



Merchant Navy Association (Wales)

Newsletter



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



2017 was another busy year which culminated in our Service down Cardiff Bay in November. This year it coincided with Armistice Day and we joined staff and visitors to the Senedd Building in observing the two minutes silence at 1100. This moment was broadcast live by a BBC TV News crew as part of their National coverage. An ITV News crew was also in attendance and interviewed our Standard Bearer Dave Richards and the WRNS Standard Bearer Jodie Taylor. The interviews were included in their news broadcasts. Given the coverage of our Service by the BBC and ITV, the number of MN representatives that took part in the Royal Albert Hall muster (22) and the interview with the President of the National MNA Vivian Foster at the Whitehall Service/Parade, the Merchant Navy at last gained some recognition for the sacrifices made by Merchant Seafarers during both World Wars. Long may it continue.

Our membership continues to fall and new members are hard to come by. Age is having an effect and attendance at meetings and events is proving very difficult for some. We appreciate the effort you put in in trying to support us. Remember we are here to support you if we can. If we can help in anyway please contact the Secretary on 01443 815013 or email at byron@blackranger.plus.com and we will try to help, or at least point you in the right direction.

HORACE FARNHAM

1928 - 2017

Horace was born on the 10th September 1928 and in 1944 he decided to join the Merchant Navy. He went to Catering School in October 1944 and spent six weeks peeling potatoes, washing pots and pans, keeping the cookhouse clean, learning about seamanship and how to be a gunner.



He joined his first ship the S.S. Tamaha an Anglo American Company tanker on the 4th December 1944 and stayed with her until 28th May 1945. His time on board was not without incident albeit for maritime reasons rather than military. These are some of Horace's own reports.

15/1/45, Barry Roads. At 0736 vessel grounded one end of Sully Island. Pilot on board. At 0730 I informed Pilot I thought I saw land fine on the Port bow and he ordered hard aport the wheel, take soundings and stop engines. Weather hazy, visibility poor. At 0736 engines rung full speed astern and commence discharging ballast from main tanks. At 0820 vessel floated off and proceeded to anchorage. Upon inspection no damage visible in main tanks or fore deep. Fore peak full of water. It was found to be running down slowly eventually minor damage in the peak.

14/3/45 Antwerp. At 0800 while proceeding to petroleum pier in hazy weather berth was observed to be occupied by another vessel which was casting off. In order to to give her room to swing out we kept close to the quayside and stranded. Light SW breeze bottom sand and mud. At 1300 two tugs aft and forward stern floated. 2 stern tugs could not keep the starboard quarter up to the tide and we fouled a barge, Nanometer 4, that was moored alongside quay damaging her wheelhouse. At 1425 all clear proceeded to swing vessel. At 1450 moored alongside petroleum pier.

1/4/45 At sea. At 0913 on 2/4/45 whilst in convoy the vessels speed was observed to have slackened. At the same time the propellor was churning up sand. It was assumed that she had touched bottom. The next ship astern also reported touching bottom at the same time. Soundings of all available spaces were taken and no apparent leaks.

12/4/45 - Brest. At 0505 hove up anchor and proceeded to Brest Harbour. At 0542 engines on slow and Pilot advising struck submerged wreck in entrance on port side. Oil leaking from main tanks. Flood tide outside entrance. Accident due to absence of tugs and ebb tide.

On leaving the Tamaha Horace served on the Empire Cromer from 19/6/45 until 6/12/45 and the S.S. Kerma from 13/12/45 until 8/1/46 when he left the Merchant Navy.

Sadly Horace Crossed the Bar on the 15th October 2017 at the age of 89. He was a lovely generous gentleman who will be greatly missed.

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Well a year has passed since I took over the chair and I thank you all for your support. I have been proud to represent you at various occasions during the year. The year started with Commonwealth Day



at the Mansion House in March, then our service at our Memorial in May. This being well attended with support from our Swansea and Newport shipmates. Next followed Merchant Navy Day when we attended the Flag Raising Ceremony at the the Mansion House. The Ensign was also flown from the battlements of Cardiff Castle. We made our usual trip to Swansea in September to attend the parade for Merchant Navy Sunday. The weather was very poor so the service was held in the Railwayman's Club which meant the bar opened at 10.00 a very enjoyable time for all who were there.

We also attended many functions around Armistice with planting crosses in St John's Church, Cardiff, Garden of Remembrance in the Cardiff Castle grounds, then our service in the Bay. Newport MNA were in attendance and there was a good response from all those invited. Sunday was the Civic Service in Cardiff where I was proud to lay a wreath on behalf of the Association. The following Saturday I attended Newport MNA Remembrance Service at their Memorial and laid a wreath on behalf of the members.

I thank Harry for the guidance he has given to make sure I made contact with all the V.I.Ps.

Thanks to all and I hope that you have a good Christmas and look forward to this new year.

Tony Meade

SEA SUNDAY CARDIFF BAY JULY 2017

Fr Dean Atkins and Rev Peter Noble decided to move the event from the green alongside the quay where the old Lightship was moored, to inside the Pierhead Building. This enabled us to have a display stand which was manned by Jan and Margaret Kramer. Dave Richards carried the standard for the short ceremony at our memorial where a wreath was laid. There was a good response from the public so maybe it will become the new venue for the event.



ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Membership Secretary reminds all members that subscriptions for the year 2017/2018 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.

CROSSED THE BAR

Sadly the following Members have Crossed the Bar since the last Newsletter

Mr. E. B. Harrison, of Barry - July 2017

Mr. Horace Farnham, of Dinas Powis - October 2017 age 89

We will Remember them.



ARMED FORCES DAY Saturday 30 June 2018

The Armed Forces Day National Event will take place in and around Llandudno in the borough of Conwy, North Wales on Saturday 30 June 2018. There will be no event in the South Wales area. We have supported previous events that have been held in Cardiff and Caerphilly. Please let the Secretary know if you would be interested in attending this event. If we are interested in attending we have to register by Wednesday 28th February 2018.

Dates for your Diary

Regular meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month at the Canton Liberal Club, Cowbridge Road East, Cardiff, commencing at 14.30.

Details of Armed Forces Day 2018 are provided above. Our Service down the Bay is scheduled for Saturday 26th May 2018 but has yet to be confirmed.

You will be notified of other events as dates and times become available. Notification will be provide at our regular meetings and via email and our web site below if you are on line. Those of you who can't make the meetings or are not on line and would like to be kept up to date, please contact the Secretary and he will make sure you are notified.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 9th May 2018 at the Canton Liberal Club, 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.

