



Newsletter – Volume 3 - No 5 – March 2010.

**Opening Comment:** - Barbara and I had a good weekend in Torquay from Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February, spent in the company of the ‘South West Area St Vincent Old Boy’s Group’. Incidentally during the Saturday coach trip, we made a short stop at Widecombe, found it fascinating! This weekend invariably provides a good time for all, but this year everyone was wondering how it would go, following the loss of Bryan Jervis, their organiser, just days after the 2009 event. As it turned out, there was no need to have worried because ‘all went well’; however, there is no doubt but that if it had not been for Bryan, these yearly reunions would never have taken shape; may God go with you Bryan!

**Terry.**

**Chairman’s Corner:** - Hello Shipmates. I feel sure that members of the 1950/52 commission remember well the day, April 12<sup>th</sup>, when Ceylon slipped from alongside King George V and made her way out of Portsmouth; final destination East Indies. Little did we know that we would end up with the Far East Fleet, no thanks to Kim Il Sung; where have those sixty years gone?

Our annual reunion is but a few short weeks away and I am hoping that those intending to come along have made their bookings. We are hoping for a good turn out as it is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the association and much water has passed under the keel since the original few met at Butlins in Bognor Regis for the first time. Unfortunately, some of those people are no longer with us!

On the 10<sup>th</sup> February, some of the committee held a meeting at the Maritime Club in Queen Street Portsmouth and after about an hours discussion, we headed home feeling quite pleased with what had been accomplished; we are keeping our fingers crossed that all goes according to plan!

Sadly two members recently ‘crossed the bar’ and on behalf of the association, letters of condolences have gone out to Olive MacGregor and Barbara Jenner.

Doubtless you are all pleased that we have seen the last of the snow; I certainly was as I was unable to get the car out for a week due to the fact I had 12 inches of the white stuff clogging my 120 ft drive. Over a period of three days I spent a great deal of time shovelling this stuff away; it was important that this was done as we were due to attend a funeral at he end of the week. What happened then, I looked out the window on the Thursday morning and there was another 2 inch layer! On the road outside, a snow plough had also deposited an 18 inch ridge of frozen snow; more shovelling which left me feeling a bit like a stoker on an oil-burner.

Do you recall that I mentioned sometime ago that the Newfoundland Association had held their final reunion? Well I don’t know what is going on, but I have just read in the Navy

News that they are having a reunion in May!! That's all for now, see you at the reunion.

**John.**

**Secretary's Piece:** - **April's reunion** - The rooms will generally be available from 2.p.m. Breakfast will be served from 0700 until 1000 and dinner will be served from 1900. For the toasts on the Saturday evening 'Gala' dinner, sparkling wine will be served, at a cost to the association. The bookings appear to be going well, in fact there are only a few rooms still available, so anyone leaving it until the last moment might well find a 'booked-out' situation; if you do not want to be disappointed, do please get in touch with the hotel as soon as possible

"Guided Walking Tour of Chester". - We can take up this offer, *if* it is well enough supported; up to 25 people at a cost of £4: 00 per head. The tour takes about one and a half hours and would start from the Town Hall. There will not be any organised transport from the hotel, but if 4 people share a taxi this will not be a major expense. The tour would commence at 11 o'clock allowing plenty of time to get to the start; if preferred, you would be able to go by bus. Any takers please confirm to Tony Mendoza

This will be on a first come first served basis! Send no money now and please note that it will not go ahead if it not well enough supported.

**Tony M.**

*(There is a small map of the hotel's area on page 4).*

**Surfer's Section:** - Things in this department have been very quiet, with no enquiries at all! Maybe there will something of interest to report next newsletter?

**Regards Ron.**

**Sick List:** - The following message was received from Vic Steeple on the 8<sup>th</sup> January and my immediate reaction was "**Ouch & Double Ouch**", making me realise that that I am indeed most fortunate; his mishap made it three people whom I knew, that in the same week had suffered similarly! "*Just been discharged from hospital this morning! I fell on the ice 23<sup>rd</sup> December and broke my left femur very badly. Never knew that pain could be so severe - they dosed me up with morphine for a couple of days until I told them to ease off. I'm resting at my son's place on Romney Marsh until able to take care of myself. The femur has been screwed together with a huge chunk of metal and I'm now learning to walk again*".

**Vic Steeple.**

**Crossed The Bar:** -

1. **Alan McGregor – QMS R.M.s - CHX 4852. 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 1928 - 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2010.**  
**Alan McGregor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commission, Cpl & Sgt R.M Detachment.**

In the New Year, Olive McGregor informed us of the sad news that Alan had died of Mesothelioma on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

Alan joined the Royal Marines at Deal on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1946, Squad 467 and was awarded the King's Badge as best recruit of that squad on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 1947. From there he went to Command School, with this followed by a spell at Eastney Gunnery School where he won a distinction. In February 1948, he was drafted to Duke of York and promoted Corporal on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 1949, then later in May he attended a Junior NCO's course at RMB Plymouth.

Alan served with distinction in Ceylon during the second commission as both a Corporal and Sergeant in the RM Detachment. His connection to the ship commenced on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1949 by going to Chatham as part of the unit to be trained for service in the Ceylon for her forthcoming Foreign Commission in the East Indies; the detachment joined Ceylon in Portsmouth on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1950. He was involved in the many landings in which the ship's Marines were involved, with one landing of particular note on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 1951. During a landing on the 30<sup>th</sup> at a place called Chonidong, near Choppeki Point, he and a number of his fellow marines were wounded. This patrol had been an exceptionally busy one

for the ship, in fact during one 48 hour period she fired some 805 rounds of 6” as well as numerous rounds of 4” and close range! On the 14<sup>th</sup> March 1952, Alan was promoted Sergeant, a well deserved move.

On return to the UK in August 1952 and after a lengthy ‘foreign service leave’, he served as a Seamanship Instructor in Jamaica, Cleopatra and at Eastney Amphibious School, from November that year until March 1954, then moved on to the RM Amphibious School at Poole. This was followed by a stint with ‘Royal Prince – Rhine Squadron’ until 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1956 when he returned to the Poole Depot, then subsequently returned to Eastney Gunnery School on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 1957. On 30<sup>th</sup> April 1957 Alan joined Gambia until 5<sup>th</sup> November 1958, then Vanguard where he was promoted C/Sgt on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 1959. On the 8<sup>th</sup> June 1960 he went to Sheffield (Bellerophon) until 18<sup>th</sup> July 1961, then returned once more to Eastney. Shortly afterwards on the 15<sup>th</sup> August, he joined 45 RM Cdo and was promoted to QMS on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of that month. In April 1966, Alan moved to RMFVR Tyne where he finished his rather outstanding career, before moving for the last time to RMB Eastney at the end of 1968 for discharge on the 31<sup>st</sup> December.

2. **Harry Jenner, PO RP2, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commission.** Harry departed this life on the 14<sup>th</sup> January this year, with his funeral held on the 29<sup>th</sup> of the month. His latter years were tragically marred by dementia, the start of which coincided with his undergoing heart surgery. He was a much respected husband and father, and on marrying Barbara on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 1956, there followed 53 years of life together.

Harry was a man well respected in all his duties within the Royal Navy; for instance during his time in Ceylon where he spent a lot of time in ‘Radar Plot’, he was sufficiently competent and well enough thought of by the officer in charge of his department, for him to allow Harry ‘free-rein’ on the many occasions that ‘Plot’ was needed!

Harry’s next ship after return to England at the end of the second commission was Bigbury Bay. In 1954 when she visited Punta Arenas in Chile, he went ashore to a dance given by the people there. Among the hosts was a young lady of Scottish descent called Barbara and they initially met when Harry clumsily stepped on Barbara’s toe! Later while dancing with the lady who had organised this dance, she said Harry should perhaps dance with the girl on whose toes he had trodden; such is fate!

After the ship sailed from Chile, Harry and Barbara maintained contact by letter for two years, then on her return to England they married on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 1956.

The following year Harry went to St Vincent as an instructor and here apparently excelled himself. One of the ‘boys’ he instructed was a chap called David Yeomans and here are David’s own words about Harry: - *“I joined the Royal Navy at 15 years of age, very immature, never having left home before and Petty Officer Jenner was my class instructor. I never ever called him Harry, or even PO, in HMS St Vincent all Instructors were called ‘Sir’. Under his guidance, the year I spent there was far from unhappy. His attitude to his role as an Instructor was **plenty of carrot and very little stick**. Always firm, always fair, he rarely shouted during instruction. I knew that if I had a problem, he out of all the instructors, was the best one to go to”*.

Towards the end of his career in the Royal Navy, Harry went into ‘recruitment’ in Northampton, following this period by going into ‘resettlement’.

All one can add to this is, here was a man deserving of absolute respect and I am sure that all Ceylons send their condolences to Barbara and her family.

3. Brien Harrison kindly passed on information gleaned from his copy of ‘Globe & Laurel’, referring to the death of Major F Reynolds R.M’s in Truro Hospital on the 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2009. He was OC Royal Marines in Ceylon 1958/60 and presumably at that time would have held the rank of Captain. Major Reynolds was not a member of our association, but in accordance with our standard practice, the news is passed on for those members who knew him.

**Snippets:** - a couple of one-liners!

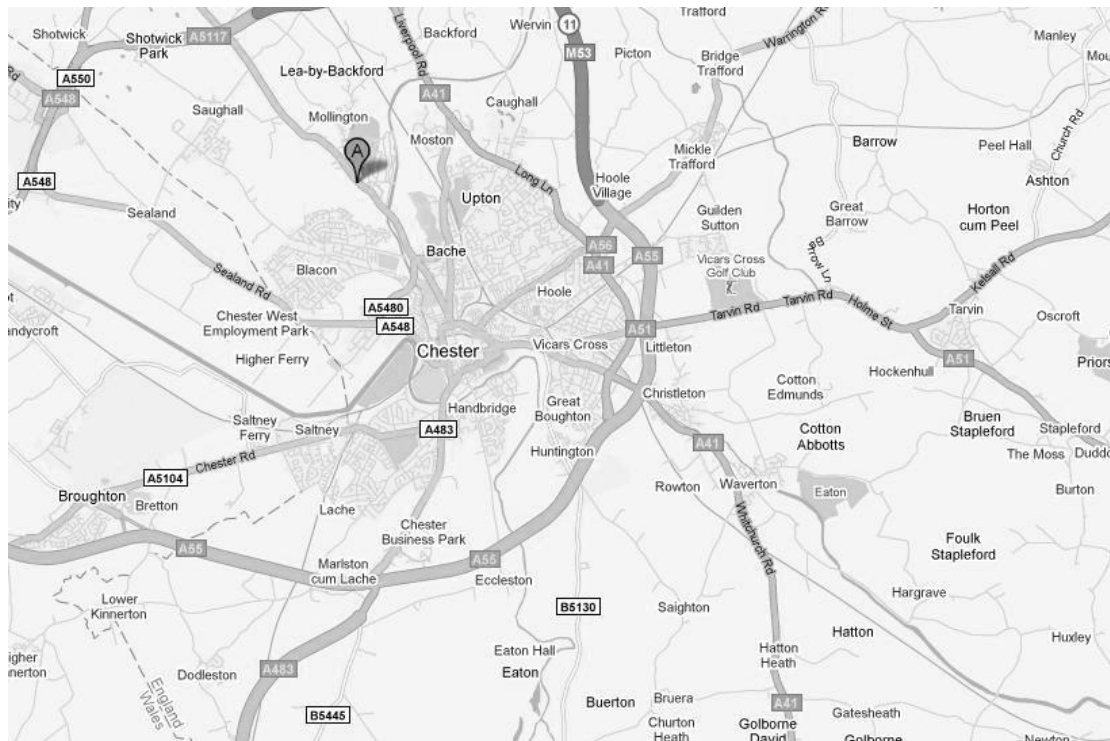
Living in the past has one advantage; it is cheaper!  
Some men are wise, some are otherwise!  
Behold the turtle; he makes progress only when he sticks his head out!

Inner Peace: -

If you can start the day without caffeine,  
If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,  
If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,  
If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it,  
If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time,  
If you can take criticism and blame without resentment ,  
If you can conquer tension without medical help,  
If you can relax without liquor,  
If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,

*Then* you are very probably the family dog!

*Cheers for now, Terry Randall.*



Letter 'A' denotes hotel.

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