



Rise your
glasses at
2100 on the
25th to Absent
Friends

www.candoo.com/ulsternorrie/rnator

Ahoy Shipmate

RNA Torbay Newsletter

Volume 9

Issue 6

December 2020

In this issue

Editorial	1
Presidents Patter	2
Peter Shepperd's Protector Piece	3-4
HMCS Robert Hampton Gray	5
Two casks of Sherry	6-8
St Adjutor's Church	9-10
Loss of HM S/M Vandal	11-12
How did WWII U-Boats surrender?	13-14
The Bish's Bit	15

ADULT

A person who has stopped growing at both ends.

BEAUTY PARLOR

A place where women curl up and dye

CHICKENS

The only animals you eat before they are born and after they are dead

COMMITTEE

A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

DUST

Mud with the juice squeezed out.

EGOTIST

Someone who is usually me-deep in conversation

HANDKERCHIEF

Cold Storage

INFLATION

Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

MOSQUITO

An insect that makes you like flies better.

RAISIN

A grape with a sunburn.

SECRET

Something you tell to one person at a time.

SKELETON

A bunch of bones with the person scraped off.

TOOTHACHE

The pain that drives you to extraction.

TOMORROW

One of the greatest labour-saving devices of today.

WRINKLES

Something other people have, similar to my character lines

Editorial

By Shipmate Norrie Millen

Hi! Shipmates,

As this will be the last newsletter of the year, may I begin by wishing all shipmates, your wives, families and friends.

Peace, Happiness and Joy for Christmas and a Prosperous & Covid Free New Year

This had been a terrible year for us all in one way and another. Being locked down, having to social distance, wearing masks and worse of all the possibility that you may have lost a loved one to Covid-19. This on top of all other serious personal health issues.

Let's all hope and pray that 2021 will see a massive improvement for us all.

The first of the promised Covid vaccines is now arriving and these deliveries will increase as they become available and more importantly tested for safety and side effects. I believe as I write – December 7th - that the first people will be vaccinated tomorrow. As a vulnerable, person I should be able to get mine in January, hopefully.

What I find hard to understand is those people that are refusing to accept an injection of the vaccine and still more people who still insist that Covid is all fake news.

I am sure you have your personal views on this and these, dare I say it? Foolish persons. Them not you!

I still try and go down to Teignmouth sea front on a daily basis. Yesterday, brilliant weather, the cruise ships Arcadia, Azura, QM2, and Marella Discovery, were joined by Queen Elizabeth. In addition the Ro-Ro Vesperine is off start point

Let's us all hope and pray that 2021 will see us on the right side of Covid-19 and leading normal lives again.

The way I see it anyway!

**WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES A
HEALTHY AND HAPPY 2020**

President's Patter*By Shipmate Terry Membery*

Hi! Shipmates,

I hope you and your families are fine and coping with the Covid restrictions. Well, another year has passed us by; where has it gone? It doesn't seem long ago that I was doing all the nice jobs outside the house, now it's confined to the house.

I had the honour to represent the Branch at the Remembrance Day service in Torquay, a very sombre affair with no marching due to Covid restrictions.

Also, I have been working up at Roundham to spruce the memorial, getting it into shipshape for the winter. I planted some spring bulbs which should flower in April, in time for our annual service if it goes ahead.

What does 2021 bring? Hopefully some of the events that were cancelled in 2020, due to Covid. Our 75 anniversary +1, Street Collections, Babbacombe Fayre, Sunday Lunch, Trafalgar Night and last but not least our Branch meetings. We await further information on the way ahead.

In the pipeline is no subscription to RNA central. We await the outcome of RMA AGM, who will be voting on giving the RNA a loan and the outcome will be, we will not pay subsidies to central office.

Finally, this will be the last newsletter of 2020 so I wish all shipmates and families a Covid free festive season and a big thank you to our resident editor(scribes) who produces the said newsletter, BZ to Norrie and a tot or two when we meet again.

Yours aye

Terry Membery



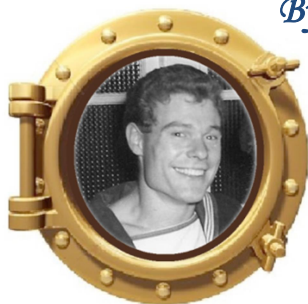
**Strange new trend
at the office.
People putting
names on food in
the company
fridge. Today I had
a tuna sandwich
named Linda.**

Peter Shepperd's Protector Piece

With some additional material; added by Norrie Millen

By Shipmate

Peter Shepperd



I served on HMS Protector, a converted netlayer; one of the first

ones to be guard ship for our claimed islands in the Antarctic.

Flat bow, stopped dead in heavy seas every time a wave hit us; she also had a bloody great hanger on the stern with 2 helicopters. This acted like a huge sail and made steering extremely difficult.

Protector was laid down as a fast net layer by Yarrow Shipbuilders at their Scotstoun, Glasgow shipyard on 15 August 1935, launched on 20 August 1936 and was completed in December 1936. She was commissioned on 30 December 1936. Her design was based on that of HMS *Guardian*, built in 1932, but with more powerful machinery and improved equipment for handling nets.

Protector was 338 feet (103 m) long overall and 310 feet (94 m)

between perpendiculars, with a beam of 53 feet (16 m) and a draught of 13 feet 9 inches (4.19 m) at deep load. Displacement was 2,820 long tons (2,870 t) standard and 3,610 long tons (3,670 t) deep load.

Modifications

Protector was modified in 1955 for service as a Guardship for the Falkland Islands Dependencies and a survey vessel for Antarctic waters. The twin 4-inch gun mount was moved to a forward position, allowing a flight deck and hangar for a helicopter to be fitted aft, while the close-in armament was reduced to four 20 mm cannon (with four 3-pounder saluting guns also carried). The ship's bridge was enclosed and the hull ice strengthened. A further refit in 1957 saw *Protector*'s bridge remodelled, while in 1958 a tripod mainmast was mounted on the ship's hangar, and a crane was fitted.

We had to use up to 30 degrees of wheel and 1 engine slowed down to try and steer a straight course in any gale. One time a fire developed in a compartment under the port side avgas tank; during a huge gale, in the roaring 40s. We were ready to slip the tank over the side; but the fire was put out in the compartment below it. Both





Sir Edmund Hilary

tanks, in typical naval fashion could be slipped overboard by releasing a stop surrounding them.

At the same time, during the middle watch, a huge lathe broke adrift in the machine shop and punched a hole in the rear quarter. I had to go in as damage control party to secure it and other heavy items; with freezing water up to our waists and extremely worried about what was under the water rolling around to squash our legs. We secured the lathe with ropes, splinter boxes and collision mats used in anger for the first time.

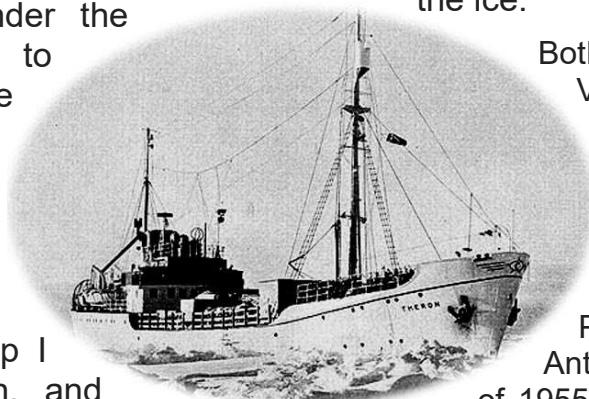
It was the worst ship I have ever sailed in, and handled really badly in heavy sea conditions. The donkey engine that powered the steering gear failed, so watch by watch, for a week we had to use emergency hand steering. (See *image below middle*) This in a hell hole with six guys on three joined together steering wheels, similar to a sailing ship.

One guy sitting on the rudder head as the orders came down by runner to the hatch. We turned port or starboard until the correct angle was read off the rudder head all the time rolling 20 plus degrees each side. Happy days? NOT

Further to this story we had to rescue the explorer Edmund Hilary and a Dr Fuchs from being trapped in the ice on their ship MV *Theron*. One of our helicopters had to show them a route out through leads in the ice. What surprised me was when we eventually got them out, was the steel on the waterline of the *Theron* was burnished like chrome amazing from the constant rubbing of the ice.



Dr. Fuchs, later Sir Vivian Fuchs

**M.V. Theron**

Both Sir Edmund and Dr Vivian Fuchs came onboard and during their time onboard signed many autographs for the crew.

Protector made her first Antarctic patrol in the winter of 1955/56, serving the Falkland Islands and the British Antarctic Survey bases. She returned to the Antarctic 13 more times in her career. During her patrols the ship rescued not only the passengers and crew of the icebound MV *Theron*, but also Protector rescued the passengers of the RRS *Shackleton*, which had struck an iceberg and had to perform emergency repairs to keep from sinking.



Sixth Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship named after Canadian Navy hero: Robert Hampton Gray.

From the Internet, written by Julie Lennips

Editor's Note: In a previous issue I gave an account of last RN VC. Since then I have received news that Canada have named a ship after Robert Hampton Gray.

The first Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship (AOPS), HMCS Harry DeWolf, was delivered to the Government of Canada on May 31 2020 in Halifax. Designated the Harry DeWolf-class in honour of Vice-Admiral Harry DeWolf, a Canadian naval hero, the delivery this new class of ship represents an historic milestone for the RCN, marking the delivery of the first ship in the largest fleet recapitalization Canada's peacetime history.

The other five AOPS are named Harry DeWolf, Margaret Brooke, Max Bernays, William Hall, and Frederick Rolette.

The RCN named this class of ships after prominent Canadian naval figures for the first time in its 110-year history, proudly honouring their leadership, achievements, and heroism

The Royal Canadian Navy's (RCN) sixth Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship (AOPS) was named in honour of Lieutenant (Lt) Robert Hampton Gray, a Canadian naval hero of the Second World War, on August 10.

In 1940, Lt Robert Hampton Gray joined the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve and served as a pilot in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm.

Lt Gray embarked on HMS Formidable with 1841 Squadron, which joined the



HMCS Robert Hampton Gray
Photo Credit: Mono Ghiz, MARLANT, DND, CANADA

war in the Pacific as part of Operation ICEBERG in April 1945.

He was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously, for courage and determination in carrying out daring air strikes on the Japanese destroyer, HIJMS

Amakusa.

On August 9, 1945, he led two flights of Corsair aircraft to attack naval vessels in Onagawa Bay. He opened the attack run flying straight into concentrated anti-aircraft fire, and was hit almost immediately. With his aircraft on fire and one bomb lost, he used his remaining bomb to sink escort vessel, HIJMS Amakusa.

Moments after the attack, his aircraft crashed into the sea, and his body was never recovered. He was the only RCN member to be awarded the Victoria Cross during the Second World War.

Vice-Admiral Art McDonald, Commander Royal Canadian Navy, says, "Lt Gray was known to his fellow-military members as a courageous leader, with a brilliant flying

spirit, who continued to inspire and motivate his crew after his unfortunate passing. By naming the sixth Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship after Lt Gray, we honour him as a Canadian naval hero, and celebrate his outstanding leadership and heroism."



Lt. Robert Hampton Gray was the only member of RCN to be awarded the VC.

The Spanish Navy Is Sailing Two Casks of Sherry around the Globe

*From the Internet by Isabelle Kliger,
Submitted by Shipmate Gord McLennan*

It revives a centuries-old tradition.

ON AUGUST 24, THE SPANISH naval training vessel *Juan Sebastián de Elcano* set off on an epic voyage that will take it across the Atlantic to Argentina, then through the Straits of Magellan and across the Pacific Ocean, passing Guam and the Philippines on its way back to the Spanish port of Cádiz. On board are 197 men and women, all the necessary provisions for a year at sea, and two half butts of Amontillado Viña AB sherry from the González Byass winery in Jerez, Spain.

The *Elcano*, which sailed its maiden voyage in 1928, holds great cultural and historic value for the Spanish Navy and many generations of officers.

At 371 feet long, this four-masted topsail, steel-hulled schooner barque is the third-largest tall ship in the



The Spanish tall ship *Juan Sebastian Elcano*

world and has sailed more than 2,000,000 nautical miles. The ship's primary mission is to provide insight into life at sea—naval officers in training typically spend six months to a year on board.

But this year's voyage is different.

The current expedition commemorates the 500th anniversary of the first-ever crossing of the Pacific Ocean by a European, and the first circumnavigation of the globe, by Portuguese and Spanish explorers Ferdinand Magellan and Juan Sebastián Elcano.

In addition to paying homage to Spain's seafaring past, the *Elcano* is recreating another great Spanish tradition: aging wine at sea. The ancient practice dates back to the Phoenicians; in Ancient Rome, Pliny the Elder wrote that in "wines shipped over sea ... it is observed that the effect of the motion on vintages that can stand it is merely to double their previous maturity." It also inspired the nickname of the González Byass sherry aboard the *Elcano*: *Estrella de los Mares*, or "Star of the Seas."



The two half butts of sherry Courtesy Of González Byass



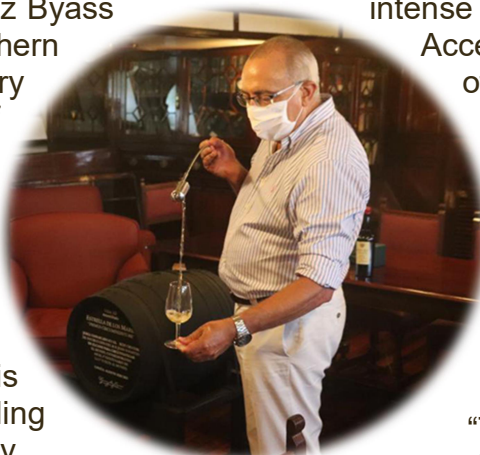
Commander de Colosa Trueba signing the cargo manifest. Picture courtesy of González Byass

Founded in 1835, González Byass is a historic winery in southern Spain's so-called "Sherry Triangle." Upon hearing of the Navy's intention to recreate the first circumnavigation of the globe, Global Marketing Manager José Argudo says he and his team were moved "to revive this beautiful tradition" of sending sherry to age at sea. They wrote a letter to an admiral detailing the plan, and the response was positive.

"It seemed to be an interesting project, since it's remarkable to analyse how the movement and list of a sailing ship can dramatically improve the quality of shipped wine," says Santiago de Colosa Trueba, Commander of the *Juan Sebastián De Elcano*.

It helps that Jerez is situated close to the Bay of Cádiz, one of the main centres of activity for the Spanish Navy. This has formed links between the Navy, civil society, and the business sphere, including the renowned Jerez de la Frontera wineries. Commander Santiago de Colosa Trueba explains that the Navy should not and cannot receive any tangible or economic benefit from the collaboration, "beyond the satisfaction of supporting a quality, exclusive Spanish product such as Jerez wine."

According to Antonio Flores, oenologist and master blender at González Byass, conditions aboard the *Elcano*, including temperature, pressure, and the continuous movement of the waves, are subjecting the winery's two half butts of sherry to an



Antonio Flores using a 'venencia' to pull sherry directly from the barrel.

Picture courtesy of Gonzalez Byass

intense micro-oxygenation process. Accelerating its oxidation, which often happens on land, gradually, through barrel aging, positively impacts the aging of the wine and improves its quality. Aging wine at sea, Flores adds, reduces its water content, concentrating the other components.

"This increases the intensity of the aromas, such as the spice and the vanilla from the wood," says Flores. "All these factors make the wine more powerful and balanced on the palate and more intense on the nose." Other spirits with high alcohol content, such as Madeira or Aquavit, can also be aged in this manner, whereas wines with a lower alcohol content would deteriorate.

During the days of the original Elcano and Magellan expeditions, Spanish sherry makers recognized the benefits of aging their wine at sea, and sending it across the waves soon became a lucrative commercial practice. While the shipper was paid handsomely for the service, the winery was able to charge up to five times more for a vintage that had been on a so-called "round trip."

Sherry was on board for the Magellan-Elcano circumnavigation of 1519, and it also played a part in major maritime expeditions,

including Christopher Columbus's second voyage and the Anglo-Spanish War, the latter of which was instrumental in establishing sherry as the drink of choice for thirsty Brits. In 1587, English sea captain Sir Francis



Drake famously raided the port of Cádiz and pillaged some 2,900 butts of sherry, which were brought back to the Court of Elizabeth I. The sherry made a huge splash in England, wending its way into the country's taverns and, from there, into the works of William Shakespeare.

But from the height of its trendiness in Elizabethan London, the popularity of sherry waned. By the late 1900s, the drink had become grandma's favourite tippie. However, with fortified wines currently undergoing a major revival, sherry is once again a fashionable cocktail ingredient in bars around the world.

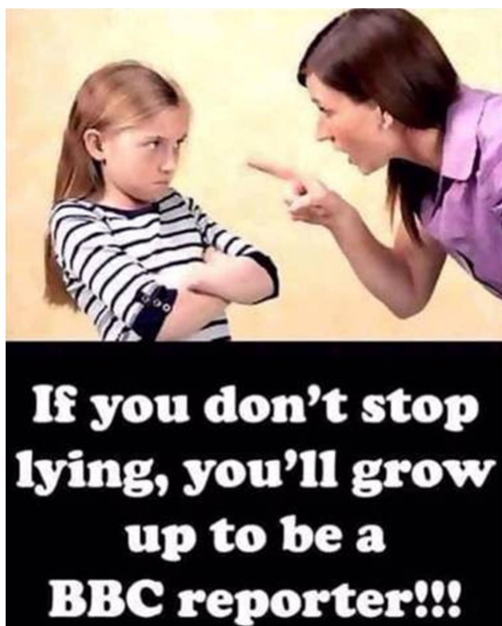
For winemakers at González Byass, this renaissance has inspired them to raise the profile of its brand while paying homage to a long-lost tradition.

"These days, we have the technical means to optimize the quality of the wine without sending it on a round trip," says Antonio Flores wistfully, "but this project is all about reviving the romanticism of the old practices." As we talk, his two half butts of Amontillado Viña AB slowly roll across the waves of the Atlantic Ocean.

**The longer
I stay home,
the more
homeless
I look.**

**OUR TOWN IS SO SMALL WE
DON'T HAVE A TOWN
DRUNK SO WE ALL TAKE
TURNS**

**I'm so scared of
being called
'racist', I've
started sending
money to Nigerian
scammers.**



ST. ADJUTOR'S CHURCH- HMS VERNON

Copied from Facebook

By Lt. Cdr R.JU. Hoole & Submitted by Shipmate Norrie Millen

St. Adjutor's Church was perhaps the smallest, shortest lived and most exclusive church ever built on Portsea Island. It was erected at the Vernon Shore Establishment after World War 2 and was lost in the redevelopment of Gunwharf at the end of the century.

Lt. Cdr. R.J. Hoole MBA MCMI MIEpE MNI RN, of the Minewarfare & Clearance Diving Officers' Association has kindly provided some snippets of information about the church

"St Adjutor's was a tiny wooden chapel behind the administration building (now the Old Customs House pub) in HMS Vernon. I believe it was built in 1955 on the site of Dido building where 100 people were killed on the night of 10/11 March 1941 during the Blitz. It replaced the temporary chapel located on the ground floor of the administration building which had been in use since 1941.

Apart from departmental and general Sunday morning services, St Adjutor's was also used for the occasional wedding, christening and carol service at Christmas. It was demolished along with much of the rest of HMS Vernon to make way for Gunwharf Quays.

All three of my children were christened in a bowl of water placed in an inverted diving helmet used as a font. The diving helmet currently resides in St Barbara's at HMS Excellent on Whale Island. It sits upright on a tubular brass stand on which are mounted brass tallies listing all the divers' children ever christened in it. Sadly, years of polishing by enthusiastic vergers has worn away most of the inscriptions."

Extract from the Royal Navy Diving Magazine of 1968

"On Sunday 22nd September, 1968, the church of H.M.S. Vernon was dedicated to St. Adjutor by the Chaplain of the Fleet. Why St. Adjutor? And who was he anyway?

The church in **Vernon** had never been dedicated to any saint, and exhaustive research showed that there was no Patron Saint of Divers. The most appropriate was a St. Adjutor who was invoked by swimmers in danger of drowning, and by sailors and prisoners. The fact that he was born in Vernon-sur-Seine added interest and further research was made into details about him. He turned out to be a Vernon, and a member of the same family as Admiral Edward Vernon (Old Grog), 1684-1757, of Portobello fame, Admiral Sir Edward Vernon, 1723-1794, and the Hon. George Vernon. 1803-1866, whose figurehead is [was] outside the Administration Block in H.M.S. **Vernon**. The genealogy is in the Chaplain's Office, in case anyone is interested!

St. Adjutor was born in Vernon-sur-Seine, about 1070, the son of John, Seigneur of Vernon, and Rosamonde de Blairv. He joined the First Crusade, and left with 200 Knights, for the Holy land in 1096. The next year, they captured Nicaea, and advanced to Antioch in Asia Minor. It was near here that St. Adjutor's army fell into an ambush, and all seemed lost. He invoked St. Mary Magdalene, and promised to build a chapel to her honour in Vernon, if only his army could escape. A violent thunder-storm came up at once, which threw the enemy into such confusion that victory was achieved.

On 15th July 1099, St. Adjutor took part in the capitulation of Jerusalem,

and he took the opportunity of visiting different Holy Places. On one visit he was captured by the Saracens and put with heavy chains into a cell. He spent many weary years there, till one night he had a dream. Mary Magdalene and St. Bernard appeared and snapped his chains off the wall; they carried him, with his chains, to his hunting lodge outside Vernon, and told him to build his chapel there. When he awoke, he was actually back in Vernon. (For a similar story, read the 12th Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament.)

The news spread of his sudden return, in circumstances attested by numerous Knights, and people started to ask for his help. He was by now living the strict life of a hermit, wearing a hair shirt and living on bread and water. He was supposed to have worked many miracles of healing, but his most famous was in the Seine opposite his cell.

The river narrowed here, and there was a notorious whirlpool which drowned the unworthy and engulfed their boats. St. Adjutor saw this happen, and determined with the assistance of his friend, Archbishop Hugo of Rouen to rid the Seine of this danger.

They set out in a small boat, and as they were sucked into the pool, the Archbishop made the sign of the Cross, and sprinkled holy water. St. Adjutor called on Mary Magdalene and St. Bernard, and threw the chains of his captivity into the whirlpool. Front that moment, the whirlpool disappeared.

His reputation as a wonder worker increased, but he felt his power ebbing, and on 30th April 1131, he died after receiving the Last Sacraments from Archbishop Hugo.

Last month, two statues were given to our church, one of St. Adjutor about to cast his chains into the Seine, and the other of Mary Magdalene granting his

request. Both are in bronze, and were made by Miss Ann Hughes of Twyford. The statues seem almost alive, and Adjutor in his hermit's shirt and Mary Magdalene in a 'mini-skirt' look real people, instead of plaster saints.

Last month, too, for the first time in **Vernon's** history, the Church of St. Adjutor was licensed for Banns and Marriages. At the end of June, it is hoped that three of **Vernon's** ships will visit Rouen and Vernon-sur-Seine to cement the relations started by that Vernon who has become our common patron saint. The Diving Section is well and truly represented by H.M.S. **Laleston**, which will remain at Rouen for the visit."

††††††

**I DON'T LIKE THE
FACT THAT MY
CHANCES OF
SURVIVAL SEEM
TO BE LINKED TO
THE COMMON
SENSE OF OTHERS**

**I trained my dog to
fetch beer. It may
not sound too
impressive but he
gets them from the
neighbor's fridge.**

THE LOSS OF HM SUBMARINE VANDAL (P 64) OFF THE ISLE OF ARRAN IN 1943

From the Internet by Angus MacKinnon



Despite

the lessons of WW I, Great Britain and the corridors of power within the Admiralty paid scant attention to the real danger posed by Germany in respect to its submarine building programme. Much the same could be claimed in respect to the surface fleet being rushed through by Germany in the build-up to WW II, however, it was always the U-Boat threat that presented the greatest danger, a point driven home relentlessly by Winston Churchill.

At the outbreak of hostilities, Britain had about 57 serviceable submarines including 12 used for training purposes and many of this number dated from the 1914-1918 war and were effectively obsolete. Consequently an emergency submarine building programme had to be implemented shortly after Winston Churchill came to power, resulting in around a total of 168 submarines being built by each and every shipyard capable of this class of work, working flat out.

Some 78 of these were subsequently lost, many under unknown circumstances, such as HMS VANDAL, a U-Class Coastal Submarine built by Vickers-Armstrong of Barrow, a prolific builder of all forms of naval vessels and one of the largest producers of submarines. HMS VANDAL disappeared during testing trials off the Island of Arran in February 1943, only a few days after her commissioning and hand-over to the Royal Navy.

Carrying a new crew totalling 37 men, including her Commanding Officer, HMS VANDAL was inexplicably lost in the Kilbrannan Sound where the depth was of the order of 70-80 metres, well within the capacity of her pressure hull. The location of her wreck remained unknown for over fifty years until

discovered in the summer of 1994. Lying deep in the Kilbrannan Sound, HMS VANDAL was to become a permanent tomb to those who sailed her out of Lochranza in the early morning of 24 February 1943. These were young men, the average age of crewmembers was only 24 years, and all but two were Englishmen, destined to die a horrific death in Scottish waters far from home.

The lonely and high-risk life of the submariner cannot be overstated. Yet there was no shortage of recruitment candidates for this dangerous arm of the Royal Navy. Although Britain's submarine effort was at a totally different level than that of her enemy, Germany, and based on a very different strategy, nevertheless its achievements were quite remarkable. A true comparison cannot be practicably made but, for indicative purposes, British submarines accounted for 134 enemy surface warships, 34 enemy submarines, and 493 enemy merchantmen and, for every British submarine lost, almost 8 German ships were destroyed, whereas one German U-Boat was lost for every 4 British ships destroyed.

The precise number of non-combatant losses of British submarines will never be known, i.e. those lost in mysterious circumstances unrelated to a specific enemy action. HMS VANDAL is such a case. It is more than likely that the mystery will remain unsolved and that this unfortunate boat and the 37 young men who perished within her confines will be afforded the dignity of her official classification - a war grave.

THE LOSS OF HMS VANDAL

HMS VANDAL was a Class U-Group II Coastal Submarine, Pennant No. 64, built by



the world-famous naval vessel Builder, Vickers-Armstrong's of Barrow in Furness. With a displacement of approximately 545 tons, her principal dimensions were 204 feet in length, 10 feet in diameter, and under normal trimming she would draw around 12' 6" of water.

HMS *VANDAL* was laid down by Vickers-Armstrongs on 17 March 1942, launched on 23 November 1942, and completed / handed over on 20 February 1943.

On that day, 20 February 1943, HMS *VANDAL* sailed out of Barrow Island for trials and passage to Holy Loch where she was planned to join the 3rd Flotilla based there. She arrived at Holy Loch later on the same day and was scheduled to carry out conventional test manoeuvres in the Kilbrannan Sound on 22nd and 23rd February, culminating in deep diving tests on 24 February in the Upper Inchmarnock North designated deep-water area. During these 'shakedown' tests, and given that the tests were to be carried out under wartime conditions, communications by wireless telegraphy were neither obligatory nor encouraged. The final deep dive tests scheduled for the 24th February would proceed only providing the Commanding Officer was satisfied with the water-tightness of the boat and the training standard of the boat's complement, which would be determined during the two day exercises in the Kilbrannan Sound on 22nd and 23rd February.

It was expected that HMS *VANDAL* would return to her base in the Holy Loch at about 19:00 hours on the evening of the 24th February. In the event, she was never seen again and despite searches being

implemented her fate and location remained unknown. The last (known) sighting of the boat had been on the morning of the 24th February when she left Lochranza. After that, there was no trace or clue to what became of the boat, and this remained the position for the next 51 years.



In June 1994, the wreck of HMS *VANDAL* was discovered lying in about 69 metres depth in the Kilbrannan Sound (37 fathoms / 224 feet) in position 55 degrees 43.8 minutes North, 5 degrees 22.4 minutes West. This places the wreck approximately midway between Lochranza and Claonaig and almost in line with the navigational track of the small vehicular ferry, which crosses between these two points.

The cause of her loss, however, remains a mystery to date. Underwater photography has shown no obvious reason for her loss, e.g. open to the sea, collision or other damage, etc. It is assumed therefore that all of her crew remain on board the boat and that she is effectively a war grave.

The records do not show whether there were representatives of her Builders on board at the time of her loss. It would, however, be unusual if this was not the case. Her Royal Navy on-board crew at the time of her loss consisted of her Commanding Officer, Lt. John S. Bridger and his Officers and Men as detailed on the attached sheet.

Any speculation as to the cause of the loss is just that – speculation. The only manner in which the cause of loss could be possibly identified after this time lapse would be a full recovery and painstaking survey of the boat to search for clues.

The Diesel Submariners Prayer

Our Captain, who art in the control room,
Hallowed be thy aim.
Thy targets come,
They will be done,
On the surface and as in Neptune's kingdom

Give us this day our daily tot
And forgive us our defaults,
As we forgive those who default against us.
Lead us into calm waters,
And deliver us from roughers.

For thine is the ocean
The power in the batteries
Until we have to charge them again
Pipe down

How did German U-boats surrender at end of WWII?

Submitted by Shipmate Norrie Millen

Many U-boats were at sea or in port when the "Regenbogen" order was given to surrender on May 3, 1945. This was not as easy as it might sound since a submarine suddenly appearing out of the water was a target, even if it meant to surrender. Many German submarine commanders chose not to surrender and scuttled their subs in place. As all this was going on, combat operations and logistics were still taking place. The German Navy was in far better shape than the German Air Force or land armies. Their fuel bunkers still possessed sufficient quantities of quality fuel; many, if not most of their barracks were still intact and not bombed; their foodstuffs were plentiful and varied. Surface ships like the "Prinz Eugen" and many, many others were conducting combat operations up till the last day of the war. E-boats, the German equivalent of the British MTB or the American PT boat were conducting combat operation up till the very end, the E-boats sinking 50,000 tons on the last day alone from bases in Holland.

The Germans had been frantically trying to complete the revolutionary Type XXI submarine program, using revolutionary mass-assembly techniques and many were on the stocks when the war ended. But only two achieved operational status, U-2511 and U-3008. The commander of the 2511 was able

to infiltrate a fleet of British ships undetected and was about to commence a torpedo attack when the surrender order came in. He made a mock attack instead, to prove to himself the value of the class of submarine, and then he made his escape, still undetected and surrendered. If it had been built earlier the Type 21 could have had an impact on the war. The Russians completed many of them and used them till 1973. Both the Americans and the Russians used the design as the basis for an entirely new direction in submarines.

Some sub crews refused to surrender right away. One sub, the U-977 Type VIIC made an unprecedented underwater trip to Argentina to surrender and spent 66 days underwater during the 99 day trip. Another U-boat, the U-530 also refused to surrender. The U-530 also made a dash to Argentina. The 530 was a Type IX, larger and better equipped than the Type VII and had survived seven war patrols, which was an extraordinary event by that time of the war. It surrendered in Argentina on July 10, about two months after the war ended and creating many controversies since the logs were destroyed, identification

Was it done at a particular time? Did they go to specific locations? How were they informed?



Surrendered German U-Boats at Londonderry

destroyed and equipment destroyed. It was said to have landed Hitler before surrendering, although the obviously white-washed reports from the Argentinian government denied such things. Both subs were in bad shape when they arrived in Argentina and were eventually sunk by the Americans.

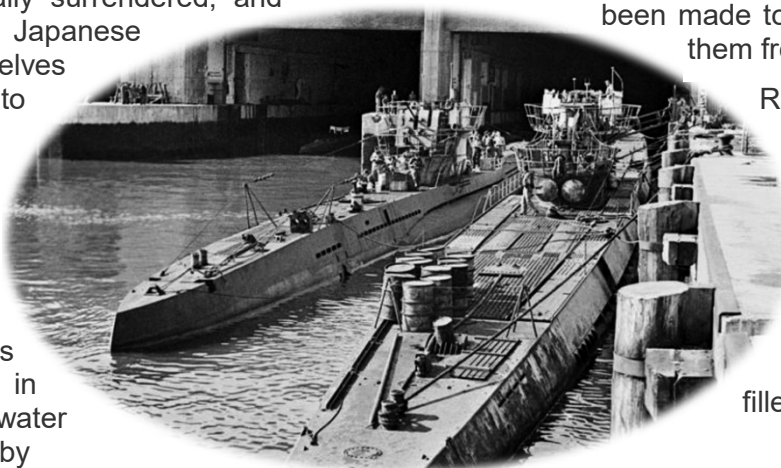
The U-234 was a Type X minelaying submarine carrying uranium oxide and plans and engineers and diplomats to Japan, including two high ranking Japanese officers when the surrender order came. The commander, instead of trying to reach Japan, decided to surrender to the Americans at Portsmouth, NH. In a dashing trip with much excitement, he finally surrendered, and as he did, the two Japanese officers shot themselves rather than submit to capture.

Many other submarines were captured in place. The Type 21 sub U-2540, the most advanced of its class, was scuttled in relatively shallow water and later raised by the post-war German government and re-fit

as a research vessel named "William Bauer" for the pioneering German sub inventor who developed a sub to attack Denmark in the 1800s. The sub is a museum ship now in Kiel and tourists are still impressed by its complexity and advanced design. Many of the techniques and designs were used by the US in the development of the "Albacore" and eventually the first nuclear sub "Nautilus"

About 156 U-boats surrendered to the Allies after the war, almost 100 less than still existed - there were 236 U-boats operational or near-operational at the time of surrender. Over 770 had been sunk throughout the course of the war, meaning 75 percent of the crews were killed. There was almost a 90 percent chance of dying on every patrol by the end of the war. About 28,000 men died,

the highest of any service in the German military. Note that a German soldier fighting from the beginning of the war had about a 70 percent chance of surviving the war while the average U-boat sailor had a 10 percent chance of surviving a single three month patrol by the closing months of the war. The subs that did not surrender were scuttled by the crews or captured by Allied elements. Of those 156 subs, 116 were sunk by the British off Ireland in an operation called "Operation Deadlight" in Nov, 1945. Until then, they had been sitting at makeshift docks, exposed to the elements and being stripped for souvenirs. Some sunk while being towed to the scuttling area, others had to be blown up because they refused to sink. Efforts have been made to raise a couple of them from time to time.



Surrendered German U-Boats outside the homebase pens

Right before the surrender the U-534, a training sub, was sunk by the British and was raised in 1993 by a team who believed she was filled with gold. Instead, they found a large quantities of

potatoes.

Today, there are four German U-boats remaining as museums, as well as parts of U-boats scattered around. The U-505 was captured by the Americans off Bermuda and now sits outside at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. One of the motors was actually started in 2000. The U-995 sits as a memorial and tourist attraction in Kiel while the U-2540, "William Bauer" is permanently moored at Bremerhaven and the U-534 is a rusting tourist attraction in Birkenhead, England. The bow and torpedo tubes of a U-boat are used as a traffic guide and memorial in L'Orient, France, where the massive German sub pens still sit.

For those who like submarine lore, the incredibly well researched site "<http://www.uboot.net/>" is a great resource.

Bish's Bit –Good Tidings & Joy

By Shipmate Paul Lomas

Shipmates

Good Tidings, Great Joy

In Luke's Gospel chapter 2 and verse 10 it says:

"Then the Angel said to the shepherds, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people".

All of us have had the experience of waiting an outcome, a medical examination and diagnosis, a job application, a missing child, and we wait with a sense of dread. Then the phone rings, or a person approaches, and says, "Good news! All is well!" When that good report comes, we have experienced what the Bible calls evangelism,

The receipt of good news that brings joy and relief. In Luke 2:10 the angels words, "*I bring you good tidings of great joy*" contains the Greek word for evangelism, the announcing of good news.

The shepherds were no doubt anxious when the Angel of the Lord appeared. But

they were soon put at ease by the angels words. Dread and fear were replaced by great joy at the announcement of the birth of the Saviour in Bethlehem. That is also true of us, we may fear much in life but the Good News of Christ can alleviate every worry.

This Christmas let the reminder of Christ's birth and life be a source of great joy for you. And may the Peace of God, the father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you all and in your homes, throughout this Christmas and into the New Year

Love and prayers for you all and your families, and may you all have a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

Paul and Bette



For thine is the Kingdom, The tower and the gory..



**SORRY FOLKS, WE'RE BOOKED SOLID . . .
GOD HIMSELF COULDN'T GET A ROOM
HERE TONIGHT**

Mr. Prime Minister, about the masks you organised...

