

CAVALIER CAPERS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF
THE H.M.S. CAVALIER ASSOCIATION

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Chairman's Corner

I'm not sure where to start for this Capers, all we seem to hear about since March is Covid, and since the middle of the year Brexit. I have to say I'm frustrated with both subjects, and now we've gone into lockdown again; so that's all I'm going to say on the matter.

I, and I'm sure others were disappointed that we had to cancel the two working weekends this year, but looking forward to a brighter future I have made bookings for 2021, they are as follows:

24th – 25th April

2nd – 3rd October

Let's hope that we don't have to change these dates.

I've really missed our trips to the ship this year, as I'm sure all those that attend have. It's a chance to swing the lamp and remember the good times we had during our commissions. It's even nice to relive those trips across the Indian Ocean often regaled by Rowdy Yates, I'm sure he thinks we weren't there. And not forgetting the sumptuous evening meal and breakfasts supplied by CHDT. So next year make a date in your diaries and join the working weekends.

As you are all now aware with the demise of IoW Tours next years reunion has been cancelled.

The committee had a discussion on whether we should hold a postal vote, but the committee unanimously voted against this idea.

At our last AGM members voted for the next Northern reunion to take place in Llandudno. Covid hasn't changed this decision, therefore Llandudno still stands.

Any changes to the way we organise our reunions can be voted on at the next AGM.

Also, I'd like to assure the members that the committee has not been standing still, we have been in touch with other Naval Associations, some whom have used IOW Tours and some who haven't.

At a meeting last night, (Zoom) the committee voted on another event organiser (who came very highly recommended) to organise the Bristol and Llandudno reunions).

I know you'll all be rushing off to your computers to look the company up, all you have to do is type in SF Events and it will take you there.

Because we are unsure of Covid 19 impact in the early part of next year, we have agreed with the hotel to hold the Bristol reunion a weekend towards the end of September beginning of October.

The committee will be working closely with the new organiser to ensure that things run smoothly for her first reunion with the Cavalier Association.

Let us hope that we don't have to change these dates like we have in the past.

The committee has not had any calls regarding claiming back your monies from IoW Tours, so I guess things are working out well for everyone. Personally I've had confirmation that my claim has been accepted but no monies have appeared in my bank as yet.

I wish you all a Happy Christmas with your families and hopefully look forward to seeing you in the New Year either at the working weekend or reunion.

Tony Cox
Chairman

President's Dit

As I sit down to write this President's dit, I find it a little difficult to know what to say. It seems only yesterday that I wrote my last dit. In this strange time days can sometimes seem very long, but weeks flash past. Sometimes it is hard to remember what I have done because many days are just like each other. Yet even in this dangerous and confused time there have been benefits. We have nearly all lost someone we know, and even our Association has sadly lost members to the virus. On the other hand, we have also learned, or re-learned, valuable things; the importance of keeping in touch with extended families and friends; the way in which local neighbourhoods and communities have come together and have helped each other and the vulnerable members of their communities; how to enjoy those little pleasures which in our normal, busy lives we don't always notice; and how unexpected people have produced acts of great kindness and support. Much of it has been very heart warming, and even if many of us have sore backs from spending much more time digging the garden and (in my case) trimming unruly hedges, we have surely learned much about neighbourliness and kindness and the value of other people. I am sure that I am not alone in hoping that we can carry all these things forward into whatever kind of lifestyle awaits us in the months and years ahead.

It is a great sadness that we have not been able to hold our reunion this year, but I know all members understand the

problems. I would like to thank Tony and his committee colleagues for their work and efforts to try to keep the show on the road. I am sure you will all be as upset as I am about the demise of loW Tours, one of many small businesses eventually defeated by Covid-19. Shirley Winn and her team worked so hard to keep it going and to be as flexible and helpful as possible and it seems very unfair that they should not in the end have succeeded. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Shirley and our other friends at loW Tours and send them our very best wishes at this difficult time.

I know that Tony and the Committee are thinking hard about the future and how and when we can get together again. Obviously it must wait until the way ahead with Covid is much clearer, but I am sure that you, like me, are keenly looking forward very much to that and I hope as many members as possible will come along to share the occasion.

Jeremy Blackham

Vice Chairman's Report.

Not much to say this time as the situation speaks for it all. First few months of the year in total lockdown, with no pubs or socialising, pretty poor all round really. I do hope that none of our members have been struck down by this wretched disease.

It was unfortunate that this year's reunion was postponed then eventually shelved until next year hopefully. We are not

making any reunion plans until this Virus has been sorted out, and social gathering back on the cards.

As you all may have heard the IOW Tours have gone into administration and have ceased trading so the May reunion is off. Anyone who has paid for there reunion will be fully reimbursed as Shirley had a policy in place to cover it.

I am sorry to say that we cannot give any news yet about a reunion until this problem is all sorted. Looking forward to seeing you all when possible, until then I hope you all stay fit and well.

Dave Shardlow

Treasurers and Membership Bosuns Report

I wrote the article which follows before news of the IOW Tours demise which, whilst being a real blow to us will be a disaster for Shirley and her team and all those many employees that are now out of work. I fear there will be more of this to come for others before we see the end of it all. I am so sorry.

In this issue you should find the latest information on the way forward and to sorting a resolution.

At this juncture I would normally be reporting about the AGM, the Hotel and all the goings on but ,alas as you all know , it did not occur due to this blasted plague which is affecting all our lives to a lesser or greater extent. Looking at the situation as I write, I think you will all agree that postponement was the only way to go.

I hope that all of you are well, bearing up and taking all the requisite precautions. I wonder how Christmas is going to play out. Do we order the usual huge turkey or something more modest for a much smaller gathering?

Still, if that is our only concern then we are much better off than many.

As I write it has just been reported that our friend Mr Trump has come a cropper with Covid. That's what you get when you have a "CAVALIER" attitude! Whilst I think he is a dangerous, egotistical, vain and reckless man I do not wish him ill will and hope he does not succumb.

What the situation will be by the time you read this is anybody's guess, it could be him, Pence, Biden, his running mate or Uncle Tom Cobby. We live in worryingly exciting times.

On the home front Boris seems to be staggering under the load and sometimes appears to be somewhat lost and there are no shortage of people queueing up to criticise him but, I really do not think there is anybody out there who wouldn't be in the same predicament and certainly nobody that might do any better. For those reasons he has my full support!

Membership

Our current levels are	Full	116
	Assoc	19
	Life	10
	Hon	40
	Total	185

Although we have sadly lost some members due to their demise and god bless them all, we have acquired five new members all of whom are ex members returning to the fold. They are George Fraser 59/60, Gerry Harte 61/62 both of whom live in Canada,

Les Broughton 61/62 who lives in Wales, Cliff East 60/61 from S York's and Norman Carter 71/72 from Kent. So, welcome aboard gentlemen.

Incidentally, if any of you want to get in touch with a member whose details you have lost or do not have, then just contact me and after getting their permission I will put you in touch.

Finances

Nothing of consequence here. Although we have lost income from the delayed AGM from raffles auctions and the like we are still healthy and in good order with no major outgoings. The bulk of membership fees will start coming in shortly and from my point of view, the sooner the better as otherwise they all come in at once and I get rushed off my feet. After all, as you know, "Warming the bell is standard Naval practice". We have made two welfare payments recently to members who required help and we are pleased that we were able to do so. The payee's details are of course confidential.

You should, with Julies good offices, receive with this issue your membership slip.

So, on that note I will wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas (Whatever form it takes). Stay well and I hope to see many of you in Bristol in May.

I remain sirs and madams, your most obedient servant.

Alan Rowdy Yates

Secretaries Report

What a year, it's not been the best and I know we are all fed up with this Covid, it's putting pay to so much in our lives. The Reunion being cancelled is a big blow to us all, but I'm sure we will manage to all get together at some point next year. Tony, I know is working very hard behind the scenes to try and sort things out.

Thank you for all stories, pictures etc that you have sent in, please, please keep sending them, I haven't had anything in lately, usually I have enough to start our next issue, but sadly nothing yet, there must be some more stories out there, just waiting to be told. (If at all possible could they be typed and sent in "Word", makes life it a bit easier, thank you.)

WhatsApp, I will try again, sorry, I forgot to put my mobile number in the last Capers. So, if you fancy joining the Cavalier WhatsApp group for staying in touch with each other, messages, pictures etc my number is **07738 680015**. Just text me with your name and I will add you.

We have been having fun with the kids, painting pebbles, it's a thing lots of towns and villages do, ours is called "Biddenden Rocks" once painted you take them on your walk and hide them for the next person to find, re-hide and post on Facebook, below is our Cavalier Rock.



I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and hopefully a better New Year, take care and please stay safe.

Julie

Get that..... motorbike out of my sight cont..

With the arrival of the ship in Toulon and my first Naval Patrol behind me, it was time to land the bike. With the help of messmates, we unloaded the bike. The ship was alongside at the furthest point from the dockyards main entrance. For those who have not been to Toulon it is huge, like walking from Devonport South yard to the North yard. The French navy had made available a lay apart store adjacent to the ship. I could keep the bike there. This was very handy as the ship would be away for days at a time whilst on the French firing range, leaving the bike on the jetty was not a good idea. The location of Toulon is ideal for bike touring the Cote d'Azur, Provence's lovely climate, all this being interrupted by Exocet trials!

During the summer in a self-maintenance period, I took a week's holiday and my brother joined me and we toured along the coast to Italy, we visited Monaco, Avignon and Aix en Provence.

However, there are two events that stand out. Within a few days of arriving the "Social Secretary" of the mess had arranged a visit by the local Girls English Language College, for a tour of the ship and reception in the Pos mess. All I can say is that the girls really enjoyed the "fruit drink" provided from the large glass bowl created by the bar manager. During the evening I met Frederika who was into bike, so I arranged to take her out the following Thursday. On the Monday I submitted a request for a day's leave on Thursday to LT

Pacey. Back it came NG. Over the next couple of days I approached him as to why NG and various vague reasons were given. What I didn't know was the Wardroom had a cocktail party on the Saturday with local dignitaries including the Mayor of Toulon. LT Pacey had met a girl called Frederika, who turned out to be the Mayors daughter, who was attending an English speaking college. When pressing for a date, she informed him she had arranged to meet a PO the following Thursday, when pressed more, she gave my name. Anyway, I was would up for several days by LT Pacey and the Chief Jim Masters. Then all was revealed and my request was granted. We had several dates, but I suspect the Mayor of Toulon was not impressed with his daughter riding around on the back of a British sailors motorbike.

The second event was a bit more hair-raising and I nearly lost the bike. We arrived in Malta for a self -maintenance period. We were staying for 14 days, so landing the bike was worthwhile. The next couple of weeks were spent exploring the Island. On the second Sunday, the day before we were due to sail, I was out and about when I realized I was low on fuel, it soon became apparent that petrol stations did not open on Sundays. So I stopped at one parked up and got a taxi back to the ship. I asked the taxi driver if he would pick me up in the morning and take me back to the petrol station. This he did, I fueled up and made my way back to the ship, which by now was preparing to leave. As I arrived I immediately noticed that the main gangway had been lifted, all that was left was a narrow footbridge, no way was the bike going up there. I looked up and down the jetty in desperation, when I saw a lighter with a crane alongside about to lift the ships landrover. I took the bike to where the landrover was waiting. A Maltese dockyard worker was preparing straps, so I asked him if he would be prepared to load the bike as well, he looked a bit sceptical, I asked him if 200 dfs would help his decision making and he said yes. I legged it on board and returned

with 200dfs. I then returned to the ship and hovered in the vicinity of the flight deck. I am on board and my bike and 200dfs are ashore, a bum clenching moment, out came the lighter, I could not see the bike! Then as the landrover was lifted, my bike was revealed behind it, phew!! However, I wasn't the only person to see it, the Captain was on the wings

of the bridge, giving jimmy the hurry up, they both saw it. As the landrover touched down there was a pause which seemed like a lifetime before the jimmy gave the nod to the crane drive. As the bike landed on the flight deck I was beckoned by the jimmy towards the bike – **(you are invited to translate the following using naval jargon and expletives)** “PO would you kindly remove your bike from my sight line, stow it and put the cover over it as soon as you can, the C in C does not want to see it, particularly as we are now late for the passing salute!”



This was the first live firing of an Exocet by the Royal Navy
This took place off Gibraltar in the atlantic fired by HMS
Norfolk

The target was ex HMS Undaunted



A recent photograph 2019
About to set off touring Northern Spain
a bikers paradise

Colin Powell

DOING YER BIT

Sir Jeremy's comments about using our expertise in these trying times sent the old grey matter into motion!

In '62 whilst awaiting a twos course I spent some time on the accommodation ships HMS Bellerophon. At the time it was the old WWII Sheffield and Rame Head. I was part of a small 15man ferry crew. We were mainly ferrying ships from or to refit. Amongst them the Lafoton, a WWII tank landing ship, from Gibraltar to Portsmouth. That was 'interesting', no lighting, a cold ship towed by an RN tug, drinking water from a tank on deck and washing with saltwater soap. We got blown out into the Atlantic and (disaster) we ran out of cigarettes the tug shortened the tow and sent some back to us in a tin on a heaving line. However, I digress, as I'm apt to do!

In between ferrying I spent some time with the sailmaker on Bellerophon, from whom I learnt a great deal. He was a very industrious man, making things like car and motorcycle covers and other essential naval items! Many years later, long after leaving the mob, I happened to inherit an old hand cranked Singer sewing machine. This I put to good use repairing the grandchildren's clothing. It also did good work in making all the canvas reel and gun covers on the ship at Chatham. Now getting to the point!

During lockdown the nurses were crying out for scrubs, so with donated sheets, pillow cases and old curtains, I put the old Singer through its' paces and made I think it was about eighty draw string wash bags for our local hospitals. Many of the nurses when they've finished work put all the clothing they've worn in a wash bag, take it home and put it into the washing machine, bag and all. I was slightly embarrassed when someone awarded me a prize of a nice mug.

So yes, I was able to put to good use past expertise in a good cause.

Barry Knowle



A Commission in Cavalier

I find it hard to believe that April marked the 60th anniversary of the time I left Cavalier in Hong Kong after an eighteen-month stint in the Far East. We often hear people say that their last ship was the best, but for me it was always Cavalier that had that distinction. I was always a small ship man; I often said that any ship that was big enough to carry a boot-neck bugler would be too big for me. Fortunately, although I had no choice in the matter, I was invariably drafted to destroyers and frigates. Most of these, Chaplet, Tenacious, Urania and Cavalier were Emergency class destroyers in various stages of modification. The 1959-60 commission for me actually started in October 1958 when the advance party flew out to Singapore in an antiquated Hermes charter aircraft. It needed about seven refuelling stops, including an overnight stay in Karachi, where, due to an earlier accident at the civil airport, our aircraft had to land on the military airfield. As there were no baggage handlers available, a do-it-yourself effort was required.

The next three months included visits to Penang and Hong Kong, where Cavalier was possibly the last ship to use the dry dock at the Naval base before it was filled in. After Christmas we returned to Singapore, where the new commission officially began in January 1959.

In the CPOs mess down in the after end we really were 'Of One Company': Louis, Des, Matt, Eric, John, Colin, Knobby, Chippy, Frank, Charlie, Taff, Bert. During the commission, some left and some others joined on promotion. It's difficult to explain how sometimes a random bunch of men can get along together remarkably well. This was more than the usual camaraderie among ratings; that can be explained by the fact that they have a common enemy: the officers.

Part of the explanation may be that although the old port divisions had been abolished a couple of years previously, we were about equally divided between former Pompey and

Chatham ratings. There was a wide age range of around 15 years. Several members were World War veterans, most of whom, sadly, have since crossed the bar. I believe we all felt we could rely on each other, whether it might be in a storm at sea, or getting back to the ship after a boozy run ashore.

So, we settled down to 18 months, mainly in the tropics, without such luxuries as air conditioning or even a full set of bunks. During that time the only reasonable method of communicating with the people at home was by letter. To make a phone call to the UK meant booking it weeks in advance at a Cable and Wireless office. As the ship was often required to sail without much notice, this was rarely a possibility.

The commission followed a fairly typical pattern generally, and much of it has probably been described previously so it may be more appropriate to comment on a few fewer usual events. For instance, many of us may have collided with a lamp post when driving, riding a bike or even walking, especially after tot time, but hitting one with a destroyer must be rare. This happened when coming alongside in Singapore, where the bow flare overhung the jetty far enough for a dockside lamp standard to get in the way and become decidedly bent. Damage to the ship was minimal!

During a long refit in Singapore, the captain encouraged all hands to take some 'station leave' so a couple of us managed to get an indulgence passage with the RAF to Hong Kong, where we stayed at the China Fleet Club. Our stay there happened to include May Day, celebrated by the Chinese communist supporters. To prevent possible confrontations between those people and Navy personnel, all the ships went to sea and leave was stopped in shore establishments, so the two of us could have had the whole of Wanchai to ourselves. However, having seen some hostile crowds and police out in force, we decided to play it safe, and remained in the Fleet Club for the evening. It seems ironic that in recent times in HK, the hostility has been *against* mainland China.

The rest of that leave was uneventful, except for the fact that the aircraft for the flight back to Singapore, an ageing Hastings, developed a fault, which meant we had to stay for another two days. By this time, we had almost run out of money, so we chanced what we had on Tombola at the Dockyard Police Club. We didn't win, but a good friend did, and agreed to help us out, so we were able to survive until we finally left from the notorious Kai Tak airport.

Sometime after the refit and working-up period in Singapore, we were suddenly sent to sea without any indication as to where we might be going. There were all sorts of 'buzzes' but our actual destination was revealed after we were well clear of the port. We were heading for Gan, the southernmost island of Addu Atoll in the Maldives, about 30 miles from the equator. An airstrip was being built as a staging post for the RAF and it appeared that the British main contractor had sub-contracted a local firm to provide a labour force. Although this contractor had been paid in Ceylon rupees, they had paid the local labour in another currency of a much lower value. This had caused something of an insurrection, and the authorities had taken the traditional colonial response of "sending a gunboat". By the time we got there, all had quietened down, and we were able to enjoy the beaches and the hospitality of the RAF and their civilian works unit. We even had some friendly boat races with the locals.

Some years later, when another ship I was in visited Gan, it was being used as a Navy refuelling base, with an old tanker that had been moored in the lagoon so long it had grown its own coral reef. That all seems remote from the present situation, where the Maldivian Islands have become popular, luxurious and very expensive holiday resorts.

Another memorable destination was Saigon, where the ex-pat population, mainly British, French and American, seemed to view the arrival of a Navy ship as a welcome distraction from the normal routine. This was during a peaceful period in

Vietnam's troubled history. There was so much hospitality on offer that, at one point, part of the duty watch was sent ashore to accept some of the many invitations. There were some formal diplomatic receptions and tourist-type attractions such as the zoo and markets, but for most of us the days were usually spent recovering from the excesses of the previous nights.

At a later date, Cavalier, and some of the other ships of the 8th Destroyer Squadron assembled at Hong Kong prior to a planned visit to Tokyo. Cavalier had sociable contact with an army regiment in HK, and some of the soldiers were invited to come with us to Japan; a sergeant known as Rocky became a guest member of the CPO's mess.

Shortly after leaving HK, we encountered typhoon weather. A steel deck locker, known as a coffin due to its size and shape, disappeared during the night, despite being bolted to the deck, so somewhere in the China Sea there remains a part of Cavalier, if it hasn't rusted away by now. What was worse, the ship's side developed a split coinciding with one of the fuel tanks, so was leaking oil into the sea. As a result, we had to return to HK for repairs. The Navy dry dock no longer existed, so Cavalier had to use a commercial dock on the Kowloon side, with the ship's company accommodated in the Fleet Club, and ferried across the harbour daily. It was decreed that if the ship was seaworthy by a certain date, the visit to Tokyo could still be made. The deadline was met, so we prepared for sea. The army unit was notified that the invitation remained, but with a warning that weather conditions had not improved. During the aborted voyage poor Rocky was about as seasick as it's possible to be, and when he left us after returning, we all assumed that would be the last we would see of him. However, when we were about to sail again, he arrived with the rest of the troops; obviously a glutton for punishment, though we did hear that his wife had sent him to Tokyo with a shopping list. Needless to say he was just as sick the second time around.

This time, we reached Tokyo safely, and as we had been delayed, we were allowed to stay a few days after the other ships had left. That made it a lot less crowded for us, and we were able to take in some of the attractions, which had largely been rebuilt since the war. There were also, of course, a whole lot of bars to be sampled. That was where we discovered that the Japanese made whisky, not as good as Scotch, but a whole lot cheaper! By the time we left Tokyo, the typhoon had abated to some extent, so the return trip was a lot more comfortable.

At that stage in Cavalier's career, she still had a set of torpedo tubes, and there was a requirement to do a test firing for training purposes. One was a live attack on an unsuspecting rock somewhere, the other an inert launch, where the torpedo floats after it has reached its designated range and can be recovered for re-use. Unfortunately, on attempting recovery, the ship overran the torpedo, which collided with a propeller. The torpedo was lost forever, but as a memento it damaged the propeller, knocking it out of balance. This created a lot of vibration in the shaft, which ran under our mess, adding a bit more discomfort.

For the most part, the commission followed a fairly routine course, much of the time divided between Singapore and Hong Kong, with occasional visits to obscure places such as Pulau Tioman and Christmas Island (one of several with that name). The longest voyage was around a large part of Australia, visiting Fremantle, Adelaide, Hobart, Sydney and Darwin. In the harbour at Darwin were the remains of some ships that had been sunk in a Japanese air raid during the war. Ironically, these ships were being salvaged by a Japanese company. Unsurprisingly, the salvage crews were not allowed ashore, for fear of reprisals from residents.

Soon after the Australia tour, Cavalier returned to Hong Kong, where the advance party eventually were able to head for home, after some farewell celebrations. This time, the transport was provided by another charter company using a Britannia airliner

which made the flight to Stanstead needing only one stop, at Istanbul.

The events described are in no particular order and I must apologise if I have got any of the details wrong, but over that length of time nobody's memory is infallible.

The places we saw have changed out of recognition, Singapore, Hong Kong, Saigon, Tokyo. Now when I see pictures of Hong Kong, the only things that don't appear to have changed are the Star Ferry and the Peak tramway.

Thinking back to those times, life was never ideal, being separated from family and the familiar environment, often in very uncomfortable conditions, but the whole experience was made more bearable by being in a good ship with some very good mates. The ship itself is of course, just a heap of metal, it's the people who make the difference, but I'm still glad that Cavalier has survived, and I would still like to see the old ship again sometime.

Jack (AKA Bert) Mills (ex EA)



A GREAT SUBMARINE STORY

USS Barb & Commanding Officer Lucky Fluckey

A fascinating WWII story.

Thirty-nine years ago, an Italian submarine was sold for a paltry \$100,000 as scrap. The submarine, given to the Italian Navy in 1953 was originally the USS Barb an incredible veteran of World War II service. with a heritage that should not have been melted away without any recognition.



The U.S.S. Barb was a pioneer, paving the way for the first submarine to launch missiles and it flew a battle flag unlike that of any other ship.



In addition to the Medal of Honour ribbon at the top of the flag identifying the heroism of its Captain, Commander Eugene 'Lucky' Fluckey. And the bottom border of the flag bore the image of a Japanese train locomotive. The U.S.S. Barb was, indeed, the submarine that SANK A TRAIN! July 18, 1945 In Patience Bay, off the coast of Karafuto, Japan. It was after 4 A.M. and Commander Fluckey rubbed his eyes as he peered over the map spread before him. It was the twelfth war patrol of the Barb, the fifth under Commander Fluckey. He should have turned the submarine's command over to another skipper after four patrols but had managed to strike a deal with Admiral Lockwood to make a fifth trip with the men he cared for like a father. Of course, no one suspected when he had struck that deal prior to his fourth and should have been his final war patrol, that Commander Fluckey's success would be so great he would be awarded the Medal of Honor. Commander Fluckey smiled as he remembered that patrol. Lucky Fluckey they called him. On January 8th the Barb had emerged victorious from a running two-hour night battle after sinking a large enemy ammunition ship. Two weeks later in Mamkwan Harbour he found the motherlode... more than 30 enemy ships. In only 5 fathoms (30 feet) of water his crew had unleashed the sub's forward torpedoes, then turned and fired four from the stern. As he pushed the Barb to the full limit of its speed through the dangerous waters in a daring withdrawal to the open sea, he recorded eight direct hits on six enemy ships. What could possibly be left for the Commander to accomplish who, just three months earlier had been in Washington, DC to receive the Medal of Honour? He smiled to himself as he looked again at the map showing the rail line that ran along the enemy coastline. Now his crew was buzzing excitedly about bagging a train! The rail line itself wouldn't be a problem. A shore patrol could go ashore under cover of darkness to plant the explosives... one of the sub's 55-pound scuttling charges. But this early morning

Lucky Fluckey and his officers were puzzling over how they could blow not only the rails, but also one of the frequent trains that shuttled supplies to equip the Japanese war machine. But no matter how crazy the idea might have sounded; the Barb's skipper would not risk the lives of his men. Thus, the problem... how to detonate the explosives, at the moment the train passed, without endangering the life of a shore party. PROBLEMS? If you don't search your brain looking for them, you'll never find them. And even then, sometimes they arrive in the most unusual fashion. Cruising slowly beneath the surface to evade the enemy plane now circling overhead, the monotony was broken with an exciting new idea: Instead of having a crewman on shore to trigger explosives to blow both rail and a passing train, why not let the train BLOW ITSELF up? Billy Hatfield was excitedly explaining how he had cracked nuts on the railroad tracks as a kid, placing the nuts between two ties so the sagging of the rail under the weight of a train would break them open. "Just like cracking walnuts, "he explained. To complete the circuit [detonating the 55-pound charge we hook in a micro switch... and mounted it between two ties, directly under the steel rail. " We don't set it off the TRAIN will." Not only did Hatfield have the plan, he wanted to go along with the volunteer shore party. After the solution was found, there was no shortage of volunteers; all that was needed was the proper weather... a little cloud cover to darken the moon for the sabotage mission ashore. Lucky Fluckey established his criteria for the volunteer party: [1] No married men would be included, except for Hatfield, [2] The party would include members from each department, [3] The opportunity would be split evenly between regular Navy and Navy Reserve sailors, [4] At least half of the men had to have been Boy Scouts, experienced in handling medical emergencies and tuned into woods lore. FINALLY, Lucky Fluckey would lead the saboteurs himself. When the names of the 8 selected sailors was announced it was greeted with a mixture of excitement and disappointment. Members of

the submarine's demolition squad were: · Chief Gunners Mate Paul G. Saunders, USN; · Electricians Mate 3rd Class Billy R. Hatfield, USNR; · Signalman 2nd Class Francis N. Sevei, USNR; · Ships Cook 1st Class Lawrence W. Newland, USN; · Torpedoman Mate 3rd Class Edward W. Klingsmith, USNR; · Motor Machinists Mate 2nd Class James E. Richard, USN; · Motor Machinists Mate 1st Class John Markuson, USN; and · Lieutenant William M. Walker, USNR. Among the disappointed was Commander Fluckey who surrendered his opportunity at the insistence of his officers that as commander he belonged with the Barb, coupled with the threat from one that "I swear I'll send a message to ComSubPac if the Commander attempted to join the demolition shore party." In the meantime, there would be no harassing of Japanese shipping or shore operations by the Barb until the train mission had been accomplished. The crew would 'lay low' to prepare their equipment, practice and plan and wait for the weather. July 22, 1945 Patience Bay off the coast of Karafuto, Japan Waiting in 30 feet of water in Patience Bay was wearing thin the patience of Commander Fluckey and his innovative crew. Everything was ready. In the four days the saboteurs had anxiously watched the skies for cloud cover, the inventive crew of the Barb had crafted and tested their micro switch. When the need was proposed for a pick and shovel to bury the explosive charge and batteries, the Barb's engineers had cut up steel plates in the lower flats of an engine room, then bent and welded them to create the needed digging tools. The only things beyond their control were the weather.... and the limited time. Only five days remained in the Barb's patrol. Anxiously watching the skies, Commander Fluckey noticed plumes of cirrus clouds, then white stratus capping the mountain peaks ashore. A cloud cover was building to hide the three-quarters moon. So, this would be the night. MIDNIGHT, July 23, 1945 The Barb had crept within 950 yards of the shoreline. If it was somehow seen from the shore it would probably be mistaken for a schooner or Japanese patrol boat.

No one would suspect an American submarine so close to shore or in such shallow water. Slowly the small boats were lowered to the water and the 8 saboteurs began paddling toward the enemy beach. Twenty-five minutes later they pulled the boats ashore and walked on the surface of the Japanese homeland. Stumbling through noisy waist-high grasses, crossing a highway and then into a 4-foot drainage ditch, the saboteurs made their way to the railroad tracks. Three men were posted as guards, Markuson assigned to examine a nearby water tower. The Barb's auxiliary man climbed the tower's ladder, then stopped in shock as he realized it was an enemy lookout tower . . . an OCCUPIED enemy lookout tower. Fortunately, the Japanese sentry was peacefully sleeping. And Markuson was able to quietly withdraw to warn his raiding party. The news from Markuson caused the men digging the placement for the explosive charge to continue their work more quietly and slower. Twenty minutes later, the demolition holes had been carved by their crude tools and the explosives and batteries hidden beneath fresh soil. During planning for the mission, the saboteurs had been told that, with the explosives in place, all would retreat a safe distance while Hatfield made the final connection. BUT IF the sailor who had once cracked walnuts on the railroad tracks slipped or messed up during this final, dangerous procedure, his would be the only life lost. On this night it was the only order the sub's saboteurs refused to obey, and all of them peered anxiously over Hatfield's shoulder to be sure he did it right. The men had come too far to be disappointed by a bungled switch installation. 1:32 A.M. Watching from the deck of the submarine, Commander Fluckey allowed himself a sigh of relief as he noticed the flashlight signal from the beach announcing the departure of the shore party. Fluckey had daringly, but skilfully guided the Barb within 600 yards of the enemy beach sand.

There was less than 6 feet of water beneath the sub's keel, but Fluckey wanted to be close in case trouble arose and a daring

rescue of his bridge saboteurs became necessary. 1:45 A.M. The two boats carrying his saboteurs were only halfway back to the Barb when the sub's machine gunner yelled, 'CAPTAIN!' There's another train coming up the tracks! The Commander grabbed a megaphone and yelled through the night, "Paddle like the devil!", knowing full well that they wouldn't reach the Barb before the train hit the micro switch. 1:47 A.M. The darkness was shattered by brilliant light and the roar of the explosion! The boilers of the locomotive blew, shattered pieces of the engine blowing 200 feet into the air. Behind it the railroad freight cars accordioned into each other, bursting into flame and adding to the magnificent fireworks display. Five minutes later the saboteurs were lifted to the deck by their exuberant comrades as the Barb eased away, slipping back to the safety of the deep. Moving at only two knots, it would be a while before the Barb was into waters deep enough to allow it to submerge. It was a moment to savour, the culmination of teamwork, ingenuity and daring by the Commander and all his crew. Lucky Fluckey's voice came over the intercom. "All hands below deck not absolutely needed to maneuver the ship, have permission to come topside." He didn't have to repeat the invitation. Hatches sprang open as the proud sailors of the Barb gathered on her decks to proudly watch the distant fireworks display. The Barb had sunk a Japanese TRAIN! On August 2nd, 1945 the Barb arrived at Midway, her twelfth war patrol concluded. Meanwhile United States military commanders had pondered the prospect of an armed assault on the Japanese homeland. Military tacticians estimated such an invasion would cost more than a million American casualties. Instead of such a costly armed offensive to end the war, on August 6th the B-29 bomber Enola Gay dropped a single atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan. A second such bomb, unleashed 4 days later on Nagasaki, Japan, caused Japan to agree to surrender terms on August 15th. On September 2, 1945 in Tokyo Harbor the documents ending the war in the Pacific were signed. The story

of the saboteurs of the U.S.S. Barb is one of those unique, little known stories of World War II. It becomes increasingly important when one realizes that the 8 eight sailors who blew up the train near Kashiho, Japan conducted the **ONLY GROUND COMBAT OPERATION** on the Japanese homeland during World War II. Members of the sabotage team pose with the Ships flag (The train mission is noted at the centre bottom of the flag)





Gerald

Shipmates and Friends

Yesterday I attended Gerald's Funeral (our Gentleman Stoker) and I can inform you all that he had a brilliant send off, there were two Standards present and a uniformed Bugler with a maximum of thirty people in the chapel for the service, the service was officiated by Neil Dunlop Naval Chaplain and ten shipmates who attended had formed a guard at the entrance and remained outside during the service,

Gerald's family were so pleased and comforted by the attendance and support of his Shipmates including the ex-President of the RNERA Andy Nailor and his lady wife Chris who had travelled up from Kent to be present.

After the service we attended the family home for refreshments and to share fond memories of Gerald who we are so proud and privileged to have had as a Shipmate, He was toasted in the Naval Tradition with a tot of Woods rum, May He find a safe anchorage in calm waters with a following wind.

**Yours Aye
Katie.**



HMS Cavalier Membership

What a pleasant surprise it was when I went to the Maritime Museum for my volunteer day this week to be handed your note with my Cavalier membership card. It brought back happy memories of 16 years ago and the memorable visit to Chatham culminating in shared tots in the wardroom. I keep up to date with reading Capers online and am impressed with the spirit of your Association. I hope all members are well at this time.

Our Museum is due to reopen early next month and we've been using the downtime to refurbish the building and paint Diamantina's deck. The ship hosted the WWII surrenders of the Japanese on Nauru and Ocean Islands and carried the Japanese General and Admiral to surrender Bougainville on land, so we'll be especially commemorating VP Day's 75th anniversary.

Thank you again for the membership and please pass on my best wishes to all the Cavaliers.

Peter Nunam

Volunteers - cont...

I've had so many of the old seadogs contacting me I thought I would do episode number two for the Capers continuing in the same jolly manner as before. I also have to add the first part of episode one which was missing not because of anything naughty I may add. I normally don't write enough of what the volunteers/association members do and I also keep in contact with quite a few from the association such as Katie and Gerald and Danny to name a few, Katie and Gerald who never stop sending attachments all the time and I just don't know where they find the time but they are most interesting to say the least.

Well over the last three months the volunteer side of things have been very quiet indeed so I thought I would write about one run ashore adventure that I had. Being an R.P. obviously before going ashore I had to ensure that my make up was correct and get to the mirror before the stewards. I was all ready to see the sights of Gibraltar dressed in my finery when the bad influence named Danny Sprinks said you're coming ashore to have a few drinks, my goodness something I very rarely did being mainly teetotal especially with Danny a well known scallywag. The night went really well and I was sticking to Pepsi's as normal but still enjoying myself even Danny was in great form downing JC's by the dozen plus his usual eight pints oh boy he can drink. I mentioned that it might be the right time to go back onboard after seeing that the bar staff at the Fox and Hounds were concerned that Danny may injure himself if he fell off the table again singing Zulu warrior for the third time. We did manage to get down the stairs and I suggested getting a taxi (on hindsight I wish I hadn't). We got to the taxi rank after a couple of detours but as we got there so did a couple of American sailors from a destroyer that was already berthed in Gibraltar and that's when the trouble started , I wanted to let them go in the first taxi but that wasn't

acceptable to Danny who was now in a very heated debate or tussle with one of our American cousins . I was shocked at this as it wasn't the quiet run ashore I was used to but being a poor Scotsman Danny was paying for the taxi so I had to stay however just at that time I was trying to calm the situation down when the other American started to get excited so I asked him lets forget it but then unfortunately as he started to walk over he tripped pulling me over a small wall which is two feet one side and four feet on the other side and as I was trying to help him up the dreaded naval patrol van thought it would be a great idea to help Danny have a free lift (what thoughtful people they are). Well as this was happening all I could do was watch from my four foot ditch with my new American buddy thinking who is going to pay for a taxi now but with a tear in my eye and telling the two Americans that the blood will wash out could you give me a lift in your taxi into the dockyard but that didn't happen. I just couldn't believe that Danny would get fourteen days nines as this was one of our quiet runs ashore and falling over the wall which luckily enough my fall was broken by my new buddy and my make up was still presentable just so any RP's think I let the side down. Well that's about it for this little episode for the Cavalier Capers and I missed Ken Waddington out last time who also is a volunteer and he just comes to the Cavalier to be horrible to me but a ninety year old veteran I have to accept some abuse I suppose.

Jim Low 70-72 Commission

Paper Snippet

Nostalgic

Congratulations to Bob Hind for his excellent feature about former *News*

***I was taken
on board, but
never got the
chance to thank
these
lovely people.***

MICK WALKER

chief photographer Roy West, with whom I had the pleasure to work on many assignments during my years with the *Evening News*.

However, I must correct the caption to the world-famous aerial photo Roy took of HMS Vanguard, now on display at The Still and West.

It states that Vanguard 'almost ran aground at Point, Old Portsmouth', but I can assure readers that the 42,000-ton battleship was stuck well and

truly on the putty for 45 minutes before ocean-going tugs, which were waiting off The Nab to take over her tow to the breaker's, arrived and pulled her clear.

I saw the drama unfold from Vanguard's bridge on August 4, 1960, having been sent to cover the tow as far as The Nab and write a colour feature for next day's paper.

The Dockyard tugs were simply not powerful enough to correct Vanguard's heading, and the further she went down harbour the more the bows veered towards the Still & West. It was a countdown to disaster.

Portsmouth Senior Pilot Roy Ottley, who was standing beside me, saved certain carnage among the crowds waving farewell from Point with a split-second decision.

He knew the chains of the old floating bridge were still there and, with precision timing, ordered the starboard anchor to be dropped; the anchor flukes caught the chains and it was enough to haul Vanguard's bows away, preventing her ploughing through the pub, and she grounded just yards from the Customs Jetty.

Vanguard had briefly defied her executioners, but she was dragged clear with barely ten minutes to spare on a falling tide with predictions that otherwise 814 feet of armoured steel would have swung across the harbour

entrance and blocked it.

Tim King
Former News Defence
Correspondent
Fareham



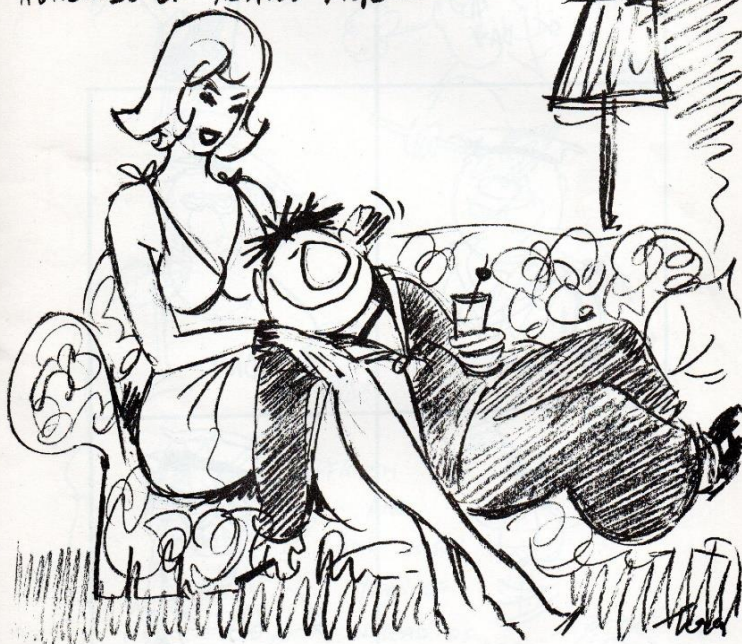
Visiting Dads stone 🇬🇧💙 @ Sandown, Isle Of Wight, United Kingdom



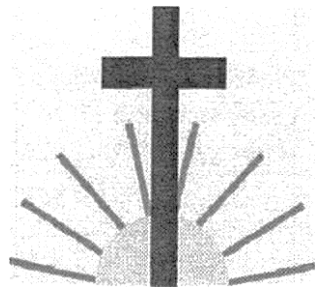
The beloved daughter of Alan 'Smudge' Smith, 60 - 61 commission, paying a visit to his memorial on Sandown sea front I. O. White

The Best of ... Tugg

... Oh! YOU POOR DARLING, FANCY TREATING
YOU LIKE THAT - THEY STOPPED
FLOGGING IN THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY
HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO - ...



FALLEN SHIPMATES



John Mark Jones Gerald Sedgley Leigh Easton	28/4/20 18/7/20 02/7/20	66/69 Ass 60/61
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**Deepest sympathies are extended to our shipmates’
families and friends.
May they find calm seas and a safe anchorage**