



Newsletter Volume 5 – No 1. February 2015.

Opening Comment: -Apologies to all for the fact it has been so long since the last newsletter (**August**) and I am very aware that quite a number of people were worried about this! The reason for this was the sad loss of Ron Boniface, who among his many duties undertook the up-keeping of the association's membership and labels lists. There have been problems with retrieving these files from his computer, and with the labels list not available to me, I could not put a letter in the post until now. It is sincerely hoped that all the hard work put into producing the new lists by Secretary Cliff, Treasurer Andrea and me have overcome the problem and that all is now alright? I would add - *in the manner of a request* - that if any of you are aware that the membership list is in any way lacking, in that they know or suspect that someone has been overlooked, then please get in touch with me ASAP so that the situation can be rectified. I might add that the problem seems to be that the older I get, the busier I become!

I sincerely hope everyone's Christmas went well and that this New Year will bring you all good health; also that the recent cold weather has not been too hazardous for you, **yours aye, Terry.**

Chairman's Chat: - I hope you all managed to cope with the winter weather without too much hassle. The signs of spring are now showing in the garden and my thoughts are turning to our 25th annual ship's reunion where Joyce and myself are hoping to see as many of our members as are able to travel to this special reunion.

Unfortunately my friend, Brian Blackburn will not be with again because of knee surgery which has gone badly wrong, he is waiting for further surgery in the near future and I am sure that you will join with me in wishing him a speedy recovery. I have also spoken to John Wyeth on the phone and I am pleased to say that he is slowly recovering and hopes to be with us in April. For those who have not already booked for Babbacombe, I urge you to get your bookings in as soon as possible **Regards to you all, Brien**

Secretary's Piece: - Hi all, as you all know we lost our shipmate Ron who did an excellent job not only as our website manager, but also as membership secretary keeping our 'watch-bill' up to the mark and most importantly producing the labels for our newsletter; he is sadly missed. I feel I must say thanks to Terry and Andrea for their work in updating these lists and Andrea also for printing the address labels, in order that we can still receive a newsletter; this I feel is a very important part of our association and plays a big part in holding us all together. This year as you know is our 25th reunion and we would like to fill the hotel. The bookings have gone well so far, but might I suggest that if you haven't yet booked, please do so

soon, as I would hate to hear someone say "I left it too late". Where can you get a long-weekend away for £110? Anyone who has mislaid their booking form has only to get in touch for a replacement.

Anyone who has a thought on venues for future reunions please let me know. It does not have to be on the coast, somewhere central would perhaps make it easier for some of our northern members for a change? I have found two new possible venues for consideration, but you won't find out till the AGM.

On a serious note we have lost more than a usual number of members "***crossed the bar***" in the past year; we may not know them by sight, but ***we will remember them*** on our Ceylon weekend! **Regards, Cliff.**

Treasurer's Report: - The payment of subs for the past year has on the whole been very good, there are however just a few who are outstanding from last May 1st; your payments would be very much appreciated. After all, it will not be all long before next year's subs are due; only three months! **Andrea.**

Crossed the Bar: - (1). I was particularly saddened at the passing of Freddie Darwent from the second commission. His funeral took place at 1545 Friday 28th November at the Heart of England Nuneaton Crematorium. The newspaper excerpt, reproduced below, is probably the finest way to impart the news about Fred, who I remember well as a fellow member of 'A Turret's' crew. In the same edition of this newspaper there was a photograph of the hearse, escorted by 12 of the 17 standards mentioned: -

Servicemen and women have paid an emotional tribute to a Korean war veteran at his funeral.

by **SAMANTHA FISHER**

Frederick John Darwent, 84, of Hinckley, died of lung cancer on November 17 after having been diagnosed only four weeks earlier.

At his funeral yesterday, 17 standards flew in his memory and a bugler played the Last Post in tribute to him.

The South Korean embassy sent flowers for his coffin and a letter of gratitude for his services during the war.

His son, Graham Darwent, 49, said his dad was well respected for his service in the Navy.

"The South Koreans have given him quite a few medals. They are hanging on the wall of his house," he said.

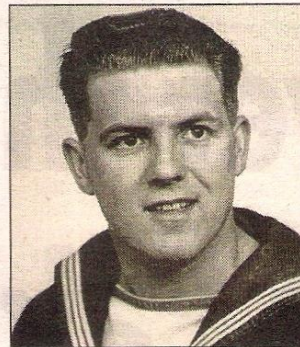
Graham said his father spoke a lot about his time in the Navy. "He said it was hard but he really enjoyed it."

Frederick's funeral was held yesterday at The Heart of England Crematorium, in Nuneaton.

Graham, of Hinckley, said: "Servicemen and women came from all around to pay their respects."

Frederick has been a standard bearer for Leicestershire's armed forces for the past 12 years and has attended many funerals of servicemen and women. Due to Frederick's popularity, many military personnel attended his funeral.

He was a father of three, grandfather of five and a great-grandfather of three.



NAVY: Frederick Darwent

He was born in Stanton-under-Bardon and went to school in the village. At the age of 15, he went to work as a miner.

He then served in the Navy for 12 years from the age of 18.

He served for the duration of the Korean War, from 1950 to

1953, where he was a gunner. Graham said: "He was shooting the shells from the ship on to land."

HMS Ceylon was Frederick's favourite ship.

Graham said: "Marriage and kids pulled him out."

After leaving the Navy, his main trade was hosiery - he worked for Jones and Shipman. He then went on to own a business, Burbage Damp Proofing.

Graham said: "He looked after his family, worked very hard, put food on the table, a roof over his family's head and made enough money for a beer at the local working men's club.

"He was well-known around Hinckley."

As he got older, Frederick did two cleaning jobs to keep himself busy. He also enjoyed shooting, metal detecting and naval reunions.

His ashes are to be scattered in the Solent at a date to be arranged.

- (2) John Burnett R.M. Second commission 1950/52. 7th August 2014.
- (3) Tony Baller. Second commission 1950/52. November 2014.
- (4) Albert Higgins. First commission 1943/45. 3rd November 2014
- (5) Gil McNeil - who attended many of our reunions with husband John (2nd commission - Cpl Royal Marines) and who unfortunately suffered with Alzheimer's, passed peacefully 26th December 2014. Our thoughts go with John and his family.

Sick Bay : - (1) John Wyeth unfortunately had a very serious fall just before Christmas, causing considerable injury to himself; a multiple fracture of the femur necessitating a lengthy operation for the insertion of pins, then a period in hospital followed by long term incapacity at home. The latest bulletin: - managing to get around with the aid of a frame – **and possibly being a real burden on poor Rosemary?**

Brian Blackburn, RM 56/57 has been really ill of late; as mentioned in the chairman's address!

John Rickwood Saga: - Reading my article in the May issue of our newsletter, I was reminded of an occasion in the Mauritius during 1951. I was Dental SBA in the ship, working with Dental Surgeon Lt P H Tucker RNVR (National Service). I was messed in with the 'Odds 'n Sods' - S A's, Wtr's, etc and two other SBA's - there was a round dozen of us in that mess and the Leading Hand was an L/SA. One particular Saturday he informed me that I was duty cook that day and I was to prepare dinner for the mess. This meant that I was not only responsible for preparing the spuds, carrots, cabbage and beans, plus the meat and make a 'figgy duff' with custard and then get it all to the galley for cooking, but that as it was also Captain's Rounds day, I was to get the mess spotlessly clean – "Understand Doc? Just like your dental surgery! And don't forget to have all hammocks stowed correctly, with all names on display, all fannies scrubbed, cutlery sparkling – so get cracking". With that he disappeared!

With that I set to with Gusto and gradually it all took shape, **then** I got to the fannies, 'Oh My God', one was absolutely Milo with a Gunge in it; if Matron had seen it she would have had forty fits, so I whipped it to the Pharmacy in the Sick Bay and with a bit of H2O and other well-known Chemicals I managed to get it just as if Jack Dusty had Issued it to us from his Stores. I did the other two as well, plus all the Utensils. Then I carefully scrubbed the table and benches, in fact blitzed the whole of the mess, it was then I heard "Up Spirits" piped and our L/SA came bounding in. he stopped short, looked around the mess, at the neatly lined up utensils, the napkins done in Mitre, Rose and Lotus Fashion along each place sitting, the condiments - salt/pepper/mustard - all freshly made. He then said in amazement, "Doc, it looks great, now where's the rum fanny". "Up there" said I pointing to the Shelf. Well he reached up and took all three down, he then said 'Words'! "No", he screamed and for ten minutes I learned nautical words that would have made a Nun Blush. As he drew breath, a Royal Marine Bugler came into the Mess, put his bugle to his lips and sounded the "G" which drowned out the L/SA. It was then that the Captain entered the mess-deck and came to our mess, he paused, looked at the neatly and correctly stowed hammocks away and went on to the next five messes, before coming back and carefully examining all my napkins, picking up the odd knife and fork. He then looked at the condiments and said "These all fresh?" "Yes Sir." I replied. "Ah Good" he said and then to the Commander "Now this is how a mess should look like". Then he said to the MAA, "Let the other messes know I am Awarding this Mess as the Finest I have seen". Then turning to the L/SA, he said, "You will miss Rum Issue, look lively and double away". Strange to say, I was never ever the Cook of the Mess again! On November the 21st, 1951, we handed over Mauritius to the Kenya's ships company, who brought her home for a major re-fit, while we continued our commission in Kenya. When my Dental Officer finished his time, I reverted to General Duties, took passage on the Empire Fowey to Singapore and joined Ceylon for another 14 months or so.

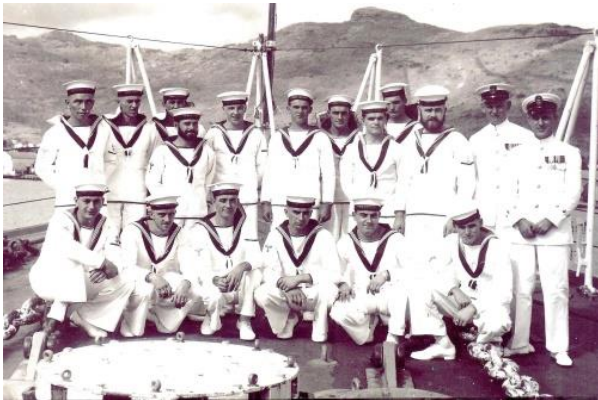
John.

The following contact was made via our website: - Dave Angell, 56/58 commission, Engineering Branch:-

"On looking through old photographs, I came across a Department group picture of myself with two 'run ashore' oppos, 'Jumper' Cross and Ray Barlow. I am wondering if they might be of interest to anyone. I am prepared on receipt of an address to send a copy to them. All best wishes to all fellow Ceylons for good health and good things in 2015. Kindest regards,

Dave Angell.

Below are copies of the pictures, taken in Mauritius, we received from Dave: names as best remembered to the right or below.



Back row – ‘Jumper’ Cross: Ross: ‘Dan’ Dare: Ray Barlow: Harper: Impey: Clar. (8 out of 12).

Front row – Perington: Rugeley: Goodison: Wallington: Readings: Hazell. (All 6)



Dave Angell: ‘Jumper’ Cross: Ray Barlow.



‘Jumper’ & Ray signing Governor House Visitors book.

Having reached the end of this much adrift letter, I hope it reads well and apologise yet again for the length of time it has taken for us to re-organise. Ron’s past efforts are certainly looked back on with grateful thanks and his always prompt participation over the past years is something that will always be sorely missed in the future. The situation does bring to the fore – **and everyone must reflect on this** – the fact that we really do not have any reliable back-up, or ‘step-in’ people around to take over these very important tasks when the unthinkable happens!

Yours aye,

Terry.



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 Printed by 'Print Room' D E K Graphics, Chandlers Ford SO53 2FZ.