

# FLAG HOIST

## The Chatham Naval Officers' Association Newsletter

Dear Members

Many thanks to all those that attended the AGM, what an excellent turn out, for those that did not attend the committee remains the same, see below. I have given notice that I won't stand another year as Chairman as I am now in my seventh and I am sure the CNOA will benefit from a fresh face with new ideas at the helm.

I want to thank the incredible Committee who all work so hard and are the pillar of our Association.

One action that did come from the AGM was to allow Peter Luxton a £250 budget that he can use without committee approval on supporting members welfare. This will enable he can act fast to help and keep any matters confidential between the member and himself.

We currently have four members that have not paid subs. Martin has sent reminders and zero payment by the 31<sup>st</sup> March will mean their membership will be terminated and they will need to reapply for membership should they wish.

**Please** can all members set up a standing order for January to reduce the committee workload in particulars Jan and Martin.

Please support our Easter lunch details enclosed with the hoist.

Book NOW please and enjoy the fellowship of YOUR Association

Yours Aye, Jon



*Lt Cdr Jon Vanns RNR*



**Sea Shanty  
and Maritime  
Folk Music  
Night**  
**Saturday 29th November 2025**  
6.30pm for 7.30pm start

To raise money for the  
Tunbridge Wells Sea Cadets

Drinks, bar snacks  
fantastic raffle

Venue: Masonic Hall, St Johns Road  
Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9UY

**Entrance: £15 per person**

**BACS: 20-88-13**

**63272567**

**Ref: SS2025**

email: [twsc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:twsc.treasurer@gmail.com)



*Swinging The Lead*



Resident Sea Shanty singers  
on The Cutty Sark at  
Greenwich

# Prince of Wales Departs

HMS **Prince of Wales** has left Portsmouth for time at sea ahead of a major deployment later this year.

The Royal Navy's flagship departed the Princess Royal Jetty just before 10am on the 24th February 2025, with the harbour temporarily closed to other shipping.

Police launches stood guard as tugs manoeuvred the carrier away from the wall before turning her bow towards the narrow harbour entrance, her stern facing Portsdown Hill.

## Spinnaker Tower

Loved ones gathered at the Tudor fortifications despite the grey, drizzly weather to wave the ship off as she made her way past the Spinnaker Tower and Gosport.

The carrier is expected to be at sea for several weeks, likely conducting work-up training ahead of Carrier Strike Group 25.

The operation will see HMS **Prince of Wales** lead a flotilla of ships, including a Norwegian vessel, to the Indo-Pacific region in what will be a major demonstration of Royal Navy capability and UK global presence.

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## Channel Dash Service - 12/2/2025

CNOA member, Clifford Mickleburgh, attended the Channel Dash Service at Ramsgate Harbour with about 180 members of the British Legion and their families, also a number from the 'Chain Gang'.

He writes...

*"We were well looked after by hospitality of the Queens Head Ramsgate Marina with Tea/Coffee and Bacon Butties. The weather was kind albeit there was a chilly North Easterly but it was dry and the skies were blue. The Padre carried out a very meaningful service –there were about twelve Standard Bearers."*

Turn to page 5 for more information on the Channel Dash Service and Wreath Laying...

## Peregrine RWUAS Deployed

The Peregrine Rotary Wing Uncrewed Air System (RWUAS) has been deployed from HMS **Lancaster** for the first time during live operations in the Middle East.

Operating from the flight deck of the frigate, which is engaged in a long-term maritime security mission in the region, Peregrine has been actively involved in patrolling the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Oman.

These efforts are focused on identifying smugglers and drug traffickers operating along the notorious 'Hash Highway.'

During its operational debut, the aircraft played a key role in locating and monitoring several small craft during board-and-search operations. As Royal Marines boarded suspect dhows, the drone provided intelligence that facilitated the seizure of illicit drugs and contraband.



Peregrine has conducted both day and night sorties, covering hundreds of square miles per mission while relaying live radar data and imagery directly to the operations room aboard HMS **Lancaster**.

The clarity of its imaging capabilities has proved highly useful. Remotely piloted from the ship, Peregrine is capable of flying missions lasting up to 5 hours at extended ranges beyond the horizon.

Peregrine enables HMS **Lancaster's** Wildcat helicopter to be preserved for interdiction and strike missions.

Additionally, team from 700X Naval Air Squadron embarked on the ship successfully operated Peregrine in tandem with the 815 Naval Air Squadron Wildcat to explore the advantages of both crewed and uncrewed aerial systems.

# Easter Lunch, 26th April 2025

Venue : Maidstone Masonic Centre  
 Courtenay Road, Maidstone, ME15 6EF

Time : 1200 for 1230

Dress: Gentlemen - Lounge Suit  
 Ladies - Cocktail dress

Cost: £35 per head

Applications (by 5th April 2025):

Email to Lt Cdr Andy Nailor at:

[andyandchris@gmail.com](mailto:andyandchris@gmail.com)

Or by post to :

Lt Cdr A Nailor  
 1 Farmcroft,  
 Woodland Park,  
 Gravesend,  
 Kent  
 DA11 7LT

Send via Bacs/electronic transfer to:

Sort Code 23 05 80  
 Account 50484076  
 marked with "Surname and Easter" please

## Menu

### Choice of Starters

- A) Avocado and Prawn Salad
- B) Carrot and Coriander Soup
- C) Pear Blue and walnut salad

### Choice of Main Course

- D) Chicken breast, mozzarella and sun dried tomato wrapped in pancetta
- E) Roast Beef, with Yorkshire pudding
- F) Goats cheese, balsamic onion and mushroom wellington

### Choice of Pudding

- G) Apple & Blackberry crumble with custard
- H) Chocolate Tart with orange compote
- I) Eaton Mess

*Wine: personal orders from the bar*

*Followed by coffee & mints, and raffle*

Chatham Naval Officers' Easter Lunch			
	Starter	Main	Pudding
<b>Example</b>			
<i>Jack Frost</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>H</i>
<b>MEMBER'S Name</b>			
<b>GUEST's Name(s)</b>			

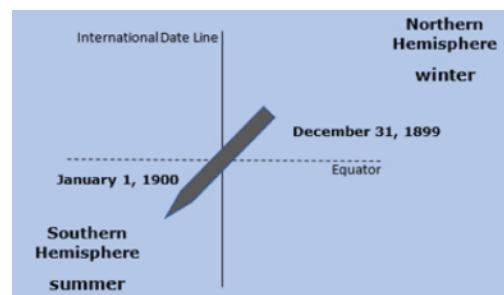
# The Navigational Coup Of A Lifetime

The SS **Warrimoo** was a 345-foot passenger ship launched in England in 1892. It had 32 passengers and was cruising from Vancouver, Canada, to Sydney, Australia. The weather was calm and clear on the night of December 31, 1899. Capt. John Phillips was on the bridge when the navigator completed a star fix and presented the figures, including the LOP—Line of Position—to the ship's master. The **Warrimoo's** position was Lat: 0o31'N and Long 179o30'W. First Mate Payton broke in to point out that they were only a few miles from the point of intersection of the Equator and the International Date Line.

Captain Phillips was clever enough to take full opportunity of the opportunity this presented and called his navigators together to check and double check their position as he manoeuvred the vessel to achieve the navigational freak of a lifetime.

Once he completed the course changes he showed the others how the fore of the ship was in the Southern Hemisphere and the middle of summer, while the aft was in the Northern Hemisphere and in the middle of winter. The date in the aft section of the ship was December 31, 1899, while in the forward section it was January 1, 1900. There were no celebrations in the aft where the ballroom held parties. That section missed New Year's altogether. It was indeed a "one for the books" maritime success. The captain and his crew set an astounding world record that has never been broken. They were in two different days, months, seasons, years and centuries, all at the same time.

Although Capt. Phillips and his crew completed what some call, "the navigational coup of a lifetime," they never received any credit until more than 40 years later. The captain wasn't a braggart and never notified the newspapers of his accomplishment. In 1942, a Canadian reporter doing research on "shellbacks," the name given to US Navy seamen and civilians who cross the equator, came across a tiny story in an early Australian newspaper about the **Warrimoo's** "strange" experience. In 1953, writer John Fuller popularised the story by writing more about it in 'Ships and the Sea' Magazine. As word got out and the feat gained more publicity, some



people started to question the story. The navigational instruments used in those days were described as not accurate enough to support the captain's claims. They thought it foolish to deal with imaginary lines.

Others disagreed and held that the perfect weather, accompanied by calm seas, created just the right scenario for locating and holding the LOP while idling the engine at just the right spot. They added that this wasn't a difficult manoeuvre for a captain and navigator who between them had 50 years of experience at sea. This was an opportunity of a lifetime that neither one was going to let pass.

Just think of the hype this story would receive in today's worldwide news! Social media would have a field day and all the armchair navigators and captains would expound endless theories.

Whether Captain Philips did achieve the freak of the century or not, it makes for a good story and, no doubt a master mariner in the future will attempt the feat again as he or she sails towards the intersection of the Equator and the International Date Line on December 31 2099.

## So what happened to the SS Warrimoo?

Unfortunately, it became a victim of "friendly fire" during World War I when it was in a convoy transporting British troops from Bizerta, Tunisia, to Marseille, France. In May, 1918, she sank off the coast of Tunisia, North Africa, 12 miles southwest of La Galite Island after colliding with the French destroyer Catapulte. (Latin, French for "war machine for throwing"). During the collision, the Allied warship's depth charges broke free and blew out the bottom plates of both vessels. Some lives were lost as the ships settled in deep waters.

# Channel Dash - Remembrance

In commemoration of the lives sacrificed during  
'Operation Fuller' on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1942

*"A handful of ancient planes piloted by  
men whose bravery surpasses  
any other action that day"*  
German Admiral Otto Cilliax

The Channel Dash Memorial commemorates 'Operation Fuller' that took place on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1942 targeting the German battleships **Scharnhorst** and **Gneisenau**, supported by the cruiser **Prinz Eugen**. It was suspected they might break out of Brest harbour and attempt to force a passage through the Channel Straits.

On the morning of 12<sup>th</sup> February, the German flotilla having left Brest harbour was sighted close to the French coast. Protected by destroyers, E-Boats, minesweepers, and extensive air cover of over 250 Luftwaffe aircraft, the battleships provided formidable targets.

At 12.25, the six Fairey Swordfish took off from RAF Manston and circled Ramsgate awaiting the five Spitfire squadrons promised as escorts.

In the event only ten Spitfires arrived as support, and as time was running short Lt Cdr Esmonde dived his aircraft to 50 feet above sea level and led his squadron out across the Channel to attack the German battleships.



All six Fairey Swordfish aircraft were destroyed.

The heroic attack was over. As the last of the Fairey Swordfish Torpedo planes blew up and splashed into the sea and the German fighters resumed their patrol, it was 12.45. The squadron had only taken off from RAF Manston twenty minutes earlier.

Of the 5 survivors, only Edgar Lee was not wounded although the wound of Donald Dance was slight. Pat Kingsmill and Mac Samples had serious leg injuries. Brian Rose had back injuries but after some months was fit for duty. However, he died in his aircraft only 2 years later.

The surviving Officers were made Companions of the Distinguished Service Order [DSO] and Don Dance received the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal [CGM]. The 12 others who lost their lives received posthumous Mentions in Dispatches. Had they survived there is little doubt that they would all have been similarly decorated for gallantry in the face of the enemy, however at the time, posthumous Mention in Dispatches was the only recognition for bravery that could be given after death, other than the Victoria Cross [VC]. Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Eugene Esmond DSO, received a posthumous VC – incredibly, the second VC to be won by his immediate family.

The body of Lt Williams was recovered from the sea, taken to RAF Manston and buried in Aylesham Cemetery, near Dover, Kent. The body of PO Clinton also recovered from the sea was returned to his home in Ruislip, Middlesex, where he was buried with full military honours in St Martin's Church Cemetery. Lt Cdr Esmond's body was recovered from the River Medway at Gillingham, Kent, having drifted from near Calais. He was buried on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1942 in grave No 187 of the RC Section, Naval Reservation, Woodland Cemetery, Gillingham, Kent with full military honours.

Nearly two weeks later, the body of Leading Airman W G Smith was found on Upchurch Marshes, close to Gillingham, Kent.

/cont...

Naval authorities would not allow his widow to have his body for burial at his home town Poplar, East London, and he was buried at a private ceremony in grave No 1393 in the same Woodlands Cemetery Naval Reservation, 40 yards from his Commanding Officer

On 11<sup>th</sup> February 1942, the ships left Brest at 22.45. [German time] and escaped detection for more than twelve hours, approaching the Strait of Dover without discovery.

### *Operation Thunderbolt*

The *Luftwaffe* provided air cover in Unternehmen Donnerkeil [Operation Thunderbolt] and as the ships neared Dover, the British belatedly responded. Attacks by the RAF, Fleet Air Arm, Navy and bombardments by coastal artillery were costly

failures but **Scharnhorst** and **Gneisenau** were damaged by mines **Scharnhorst** was out of action for a year.

By 13<sup>th</sup> February, the ships had reached German ports; Winston Churchill ordered an inquiry into the debacle and *The Times* denounced the British fiasco.

The *Kriegsmarine* judged the operation a tactical success and a strategic failure because the threat to Atlantic convoys had been sacrificed for a hypothetical threat to Norway.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> February, **Prinz Eugen** was torpedoed off Norway and after being repaired, spent the rest of the war in the Baltic. **Gneisenau** went into dry dock and was bombed on the night of 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> February, never to sail again; **Scharnhorst** was sunk at the Battle of the North Cape on 26/12/1943.



“Operation Cerberus – The Channel Dash” by Philip E. West – Reproduced with permission from SWA Fine Art Publishers. Here we see the Swordfish flown by Sub. Lt. Kingsmill and Sub. Lt. Samples with PO Bunce in the rear, fighting for their lives with his machine gun.

### Conference of Naval Associations (CONA)

A CNOA member has been invited to attend the next CONA event on the 28th March 2025.

It will be in Pompey's historic dockyard at the Princess Royal Gallery, including a key presentation from Rear Admiral Judith Helen Terry CB OBE, Director People & Training, a free sandwich lunch and refreshments, enjoyable networking, naval charity stands, and a valuable two-way feedback and discussion session in the afternoon.

Coffee is from 1000, starting at 1030 and finishing around 1530-1600. Rig is personal choice - some wear association branded polo shirts, others a blazer and tie.

If you would like to represent the CNOA, or have any other questions, please contact the Hon Sec, Martin Watts, via [contact@cnoa.org.uk](mailto:contact@cnoa.org.uk)

**CHATHAM NAVAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**



**Joining Fee and Annual Subscription**

**With effect from 20<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> July, and then will be renewed by Standing Order from the following 1<sup>st</sup> January.**

**New members who join after 1<sup>st</sup> July will be required to submit a Standing order from the following 1<sup>st</sup> 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto: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: \_\_\_\_\_

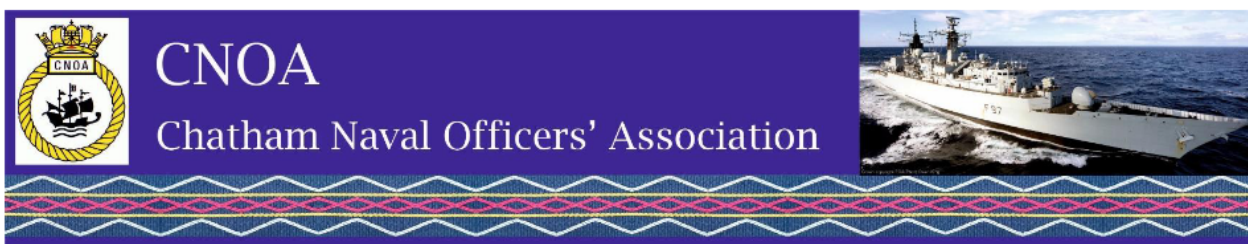
To my bank:

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](http://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><b>General Data Protection Regulation:</b> 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><b>SIGNED</b>.....</p>				
PRESENT OCCUPATION				
PROPOSER'S NAME	PROPOSER'S SIGNATURE		HOW LONG KNOWN	
SECONDER'S NAME	SECONDER'S SIGNATURE		HOW LONG KNOWN	

### CNOA Events Programme 2025

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	<i>"Eat Your Carrots!"</i> 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		

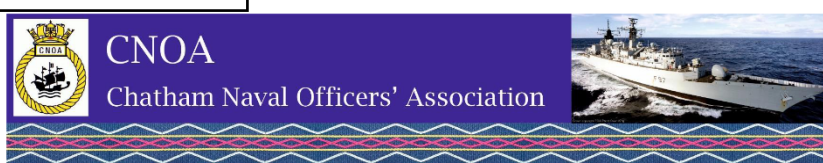
**CNOA ONLINE**



The CNOA website has now been updated for 2025. Why not take a look for yourself?

[www.cnoa.org.uk](http://www.cnoa.org.uk)

Please do send suggestions for future development or content to the CNOA webmaster, via [mr.guy.bartlett@gmail.com](mailto:mr.guy.bartlett@gmail.com)



# The Association of Dunkirk Little Ships



## COMMEMORATIVE RETURN TO DUNKIRK

21-26<sup>TH</sup>, MAY 2025

### INTRODUCTION

The Association of Dunkirk Little Ships (ADLS) is making preparations for its five yearly return to Dunkirk in 2025 to mark the 85th anniversary of Operation Dynamo.

The operation to evacuate the BEF, together with French and Belgian troops started at 18:57 on 26th May 1940 and finished on the morning of 4th June. Winston Churchill expected the operation to lift 30-40,000 personnel. In the end 338,226 were rescued, including 130,000 French and Belgian soldiers. Of the total, just short of 100,000 were rescued from the beaches to the east of the port of Dunkirk by the Little Ships picking them from the beach and ferrying them to the larger vessels just offshore.

### THE COMMEMORATIVE RETURN

The Little Ships will assemble from around Europe in Ramsgate harbour in the week beginning 19th May. It is planned that they will be joined by vessels from the Royal Navy and the Ramsgate RNLI lifeboat. The town of Ramsgate will be supporting the ADLS with a number of commemorative events on 20<sup>th</sup> May.

The ADLS plan to depart in the early morning of 21<sup>st</sup> May if the weather is suitable. In case the weather is unsuitable there are two fall back days on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May. The Little Ships are expected to arrive in Dunkirk in late afternoon. The fleet will proceed into the centre of town and moor together in the Basin du Commerce.

The City of Dunkirk will be laying on a number of commemorative events in the town centre as well as the war memorial on the beach. The ADLS will attend the British Commonwealth War Graves cemetery in Dunkirk. There will also be a short open air service on the quayside on 25th May. The ADLS fleet intend to return to Ramsgate on 26th May.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit the ADLS website [www.adls.org.uk](http://www.adls.org.uk)

Visit the ADLS Facebook page [https://www.facebook.com/DunkirkShips/?locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/DunkirkShips/?locale=en_GB)

# **THE MARINE SOCIETY AND SEA CADETS**

Invite you to the

## **KENT BRANCH FUNDRAISING DINNER**

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025

1900 for 1930

**Maidstone Masonic Centre**

Courtney Road Maidstone ME15 6LF

Tel: 01622 678336

**Dress:** Mess Dress (2Bs) Dinner Jacket, Evening wear or lounge suit

**£38.00 per Person**

Cheques payable to MSSC (Kent Branch) by 9<sup>th</sup> May

and sent to: Peter Luxton

16 Denbigh Avenue Rainham Gillingham Kent. ME8 7EU

Or by Bank Transfer to MSSC Account 00423750 Sort Code 56-00-27

Reference "Dinner & Name"

If you have one please bring a memento from WW2 as a talking point for your table  
(No Live ammo please)

Raffle prizes would be most welcome

**MSSC**  
MARINE SOCIETY & SEA CADETS



## KENT BRANCH OF THE MARINE SOCIETY AND SEA CADETS

### KENT BRANCH FUNDRAISING DINNER

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025

#### First Course

1	Pear, blue cheese and walnut salad (V)
2	Smoked Salmon Beetroot & Horse Radish Creme
3	Chicken Liver Pate with Apple & Walnut Chutney

#### Main Course

4	Roast Sirloin of Beef with Yorkshire pudding
5	Duck with red current jus
6	Goats Cheese Balsamic Onion and Mushroom Wellington (V)

#### Dessert

7	Salted Caramel Cheese Cake
8	Baileys Profiteroles with Caramel Sauce
9	Apple & blackberry crumble with custard

Coffee and mints

**£38.00 per person**

Please indicate any dietary requirements – Nuts Dairy etc

