

FLAG HOIST

The Chatham Naval Officers' Association Newsletter



Lt Cdr Jon Vanns RNR

Dear Members

Firstly, thank you to those who attended the Burns night.

Cdr Jamie Shaw lead the haggis ceremony with our guest piper Rorie Evans, the event was well attended with 70 guests.

Next is the AGM on 14th Feb, if you have any item to raise please do so now. We are always looking for new blood on the committee, and certainly looking for my relief after 6 years of a 3 year appointment.

Attached to the Hoist is our next social event, our Easter lunch. Please try and support this event with family and friends.

We have new smaller CNOA pins at £3 that will be available for purchase at the AGM.

As we end another working year I want to remember the wonderful friends that have past the bar, and welcome new friends to our Association.

Yours Aye, Jon

Navantia UK Completes Acquisition Of Harland & Wolff

Navantia UK recently announced the completion of its acquisition of Harland & Wolff's facilities in Belfast, Appledore, Methil and Arnish, protecting more than 1,000 jobs across the four sites and strengthening Britain's defence, maritime and clean energy industrial capabilities.

Under Navantia UK's management, all four facilities will benefit from extensive expertise in shipbuilding, fabrication and complex programme management, supporting both a highly skilled workforce and robust supply chain.

The transaction ensures the continuation of the Fleet Solid Support (FSS) programme, comprising three ships for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary to support the UK Carrier Strike Group.

These vessels will be built at the Belfast and Appledore facilities alongside Navantia's facilities in Spain. Navantia UK envisages significant development of the yards for the defence, maritime and green energy sectors.

Navantia UK extended its gratitude to His Majesty's Government for its support throughout this process, which has helped secure this strategic investment in UK industrial capability.

The transaction has received all necessary regulatory approvals. All current employees have transferred to Navantia UK with their existing terms and conditions preserved.



Astute-class Nuclear Subs

The sixth of seven Royal Navy Astute-class nuclear powered hunter killer submarine **HMS Agamemnon** was, on 6th October, lowered into the water at BAE shipyard at Barrow-in-Furness.



Named after the ancient Greek king, the submarine has a displacement of 17,400 tonnes and is powered by Rolls Royce nuclear reactors. Astute class are the most powerful attack submarines ever operated by the Royal Navy.

The first five submarines, **HMS Astute**, **HMS Ambush**, **HMS Artful**, **HMS Audacious** and **HMS Anson**, have been handed over to the Royal Navy.

HMS Formidable

Work on the third of the Royal Navy's future Type 31-class frigates, **HMS Formidable**, is underway following the successful first steel cutting.

Rosyth's local MP, Graeme Downie pressed the button that started the laser cutter at Babcock's state-of-the-art shipyard.

Five Type 31 frigates are planned for the Royal Navy, with the first two, *Venturer* and *Active*, taking shape and two more, *Cambeltown* and *Bulldog*, about to commence within the next two years

£50k for X-Man's Medals

MEDALS won by one of the submariners who helped cripple Hitler's flagship were bought at auction for £50,000.

Edmund 'Eddie' Goddard was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal for his role in Operation Source, steering a 50ft 'midget' submarine for hours on end through cold, confined waters to attack the mighty Tirpitz deep inside the Arctic circle in German-occupied Norway.

In 1941, he volunteered for 'special and hazardous service'... which led him to training to operate 'midget' submarines – officially designated X-craft.

In 1943, the Germans' biggest warship Tirpitz was potentially the greatest surface threat to the Royal Navy. Skulking in the fjords of northern Norway, protected by layers of defences on and beneath the waves, as well as strong Luftwaffe cover to fend off air attack, Tirpitz was proving impossible to 'get at'.

The Admiralty turned to small-scale submarines to penetrate the fjords, evade the defences and finally plant explosive charges on Tirpitz's hull to cripple or even sink the battleship.

Helmsman Eddie Goddard was the only rating in the four crew on HMS X-6, one of six X-craft due to execute Operation Source in September 1943.

X6 led the operation against the Tirpitz, slipped through the anti-submarine defences, passed under the battleship's keel, placed explosive charges near one of the forward turrets and then was forced to scuttle as there was no hope of reaching safety with a broken periscope.

The X-craft attack put Tirpitz out of action for six months.



Trafalgar Night 2025

As members are aware, the premier event of Chatham Naval Officers Association is the annual Trafalgar Night Dinner, which has always attracted excellent support from members and their guests, and is an outstanding symbol of the naval and nautical fellowship that binds us.

It was, therefore, a matter of grave disappointment that the Association was let down, after months of careful planning, by the poor standard of food and service from the third party provider on the evening itself.

Quite rightly, the committee and members were swift in expressing their disappointment and both formal and informal complaints were delivered on the evening in question and in the days immediately following.

The committee also learned from our guest of honour, the CO at RSME, that the unacceptable delivery of catering services by the contractor was also affecting the mess, which has been a generous and loyal host to CNOA for many years. By working in partnership with RSME, the committee were able to achieve an equitable and swift resolution to the complaint, which has also resulted in decisive action to repair the damage done and restore confidence for future Trafalgar Dinners and other CNOA meetings and events.



We are pleased, therefore, to report on the following actions:

1. New catering management in place - as evidenced by the significant improvement at meetings and events since Trafalgar night, and the pro-active approach now adopted by the contractor. This reflects the effectiveness of the strengthened partnership between CNOA and RSME.

2. For Trafalgar 2025, the committee are pleased to announce Admiral Sir Trevor Soar as our Guest of Honour, and have taken the following steps to improve the experience:

- i) Planning has already commenced and there will be rehearsals with the new management before Trafalgar.
- ii) Singing has been removed from the programme.
- iii) Speakers will use microphones (compulsory).
- iv) The Band's placement has been moved to avoid any possibility of inconveniencing members and their guests.

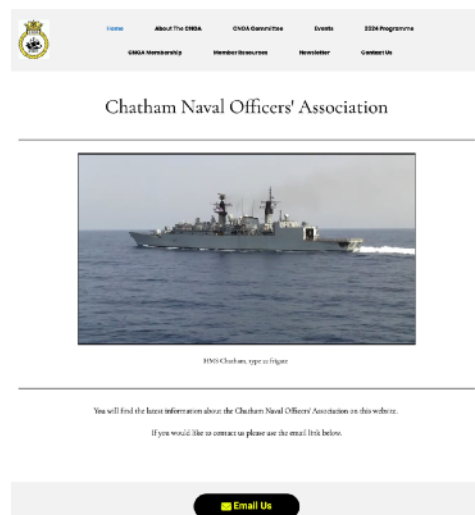
The President, Chairman and your Committee are now working to complete the planning for 2025 and are very confident that this most significant event has been restored to its traditionally high standard, enabling CNOA members to enjoy the conviviality and fellowship of this occasion with colleagues, friends and guests. Trafalgar 2025 promises to be special, and we ask all members to join us in making it an evening to remember.'

CNOA Website

The CNOA website continues to develop. Members are asked to submit an appropriate "head & shoulders" photo for inclusion on the website which will be updated in February 2025. The events calendar for 2025 and previous editions of Flag Hoist will be available for viewing or download. If any members have other suggestions for the website update please use the details below.

Please send photos or ideas via email :

mr.guy.bartlett@gmail.com



In The News

HMS Scott

The Royal Navy's sole ocean survey vessel, **HMS Scott** entered refit at A&P Falmouth's dockyard for a Ship Life Extension Programme [SLEP]. The modernisation and refurbishment programme will enable the ship to continue in service until at least 2033.

It is hoped that following the Strategic Defence Review, anticipated for the spring of 2025, news of replacement tonnage for the Royal Navy will be announced in the form of Multi-Role Support Ships [MROs] that will, as the name implies, carry out a wide variety of support roles in the Royal Navy, one of which will be ocean survey work.

During the refit, the ship will have her hull sandblasted and repainted, and internally much of the ship will be gutted and refitted with new systems, including new water treatment systems, sewage treatment plants, and LED lighting throughout the ship.



HMS Scott In The Antarctic

Cold Weather

Midshipman Barney suggests members keep warm by the fireside during the current inclement weather.



2025 Defence Review

Deep cuts into the Royal Navy were announced in November, even before the publication of the Defence Review in early 2025.

Most damaging for the future of the Navy is the announcement that the two assault ships **HMS Bulwark** and **HMS Albion**, essential components of the Royal Marines' amphibious capability, will be scrapped or more likely sold abroad.



HMS Bulwark

Another hard worked Type 23 frigate **HMS Northumberland**, which is in for refit, will now be decommissioned and eventually scrapped. It was found during the refit that previously undiscovered damage would make the ship uneconomic to put back into service.

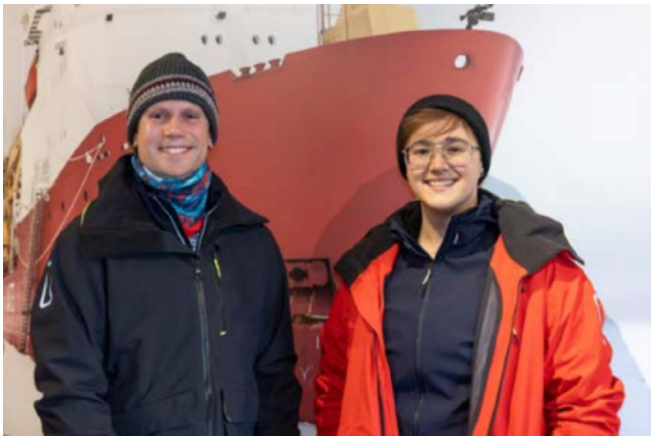
The Royal Fleet Auxiliary will also lose **RFA Wave Night** and **RFA Wave Ruler**, which have been in long-term storage. The cuts to the Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary are a small part of the Labour government's plan to save up to £500 million from the defence budget.

All the cuts will leave what little remains of the Armed Forces perilously short of equipment at a time of increased global tension and are probably a portent of more cuts to come in next year's Strategic Defence Review.

Protecting Antarctica

Scientists join icebreaker for upcoming mission

SCIENTISTS will study the impact of tourism and climate change on one of the world's most unique and fragile environments during an upcoming Royal Navy expedition to Antarctica.



Dr Roberts and Dr Julier

Two researchers from the University of Portsmouth, Dr Adele Julier and Dr Keiron Roberts, will join the ice breaker **HMS Protector** for five intensive weeks immersed in the frozen continent to gather crucial data on pollution from increased tourism and the far-reaching impacts of climate change.

Dr Julier, a senior lecturer and palaeologist, will focus on understanding wind and weather patterns through pollen collection techniques, using pollen, charcoal and other particles from sediments to analyse historical climate data and track shifts in the patterns.

Dr Julier said. It's the second year running the university has teamed up with the Royal Navy for in-depth studies of the continent.

Dr Roberts will collect water samples to measure nutrient levels, metals and antimicrobial resistance – indicators of human pollution.

HMS Protector serves as the hub for the researchers' mission in the polar region and is equipped with everything needed to assist the scientists with their projects.

The ship has a full sonar suite as well as a small survey boat equipped with a multi-beam echo sounding system that can survey the sea floor at shallow depths, close to calving glacier margins.

Commanding Officer, Captain Tom Weaver, said: "HMS Protector's mission in Antarctica provides valuable opportunities for scientists to access the world's most important natural laboratory. "Last year we embarked two scientists from the University of Portsmouth to research water pollution and glacier change in Antarctica and I'm delighted that during this Austral summer season the Royal Navy can continue to support the University of Portsmouth and their environmental research."



HMS Protector

Agincourt becomes Achilles

The 7th and final Astute-class submarine being constructed for the RN is set to be named **HMS Achilles** in a change from what had previously been announced.

Curiously posted on social media on a Sunday night, the RN simply stated the name **HMS Achilles** has been approved by The King with no mention of the previously stated name. At the time of writing, Agincourt is still listed on the RN website.

The former Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson made the announcement that the last of the Astute class SSNs would be named Agincourt as long ago as May 2018.

Prior to that, the vessel had been unofficially expected to be named Ajax.

There can be little complaints about 'HMS Achilles' as another historic name, derived from Greek mythology. The submarine will be the 7th RN vessel to carry the name, most recently a Leander-class frigate named Achilles served from 1968-90.

The most famous **HMS Achilles** was the Second World War cruiser manned by New Zealand sailors and ultimately transferred to the Kiwis, carrying the HMNZS prefix from 1941-46.

It is unclear why the name change has been made but most speculate that it is to avoid "offending the French".

The battle of Agincourt in 1415 saw a much smaller English and Welsh army defeat the French army with the innovative use of longbows.

Avoiding ship names that commemorate past triumphs over friends who were once enemies is something of a slippery slope.

The RN has a very long and distinguished history of roundly defeating many of the countries that are now close NATO allies.

HMS Nelson, (shore establishment in Portsmouth) commemorates Britain's greatest admiral, who spent his life fighting and beating the French and Spanish.

His finest and final hour came at the battle at Trafalgar (Incidentally, the name of a submarine class, the last of which was only decommissioned last year).

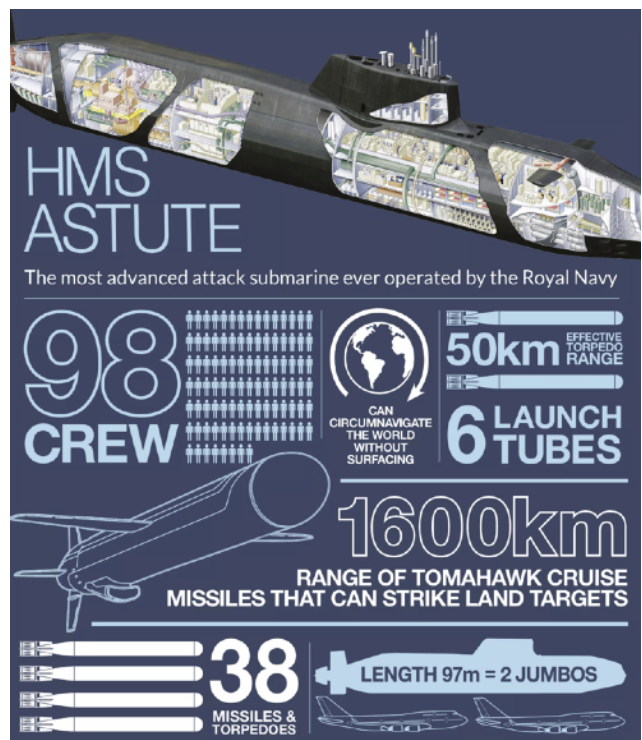
The defeat of the French fleet off the Spanish coast in 1805 was the foundation for more than 100 years of British global naval supremacy. Nelson's flagship **HMS Victory**, is still a commissioned RN vessel, one of the world's most revered museum ships.

HMS Anson (Astute-class boat 5) is named after Admiral George Anson whose career involved battles that resulted in Spanish and French defeats.

Graf Spee

Even **HMS Achilles** is synonymous with a German defeat when the cruiser of that name was one of three much smaller ships that fought in the Battle of the River Plate which resulted in the destruction of the pocket battleship Graf Spee.

Changing the name of a ship or submarine is traditionally seen by some sailors as "unlucky".



CNOA Events Programme

Date	Speaker / Activity	Subject	Comment
10 January	Martin Watts	Gallipoli 1915	Virtual Meeting
14 February	AGM		
14 March	Derek Goodwin	LNG Bunkers, Cold Ironing and Scrubbers	
11 April	Social Evening		
26 April	Easter Lunch	Maidstone Masonic Centre	
9 May	Guy Bartlett	"Eat Your Carrots!" The Story of Radar	
13 June	Mark Gambell	Seamanship	
11 July	Summer Social Evening		
August	No Meeting Summer Leave		
12 September	Mark Bathurst	The History of Paddle Steamer Medway Queen	
10 October	Trafalgar Dinner		
14 November	Peter Gilbert & Barry Bryant	Santa Fe & South Georgia - Hunter and Hunted	
12 December	President's Christmas Social		

Speakers for CNOA Events

The CNOA are always keen to hear from new speakers. If you, or someone you know, gives presentations - lasting between 45 minutes to an hour - please get in touch. The Lectures Officer, Lt Cdr Jim Williamson, would be delighted to hear from you. Contact Jim via contact@cnoa.org.uk.



"...is hereby awarded the Navy Commendation medal for his suggestion that stale bread be painted brown and served as toast..."

CHATHAM NAVAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS



Joining Fee and Annual Subscription

With effect from 20th March 2023, new members will be required to pay a joining fee of £30 by cheque or transfer to CNOA at the following bank:

Metro Bank Sort code 23 05 80 Account 50484076

Cost £20 PA payable to Chatham Naval Officers Association

Address if required 2 Calverly Road, Tunbridge Wells Kent TN1 2TB

On receipt of the joining fee new members will receive an Association tie or scarf and lapel badge. The Annual Subscription of £20 applies from the date of joining if this occurs before 1st July, and then will be renewed by Standing Order from the following 1st January.

New members who join after 1st July will be required to submit a Standing order from the following 1st January.

Annual Subscription – Current members

The annual subscription remains at £20 and, with effect from 1 January 2024, the subscription will be payable annually on that date. In the first instance, and to allow members time to alter their current standing order dates, a transition period of 3 months, to 31st March 2024 will be in place, after which an audit and follow up process will be undertaken.

CHATHAM NAVAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL STANDING ORDER FORM

Please complete this form and return it to the Hon Treasurer: Lieutenant Jan Dean RNR, 79A Cherry Avenue, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7OU, or, if you prefer, you can scan a copy and email it to cnoauk@gmail.com. You can arrange a standing order electronically via your bank and, for those using traditional banking methods this form can be used to inform your bank of your instructions as below.

I wish to make my annual subscription payments by standing order to the Chatham Naval Officers' Association.

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Name of your Bank: _____

Address of your Bank: _____

Your Bank Sort Code: ____/____/____

Your Account Number: _____

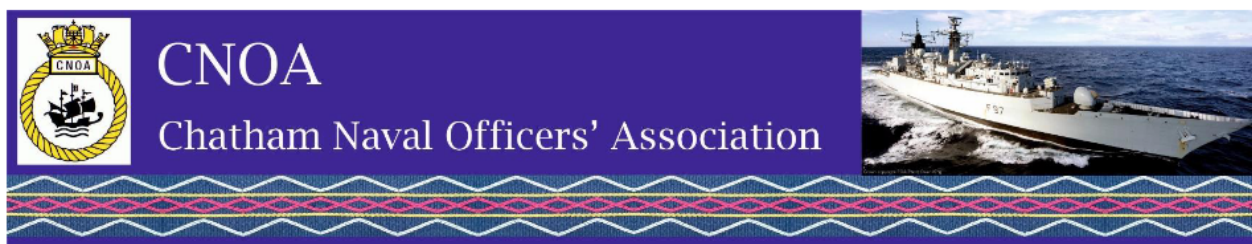
To my bank:

I request you to pay the regular sum of: £20 PA

Metro Bank sort code 23 05 80 account 50484076

Payable to Chatham Naval Officers Association

Address if required 2 Calverly Road, Tunbridge Wells Kent TN1 2TB



If you enjoy the CNOA activities, why not extend an invitation to a like-minded serving or retired officer? Or ask them to look at cnoa.org.uk



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

SURNAME		FORENAMES		DATE
HOME ADDRESS			BUSINESS ADDRESS	
Tel. No:			Tel. No:	
E Mail Address:			E Mail Address:	
RANK	TYPE OF COMMISSION		SPECIALISATION / AWARDS & QUALIFICATIONS	
BRIEF CAREER DETAILS				
<p>General Data Protection Regulation: I agree that all the above details may be maintained and kept by the CNOA and RSME for the purposes of membership records and security. I agree / do not agree (delete as applicable) to my details being published in a membership booklet.</p> <p>SIGNED.....</p>				
PRESENT OCCUPATION				
PROPOSER'S NAME	PROPOSER'S SIGNATURE		HOW LONG KNOWN	
SECONDER'S NAME	SECONDER'S SIGNATURE		HOW LONG KNOWN	