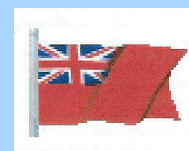




# Merchant Navy Association (Wales) Newsletter



*Happy New Year Shipmates.  
Best wishes and plain sailing to you  
and yours for 2012*



Standing: Harry Parry, Ray Newbury, Dave Sheen, Bill Berry, Des Farnham, Con Connelly, Bill Tuck, Graham Sellick, John Mumford, John Marks and Brian Hammett.

Seated: Cyril James, Colston Hicks, Bill Harding, Malcolm Mort, Brian Lansley, Horace Farnham, Tony Woodward, Oliver Lindsay, John Evans, Norman Phillips, Jim Greenway, and Joe Norton on the floor.

The above photograph was taken at our October 2011 meeting. Those of you who attended will remember that on that occasion the Royal Navy Presentation Team, lead by Commander Simon Staley, gave us a very informative talk on the current role of the Royal Navy. This was one of many events attended by members during 2011. These included visits to Barry, Swansea and Newport to support our shipmates at their Remembrance Services, our Remembrance Services down Cardiff Bay in May and November, at which we were accompanied for the first time by Commodore Jamie Miller, Senior Naval Officer for Wales and Western England, Armed Forces Day in Cardiff, National Armistice Day in Cathays Park and the Field of Remembrance, Cardiff Castle, whilst John Mumford and Dave Richards represented us at the St. Davids Hall Remembrance Service and Muster. Many thanks to all for your support at these and other events, and we look forward to seeing you during 2012.

## Dates for your Diary

**Regular meetings** are held on the second Wednesday of every month at the R.A.F.A. Club, Ely, Cardiff, commencing at 14.30.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be held on Wednesday 9th May 2012 at the R.A.F.A. Club, Ely, Cardiff, commencing at 14.30. This is an opportunity for those wishing to serve on the Committee, to put their names forward. Nominations should reach the Secretary on or before the 18th April, 3 weeks prior to the AGM.

Our **Annual Service** down Cardiff Bay is scheduled to take place on Saturday 26th May 2012, commencing at 11.00.

You will be notified of other events as dates and times become available. Notification will be provide at our regular meetings, and via our web site [www.mnawales.org.uk](http://www.mnawales.org.uk)

## CROSSED THE BAR

Sadly the following members have crossed the bar since the last Newsletter

*Mr. Brian Sheryn of Pontypridd - June 2011*

*Mrs. Pat Tobin of Barry - October 2011*

Their sailing hath ended

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Membership Secretary reminds all members that subscriptions for the year 2011/2012 are now due. The annual subscription is **£10.00**. In accordance with our Articles of Association, any member who is three years in arrears, may be removed from the membership list.

Please advise the Secretary of any sickness or bereavement which may come to your notice.

## LOSS OF THE GERMANIC

SS Germanic sailed from Cardiff on the 8th January 1941 for Oban, to join convoy for Atlantic crossing to Halifax, Nova Scotia. In Oban standing on bridge with Skipper, Captain Emerson (who

was a perfect gentleman and sailor who (I think) had put his age back 10 years to stay at sea!). I pointed out the huge bright yellow equal limbed cross on some of the ships to show that they had been degaussed against magnetic mines. I pointed out that these crosses were perfect targets for U-Boats in poor visibility and should be removed



**Photo Courtesy of Library of Contemporary History, Stuttgart**

at once. He said, “you have point there boy, I will bring it up at the convoy conference in the morning”. The skipper was 'busy' for the next few days, crossing the Atlantic, and very sadly collapsed and died as soon as we arrived in Halifax. Thus I never knew what happened in the conference but I never saw a huge bright yellow cross on a ship again.

On returning from Halifax in convoy HX-115, the Germanic (Skipper now Richard Mortimer) was torpedoed and sunk about 200 miles south of the southwest tip of Iceland. It is believed to be the most northerly torpedoing in the Battle of the Atlantic, from 1939 to 1943. Five members of the crew were killed. Fortunately for us an HM corvette (HMS Dianella) had lost its asdic and was allowed to call off chasing u-boats and proceed to rescue survivors. Germanic was loaded with grain and did not sink for about six hours when the grain swelled and finally burst the hull wide open, We were taken to Londonderry and then by ferry to the UK. During the six hours in the lifeboat one survivor, the ship's second engineer, apparently not injured, kept moaning and asking for water. The rest of the survivors were quite sympathetic but tended to be a little annoyed why an uninjured person should make such fuss.

Later the corvette's medic explained to us that the second engineer had suffered a piece of shrapnel slicing his scrotum in two. He was dealt with separately from the uninjured survivors so I do not know what happened to him. Being a radio officer I was also the morse lamp signaller. When the corvette approached our lifeboat it flashed 'what ship', I replied 'Germanic'. Later on when we were all rescued and on board the corvette one officer told us ' you are lucky, one gunner wanted to fill the lifeboat with machine gun bullets as soon as 'German' was signalled.

Colston Hicks, 2nd Radio Officer.

**NEW BOOKS**

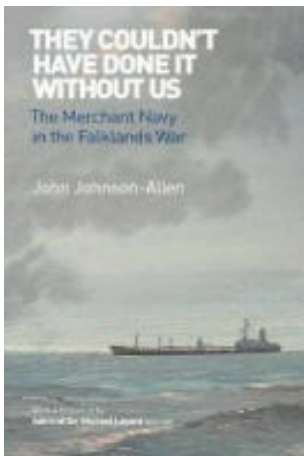
*The Cunard Story* by Chris Frame & Rachelle Cross is an insight into the heritage of this historic line. This publication is full of little-known facts and figures.



- Quick, easy reference tool covering the Cunard Line’s 170-year life-span.
- Tales of ships such as Britannia, Lusitania, Mauretania, Aquitania and the immortal Queens.

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