

# FLAG HOIST

*The Chatham Naval Officers' Association Newsletter*

Dear Members

It's been a sad leave period with the loss of two CNOA members who attended most functions and offered great support.

Lt Cdr Roy Standen RNR and Major David Hough RE. I want to thank the many CNOA members that turned up to Roy's funeral.

The attendance shows how Roy affected so many lives and worked so hard for the organisations he belonged to. David, we sadly learnt about several weeks after his death and knew nothing of his funeral arrangements.

It's time to check your calendars and make the necessary planning please :

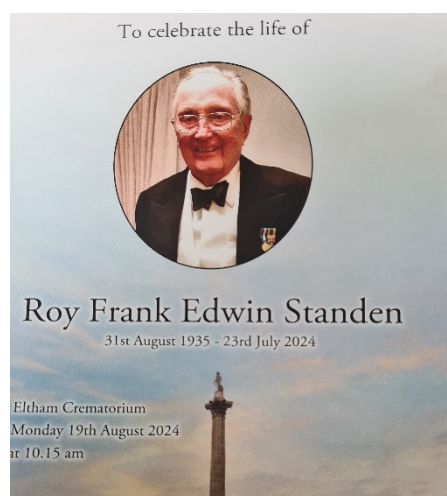
**13th September** is a social which you can bring guests, we do however need a full list of those attending and car details Cut off 5th Sept.

**25th October** is Trafalgar dinner please support this event and return your applications now to aid the committee to plan. Cut off 1st Oct.

We also have a Burns Night on **24th Jan 2025** details to follow.



*Lt Cdr Jon Vanns RNR*



We value our use of RSME very much and after the terrible attack on Lt Col Mark Teeton we have reviewed our own security.

A reminder that members and any guest must always carry HMG approved photo ID.

Cut off for event attendance is strictly complied with to allow members lists to be passed to RSME in time to be checked and passed to the main gate.

Any guests to events must be well known to members and escorted whilst in the barracks. ID passes issued by the gate must be carried in person and returned when leaving the barracks.

Below is Roy's entry in the CNOA members book.

**Roy F E Standen**

I was born at Blackdale farm near Dartford in Kent in 1935 and for most of my school years lived in Bexley where, during the War years, I attended the local schools. As a young boy, I was given an opportunity to raise funds for prisoners of war and received a letter of thanks from the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St Johns Fund.

In 1949 I joined the Sea Cadet Corps and have been a member to this day. After my Cadet teen age years and returning from National Service I became an instructor with an Officer appointment, I then served as a unit Commanding officer for 10 years and was Promoted to Lt Cdr (SCC) RNR in 1968, following this I joined the Staff as District Training Officer, following which I served 12 years as District Officer West Kent. After this time I was appointed to the post of OIC Potential officers Training course at HMS Sultan which I did until retirement from the uniformed staff in 2003. For 23 years I organised the Southern Area Sea Cadet Sail Training Week until retirement.

At 16 I became an apprentice with the firm of J & E Hall Ltd and qualified as a Toolmaker endorsed draughtsman at the age of 21. The company sent me on a training course to the Outward Bound Sea School in Aberdovey, where I was fortunate enough to have sea training under Captain Dove from Shell Mex of the River Plate fame.

Called for National Service in the Royal Navy in 1956 I served as an Ordnance Artificer. After completing basic training in HMS Excellent and the leadership course in HMS Royal Arthur I served at sea in HMS Explorer, HMS Adamant and HMS Undaunted following which I served 6 years in the Royal Naval Special Reserve.

After National Service I returned to my old firm and progressed my career within the Lift department, which was taken over in 1968 by Otis Ltd. where I held positions of Sales Manager, Service Manager and General Manager West London eventually becoming Director of Major Accounts. During this time for 16 years I ran the Company UK sailing team on a voluntary basis until the year 2000. I also became a voluntary School Governor responsible for finance. I am now retired from full time employment.

In 1986, I joined the Rotary Club of London (the first club to be chartered outside of the United States) where I was elected President in 2001.

Currently I am Chairman of the Kent Branch Marine Society and Sea Cadets, Secretary of the Chatham Naval Officers Association, a member of The London Flotilla, The Royal Naval Sailing Association, The Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association, the care for St Ann's Church committee Lime House, the Orpington Sketch club, and a Vice President of the West Kent Sea Cadet sports Committee.

My hobbies apart from Rotary, MSSC and CNOA are Oil and Watercolour painting, the German Language, collecting coins, gardening and DIY.



## Royal Navy watches Chinese warships travelling through UK waters

Two Chinese warships have travelled through UK waters closely watched by a British frigate in a rare transit, the Royal Navy has revealed.

The Royal Navy says it is not common for Chinese ships to transit through UK waters under the eye of the British and the last time it happened was in 2019.

### *Close Watch*

HMS Richmond kept a "close watch" on the Chinese Navy task group as it passed the UK twice in three weeks, travelling to and from Russia.

Monitoring foreign warships is a routine operation for the navy but it is far more common for the Ministry of Defence to publicise the tracking of Russian ships rather than vessels deployed by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (Navy).

Armed Forces minister Luke Pollard said: "These escorts are a clear demonstration of how the Royal Navy continues to protect the sovereignty of UK waters.

"Working closely with our allies to support Euro-Atlantic security is a top priority for this government.

"I thank the crew of HMS Richmond for conducting a safe and professional transit and all they do in keeping our nation secure at home and strong abroad."

The British warship monitored China's Jiaozuo, a 7,500-tonne destroyer, and Honghu, a 23,400-tonne supply ship, as they made their journey back and forth through the North Sea and into the Channel.

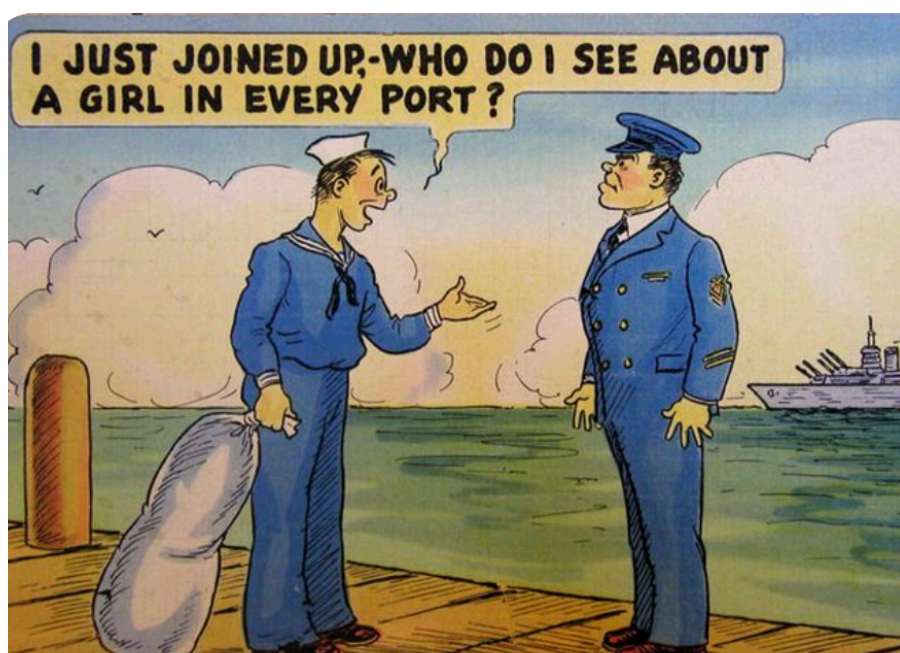
A French warship and a patrol ship from the Belgian navy also shared the task of watching the Chinese vessels.

HMS Richmond's commanding officer, Commander Richard Kemp, said: "By maintaining a visible and persistent presence, the Royal Navy demonstrates our commitment to the NATO alliance and in maintaining maritime security which is crucial to our national interests."



### **TRAFALGAR DINNER**

Members are reminded that places for the Trafalgar Night dinner are limited. Those wishing to attend should return the relevant paperwork as soon as possible.



## End In Sight for Royal Navy Submarine Problems?

Of the RN's six attack submarines (SSNs) currently in commission, only one has been to sea in the last 3 months. HMS Ambush has been alongside in Faslane for two years with HMS Artful last going to sea more than 15 months ago. Some work has begun on HMS Audacious but she has now been in Devonport for 16 months awaiting a dry dock to become available. HMS Astute conducted patrols in 2023 but has not been to sea for 7 months.

Brand new HMS Anson completed sea trials and successful test-firings of both Spearfish and Tomahawk missiles at the Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Centre (AUTEC) in the Bahamas between March – April this year but has not been to sea since her return. Astute boat 6, HMS Agamemnon was formally named in April and she is expected to be rolled out of the construction hall soon and be put in the water to begin the test and commissioning phase.

By the time the last boat is delivered, the Astute class programme will have cost over £10Bn in construction costs alone.

While they are fine boats, their maintenance demands appear to be high with not enough attention paid to through-life sustainment during their design. This has been compounded by a lack of foresight and investment in submarine support infrastructure.

The underlying cause of this very serious constraint on the Submarine operations is the lack of docks to conduct underwater maintenance and validation work. Of most immediate impact was the sudden unavailability of the shiplift at Faslane.

This was because the steel hoist ropes used to raise and lower the platform supporting the submarine failed a certification inspection.



The original manufacturer that supplied the ropes when the shiplift was constructed in 1993 had gone out of business and it took time to find an alternative supplier of these safety-critical specialist parts.

The shiplift was out of action for just over a year but has now been returned to service. With no alternative dry docks available, this created a backlog, upsetting the delicately balanced submarine maintenance schedules with Vanguard boats always having priority.

In Devonport, the work to convert number 15 dry dock from supporting Trafalgar-class to Astute-class boats has been ongoing for more than 18 months and it is hard to understand why this has taken so long. In the long run, RN submarines are set to benefit from far better infrastructure as work is now underway to make 10 Dock at Devonport into a modern facility for SSN and SSBN maintenance.

The MoD has also initiated the Additional Fleet Time Docking Capability (AFTDC) programme to acquire two floating docks and associated infrastructure at Faslane.

Despite her age, HMS Triumph has been the most active operational boat in the fleet this year, likely having been involved in tracking Russian submarines detected off the Irish coast in the spring. She arrived in Gibraltar on 21st June with some assuming she might be deployed to the eastern Mediterranean. Instead, she was observed offloading weapons and returned to Devonport in early July amid speculation she would be paying off for good. However, the RN has confirmed HMS Triumph will remain in commission for the rest of this year at least.



## **Twenty years ago, flash floods devastated the north coast of Cornwall – sweeping through the villages of Boscastle and Crackington Haven with terrifying force**

A wall of water surged down the steep valley at Boscastle, after a blocked bridge collapsed, and smashed into the village, shattering windows uprooting trees and washing cars into the sea.

The Met Office reported three inches of rain in two hours during the afternoon on Monday, August 16, 2004.

Around 120 people were airlifted from damaged buildings and stranded vehicles – and it was testament to the steady professionalism of the helicopter crews and wider emergency services that no one was killed.

Three helicopters from the Royal Navy, three from the RAF, a coastguard aircraft from Portland and two civilian air ambulances from Liskeard were all involved in rescues.

### *Royal Navy First On The Scene*

The Royal Navy spoke to one of those first on scene, Lieutenant Commander Martin 'Florry' Ford, who said:  
"Boscastle should have been relatively easy, but circumstances made it extremely difficult.

"I am still amazed there were no fatalities. When you consider there were 50 or 60 cars washed out to sea - you only needed one family to stay in their car because of the rain, and that would have been it."



Lt Cdr Ford was the observer in the duty search and rescue Sea King helicopter of 771 Naval Air Squadron.

It is the same helicopter which today stands proudly beside the fence at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose at Helston.

His pilots were Lieutenant Mike Scott and Captain (Royal Marines) Pete McLelland, and the aircrewman was Warrant Officer Bob Yeomans.

Lt Cdr Ford said they arrived off the coastal village of Boscastle in the midst of a ferocious downpour.

"We were sat outside over the sea, as visibility was terrible, and we were hit by a microburst," he said. "The rain was that heavy it was like a waterfall running off the rotor blades all around us."

"We were having to bail out the aircraft with our helmets. It was that serious that I remember Pete McLelland said to us: 'Look boys, remind yourselves of the exits'."



He said the deluge shorted out the helicopter's communications, so the pilots and rear crew had to communicate using hand signals.

"We then went in, and I can only describe it as what a tsunami would be like. There were cars, debris, Winnebagos and houses going past - all these cars – literally dozens of cars coming down the valley in the water," he said.

"We started getting intermittent 'comms' and I remember hearing the order 'save who you can'. It made the hairs on the back of my neck come up."

Positioned at the aircraft's side door, Lt Cdr Ford surveyed the destruction below while Warrant Officer Yeomans prepared to go down on the winchline.

"We could see people on rooftops," added Lt Cdr Ford. "One family had broken through their roof. We started moving up through the village, picking people up. I'd see the next group and direct the pilots.

"On top of the visitors' centre, there were four or five children, and Bob started bringing them up one by one. When they got inside the aircraft and I

was taking them off the strop, I remember they all had huge grins.

"We sat them on the floor, and we were just piling people in. We carried on until we ran out of fuel. We dropped off the survivors at a playing field, where there were people to look after them, and we flew to St Mawgan to refuel.

"You've got to remember that this was bigger than just Boscastle. There was a 100-square miles affected.

Lt Cdr Ford joined the Royal Navy in 1979 and by the 80s had trained as a helicopter aircrewman and then as an observer.

In the First Gulf War of 1991, he spent an intense six weeks commanding a Lynx attack helicopter of 815 Naval Air Squadron, embarked on destroyer HMS Gloucester.



Between 2003 and 2016, he served at both RNAS Culdrose and HMS Gannet in Scotland, in search and rescue (SAR) and took part in more than 1,100 operations.

In SAR, the enemy is the weather," he added. "It's harder to make decisions in SAR than it is when you're being shot at. If you turn the aircraft away in conflict, you are saving yourself. If you turn away in SAR, it's someone else's life in danger."



## Programme for 2024

DATE	SPEAKER/ ACTIVITY	SUBJECT	COMMENT
12 January	Martin Watts	Otaki	Virtual meeting
9 February	AGM		
8 March	John de Rose	Merchant Ships of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	
12 April	Peter Gilbert	South Georgia	
10 May	James Morgan	Maintaining Historic Ships	James is the Ship Manager at Chatham Historic Dockyard
14 June	Matthew Scott	Policing in Kent	Matthew is the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner
5 July	Adam Taylor	The Defence of Sheppey	Note earlier date for meeting
August	No meeting. Summer Leave.		
13 September	Social evening		
25 October	Trafalgar Dinner, RSME		
8 November	Glen Jones	The Two Battles of El Teb 1884	
13 December	President's Christmas Social		



**CNOA**  
Chatham Naval Officers' Association



## 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



**CNOA**  
Chatham Naval Officers' Association



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	