



Unity - Loyalty
Patriotism & Comradeship

Welcome to the latest edition of Up Spirits; the bi-monthly newsletter of the Royal Naval Association – Norwich Branch.

You will notice a change in the layout of the newsletter, and this has been brought in to hopefully provide an ease of reading.

We have some very good submissions this month with Shipmate Reg McGuire providing an article on the Battle of Jutland and Shipmate Keith Smith looking back at his initial training following on the Channel 4 programme 'Navy School'.

I hope you enjoy the new layout and the content of this issue of Up Spirits.

Inside This Issue

From The Quarterdeck – The Presidents Piece	1
Secretary's Report	2
In Memoriam	3
Welfare Report	3
From The Monthly Circular	4
Shipmate Submissions	5
Old Versus New	7
The Battle of Jutland	8
Calendar of Events – 2016	10
Future Editions of Up Spirits	10

From The Quarterdeck – The Presidents Piece

Shipmate Mike Mizen

Shipmates, I am in a quandary. Do I have to write two articles for Up Spirits, one from the President and one from the Chairman, or can I get away with writing just one piece? Decisions, decisions, and from one so young!

This article will be a bit shorter than previous articles and I will explain why in a minute.

What must come first is the fact that we have had a successful Annual General Meeting and welcomed S/M Keith Smith as Vice Chairman. Keith has been involved with the running of the Branch for many years and he brings a wealth of experience to his new role. He and I have known each other for a long time and I am looking forward to working with him.

On the other side of the coin we have now lost S/M Bob Knights. Bob stood down as Chairman after stepping in to the role at very short notice and at a time when it would be fair to say that not everything was running smoothly. It is not easy to

Up Spirits!

NORWICH BRANCH NEWS

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suddenly step in to the breach when there are problems but Bob took command and eventually handed over to me a healthy Branch with very few of the problems that he had to deal with. I am very grateful to him and so should you all be as well. Many thanks Bob for all your hard work.

Now you've got me for two years, serves you right!

My aim is to make the Branch as open and accountable as possible. Decisions affecting the Branch and its members will be made by you, the committee will advise and plan ahead but ultimately it is your Branch and you are expected to be involved in the decision making progress. You are also expected to support the Branch and its activities, the turnout for events such as the Trafalgar Night dinner, which the members voted for, should be much better. So, it is a two-way thing. The committee will do its bit but the members must do their bit as well.

Enough of politics. I said at the beginning of this article that it would be a bit shorter than usual. At the moment I am studying to take a number of exams the first weekend in April at a hotel in East Sussex. Now you would think that with all the time on my hands? that would not be a problem BUT for the past few weeks I have suffered with gout. For some reason this always makes people laugh so I must assume that they have never had it. I have been assured by a lady who works in the office with me that gout is worse than childbirth and she has experienced both. I will take her word for it. But it gives an example of the pain that you suffer and there is no doubt that gout occupies your thoughts and actions the whole time, to the exclusion of everything else, including studying for my exams. The result is that I am now behind schedule and trying to catch up on lost time; hence the short article.

I must make it quite clear at this stage that I do not expect any sympathy. From matelots? Fat chance. When I was on HMS Messina in the Gulf in 1962 I was on one occasion carrying a large pot of non-skid green paint from the paint store to my Landing Craft when I slipped on the wet deck. I fell and hit my head on a piece of machinery opening up a large gash and knocking myself unconscious. I was informed later that the Upper Deck PO screamed "My deck, my deck" as green non-skid spread all over his freshly painted red deck, and grabbed loads of old cloth to mop it up, totally ignoring me laying in a pool of blood.

The other downside of gout is that I have finally decided to sell my beloved sports car and buy an automatic. Having to change gear is now becoming difficult and for safety and comfort reasons the decision has been made, the sports car must go. Now would be a good time to offer sympathy!

I must get on. My presentation this weekend to the Guild of Battlefield Guides is Operation Neptune, more specifically the Landing Craft part of the operation. To RNA/RMA members this is bread and butter stuff but to the uninitiated, i.e. pongoes, it is a vague science that they know nothing about.

I will let you know how I got on.

Secretary's Report

Shipmate Wendy Howard

RNA Norwich are proud to announce that Kenyon Mansfield has received the insignia Legion d'Honneur (Chevalier). Kenyon's son, George, telephoned to advise. Our congratulations go to Kenyon.

The widow of Leonard Lines has very kindly sent a cheque for £50 for the RNA Norwich and a week later Leonard's daughter also sent a cheque for £50.

We have a new member who joined via HQ – his name is David Evans and he is our youngest member at 22 years old! We now have a membership age span of 22 to 103 years!

Armed Forces Day is on the 25th June, Saturday – more details to follow.

The National Museum of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth are holding an exhibition called 'Women in the Navy' from March to the end of November 2016. There is a shop on WRNS 100 website – www.wrns100.co.uk selling commemorative items.

HMS Hermes

The flagship of the assault force that re-captured the Falkland Islands from Argentina in 1982 has been bought for one rupee (less than a penny) by the state of Andhra Pradesh. £85m is to be spent on transforming it into a hotel and tourist attraction in India, moored in the Bay of Bengal. Named Viraat, which means 'giant' in Sanskrit, it is expected to open in two years' time.

Welfare Report

Shipmate Reg McGuire

Marriage Allowance

If you or a member of your family have access to the internet, this may be worth your time. Search on the web for www.gov.uk/marriage-allowance.

If you or your wife/husband/civil partner have a total income of less than your tax allowance. You could save £212. The tax free allowance is presently £10600 but goes up in April to £11000. Take away from that £1060. If one of you has a total income of less than that, worth claiming. As I understand this is based on Pensions ONLY and not disability benefits etc but PLEASE CHECK

Tax Advice

“Tax help for older people” is run by a charity called Tax Volunteer. They usually have surgeries in a local CAB office or Age UK.. Need advise, call 08456013321/01308488066. They have a web sight called Taxvol.org.uk

David Lees Funeral

Will take place at 1130 on 15th April at Earlham Chapel, just to the right of the crematorium. David only has a daughter living in the USA and is unable to attend. David also has a nephew but his intentions are not known. Please make every effort to attend. Afraid I will not be able to as I will be on the I.O.W.

The drop in centre at Britannia Barracks was officially opened 31st March by General Lord Dannett.

It has been called the Britannia Veterans Centre. Boards have now been made and placed to enable viewing. The cafe is just next door. It is intended to be open for the moment on a Monday, Tuesday and Friday.

Jutland Service

This will be held at Earlham Cemetery, Commonwealth War Grave on 31st May Muster 1015, service starts at 1045, Last Post sounded at 1100. It is hoped the Deputy Lord Mayor will attend. All Welcome. This battle lasted for about 12 hours during which time almost 10000 lost their lives, most of them British, just under 7000.

Take care and be good

Reg

In Memoriam

Shipmate David James Lees

Served: 1953 – 1959

AB - C/JX 930988

HMS Ganges - HMS Defender - HMS
Birmingham - HMS Lock Kinsport

Crossed the Bar: 18 March 2016

Aged: 77

Holder of the Fire Service Long Service &
Good Conduct Medal

‘May he have found a Safe Anchorage’

From The Monthly Circular

Shipmates and Oppos – Launch 27 January 2016

The Naval Secretary, Rear Admiral Simon Williams CVO, officially launched the Royal Navy's 'Shipmates and Oppos Programme' at the Navy's HQ in Portsmouth. The Programme offers free practical advice and a support service for everyone who leaves the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Reserves.

The Programme, funded by Greenwich Hospital and administered by the Royal Naval Association, supports leavers during their transition to civilian life and during the important 5 years post discharge.

Apart from the Royal Navy as the main partner, the launch was also attended by the partner charities: the Royal Marines Association; the Association of Royal Navy Officers and the White Ensign Association – as well as Senior Executives from Naval Sector Charities who work with serving and retired naval personnel.

Everyone, regardless of their rank, trade and number of days served (or whether they have been medically discharged) can call upon the Programme for practical support as often as they need it. Although most Service leavers experience a smooth transition to civilian life, some do not and the Shipmates and Oppos Programme aims to provide 'an arm around the shoulder' and guide service leavers through the maze of State and Charitable sector help available.

All Royal Navy/Royal Marines Service leavers will be provided with a Shipmates and Oppos Programme membership card at their point of release. The credit card sized membership card has a contact number on the back where they will find ex Naval personnel, who speak their language on the other end, and will be able to help them find the support they need.

The Programme includes an offer where members may claim one year's free membership to any of the partner associations. Those who have already left the Service can apply to join the programme at shipmatesandoppos.org.uk.

2016 National Armed Forces Day 25 June 2016 – Cleethorpes

Cleethorpes is hosting the National Armed Forces Day this year and those wishing to participate in the parade must complete a Parade Application Form ASAP.

Completed forms can found at the rear of Circular and can either be posted or emailed to:

Gavin Marshall
Armed Forces Events Team
Knoll House
Knoll St
Cleethorpes
DN35 8LN

<mailto:gavin.marshall@nelincs.gov.uk> / www.armedforcescleethorpes.co.uk

Shipmate Submissions

Manure...

Shipmate Keith Smith

An interesting fact Manure:

In the 16th and 17th centuries, everything had to be transported by ship and it was also before the invention of commercial fertilizers, so large shipments of manure were quite common.

It was shipped dry, because in dry form it weighed a lot less than when wet, but once water (at sea) hit it, not only did it become heavier, but the process of fermentation began again, of which a by-product is methane gas of course.

As the stuff was stored below decks in bundles you can see what could (and did) happen. Methane began to build up below decks and the first time someone came below at night with a lantern, BOOM!

Several ships were destroyed in this manner before it was determined just what was happening. After that, the bundles of manure were always stamped with the instruction 'Stow high in transit' on them, which meant for the sailors to stow it high enough off the lower decks so that any water that came into the hold would not touch this volatile cargo and start the production of methane.

Thus evolved the term 'S.H.I.T' (Stow High In Transit) which has come down through the centuries and is in use to this very day.

You probably did not know the true history of this word. Neither did I. I had always thought it was a golf term.

Breakfast Club

Shipmate Gus Honeywood

Following the success of the Breakfast Club, we have arranged our next breakfast club get together for **Saturday 7 May 2016** at the Dixie's Diner on School Lane, Norwich.

We will be meeting at 1000 and a link for the event can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/events/1565511163776971/> for those that use Facebook.

Again I would be most grateful if all those that wish to attend could let me know in advance, as the Cafe does become very busy and they have requested that we confirm numbers with them a couple of days before the meet-up.

Just as a heads up, Junes Breakfast Club will take place on **Sunday 5 June 2016** at House Cafe on St Benedict's Street, Norwich.

HMS Invincible Memorial - Happisburgh

Shipmate Rob Stephens

On 16 March 1801, HMS Invincible was lost in a shipwreck off the coast of Norfolk, England. She had been sailing from Yarmouth under the flag of Rear-Admiral Thomas Totty in an effort to reach the fleet of Admiral Sir Hyde Parker in the Sound preparing for the upcoming attack on the Danish fleet, with approximately 650 people on board. As the ship passed the Norfolk coast, she was caught in heavy wind and stuck on the Hammond Knoll Rock off Happisburgh, where she was pinned for some hours in the afternoon before breaking free but immediately being grounded on a sandbank, where the effect of wind and waves tore down the masts and began to break up the ship. She remained in that position for all of the following day, but late in the evening drifted off the sandbank and sank in deep water.

The Admiral and 195 sailors escaped the wreck, either in one of the ship's boats or were picked up by a passing collier and fishing boat, but over 400 of their shipmates drowned in the disaster, most of them once the ship began to sink in deeper water. The compulsory court martial investigating the incident, held on Ruby in Sheerness, absolved the admiral and the captain (posthumously) of culpability in the disaster, posthumously blaming the harbour pilot and the ship's master, both of whom had been engaged to steer



1 - Memorial at Happisburgh with Wreaths after the service on 19 March 2016.



2 - Shipmates Mark Boast, Rob Stephens, Neville Townsend and Dale Mason at the HMS Invincible Memorial

the ship through the reefs and shoals of the dangerous region, and should have known the location of Hammond Knoll, especially since it was daytime and in sight of land.

The remains of many of her crew were located by chance in a mass grave in Happisburgh churchyard during the digging of a new drainage channel. A memorial stone was erected in 1998 to their memory by the Ship's Company of the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Invincible, and by the Happisburgh parochial church council.

Prior to the Memorial Service on 19 March 2016, Shipmates Rob Stephens, Neville Townsend, Dale Mason and Mark Boast visited Happisburgh to ensure the memorial stone was cleaned and tidied in preparation for the Service.

The Bed

Shipmate Keith Smith

Ever since I was a child, I've always had a fear of someone under my bed at night, so I finally went to a shrink and told him "I've got problems. Every time I go to bed I think there's somebody under my bed!! I'm scared. I think I'm going crazy."

"Just put yourself in my hands for one year", said the shrink. "Come talk to me three times a week and we should be able to get rid of those fears."

"How much do you charge, I asked?"

"Eight Pounds per visit", replied the doctor.

"I'll sleep on it", I said.

Six months later the doctor met me on the street. 'Why didn't you come to see me about those fears you were having?' he asked.

"Well, eight pounds a visit, three times a week for a year, is £1248.00. A bartender cured me for £10.00. I was so happy to have saved all that money that I went and bought me a new car.

"Is that so?" With a bit of an attitude he said, "And how, may I ask, did a Bartender cure you?"

"He told me to cut the legs off the bed. Ain't nobody under there now."

FORGET THE SHRINKS. HAVE A DRINK & TALK TO A BARTENDER!

IT'S ALWAYS BETTER TO GET A SECOND OPINION

Many Thanks

Shipmate Pat Whiley

I would like to thank you all for your support over the last 12 years during my time as Social Sec. However, it is time to stand down to let some new brains in to think of new things.

I will still be involved with Trafalgar night dinner with Barbara.

In addition, we will be holding a bucket collection on 19 and 20 of August at Morrison's Wymondham, with times to be confirmed.

Names please for Trafalgar Night and Morrisons.as soon as possible.

Please support Les Wheatley as the new Social Sec, and give him all help you can.

Once again many thanks.

Pat W

Old Versus New

Shipmate Keith Smith

With the event on TV about the Royal Naval Initial Training programme there has been an awful lot of comments from older ex services personnel.

A lot has been said about HMS Ganges and St Vincent being the better training establishments and in my opinion they were, and that in most cases but not all that would be the reaction from the majority who trained there.

We from the moment we arrived were under close scrutiny and in the first four weeks were ran from pillar to post learning the basics of marching, discipline and the embroidering of our names into every item of kit (Woe betide if you had a name such as Sidebottom) and culminating in the inevitable compulsory boxing match. (Won my first bout then came up against a chap who knocked seven bells out of me. He ended up as a naval boxer) Never wanted to box again.

Over to the main establishment and the first climbing of the formidable mast a feat which looked easy as we only had to go onto the devil's elbow. This being a part of the mast which protrudes out approx. six feet from the mainmast. We could see at this point a way through the decking, so easy we thought.

Wrong, it was pointed out that we had to go round it not through it which entailed as I remember meant leaning backwards at an angle of about seventy degrees reaching up to grasp the rattline overhead then letting go with the legs and pulling oneself onto the platform. Pretty terrifying for a 15-year-old but later we swarmed all over the mast and all without safety equipment.

As a matter of fact, apart from sailing and having a lifejacket I cannot remember health and safety ever being mentioned, but that was the sixties for you. Discipline was strict and punishments could be severe. Many who trained at Ganges will never forget doubling up and down Laundry Hill or the memory of Faith, Hope and Charity those three flights each of about 25 steps.

Up you go and back down said our instructor, off we charged, completed the task and were then told, too slow do it again. Sometimes this was repeated several times until we had no breath left and no strength in our legs to carry on. But we did. Yes, we had it hard at times but we also had a lifetime of memories when we left after a year of life changing routines.

They say once a Ganges boy always a Ganges boy, a saying that most who went there will subscribe to.

I was aware that older recruits were sent to HMS Raleigh but at that time was unaware what they went through or the time their training took but believe it was considerably less than the year we did.

I am sure that some of our younger members went to Raleigh and they probably in their time found the transition from civvy street to naval life a daunting time but was it the same as now.

This brings me on to the current series on TV which has caused much comment from the older generation and yes some of which is again in my opinion somewhat justified. However, this is television and I do not think they have done the Royal Navy any credit with this programme, it makes me wonder if this programme was vetted before allowing it to go out.

The producers have spent far too much time on trivial things i.e. 'I have run out of shoe polish Chief' (Well go and buy some or better still borrow some from your oppo)

I am by no means a prude and can live with the best on cursing but is it necessary for the instructors to constantly berate the recruits with the worst kind of swearing. Must admit that all the people I have remarked on this think the same as me on the staff, pretty poor show.

Made a remark at the recent sea cadets awards to other shipmates and it was the general opinion that we couldn't remember instructors in our time actually swearing at us. Called us every name under the sun but without the swear words.

Maybe it is time for the ancient mariners to take a back seat on remarking upon training methods, it was certainly a different navy that we joined and I suppose that we have to realise a much less technical one and with the constant barrage of health and safety and human rights issues totally alien to most of us.

Fifty plus years ago it was a different generation, I think we will have to live with that thought.

The Battle of Jutland

Shipmate Reg McGuire

The **Battle of Jutland** (German: *Skagerrakschlacht*, the Battle of Skagerrak) was a naval battle fought by the British Royal Navy's Grand Fleet under Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, against the Imperial German Navy's High Seas Fleet under Vice-Admiral Reinhard Scheer during the First World War. The battle was fought from 31 May to 1 June 1916 in the North Sea, near the coast of Denmark's Jutland Peninsula. It was the largest naval battle and the only full-scale clash of battleships in the war. It was the third fleet action between steel battleships, following the smaller but more decisive battles of the Yellow Sea (1904) and Tsushima (1905) during the Russo-Japanese War.

The High Seas Fleet's intention was to lure out, trap and destroy a portion of the Grand Fleet, as the German naval force was insufficient to openly engage the entire British fleet. This formed part of a larger strategy to break the British blockade of Germany and to allow German mercantile shipping to operate. Meanwhile, the Royal Navy pursued a strategy to engage and destroy the High Seas Fleet, or keep the German force contained and away from Britain's own shipping lanes.

The German plan was to use Vice-Admiral Franz Hipper's fast scouting group of five modern battlecruisers to lure Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty's battlecruiser squadrons into the path of the main German fleet. Submarines were stationed in advance across the likely routes of the British ships. However, the British learned from signal intercepts that a major fleet operation was likely, so on 30 May Jellicoe sailed with the Grand Fleet to rendezvous with Beatty, passing over the locations of the German submarine picket lines while they were unprepared. The German plan had been delayed, causing further problems for their submarines which had reached the limit of their endurance at sea.

On the afternoon of 31 May, Beatty encountered Hipper's battlecruiser force long before the Germans had expected. In a running battle, Hipper successfully drew the British vanguard into the path of the High Seas Fleet. By the time Beatty sighted the larger force and turned back towards the British main fleet, he had lost two battlecruisers from a force of six battlecruisers and four battleships, against the five ships commanded by Hipper. The battleships, commanded by Rear-Admiral Sir Hugh Evan-Thomas, were the last to turn and formed a rear-guard as Beatty withdrew, now drawing the German fleet in pursuit towards the main British positions. Between 18:30, when the sun was lowering on the western horizon, back-lighting the German forces, and nightfall at about 20:30, the two fleets – totalling 250 ships between them – directly engaged twice.

Fourteen British and eleven German ships were sunk, with great loss of life. After sunset, and throughout the night, Jellicoe manoeuvred to cut the Germans off from their base, hoping to continue the battle the next morning, but under the cover of darkness Scheer broke through the British light forces forming the rear-guard of the Grand Fleet and returned to port.

Both sides claimed victory. The British lost more ships and twice as many sailors, and the British press criticised the Grand Fleet's failure to force a decisive outcome, but Scheer's plan of destroying a substantial portion of the British fleet also failed. The Germans' "fleet in being" continued to pose a threat, requiring the British to keep their battleships concentrated in the North Sea, but the battle confirmed the German policy of avoiding all fleet-to-fleet contact. At the end of the year, after further unsuccessful attempts to reduce the Royal Navy's numerical advantage, the German Navy turned its efforts and resources to unrestricted submarine warfare and the destruction of Allied and neutral shipping which by April 1917 triggered the United States of America's declaration of war on Germany.

Subsequent reviews commissioned by the Royal Navy generated strong disagreement between supporters of Jellicoe and Beatty concerning the two admirals' performance in the battle. Debate over their performance and the significance of the battle continues to this day.

The total loss of life was 9,823 men, of which the British losses were 6,784 and German losses were 3,039. No dreadnoughts were destroyed on either side during the battle.

British

113,300 tons sunk:

- Battlecruisers *Indefatigable*, *Queen Mary*, *Invincible*
- Armoured cruisers *Black Prince*, *Warrior*, *Defence*
- Flotilla leaders *Tipperary*
- Destroyers *Shark*, *Sparrowhawk*, *Turbulent*, *Ardent*, *Fortune*, *Nomad*, *Nestor*

German

62,300 tons sunk:

- Battlecruiser *Lützow*
- Pre-Dreadnought *Pommern*

- Light cruisers *Frauenlob, Elbing, Rostock, Wiesbaden*
- Destroyers (Heavy torpedo-boats) *V48, S35, V27, V4, V29*

Selected honours

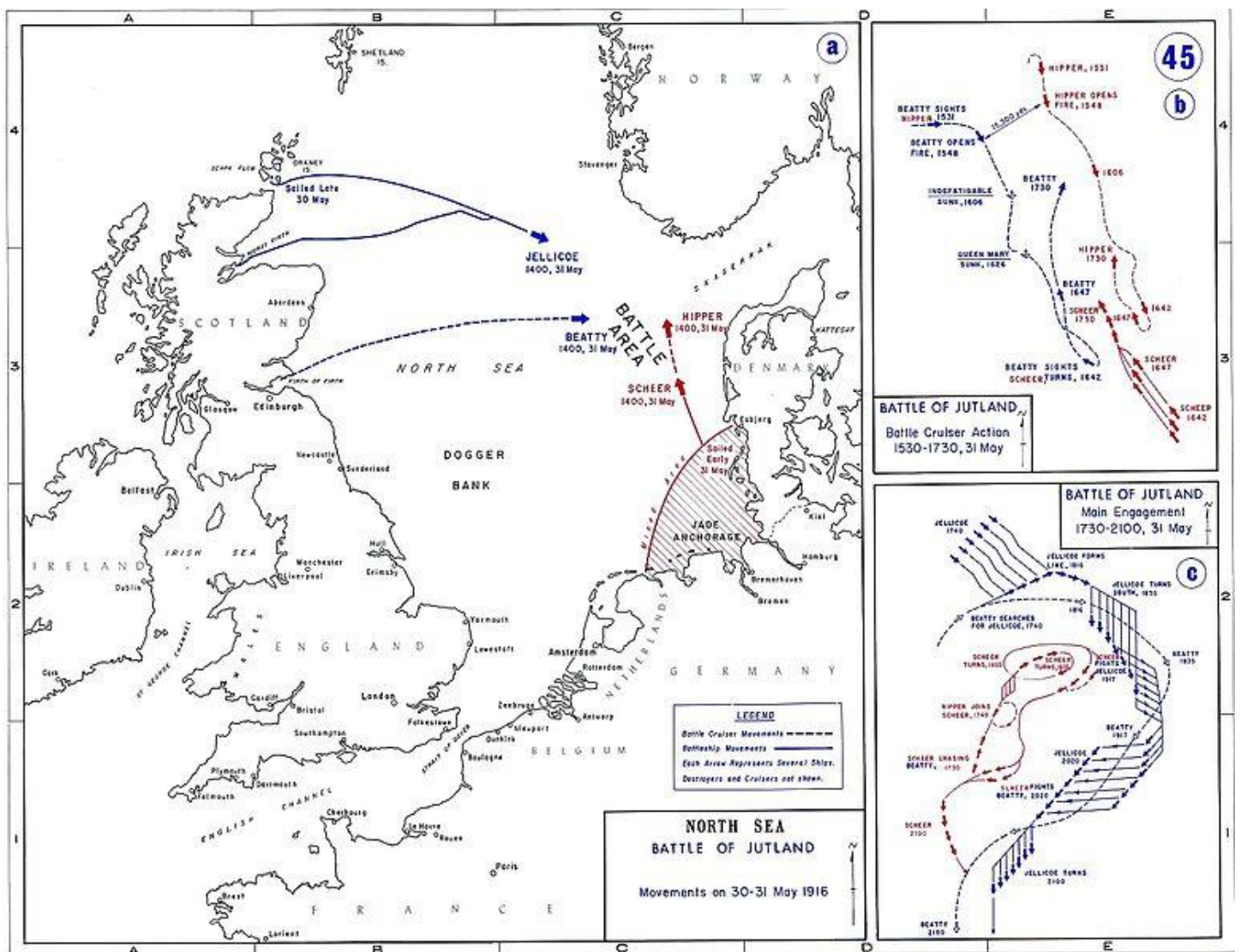
The Victoria Cross is the highest military decoration awarded for valour "in the face of the enemy" to members of the British Empire armed forces. The Ordre pour le Mérite was the Kingdom of Prussia and consequently the German Empire's highest military order until the end of the First World War.

Pour le Mérite

- Franz Hipper (SMS *Lützow*)
- Reinhard Scheer (SMS *Friedrich der Grosse*)

Victoria Cross

- The Hon. Edward Barry Stewart Bingham (HMS *Nestor*)
- John Travers Cornwell (HMS *Chester*)
- Francis John William Harvey (HMS *Lion*)
- Loftus William Jones (HMS *Shark*)



3 - Map showing the movements of the British and German fleets during the Battle of Jutland in May 1916

Calendar of Events – 2016

2016

April

2nd Breakfast Club—Café Britannia, Britannia Road
6th Committee Meeting
12th Branch Meeting

May

4th Committee Meeting
7th Breakfast Club— Dixies Diner, School Lane
10th Branch Meeting

June

5th Breakfast Club—House Café 52, St. Benedict's
(TBC)
8th Committee Meeting
14th Branch Meeting

July

2nd Breakfast Club—Harty's Diner, Heigham Street
(TBC)
6th Committee Meeting
10th Rededication Service – St. Matthews Church
12th Branch Meeting

August

3rd Committee Meeting
6th Hoveton Bucket Collection
7th Breakfast Club—No 33, Exchange Street (TBC)
9th Branch Meeting
19th Bucket Collection - Morrison's, Wymondham
20th Bucket Collection - Morrison's, Wymondham

September

3rd Breakfast Club— Louis' Deli, Upper St Giles
Street (TBC)
7th Committee Meeting
13th Branch Meeting

October

1st Breakfast Club— Pandora's Kitchen, London
Street (TBC)
5th Committee Meeting
11th Branch Meeting
21st Trafalgar Day
22nd Trafalgar Night

November

2nd Committee Meeting
6th Pickle Night
Breakfast Club— Sunny Side Up, Hall Road
(TBC)
11th Armistice Day
13th Remembrance Sunday
8th Branch Meeting

December

4th Breakfast Club— The Muddy Cup, Distillery
Square (TBC)
7th Committee Meeting
13th Branch Meeting

Future Editions of Up Spirits

Shipmate Gus Honeywood

The next edition of Up Spirits will be published for the June Branch Meeting, and I would request that all submissions for that edition are forwarded to me by 22 May 2016.

If you have any submissions for Up Spirits then you can email them to me at rna.norwich@gmail.com.

All submissions will be gratefully received.