony concert and folk dance. After the concert dinner was provided at one of the host’s house. Most of our meals were mainly salmon and venison and, I think it was this night, lots of champagne and spirits were drunk.

**Thursday 17th May (National Day).**

A Children’s Parade, followed by coffee, and then ceremonies at the Norwegian, British, Russian and French memorials. Lunch was then served in the Namsos Commune.

The afternoon was taken up by a public parade in which we rode in a beautiful 1904 Cadillac that, when new, was owned by the then King of Norway.

Evening started with a glass of wine with the French contingent, then dinner at one of the houses. Forbes Wilson presented, on a computer, an account of the Altmark Incident and then presented me with a loose-leaf book which had a photograph of myself on the front. The book was called, “A Story of Three Ships”, with pictures of Cossack, Graf Spee and Altmark. I will bring it to the next reunion.

**Friday 18th May.**

Morning at leisure, looking round Namsos and visiting the market and shops. Lunch was at a café where we met and shared war memories with the people of Namsos. The evening was spent high in the forest where a barbecue had been arranged, with a quiz afterwards and then music.

The whole trip was a great success, mainly because of the organisation and generosity of the inhabitants of Namsos. All our party enjoyed it immensely.

**Saturday 18th May.**

After an early breakfast we travelled in three cars back to Trondheim where we said goodbye to our friends. The return journey to Heathrow was via Copenhagen where we changed planes.

Things started to go wrong at Heathrow because our luggage did not arrive and, after the filling of forms at the lost luggage counter we bade farewell to each other and went our separate ways. My problem was that I had left my return railway ticket in the side pocket of my suitcase. I purchased a single ticket to Tenby (cost £74.00) but, after all the delay, I caught a later train thus missing my connection with the last Pembroke Dock train from Swansea. My daughter had to make a round trip of 120 miles to pick me up in Swansea. My suitcase was delivered to my house at 9.30 pm the next evening.

I wrote to Scandinavian Airways and asked to be reimbursed for expenses incurred by my daughter and me. Their reply was that they were sorry for the inconvenience but they were not responsible for the contents of my suitcase. The next day I visited the County Court in Havorfordwest and made a claim against the airline. The outcome was that I was contacted by phone by their solicitor who asked if my claim
could be settled amicably and agreed a figure that included the court fee that I had paid. On receipt of their cheque I cancelled the court order.

In conclusion, a special thank you to John Gritten and his wife Anda for letting me stay the night and booking my accommodation at the Borstad Hotel. My thanks also go to Forbes Wilson for his presentation of the Altmark affair and book.

Ken Robinson

THE COSSACK TREE
(and the Armed Forces Memorial)

It may be remembered that at the last AGM S/M Peter Marchant said that he had visited the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas and had noticed that the existing plaque with the Cossack tree was looking rather tatty and suggested that we should have a new one made. His own investigation there found that the cost of a metal plaque would be about £200.00. It was proposed and seconded that a new plaque should be commissioned and up to £200.00 be allocated for it. This was agreed unanimously.

After the reunion the Secretary contacted the Arboretum and found that in order to keep a certain uniformity we couldn’t just have one made up somewhere ourselves. They have the plaques made to a standard design, although we could say what we wanted put on the plaque. And the cost would be £200.00.

After receiving an application form together with a photograph of an existing plaque for another association, the Secretary set about designing ours and, with agreement from the Chairman, submitted it for approval, together with the cheque of course. A copy of their artwork was then received for approval to manufacture. This was duly sent back and on 14th August we received a letter to say that the new plaque was now in place.

Peter Marchant popped in to have a look at it on his way to Stafford early in September and the Secretary, Peter Harrison, called in on his way up to Scarborough for the 8th D.A. reunion. Both took photos. However, things progressed further after that.

We received an invitation from the Arboretum for our Chairman or a representative from the Association to attend the Remembrance Day Service to be held at the new Memorial on Sunday November 11th. The Chairman was already committed to his local ceremonies but, knowing that Peter Marchant usually takes part in acts of remembrance at this time, he was asked if he would take this one on. Peter agreed and his name was given to the organisers. We assumed that a ticket and instructions would be received in due course.

In October H.M. The Queen visited the NMA to attend the dedication of the new Armed Forces Memorial. Many of us would have seen it on television. It had been under construction during our previous visits but looked very impressive on the TV.

At the beginning if November no further information had been received and it took several e-mails and five telephone calls to get it. However, we were told that, because of the overwhelming demand from the public resulting from the TV broadcast, the invitations were no longer valid and that it would be a free-for-all - turn up and try to
get in the car park and find a place somewhere near the memorial. Peter decided to defer his visit until the following day when it would be a bit quieter.

He said that it was a magnificent memorial and well worth a visit to see and admire the excellent sculptures. Some of Peter’s photographs are shown on pages 18 and 19.

Photograph H on page 19 shows a sculpted figure pointing through a space between two doors. On the edge of the left hand door a message reads, “Through this space a shaft of sunlight falls at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month”. The effect is seen in photograph E on page 18. Photographs F and G on page 19 show some of the sculptures.

Whilst there Peter also took time to place a cross of remembrance by the Cossack tree. His photograph, also on page 19 shows the cross and our new plaque.

Our sincere thanks go to Shipmate Peter for first of all drawing our attention to the state of the old plaque and then for getting us these photographs.

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**A Voyage to my Father**

(Commander H.C. Gaffney. R.N.R.)

I never knew my Father. He was simply a name on my Birth Certificate. In 2004 I began a long and intensive search to find out who he was. My Mother had told me once that he had been a Naval Officer. However she also told me that he had not been a Naval Officer, but in fact he was a Tobacco farmer in Rhodesia. On my Birth Certificate his profession is noted as a Company Director. Thus began my search into the unknown. I approached the task ahead with equal measures of apprehension and a burning curiosity.

It was hard going at first. I wrote to many Government Institutions, but a year into the search trawling the Ancestry.com website I found my Father’s eldest son Denys, of whose existence I was totally unaware. After an initial telephone call, we exchanged several letters and in December 2006 I visited Denys at his home in Suffolk. A good time was had by all. Denys 85, had been in the Fleet Air Arm during the war, but that is another story. I also discovered that my birth had caused a family scandal. As this is not an Agony Aunt story I will spare you the details. The real story is what follows.

My Father, Harry Cecil Gaffney was born on the 11th November, 1893, in Wharfedale, Yorkshire although the family home was in Suffolk. After attending Framlingham College in Suffolk, Harry was sent to the Training Ship Conway in Jan. 1909. H.M.S. Conway began her life as H.M.S.Nile in 1839. In 1875 H.M.S. Nile was allocated on loan by the Admiralty to the Mercantile Marine Service Association as a training ship and after being fitted out for her duties, she was renamed H.M.S. Conway and positioned in the river Mersey, off Rock Ferry.

Aboard “Conway” Harry was taught all aspects of Seamanship. The boys were also taught Spanish as most of them were expected to join the merchant sailing vessels on the South American run. For the privilege of having their boys educated, and trained as future officers, parents were obliged to pay fees of £22.15 per quarter which, I suppose, was quite a lot of money in those days. Records from the Liverpool Maritime Museum which hold the records of T.S. Conway show Harry as a Junior Cadet Captain, and Coxswain of the Dinghy!
In February 1911 Harry left the “Conway” and joined the three masted sailing barque “Inversnaid” bound for the west coast of South America for the port of Iquique in Chile. The “Inversnaid” was a steel hulled barque built in Dumbarton in 1892. She was built for the INVER Line owned by George Milne and Co. and weighed in at 1414 tons, had a length of 238 feet, breadth of 36 feet, and a draught of 21 feet. Harry was to serve a three year apprenticeship before the mast aboard the “Inversnaid”. If he thought “Conway” was tough, things were about to become even more so. No doubt “Inversnaid” spent many months long months at sea. This was Harry’s baptism of fire for his future career at sea. At the end of three years he had worked his way up to possess a 1st. Mates ticket. After Harry had left her, the “Inversnaid” continued to ply her trade on the South American run, she survived W.W.1, and later was sold to Sir William Garthwaite, a shipping insurer from Montreal, who renamed her “Garthsnaid”.

In his book “The last of the Windjammers” Vol.11. Basil Lubbock describes the last journey of the Garthsnaid. Outward bound from Iquique (Chile) to Melbourne she found herself in a severe storm off Gabo Island just south of the port of Melbourne. The White Star liner “Zealandic” outward bound from Sydney found the “Garthsnaid” lying in a helpless condition with the main mast gone, her fore top mast hanging over the side, her mizzen top mast missing, her decks a tangle of twisted and broken rigging, and all her boats stove in.

Captain Jones of the Zealandic at once decided to tow the lame duck into port, but the weather was bad, and it was only after four unsuccessful attempts that a steel hawser was at last got aboard the Garthsnaid. Her crew had been without sleep and with scarcely any food for three days and were so weak that it took them three hours to heave in the hawser by their capstan and make it fast around the base of the mast. Eventually she was towed from Gabo Island into Melbourne after a long and difficult struggle.

If Harry thought he was going for some leave after disembarking from the Inversnaid at Bristol he was sorely mistaken. Britian was at war by this time and Harry was to be in it before his feet hit the deck. He was sent to Chatham barracks, and for his sins awarded the rank of Probationary Midshipman. Harry was then drafted to the armed merchantman H.M.S. Kinfauns Castle. At the outbreak of war the Admiralty requisitioned many merchant ships to see service in the Royal Navy. The Kinfauns Castle had been a mail ship of the Union Castle Line, that sailed the London to Cape Town run. After her conversion to an armed merchant cruiser, the R.N. used her for troop carrying.

As was the custom in the Royal Navy at the time Junior Officers were encouraged to write a Daily Log Book of events. It was felt this experience would stand them in good stead should they ever achieve their own command. All the events recorded here between 1914-1915 aboard the Kinfauns Castle come from my Father’s Log Book.

My Father joined the ship on the 15th August 1914 at Southampton and they sailed at 15.30 the same day in the rain and mist. At 6pm. they went to General Quarters. Two days out and a wireless message was received on board that the Kaiser Wilhelm des Grose (20,000 tons speed 22.5 knots) had captured the Union Castle SS “Gallicia” and was possibly in the area. My Father’s log book continues, “So we painted our funnels usual colours (Union Castle Colours) so if we sighted her, we would appear to be on a mail run, and turn tail and as she is much faster would overtake us, and we should turn round and fire on her.” I assume they did not sight her, as the following day my Father notes that after gun drill they played deck cricket as the Captain was very keen on it. At
5.p.m. the same day the Italian Steamer “Dora Baitea” of Genoa from Sardinia to Norfolk VA was boarded, after previously firing two blanks to stop her.

As they sailed south, and the temperatures began to climb, the rig of the day become “Ducks”. The daily routine consisted mainly of stopping and searching merchant vessels, gun drills, and deck cricket.

At Lat.23.16 N Longitude 20.40 W. on Saturday 22nd of August the Kinfauns Castle captured her first Prize of War, a German four-masted Barque the “Werner Vinnen.” She was outward bound from Cardiff to Caleta Coloso, the west coast of South America with a full consignment of coal when the Kinfauns Castle ordered her to shorten sail. Once boarded, the 32 well armed matelots hoisted the White Ensign with the German flag underneath. The boarding party confiscated all firearms and valuables and ordered the German Captain to sail for Sierra Leone. The German crew were all quite willing to work the ship to port on condition that the Captain gave them their parole, which he did. However later, three refused to work the ship, preferring to come aboard the Kinfauns Castle as prisoners of war, which more or less amounted to them being passengers. The Kinfauns Castle left the “Werner Vinnen” with her boarding party still aboard and sailed for St. Vincent. However on Wednesday 26th August the ship received orders to sail for Cape Town, via St.Helena, and Ascension Island. On route to St.Helena one of the crew was arrested for drawing a knife. There was also a sing-song in the Wardroom, and Lieut. Gardner R.N.R gave a wonderful exhibition of Ventrioloquism followed by the usual Saturday night toast for “Sweethearts and Wives”. But it was not all play.

On Saturday 5th September the ship received orders to proceed with all possible speed to Port Nolloth a distance of about 300 miles. Arriving at Port Nolloth on the Monday, Father’s log reads: “We are just keeping sufficient way on the ship so we need not anchor.” In the harbour were five large Steamers/transports ready to set sail carrying the troops of the South African Mounted Rifles up from Cape Town. Orders were changed and the Kinfauns Castle, after coaling ship, was ordered to Simonstown. After a very brief stay in Simonstown, she was to sail to Walvis Bay (present day Namibia). It was blowing hard with a big swell off the cape but she arrived two days later at Walvis Bay. Whilst there a wireless message was received that the German cruiser “Konigsberg” had sunk H.M.S. Pegasus off Zanzibar killing 40 and injuring 60. Also in harbour was H.M.S. Armadale Castle having just recently destroyed the wireless station at Swakopmund, 15 miles up the coast. Things were beginning to get nasty.

On Thursday September 24th news was received to the effect that at 2am a party of Germans (mounted) came to Walvis Bay, smashed and seized all rifles, arrested the inhabitants while they set fire to a lighter and also set a charge of dynamite to blow up the pier. Luckily, this was frustrated by a native, who managed to throw the whole charge away. They also threatened to shoot anyone who attempted to signal to us. The Kinfauns Castle left an armed party in the SS Vaila to defend the town (the Germans having left when they had completed their action) and we then proceeded to Swakopmund with all possible speed, arrived at 12am and started to bombard the jetty. After 9 shells had been fired they hauled down the German colours and came out under a flag of truce to the ship viz: the Magistrate, Mayor and a member of Council, and the Harbour Master.
The Captain told them that at 2pm he was going to blow up the pier because of the attack on Walvis Bay and, if any other attack happened, we would proceed to bombard the town without notice. Punctually at 2pm we opened fire on the jetty and fired 51 shots at a range of 2000 yards with only four misses. After the bombardment we hoisted the signal and steamed back to Walvis Bay.

British subjects living in Walvis Bay left their homes at dusk each evening and were taken out to the British ships in the harbour where they spent the night. Because of the unrest with the native locals and the German presence, it was deemed unsafe for them to stay at home. In the morning they were taken ashore so they could return home. However, when they arrived home they found that the natives had looted their homes. My father’s log book records what happened next.

Saturday 26th September at Walvis Bay.
“British subjects returned to the shore today and found the natives had been looting the place, of whom 10 were caught and brought on board here. We have got them all in irons.”

Sunday 27th September at Walvis Bay.
Court marshalled the 10 natives that had been in irons, they being sentenced to 12 lashes, which they duly received after they had been examined by the Doctor. After this they were sent ashore.

Unrest continued ashore with the natives, so on Wednesday 7th October all British citizens and Government stores were loaded into lighters and sent aboard the Kinfauns Castle. At 5pm. she got under way bound for Cape Town. A severe westerly swell greeted them outside the harbour and there were many casualties. Halfway to Cape Town they received a message from Commander in Chief, Cape Town to proceed back to Walvis Bay and await orders, much to the disgust of the passengers and crew. A thick fog developed and speed was reduced to 7 knots which did nothing to improve the situation.

Back in Walvis Bay the German Cavalry were still carrying out sorties there and at Swakopmund a few miles up the coast. As a result of this another ultimatum was sent on Thursday 22nd October to the officer commanding the German Forces south west Africa. They were warned that any further attacks on Walvis Bay or removal of Government property from Swakopmund would result in the bombardment of Swakopmund to commence on Saturday next at 8am, this being the time limit for a reply to the ultimatum. Having received no reply by the given time, Kinfauns Castle got under way on Saturday and arrived at Swakopmund at 9am. They immediately started to shell the Custom House, oil depot, and warehouses, all private houses, public buildings etc being left alone. Very soon the town was ablaze and the Kinfauns Castle returned to Walvis Bay. The following day after church service on board, “we went up to Swakopmund to see what damage had actually been done. On arriving found that the Custom Houses and all other places we had shelled were now burnt to the ground.

About a week later the K.C. went back to Swakopmund and sent a landing party ashore with cases of kerosene to set fire to two or three buildings which had stores in. This was done because we did not want to shell them owing to the fact that there were private houses in the way.
The rest of the month passed relatively quiet. Then on the 10th November a message was received that the German cruiser Konigsberg had been located in the Rufiji River which is about 100 miles south of Zanzibar. H.M.S. Chatham is guarding the mouth. We cannot get within 10 miles of her as the river is not surveyed where she is lying. “We shall attempt to dislodge her by means of the sea plane, who will drop bombs.” However the seaplane proved to be most unreliable, and having very few spare parts was out of action for long periods.

At the end of the month the K.C sailed around to the east coast of Africa and took up station at the mouth of the Rufiji river joining up with a Royal Naval Squadron consisting of the light cruiser H.M.S. Challenger, the monitor H.M.S. Severn, H.M.S. Chatham, H.M.S. Dartmouth, H.M.S. Fox, H.M.S. Goliath and several other smaller craft. The Curtiss seaplane from the K.C. flew up the Rufiji river and spotted the exact location of the Konigsberg, but on the 23rd of November the K.C. received orders to sail for Durban. “During our stay we have to get 2000 tons of coal, provisions, and all necessary parts for the sea plane.

The attack on the Konigsberg was set back once again, but her remaining days as a fighting warship were being reduced on a daily basis as further planning was an ongoing activity. Early December and the K.C. is back at the mouth of the Rufiji with a working sea plane. “After lowering the seaplane into the water the Captain decided to take a trip in her as an observer. The Konigsberg took exception to their presence and opened fire at them. Turning tail they arrived safely back alongside and hoisted inboard.

Among the local natives the British employed “spies” and were supplied the following information about the Konigsberg.

1. That she had three holes in her above the waterline which had been boarded up, these being the result of the “Chatham’s” firing at 14,000 yards range.
2. It is highly probable she has a considerable casualty list.
3. She is short of coal- having to be taken up the river by means of wood fuel.
4. They are also cut off from all communication with the numerous islands from which they have been obtaining cattle.
5. They have employed 200 natives at 4d per day to dig trenches.

Some of these “spies” just took the money and run never to be seen again. However the odd few did what they were paid to do.

The British also knew that “the Konigsberg could only escape from one and a half hours before or after high water. If she fancies her chance and comes out, our only chance of damaging her is at the mouth of the river. Once she passes us, her superior speed will soon take her out of danger.” It was a risky proposition steaming up the Rufiji as the Germans had placed shore batteries on each side of the river. Also these batteries were concealed by the dense vegetation.

The stalemate continued into the new year and the Konigsberg would be up the Rufiji for many months to come.

Harry was by now a Sub. Luietenant and in July was drafted to HMS.Challenger. However it was a very short stay and very soon after arriving on board he was drafted to the monitor HMS Severn. If he thought he had seen the last of the Konigsberg he was sorely mistaken.
A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE S/M JOHN BATTY

Life Down Under (5)
by John Batty
A quiet Sunday

Edna, Ron's wife had persuaded Joy, my wife, to join her in taking the combined five kids to the annual Easter show. Ron and I decided, at his insistence, to give it a miss and have a "bonding day" at his place. "Who wants to drag five kids around a hot and dusty show ground with thousands of people pushing and shoving. Hundreds of smelly cattle in the show ring and barkers by the hundred polluting the air with their raucous voices making 'side show alley' a hell on earth..." When he put it like that, who was I to disagree with him?

All the arrangements were made and the appointed day dawned at about 0430 with a molten sun pushing itself over the Eastern horizon immediately raising the temperature to an almost unbearable degree. 'Ron knows what he's talking about', I mused ...........

I arrived at Ron's place to find him up a gum tree, literally, he was holding on with one hand whilst he released a cat from a fork in the tree about twenty feet from terra firma. I turned my back until I was sure that he was back on the ground, knowing full well that he wouldn't have accepted any help...wasn't his daughter planning to be a Vet??? The cat appeared to be very anti-Ron so I volunteered to hold him (the cat not Ron). It still appeared to be pretty anti social so Ron decided to give it a valium...

I had my doubts, but my daughter wasn't planning to be a vet, in fact I didn't even have a daughter... I cradled the cat in my left arm, whilst I applied a little pressure to the side of the cat's mouth with my right thumb and forefinger. The valium was held in my right hand. As the cat was persuaded to open it's mouth, I popped in the pill. Easy.. I allowed the cat to close his mouth to swallow...

Ron retrieved the pill from the floor and collected the cat from behind the sofa. I cradled the cat in my left arm again and repeated the process. We cornered the cat in the main bedroom and threw away the soggy pill. With a wry smile, I took a new pill from the foil wrap, cradled the cat in my left arm while I held it's rear legs tightly with my left hand. With my right hand I forced open its jaws and pushed the pill to the back of its mouth with my right forefinger. I then held its mouth shut for the count of ten.

It was a messy business fishing the pill from the goldfish bowl and then helping the cat down from the top of the kitchen dresser. I called Ron from where he was hiding in the garden - he hated to see animals in distress. I knelt on the floor with the cat wedged firmly between my knees, holding the front and rear paws. Ignoring the low growls emitted by the animal and instructed Ron to hold the cat's head firmly with one
hand while forcing a twelve inch wooden ruler into it's mouth, he then rolled the pill down the ruler and vigorously rubbed the cat's throat.

Together, we rescued the cat from the curtain rail and took another pill from the foil wrap, Ron made a note to buy a new ruler and have the curtains repaired, he carefully collected the pieces of his two prized Dresden Mantle Vases and put them safely away for repairing later.

I wrapped the cat in a large towel and Ron lay on it with its head just visible below his armpit. I put the pill in the end of a drinking straw, forced the cat's mouth open with a pencil, inserted the straw and blew down it as hard as I could.

I then checked the label on the foil wrap to make sure that the valium wasn't too dangerous to humans, had a large scotch to take the taste away, applied a band aid to Ron’s forearm and removed the bloodstain from the carpet with cold water and mild soap.

We tracked the cat to the neighbours shed, armed ourselves with another pill, placed the cat inside the shed and closed the door leaving only it's head showing outside, forced open it's mouth with a large spoon chisel and flicked the pill down it's throat using the propelling force of a rubber band cut from a bicycle tyre.

I replaced the hinges on the door as well as I could, threw away the remains of my shirt and collected a fresh one of Ron's from the bedroom. I then rang the fire brigade to rescue the cat from the roof across the road. I apologised to the neighbour who had wrecked her fence while swerving to avoid the cat as it streaked across the road in front of her car.

Seeing the look that she shot across at me, I was certainly glad that she wasn't my neighbour ...and I took the last pill from the foil wrap.

We tied the cat's front paws to it's rear paws with garden twine and then bound it tightly to the leg of the dining room table, fetching heavy duty pruning gloves from the shed, Ron put them on then forced the cat's mouth open with a medium sized spanner, I quickly threw the pill down it's gullet followed by a large piece of rump steak. I twisted its neck until its head was vertical and poured a pint of water down it's throat to wash down the pill and the steak.

Ron drove me down to the emergency room at the local hospital and I sat quietly while the doctor stitched my forearm, reset my two broken fingers and removed the remnants of the pill from my right eye. On the way home we stopped off at the furniture shop and ordered a new table and Ron telephoned the local vet to arrange a convenient time for a house call.

The girls had arrived home whilst we were at the hospital and were enjoying a cup of tea when we arrived. the kids were sitting in a circle on the floor, each of them stroking the purring lump of fur which was lying on it's back in the centre of the circle with a seraphic smile on it's face.

Ron looked at me, I looked at Ron and we both made a dive for the fridge in the kitchen... We each twisted the top from a large bottle of Tooheys Old, and took a long, long swallow of the ice cold amber liquid...

Thank Heavens The Easter Show only comes round once a year....

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THAT’S IT FOLKS - BE CAREFUL OUT THERE
Except of course to wish you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.