

FLAG HOIST

The Chatham Naval Officers' Association Newsletter

Dear Members

Almost half way through the year, scary how time flies. Please put a note in your diaries 10th October, our Trafalgar night.

I hope to catch up with some of you at Peter Luxton's fund raising dinner on Friday 6th June and others at our next lecture on 13th June.

This week I met up with the President to host Mrs Georgie Warner DL at a Cadet Chaplains appointment that was conducted by Douglas, followed by a memorial service to Peter Fry a 14-year-old cadet killed in World War 2.

It's testament to the work our members do across the county when we gather for different organisations and events.

Pictured opposite is the DL receiving a Formal salute and the appointing of Rev Caz Mills RNR as a Cadet unit Chaplain.

I have also been hearing and reading a lot about AI, so I thought I would experiment with an AI tool. I gave some basic information on a letter I wanted to write, and AI composed a draft in seconds, I then asked AI what it knew of certain people. It was scary to see whats in the public domain.

My conclusion is, in the right hands, this tool will help with many daily tasks and allow those wishing to deceive the ideal opportunity to do so.

As you can tell by my grammar this hoist is NOT AI generated.



Lt Cdr Jon Vanns RNR



HMS Prince of Wales

On 22nd April, the aircraft carrier HMS **Prince of Wales** commenced her first major eight-month deployment as the centrepiece of a Royal Navy task force to the Far East, known as Operation Highmast.

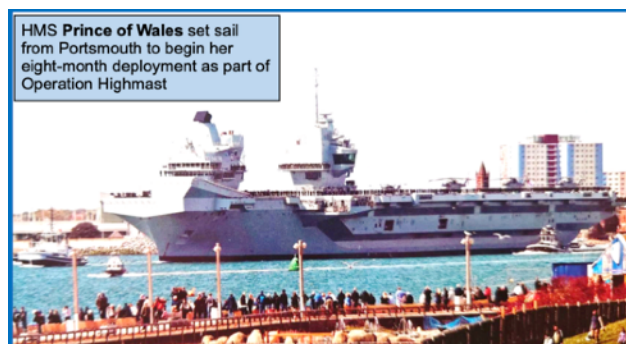
Accompanying the carrier on the deployment are the Type 45 destroyer HMS **Dauntless** and the Type 23 frigate **HMS Richmond**, an Astute-class attack submarine, and the RFA **Tidespring**.

The Royal Navy will be joined at various points by several allied warships, including the Canadian frigate HMCS **Ville de Quebec**, the Spanish frigate ESPS **Mendez Nunez**, and two Norwegian vessels: the supply ship HNoMS **Maud** and the frigate HNoMS **Road Amunsden**.

During the transit to the Indo-Pacific, the ships will pass through the Mediterranean, where they will exercise with other NATO navies as part of Exercise Neptune Strike.

After passing through the Red Sea, the group will visit Japan, Australia, Malaysia, India and Singapore.

The deployment aims to reaffirm the UK's security commitments in both the Mediterranean and the Indo-Pacific regions, while also promoting trade and industry through events in Singapore, Japan, and India.



The hearts of personnel serving at the UK Naval Support Facility, which provides round-the-clock support to UK warships operating in the Red Sea, Gulf and Indian Ocean, were touched by the plight of some tiny cats.

The five kittens were found – or rather heard – crying for help, living under a shipping container having lost their mother.

Estimated to be about three weeks old and not yet weaned, the tiny creatures were immediately taken under the care of Royal Navy personnel.

Working collectively between shifts supporting operations, personnel became foster parents, hand-feeding and helping to rear the kittens – while at the same time trying to find someone in the local animal community to offer them a new home.

Without the sailors' intervention, the kittens would have perished with temperatures in the small Gulf kingdom already topping 40 Celsius by day.



“We knew the mother, whom we fondly named ‘Michelle’,” explained Petty Officer Kirsty Scott, one of the sailors who became one of the kitten carers. “When we discovered her kittens, we were upset to find she had passed away and they were left to fend for themselves.

They would come running out crying from the shipping containers looking for food, there was no way we could leave them.”

Despite best efforts, one of the litter sadly died, but the rest came through – receiving a clean bill of health from a local vet. With a home found for the surviving quartet, saying goodbye to the creatures proved emotional – but sweetened by the satisfaction of knowing the litter would have a bright future and will be something they treasure long after their tour ends.

Northern Gulf - Exercise

What would happen if an aircraft was forced to ditch not in the waters of the River Hudson – as depicted in the true Hollywood blockbuster Sully – but the open sea of Northern Gulf?

That was the challenge facing the crew of Royal Navy minehunter HMS Middleton as they joined sailors and fliers from the USA, Kuwait and Iraq in an international test of collective lifesaving abilities.

Mock Rescue

The minehunter left her base in Bahrain to join the multi-national Combined Task Force 152 – responsible for safety and security of shipping specifically inside the Gulf – as it hosted a SOLAS exercise: Safety Of Life At Sea. Ships from the Iraqi and Kuwaiti Naval Forces, Kuwaiti Coast Guard and US Coast Guard were involved on the water, with helicopter support from the Kuwait Police Flying Wing.

The Brits were earmarked as the ship overseeing the mock rescue: to first locate an aircraft which had been forced to land on the water – then co-ordinate the response of the assorted vessels and air power. With Middleton's time in the Middle East almost entirely devoted to her core mission of hunting for/neutralising mines, her Navigating Officer Lieutenant Jack Savage said the 50 crew welcomed the chance of a "uniquely rewarding experience".

He continued: "It was a privilege to exercise alongside such a diverse range of nations and unit types, each bringing their own strengths and professionalism on the day.

"For us, operating in a new area of the Gulf added a layer of excitement and challenge, making the exercise even more memorable.

"What stood out most was the seamless communication across all units—clear, concise, and effective—which played a key role in the overall success of the exercise.

Witnessing the unity and coordination among the different national assets was truly impressive.

"The result was that the four nations could work together quickly and effectively in an emergency to a successful conclusion: saving lives.

Lieutenant Commander Kyle O'Regan, HMS Middleton's Commanding Officer, was particularly impressed by the Kuwait and Iraqi sailors.

"Their professional abilities were clear for all to see during the manoeuvring exercises and their communication during the exercise were crisp and efficient leading to a rapid and comprehensive search of the area," he said. "I'm confident that had this been a real incident we would have searched the area quickly and most likely found the aircraft.

"Also delighted with the outcome of the combined training was Commodore Mohammad Alarefi, the Kuwaiti in charge of CTF 152. He added: "The lessons learned and successes will ensure CTF 152 and the Combined Maritime Forces continue to safeguard lives at sea well into the future."



A Thank You

SIR JOHN HAWKINS HOSPITAL, KNIGHT, IN CHATHAM

Patron: Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

Registered Charity: 213213



Leydene House
102 Crestway
Chatham
Kent
ME5 0BH

Dr Martin Watts
Hon Secretary
Chatham Naval Officers Association

19 May 2025

Dear Martin,

CHARITABLE DONATION

Following our recent Board meeting the Governors have asked me to express they're grateful thanks to the members of Chatham Naval Officers Association for your generous donation to the Hospital upon the occasion of your Easter Luncheon.

Your gift was most welcome and very much helps us deliver a long tradition of welfare and support for Veteran Pensioners.

Please convey our sincere thanks you your fellow officers for their continued support.

Yours Aye,

Stephen G Small
Lt Cdr. (SCC) Royal Naval Reserve
Chairman of Governors

Russian \$100B Investment

If anyone was in doubt that Russia is rearming, the announcement that the country investing a staggering US\$100.8 billion in new warships confirms it. With this vast sum, President Vladimir Putin has financed the construction of Russian warships through to 2050, along with the modernisation of existing vessels in the fleet.

At a meeting held in the Kremlin, the President stated: "Our vessels must be able to effectively fulfil the entire range of tasks set for them now and in the future".

He also expressed the need for the Russian fleet to match any peer-level threat and to embrace new technologies in what he called a vigorous technological and digital revolution, robotisation and the widespread implementation of unmanned systems.

From Kaliningrad to Vladivostok, Russia's shipyards are engaged in the serial production of both surface ships and new missile submarines, including state-of-the-art Project Borei-A and Project Yasen-M vessels. Significant funds have been allocated for this," he added.

49 Ships

Over the past five years, 49 ships of varying classes have been built, and from 2020 to 2024, to date four Project Borei-A strategic submarines and four Project Yasen-M multipurpose submarines have been commissioned."

Testament to these ambitions is the recent commissioning of the submarine Perm, which is armed with Zircon hypersonic cruise missiles capable of hitting targets 1000 kilometres away at speeds around Mach 9.

The Zircon missile is a standout feature of the Yasen-M arsenal. Traveling at speeds up to approximately 7,000 miles per hour this hypersonic cruise missile is touted by Russian officials as a game-changer in naval warfare. Its ability to manoeuvre mid-flight and cover distances of around 620 miles complicates interception efforts by existing defence systems, according to military experts familiar with the technology.

The Yasen-M submarines, with their advanced sonar systems and low-magnetic steel hulls, are also engineered for stealth, enhancing their ability to operate undetected.

A broad narrative from the Russian government about strengthening its military in response to perceived threats from Western nations, particularly the United States and its NATO allies. The move marks a significant step in Russia's ongoing naval buildup, aimed at enhancing its maritime strength amid shifting global security dynamics.

Hypersonic Missiles

The strategic implications of these submarines extend beyond their technical specifications. The Borei-A class reinforces Russia's ability to project power globally through its nuclear arsenal, a capability that has long been a pillar of its deterrence strategy.

With the capacity to remain submerged for months and strike targets across continents, these submarines ensure a second-strike option in the event of a nuclear conflict.

The Yasen-M, by contrast, offers flexibility in conventional warfare, allowing Russia to target naval assets or coastal infrastructure with precision.

The inclusion of hypersonic missiles amplifies this threat, as it challenges the defensive planning of adversaries who rely on slower, more predictable missile systems.

Together, these platforms enhance Russia's ability to operate in contested waters, such as the Arctic or North Atlantic, where its navy has historically sought to assert influence.



CNOA Bursaries

The President, Chairman and Committee of CNOA are pleased to announce the establishment of a fund to provide CNOA Memorial Bursaries, in memory of Officers and Members of The Chatham Naval Officers Association who have crossed the bar.

The Bursaries have been co-founded and sponsored by Kent County Councillors Mr Alan Ridgers (CNOA Committee member) and Mr Jordan Meade, who have successfully recommended this scheme for a Kent County Council Community Grant and Dr Martin Watts (Hon Sec).

Cadets should apply on a single page A4 document, and include name, age, unit, unit contact details, course applied for, cost and amount applied for (up to £100). The application should also include reason(s) as to why CNOA should sponsor them, where possible written by the cadet, and always endorsed and signed by the unit CO. Example templates for these can be seen opposite.

For further information please visit the CNOA website

<https://cnoa.org.uk/CNOA-Bursaries/>



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE
WELLS
Kent, TN1 2PF

www.linktr.ee/tsbrilliant

President:
Commodore B Bryant CVO Royal Navy

01022 322000

Email:
admin@tsbrilliant.org.uk

Commanding Officer:
LT (SCC) M Vanns RNR

Date: xx xxx xxxx

CHATHAM NAVAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION BURSARY APPLICATION

Cadet Surname: xxxxx Cadet First Name: xxxxx
Cadet Rate: xxxxx Age: xx
Unit location: xxxxx Course: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Dear Chatham Naval Officers Association,

My name is xxxxxx and I am a member of *insert name organisation/unit here*. I am writing to request consideration for a bursary towards the cost of the above course. The total cost of the course is £xxx, excluding transport costs.

Attending this course will give me an opportunity to *expand my knowledge and understanding of how power vessels operate and how they navigate*. I will also gain knowledge on practical maritime engineering, catering and what to do in an emergency situation. *(Adapt opportunity description as required)*

During my specialisation training within Sea Cadets Marine Engineering is an area that I really enjoy and I am keen to progress in. So being on a working power vessel for a week will be an incredible experience. *(Adapt this as required to reflect what the applicant sees as the most important benefit to be gained from the course)*

I would greatly appreciate any assistance CNOA could provide and would be willing on my return to provide a written account of my experience or to give a short presentation to your members.

Yours aye,

Applicant name, rate and signature

CO Name, rank and signature

**Matthew Vanns, GCGI
Lieutenant (SCC) Royal Naval Reserve**

To Be Put On The Organisation/Unit Letterheaded Paper:

Date: xx/xx/xxxx

Cadet Surname: Cadet Forename: Cadet Rate/Rank:
Age: Unit Location: Course:

Dear Chatham Naval Officers Association,

Commanding Officer/Officer in Charge Endorsement:

Commanding Officer/OIC to write 2 or 3 sentences supporting the application and confirming the benefits of attending the course....

I fully support this application for a CNOA bursary and have no hesitation in recommending (name the applicant) for (name the course), in pursuit of personal and unit development.

Yours aye,

CO/OIC Signature, Name & Rank

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: _____

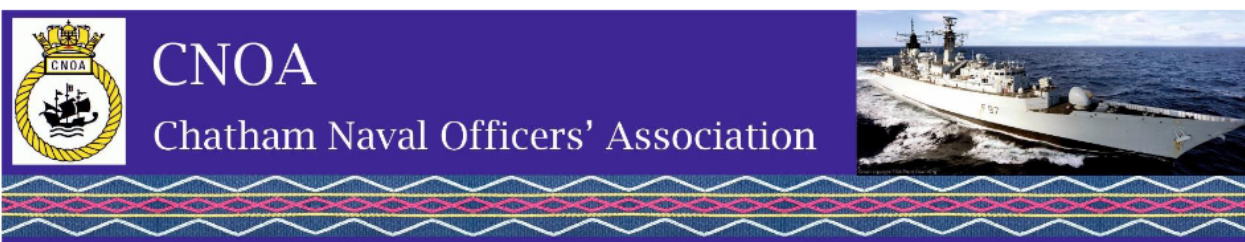
To my bank:

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	

Operation Dynamo



More than 70 Little Ships set sail from Kent to Dunkirk on the 21st May in honour of the 85th anniversary of Operation Dynamo.

Commemorative events, exhibitions, services and parades took place throughout Ramsgate over the following week.

The head of the Little Ship fleet is Brown Owl, where yachtsman Chris Cox helped with some of the helming duties.

He added: "As we go across the Channel, we've got to cross the traffic shipping lane, which is the busiest shipping lane in the world.

"It is going to be like riding a bicycle across a motorway. Depending on the day, with wind, waves and conditions, it should take us about seven hours."

Dozens of vessels, including The Medway Queen, arrived at the town with festivities ramping up over the weekend and beyond.

Some of the ships were more than 100 years old and all played a vital role in rescuing more than 330,000 Allied troops stranded on the beaches of Dunkirk in 1940.

Dr Edward Smalley, historian at the University of Kent, said: "It's a key moment in the Second World War. It keeps Britain in the war. "It allows them to rescue an army from the jaws of catastrophe.

"Even though France surrendered, Britain is able to keep its army, defend itself from invasion and then go back four years later and help liberate the continent."

Members of the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships (ADLS) have been making their way from all corners of the world for the event.

The event was supported by the Royal Temple Yacht Club, Ramsgate Tunnels, The Ramsgate Society, Ramsgate Town Council and many more.



Karen Cox, commodore of the yacht club, told KentOnline it had been around 10 years since the Little Ships had last arrived, due to the previous planned event being cancelled by Covid.

She also explained how it wasn't just civilian ships used in Operation Dynamo.

"There were 19 RNLI boats in total that were requisitioned by the Navy and went across," she said.

"Two of them were actually with their own crew, which was very unusual – and that was Ramsgate and Margate.

"In total, between the two of them, they saved 3,400 lives, which is an incredible feat."



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		



Midshipman Barney conducted a survey of CNOA members. Everything is shipshape he tells us.



"He was playing Rock 'n' Roll on his Boson's pipe – and swallowed it, Sir!"



CNOA
Chatham Naval Officers' Association

