



Unity - Loyalty
Patriotism & Comradeship

Up Spirits!

NORWICH BRANCH NEWS

**Branch Hon. Secretary
and Editor**

Shipmate Gus Honeywood
11 Lakeland Way
Hethersett
Norfolk
NR9 3QA
01603 947391
E-mail: rna.norwich@gmail.com

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

This month we have an article from S/M Peter Cook on his trip to the Marchlands Maritime Museum and S/M Alf Wiggins sharing photos from the 1989 Rededication.

Articles from The Monthly Circular and Up Spirits are also available on the Branch Website along with postings on Naval History and Traditions.

Inside This Issue

From the Quarterdeck – The President’s Piece.....	1
Chairman’s Report	2
Secretary’s Report	3
Welfare Report.....	3
From the Monthly Circular.....	3
Shipmate Submissions	4
Mike Smith’s Birthday	5
Branch History	5
Nelson	5
Calendar of Events – 2019 – 2020	7
Future Editions of Up Spirits	7

From the Quarterdeck – The President’s Piece

Shipmate Mike Mizen

The holiday season is upon us and people all over the country are either on holiday or getting ready to go. It should be an exciting time but if recent events are anything to go by it could be anything but. I have been reliably informed that the most stressful time in a person’s life is getting divorced and moving house. I would like to add, in third place, going on holiday. You’ve read the brochures, made the decision, checked the Bank account, and booked. You are now entirely in the hands of people who are NOT going on holiday and who really couldn’t care less about you as long as you have paid. In the last few days a travel and hotel booking company has folded, leaving thousands of people stranded abroad. A national airline decided, at the last moment, that they would call off their strike as they are now going to get more money, and so it continues. Summer is always a good time for industrial action because of the disruption that will be caused and who suffers the most? You do!

I hope you have a lovely holiday!

PS If you are travelling abroad, ALWAYS take a good book and a bottle of water! You may need both.

I feel better for that. Now, what’s next. Ah yes, Brexit. I don’t understand most of it and I don’t know too much about the people involved, only what I see on the TV or read in the newspapers. I have decided that the best way to deal with all the

continuing bad news (or good news, depending which way you voted) is to walk round with a smile on your face. It infuriates people because they think you know something that they don't, and they will avoid you. Not long ago I was in the Walk when I was approached by someone with a clipboard at the ready. I gave the person that 'knowing' smile and they promptly ignored me and walked past to interview the poor person behind me. It works, try it, although you may need to practise in front of the mirror.

Since the last Newsletter we have had all the celebrations and commemorations of the 75th anniversary of D-Day. I would like to thank all of you who were able to get involved, in whatever capacity. The RNA was, once again, in the forefront and I can assure you that it does not go unnoticed. What was especially poignant was the way that Fred Fitch was saluted by those both in and out of uniform and the accolades are richly deserved. Fred has been a staunch member of both the RNA and the RMA for many years and he has not only supported both Branches with his regular attendance but has also raised thousands of pounds for their respective charities. Just as importantly, he has been ably supported by his wife Edna and I was very pleased when both of them were invited to the Royal Norfolk Show and both were treated as VIP's. Having the support of your partner is very important!

Finally, I would just like to talk about that word 'support'. Within the family it is a 'given' that you support one another so I won't dwell on that. I am talking about supporting one another within the Branch. The reason that our Branch is as strong as it is, is because a number of people (namely your committee) work hard to offer and arrange a host of different activities that will benefit, or entertain, or support the members and it is up to you to reciprocate by doing all you can to back them up. I am fully aware that we are all busy doing one thing or another, that members have families and work commitments to take into consideration, but unfortunately, we sometimes forget that Branch activities need support as well. I have seen too many Branches either stagnate or close down because the support from the members was not there and no one must take for granted that we are immune from that happening to us.

Support Branch activities be they parades, or commemorations, or days out, whatever. It's a chance for us to get together again in a common cause and the friendly banter and mickey we (I) have to take is a throwback to our Service days and when you think about it, you did enjoy that time didn't you!

Chairman's Report

Shipmate Nev Townsend

Welcome to another edition of Up Spirits. On the social front it has been a busy few months. Towards the end of June, we had our gazebo up and running at the Royal Norfolk Show for the first time and we were part of the military village on both days. I think it worked well and I expect this to be the norm from now on. Special mention to Shipmate Freddie Fitch who was the VIP guest on the second day. He told the branch about his day with his wife Edna and how well they were treated. The highlight was Freddie taking the salute at the military parade late on Thursday evening, nice one Freddie.

Armed Forces Day (AFD) 29th June and we had a BBQ at the Chairman's house thankfully the weather played ball yet again. The Army was drinking whiskey at the end of the night and of course, the Navy had moved onto the rum. Few sore heads in the morning.

The next day we celebrated our 40th anniversary with a lunch at Wensum Valley golf club. 35 members enjoyed a very good lunch.

Our latest Run Ashore took place on the 06th July at the Unthank Arms in Norwich. A good night had by all; my cycle home was interesting but without incident thankfully.

A few of our members attended the family's day at RAF Marham at the end of the month which attracted a good turnout on the day. Feedback from one of our members indicated that it was a good but a very hot day.

Phil Coates has stood down from his role as Welfare Officer due to work commitments. This is fully understandable, as family and work come first. Phil many thanks for the time and effort you put in as Welfare Officer it is very much appreciated by the Committee.

Last week myself and Shipmate Mike Wilkinson went to PC World and purchased a new printer for the branch and the HP that has been purchased represents good value for the next 3 years and beyond.

I see that with a new Prime Minister comes new promises of more money to build more ships for the Royal Navy in the future. Sadly we have been here before so excuse me if I remain a tad sceptical over this news. The way our fleet has been run down over the past 30 years is criminal and those Admirals who backed the cuts should hang their collective heads in shame.

Finally another piece from Jackspeak.

Drongo – Rather nice term of general abuse for the slovenly or ill-disciplined individual.

Secretary's Report

Shipmate Gus Honeywood

Welcome again Shipmates to the latest edition of Up Spirits, the last couple of months have again been relatively busy for the Branch and its members. The next couple of months are less hectic and it will be chance to enjoy the end of the summer before the nights noticeably draw in and we head into another busy time of the year for the Branch; encompassing our Trafalgar Night dinner, Armistice and Remembrance Parades and Rededication Service at November's Branch Meeting.

Unless you have been living on the dark side of the moon, you can't help but have noticed that the Royal Navy has been the subject of a number of news stories over the last month or so, the first coming with the report that HMS Queen Elizabeth was sinking! Yes, according to a number of news sources the ingress of water on the Flagship of the Fleet was so severe she was lucky to have stayed afloat. As the old saying goes; never let the truth get in the way of a good dit!

Detracting slightly for a moment, it really does get on my chimes when a news presenter refers to a ship as 'the HMS'; for goodness sake, how misinformed can these people be.

The next media appearance for the Royal Navy; well to be more precise, the Royal Marines; was the boarding of the Grace 1 super-tanker as it passed through the Strait of Gibraltar. This of course had ramifications and it wasn't too long before pressure increased in the Gulf, with a British super-tanker having been boarded by Iranian Forces and HMS Montrose escorting assets through the Straits of Hormuz, with HMS Duncan having now also arrived in theatre.

All this action was met with a couple of 'memes' on social media, one being the face pulled when 'Iran start boarding tankers a week before summer leave'. This particular meme rang a bell in the darkest recesses of my mind as it sprang back to Thursday 2 August 1990 and waking up to the news that Iraq had invaded Kuwait. I was serving on HMS Brazen at the time, and we were due to be deploying to the Gulf in September, which was to include a trip to Mombasa for two weeks station leave. We proceeded on Summer Leave as normal on 3 August, but by the time we returned the situation had changed significantly. The US and UK were beginning the build-up of forces in the Gulf region and if my memory serves me correctly, we deployed earlier than had been planned, and instead of heading to Portland for work-up we undertook this procedure whilst transiting the Mediterranean. We were due to handover from HMS Battleaxe at the beginning of October, but this was put on hold as we encountered an Iraqi merchant man that we conducted a boarding on. The ship stayed in theatre until the end of February the following year, returning to Plymouth in early March where I proceeded on draft. Funny how one picture can invoke so many memories.

Welfare Report

Shipmate Phil Coates

Having just returned from a much needed short break at Center Parcs with the family, it makes you realise how valuable and precious time with your family really is. We were active every single day and it was a great way to forget about our work schedules and focus solely on the family. In an era when technology means your emails follow you everywhere, it was nice to be able to disconnect from the outside world and it's definitely good for the soul, maybe we should all try it on a regular basis? Well, sadly we can't stay too detached for long before it is time to come back to reality.

Something which recently cropped up during a business meeting was the subject of priority treatment for veterans, in fact it was the subject of a complaint. So, I thought I would take this opportunity to write a reminder about priority treatment for veterans in England and Wales. As veterans (which is anything from 1 day in service), we are entitled to priority treatment for conditions which are associated with time in Service i.e. the condition(s) is service-related. However, this is subject to clinical need and veterans are not entitled to jump the queue ahead of someone who has a higher clinical need. Priority treatment is not to be mistaken for preferential treatment and treatment, like it is for every patient will be based on clinical need.

Some of you may know that I run a company specialising in healthcare consultancy and the running of GP practices. Recently, the workload has significantly increased, for which I am not complaining, but with my wife (S/M Rhian Coates) working full time as a senior sister in critical care at the N&N and having two young daughters, my spare time has diminished somewhat and going back to my opening paragraph, I need to make sure I put family first. Unfortunately and with regret, I advised my fellow committee members that I must stand down as Welfare Officer, I am unable to offer Shipmates the support they need and even finding the time to make a call or visit a Shipmate in need is proving increasingly difficult. So rather than do the role an injustice, I made the decision to step down.

I would like to thank everyone for their support during my time as Welfare Officer and am certain my relief will excel in the role. I will continue to support the Committee and Branch as Vice Chairman (you won't get rid of me too easily!).

From the Monthly Circular

Government Cash

Shipmates please read the article below with some important information from Shipmate Rita Lock the National Welfare Advisor.

Too many pensioners are missing out on money which is rightfully theirs. This is not charity; it is something you have all worked and paid taxes for, so I urge you all to run a check on your entitlements with regard to benefits.

You may not be entitled to all of them, probably not, but even if it is just one benefit which helps to enhance your life then go for it!!

The benefits I am referring to are as follows:

Pension Credit (this is the one that could affect your TV license.) To pay or not to pay!

Council Tax benefit

Housing benefit

Disability benefits such as DLA, Carers Allowance (Are you helping your partner with many everyday functions? You might qualify)

Winter Fuel Allowance, 0800 731 0160

Most of the above cannot be back dated so if you delay in claiming you have lost money for good.

Pension Credit is a weekly means tested top-up, guaranteeing a basic minimum of £167.25 for singles and £255.25 for couples who are living together. **You can have a certain amount of savings and possibly still claim this benefit.** You might even get savings credit which is a certain amount added to your pension credit because you have saved. It depends on your total savings.

The severely disabled, carers and people who still have mortgage repayments can sometimes claim even if their income is higher than the figures stated.

Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance/Christmas Bonus/Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction and Personal Independence Payment are not included in certain calculations, so it is always worth asking.

How to apply

Call the pension service on 0800 99 1234 lines are open Monday – Friday 0800-2000 and Saturdays 0900-1300

email www.thepensionservice.gov.uk where you will find a pension calculator

Age UK have an excellent service for pension advice just call 0800 678 1602 they are manned **every day of the year** from 0800-1900

You can also visit your local Citizens Advice.

If or when you contact any of these agencies you will, need to have with you the following;

Your National Insurance Number

Your total income details and all information on any savings or investments you may have. The amount you may get will depend on your age, income, savings or state benefits you may already have.

Any of the agencies I have mentioned will help you to complete the forms and advise on Council Tax.

If you have savings try to ensure they are in an ISA (tax free) or a higher savings account. If you do not pay tax and find that tax has been deducted from your interest then call your tax office and ask for a tax rebate form. That can be back dated.

Now I have explained to you how to check your lawful entitlement and the only form you really need to complete yourself **(if you pay tax)** is the Gift Aid Form for the RNA.

I can assure you that there is NO invasion of privacy and the Inland Revenue will NOT be checking your details if you pay tax and complete that form.

It will bring added income to your Association and help to keep the subs down.

A reminder about the very good Travel Insurance through the Forces Pension Society. Have you got your bus pass or taxi vouchers?

That just leaves me to remind you to make a will so what you've got goes where you want it to go when you Cross the Bar. Its free with the TRBL just ring them on 020 3207 2253 or freewills@britishlegion.org.uk

Shipmate Submissions

Branch Run Ashore

Shipmate Gus Honeywood

The next Branch Run Ashore is organised for **Saturday 7 September 2019** at The Plasterers Arms, 43 Cowgate, Norwich, NR3 1SZ.

Mike Smith's Birthday

Shipmate Peter Cook

Here with a picture, presenting branch gift (Pussers rum flask) at the recent birthday celebration of Mike Smith from Marshlands Maritime Museum.

About sixty people attended Mike's eightieth birthday party and we met a number of members of RNA Branches throughout East Anglia.

We enjoyed having another look at his Naval Museum. It is certainly worth a visit

Branch History

Shipmate Alf Wiggins

Recently there has been speculation in the Branch as to which event the mystery photo could relate. It is established that it cannot be connected to the 1989 Rededication.

But, just as a matter of interest, and the fact that few of the current members would have had any knowledge of it, I am posting through some photos of the parade for the 1989 event.

As can be seen from the number of standards present, and the length of the parade, it was well supported by No.5 Area. No Royal Marine band was available, so the march was led by the Volunteer Blue Jacket Band from HMS Collingwood.



Nelson

Shipmate Gus Honeywood

Two important dates involving our local seafaring hero, Horatio Nelson, occur during the coverage of this edition of Up Spirits.

The end of September sees the birthdate of Horatio Nelson, who was born on 29 September 1758 in a rectory in Burnham Thorpe, Norfolk, England, the sixth of eleven children of the Reverend Edmund Nelson and his wife Catherine Suckling. He was named after his godfather Horatio Walpole (1723–1809) then 2nd Baron Walpole, of Wolterton.

His mother, who died on 26 December 1767, when he was nine years old, was a great-niece of Robert Walpole, 1st Earl of Orford, the de facto first Prime Minister of Great Britain. She lived in the village of Barsham, Suffolk, and married the Reverend Edmund Nelson at Beccles church, Suffolk, in 1749. Nelson's aunt, Alice Nelson was the wife of Reverend Robert Rolfe, Rector of Hilborough, Norfolk and grandmother of Sir Robert Monsey Rolfe. Rolfe twice served as Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain.

Nelson attended Paston Grammar School, North Walsham, until he was 12 years old, and also attended King Edward VI's Grammar School in Norwich. His naval career began on 1 January 1771, when he reported to the third-rate HMS *Raisonnable* as an ordinary seaman and coxswain under his maternal uncle, Captain Maurice Suckling, who commanded the vessel. Shortly after reporting aboard, Nelson was appointed a midshipman and began officer training. Early in his service, Nelson discovered that he suffered from seasickness, a chronic complaint that dogged him for the rest of his life.

The beginning of August sees one of Nelson's great naval battles, being the Battle of the Nile.

The Battle of the Nile (also known as the Battle of Aboukir Bay) was a major naval battle fought between the British Royal Navy and the Navy of the French Republic at Aboukir Bay on the Mediterranean coast off Egypt from 1 to 3 August 1798. The battle was the climax of a naval campaign that had ranged across the Mediterranean during the previous three months, as a large French convoy sailed from Toulon to Alexandria carrying an expeditionary force under then General Napoleon

Bonaparte. In the battle, the British fleet, led by Rear-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson, decisively defeated the French under Vice-Admiral François-Paul Brueys d'Aigalliers.

Napoleon Bonaparte sought to invade Egypt as the first step in a campaign against British India in an effort to drive Britain out of the French Revolutionary Wars. As Bonaparte's fleet crossed the Mediterranean, it was pursued by a British force under Nelson, who had been sent from the British fleet in the Tagus to learn the purpose of the French expedition and defeat it. For more than two months, he chased the French, on several occasions only missing them by a matter of hours. Bonaparte, aware of Nelson's pursuit, enforced absolute secrecy about his destination and was able to capture Malta and then land in Egypt without interception by the British naval forces.

With the French army ashore, the French fleet anchored in Aboukir Bay, 20 miles (32 km) northeast of Alexandria. Commander Vice-Admiral François-Paul Brueys d'Aigalliers believed he had established a formidable defensive position. When the British fleet arrived off Egypt on 1 August and discovered Brueys's dispositions, Nelson ordered an immediate attack. His ships advanced on the French line and split into two divisions as they approached. One cut across the head of the line and passed between the anchored French and the shore while the other engaged the seaward side of the French fleet. Trapped in a crossfire, the leading French warships were battered into surrender during a fierce three-hour battle, while the centre succeeded in repelling the initial British attack. As British reinforcements arrived, the centre came under renewed assault and at 22:00 the French flagship *Orient* exploded. With Brueys dead, and his vanguard and centre defeated, the rear division of the French fleet attempted to break out of the bay, but ultimately only two ships of the line and two frigates escaped, from a total of 17 ships engaged.

The battle reversed the strategic situation between the two nations' forces in the Mediterranean and entrenched the Royal Navy in the dominant position it would retain for the rest of the war. It also encouraged other European countries to turn against France and was a factor in the outbreak of the War of the Second Coalition. Bonaparte's army was trapped in Egypt, and Royal Navy dominance off the Syrian coast contributed significantly to its defeat at the Siege of Acre in 1799 that preceded Bonaparte's return to Europe. Nelson, who had been wounded in the battle, was proclaimed a hero across Europe and was subsequently made Baron Nelson, although he was privately dissatisfied with his rewards. His captains were also highly praised and would go on to form the nucleus of the legendary Nelsonic Band of Brothers. The legend of the battle has remained prominent in the popular consciousness, with perhaps the best-known representation being Felicia Hemans' 1826 poem *Casabianca*.

Calendar of Events – 2019 – 2020

2019

August

3rd	Area 5 Meeting – Rayleigh Bucket Collection – Roy's at Hoveton
6th	Committee Meeting – 1930
13th	Branch Meeting – 1930
17th	Quiz and Chips Evening – The Bush, NR8 5DD – 1900
28th	Stanford Battle Area Trip

September

3rd	Committee Meeting – 1930
7th	Branch Run Ashore – Plasterers Arms – NR3 1SZ – 2000
10th	Branch Meeting – 1930

October

1st	Committee Meeting – 1930
8th	Branch Meeting – 1930
12th	Edith Cavell Service
19th	Trafalgar Night Dinner – Wensum Valley Golf Club – 1930
20th	El Alamein Service - St Andrew's Church NR9 5BT - 1030

November

2nd	Area 5 Meeting – Harwich Branch Run Ashore – The Fat Cat, NR2 4NA – 2000 – Celebrating Pickle Night
3rd	Dunkirk Remembrance Service - St Paul's Chapel and War Memorial, NR9 5AP - 0930
5th	Committee Meeting – 1930
10th	Remembrance Day Parade – City Memorial – 1000
11th	Armistice Day Parade – City Memorial – 1045 Laying of Poppy Cross – St Peter Mancroft Church – 1115
12th	Branch Meeting – 1930

December

3rd	Committee Meeting – 1930
7th	Breakfast Club – TBA – 1000
10th	Branch Meeting – 1930

2020

January

7th	Committee Meeting – 1930
14th	Branch Meeting – 1930

February

2nd	Breakfast Club – TBA – 1000
4th	Committee Meeting – 1930
11th	Branch Meeting – 1930

March

3rd	Committee Meeting – 1930
10th	Branch Meeting – 1930

April

4th	Breakfast Club – TBA – 1000
7th	Committee Meeting – 1930
14th	Branch Meeting – 1930

May

2nd	Branch Run Ashore
5th	Committee Meeting – 1930
12th	Branch Meeting – 1930

June

2nd	Committee Meeting – 1930
9th	Branch Meeting – 1930

July

4th	Branch Run Ashore
7th	Committee Meeting – 1930
14th	Branch Meeting – 1930

August

4th	Committee Meeting – 1930
11th	Branch Meeting – 1930

September

1st	Committee Meeting – 1930
5th	Branch Run Ashore
8th	Branch Meeting – 1930

October

6th	Committee Meeting – 1930
13th	Branch Meeting – 1930

Future Editions of Up Spirits

Shipmate Gus Honeywood

The next edition of Up Spirits will be published for the October Branch Meeting, and I would request that all submissions for that edition are forwarded to me by 30 September 2019.

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

All submissions will be gratefully received.