

# Sussex Association of Naval Officers Association Newsletter, January 2020

## EDITORIAL

A Very Happy New Year to all. Hopefully you have managed to avoid the seasonal maladies.

Thanks to the sterling work of our Chairman and Secretary we have a full and interesting programme of events.

I would like to draw your attention to our meeting on **Thursday 13th February**, which takes the form of an evening lecture and buffet supper in conjunction with Sussex URNU. Details are to be found below.

## COMMANDER MARTIN RICHARDS RD RNR

It is with sadness that we announce the death of Commander Martin Richards who passed away on December 27th aged 96. Martin was an Electronics engineer. He saw Wartime service in the RNVR, Nov 42 - late 45 ("Accepted Class B Release"). Initially Midshipman, Special Branch. Radar Officer, S/Lt 43, Lt 45. Served in *Emerald*, *Tracker*, and *Chevron*. He joined Sussex RNVR Officers' Association Dec 59. Wife Pat also an Association member who died 2007. Martin was, for several years, Treasurer of SANO. Martin's funeral took place on 10 January at Wivelsfield Parish Church. SANO was well represented and several of Martin's colleagues from the Sussex RNVR and RNR Association were also present.

## EVENING LECTURE THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020 FRIGATE DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The Association has organised an informal lecture/buffet supper in conjunction with The Sussex Universities Royal Navy Unit for **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020**. The evening will start with a talk by **Lt Cdr Roger Martin RN** entitled Frigate Design Considerations. Details and booking form in full version of this newsletter.

Roger joined the RN in 1983 through BRNC Dartmouth. Having specialised as a Warfare Officer he went on to serve in HM Ships NEWCASTLE, INVINCIBLE, BOXER and EDINBURGH. Shore appointments included the staffs of Flag Officer Sea Training and British Forces Falklands as well as exchange service with The Royal Canadian Navy. Roger has filled specialist posts at The Maritime Capability Trials and Assessment Unit and The Defence Science & Technology Laboratory (DSTL). On leaving the Service Roger joined DSTL as a warfare analyst working on surface warfare capabilities and, latterly, on Type 31 frigate procurement. Roger was recently awarded The Meritorious Service Certificate for his work as Chairman of Hove & Adur Sea Cadet unit.

Historically the RN designed and built its own warships. With the advent of 20<sup>th</sup> century technologies and complexities, production was passed over to industry with detailed design remaining in MoD hands. The relationship between design and build became strained and relied on mountains of detailed requirements which were often misinterpreted and/or changed as programmes were extended. RN requirements were often unaffordable whilst industry expected to make a profit. Type 31 frigate procurement is a fundamentally new way to procure warships which this talk will explore.

## CLOSURE OF SETT TANK

Pictured below is the last team who taught submariners how to escape from a stricken boat, gathering at the Submarine Escape Training Tank (SETT, or “the tank”) before the iconic structure at the former HMS Dolphin, Gosport, closes.

Tens of thousands of submariners have passed through SETT since 1954 when the first man ascended the 30m column of water to simulate emerging from a sunken submarine. The tower was built between 1949 and 1953 as part of a wholesale revamp of submarine escape training, prompted by a report drawn up after World War 2. The loss of HMS Thetis, on the eve of war, and HMS Truculent, sunk in the Thames after colliding with a Swedish tanker in January 1950, both with heavy loss of life, as well as many other submarines accidents and experiences, played a significant role in the lessons learnt.



Construction 1951



Iconic view (Wiki)



Submariners outside SETT for final time

## WORTHING PARADE TO REMEMBER NORWAY RAID

Sailors past and present will march in Worthing next month to remember a naval highlight of the ‘Phoney War’.

On 16 February 1940, boarding parties from HMS Cossack, Captain Philip Vian RN, stormed the German tanker *Altmark*, which was hiding in a Norwegian

fjord. They released 299 British prisoners taken by the raider *Graf Spee* as it sank Allied merchant shipping in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

Eighty years later, sailors from destroyer

HMS Dauntless will join veterans, representatives from the Norwegian Embassy in London, the HMS Cossack Association

and local council officials for a service and wreath laying at **Durrington Cemetery**, Worthing, in tribute to those involved. The event, at 1100 on Monday 17 February, is being organised by Commander Neil ‘Nobby’ Hall, currently serving with NATO in Belgium and known to many SANO members.



**SUSSEX ASSOCIATION OF NAVAL OFFICERS  
PROGRAMME 2020**

DATE	DAY	EVENT	SPEAKER	TOPIC
13 <sup>th</sup> Feb 20	Thu	URNU Lecture	Roger Martin	Frigate Design Considerations
4 <sup>th</sup> April 20	Sat	AGM/Lecture/Lunch	Megan Maltby	Commonwealth War Graves
May 20	Sat	Mess Guest Night	Provisional	
20 <sup>th</sup> June 20	Sat	Lecture/Curry Lunch	Ian Miles	Air War over Sussex
July 20	Thu	Lunch/Visit	Lunch at Hornet	
13 <sup>th</sup> Aug 20	Thu	Pub lunch		Walk nearby
24 <sup>th</sup> Oct 20	Sat	Trafalgar Night Dinner	RA Mike Kimmons	
28 <sup>th</sup> Nov 20	Sat	Lecture/Lunch	Mike Maddox	War in a String bag

**TAILPIECE**

*Whenever I get the urge to exercise, I lie down until the feeling passes away. (Mark Twain)*

Best wishes, Bob