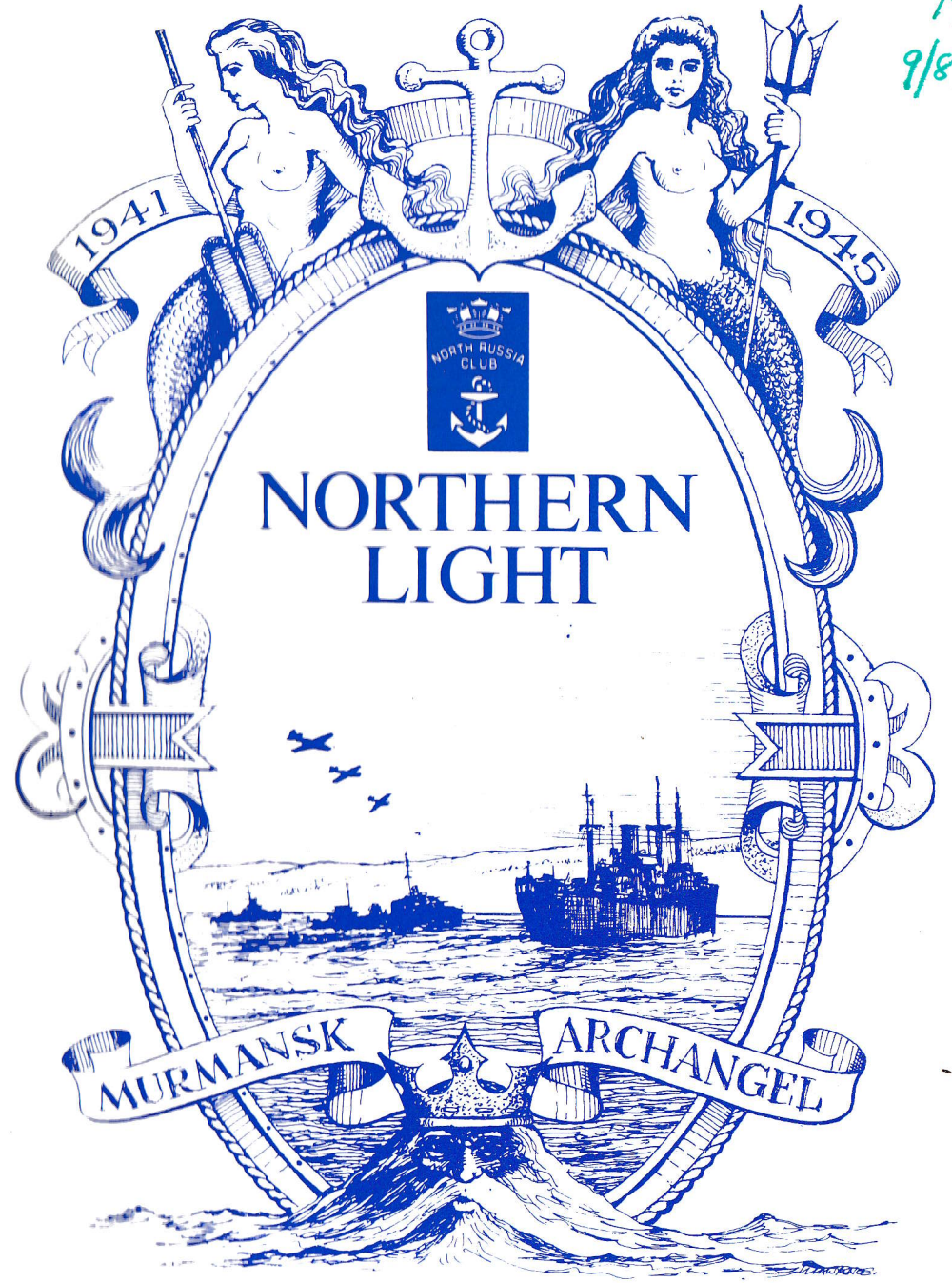




17
9/89



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH RUSSIA CLUB

9/89

SEPTEMBER 1989



"RED DUSTER" EDITION

Our Art Artificer says, "I was particularly pleased to do this M.N. sketch since I had a great regard for their complete lack of respect for the authority of the R.N. As a small ship 'Hostilities Only' rating, I never cared much for discipline I spent a lot of time knocking ice off the whaler when I should have had my head down! I earlier worked on a Port Signal Station for a few happy weeks and remember clearly, how, when you hailed

them with 'What Ship?' the folk on the bridge studiously ignored both me and anything else in R.N. uniform. This attitude on a cold, wet winter's night shouting into the wind as the ship glided past below you, did not endear me to the M.N. then. But, in retrospect I think 'You had the right idea lads!' and I remember with affection their wonderful 'Sod the Royal Navy behaviour!'"

1989 - 1990

- PRESIDENT:** Captain K.A.R. Clarke R.N.R., (Rtd).
VICE PRESIDENTS: Captain A.W. Wheeler R.N. (Rtd).
 Captain F.A. Collins R.N.
 Mr. D. Whitehouse.
LIFE MEMBERS: C.B. Tye & D. Whitehouse.
CHAIRMAN: N. Batchelor.
VICE CHAIRMAN: E. Skelton.
HON. SECRETARY: C.B. Tye.
ASST. SEC:EDITOR: R.D. Squires.
HON. TREASURER: E. Rathbone.
COMMITTEE: Shipmates L.Sullivan (Membership Secretary)
 L.Lawrence (Art Artificer)
 R.Phelps (Welfare Officer)
 R.Wren (Memorial Secretary)
 T.A.Morris.
 A.Willis.
 J.White.
 F.Green.
 W.Loades.
 L.Jones.
AUDITOR: Mr. H.E. Elbourn.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

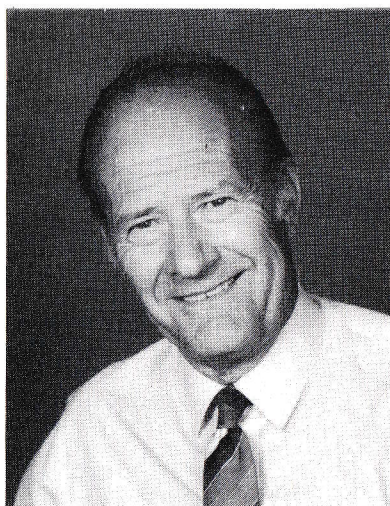
I am very proud to have been elected Chairman of the North Russia Club. I would have liked it to have been under different circumstances.

Dennis Whitehouse is a very difficult act to follow and I feel that if I can do the job half as well as he did I will have succeeded.

Norman Batchelor.

A PEN PICTURE OF THE CHAIRMAN

Norman Batchelor, who lives in Ash Vale in Surrey, served on the **KEPPEL** on Arctic Convoys as a Teleg-raphist. He is now Principal Cost Engineer with British Aerospace.



By David B. Craig.

In the Supplement to the London Gazette on Friday 8th October 1943, there was a list of 19 names of Merchant Navy officers and men; five were awarded the Order of the British Empire and fourteen received the King's Commendation for Brave Conduct. The citation read, very simply, "For dangerous work in hazardous circumstances".

I feel that the story should be told in the 'Red Duster' edition of Northern Light. I write the story as I remember it but I write on behalf of the 19 men, as we all worked together and none of us did anything different from anyone else.

On 13th January 1943 I joined "**DOVER HILL**" at Gourock. I had signed on as Radio Officer and, on boarding the ship, discovered we were bound for North Russia. We were heavily loaded with fighter aircraft, tanks, guns, lorries and a large tonnage of shells and high explosives. Our deck cargo was made up of lorries in cases, Matilda tanks and drums of lubricating oil covered with a layer of sandbags, presumably to protect them from tracer bullets. Needless to say we were not very happy about this last item.

We left the Clyde on 23rd January and arrived at Loch Ewe on 25th where we lay at anchor until the rest of the merchant ships had assembled. On February 15th 28 merchant ships set out in a gale in the heavily defended Convoy JW53. The escort consisted of three cruisers, one anti-aircraft cruiser, one escort carrier, sixteen destroyers, three corvettes and two trawlers. This was a very good escort and as the daylight hours were getting longer, trouble was obviously expected.

Due to having to maintain absolute wireless silence, the Radio Officers stood their duty watches on the bridge with the Navigating Officers. As we sailed north the gale developed into a hurricane and ships began to get damaged. **H.M.S. SHEFFIELD** had the top of her fore turret torn off and had to return to port along with the escort carrier **H.M.S. DASHER** which was also damaged. Six of the merchant ships were damaged and had to return to Iceland. On **DOVER HILL** the deck cargo began to break adrift and we were not sorry to see the oil drums going over the side, but when the lorries in wooden cases were smashed up and went overboard things were not so good. But we managed to save the tanks and kept on battering our way northwards. At one stage the convoy was well scattered but as the weather moderated the Navy rounded us up and got us into some semblance of order.

The loss of our aircraft carrier meant that we had no air cover and, as expected, a few days later a German spotter plane arrived which flew around the convoy all the daylight hours to keep an eye on us. The next day we had a heavy attack by JU88 bombers in which our ship was damaged and our gunlayer was wounded by bomb splinters but we kept plodding on to North Russia. At this part of the voyage we were steaming through pancake ice floes which protected us from the U-boats and the blizzards when they came were very welcome as they hid us from the enemy.

Two days later, on 27th February, we arrived at the entrance to the Kola Inlet. We had not lost any ships to the enemy and I must pay tribute to the Royal Navy and our own D.E.M.S. and Maritime Regiment Gunners on the merchant ships. Of the convoy's 22 merchant ships, 15 were bound for Murmansk and the remaining seven went on to the White Sea ports near Archangel. Little did we know at this time that we would not leave Russia until the end of November. The ocean going escorts would now refuel and set off homeward with the empty ships from the previous convoy.

We were all very tired when we arrived because for the last few days we had either been on duty or at action stations for most of the time. So after picking up the Russian Pilot and setting off independantly up the Kola Inlet we were looking forward to having a good sleep when we anchored at Murmansk. We were very quickly disillussioned when, about a mile up the Inlet we passed a merchant ship on fire with the crew taking to the lifeboats. On asking the Pilot about the ship, which was from the previous convoy, he cheerfully told us that on the way down to meet us he had seen it being attacked by aircraft, obviously a common occurrence. We now understood why we had been fitted with so many Oerlikon and Bofors anti-aircraft guns to enable us to defend ourselves.

After two days at anchor we went alongside at Murmansk to discharge our cargo. The port was being bombed most of the time and one of our ships, the **OCEAN FREEDOM**, was sunk alongside the quay near us. When we had discharged all of our cargo we moved out and anchored about a mile apart on each side of the Inlet. We happened to be on the side nearest the German lines which were only about ten miles away, we were regularly attacked by ME109 fighter bombers which used to come tearing at us about twenty to thirty feet above the water, dropping their bomb as they flew over us just above our topmasts. Our gunners were very skilled and used to open fire only when the planes came well within range. These attacks only lasted about a minute but were very vicious and we had gunners wounded and damage again done to the ship. We shot one plane down into the Inlet and on another occasion we damaged one which got out of range before we could finish it off. The next ship anchored astern of us opened fire when the damaged plane came within range and it blew up. We only got half credit for this one so ended up with one and a half swastikas painted on the funnel.

We now come to the incident whereby, to our surprise our names appeared in the London Gazette.

On Sunday, April 4th we were anchored in Misukovo Anchorage, a few miles north of Murmansk and I was playing chess in the Officer's Mess as Action Stations sounded and our guns opened fire. I went through the pantry, looked out of the door, and saw two JU88 bombers coming up from astern, high up. Our Bofors shells were bursting below them and when they turned away I assumed we had beaten them off and stepped out on deck. This was a foolish thing to do, as, unknown to me the planes had released their bombs before turning away. Four bombs exploded close on the port side and one on the starboard and I was blown off my feet. As I got up our gunlayer came down from one of the bridge oerlikons and pointed out a large round hole in the steel deck a few yards from where I had been standing. It was obvious that the sixth bomb had gone through the main and 'tween decks into our coal bunkers and had not exploded. We informed the S.B.N.O. Murmansk of the situation and were advised that there were no British Bomb Disposal personnel in North Russia. We then realised that we would have to dig the bomb out ourselves in order to save our ship. The minesweeper **H.M.S. JASON** was ordered to anchor astern of us and to come alongside to render assistance if the bomb should explode, although I doubt if there would have been much to pick up. Incidentally, I did enjoy talking to **JASON** by Aldis lamp during this time.

You must understand that though the **DOVER HILL** was only a battered old merchantman, she was our home and no German was going to make us leave her while she was still afloat. The Captain lined the whole crew up on the after deck and asked for volunteers and nineteen of us including our Captain formed our own Bomb Disposal Squad. We had no bomb disposal equipment, in fact we only had a few shovels borrowed from the stokehold - plus nineteen stout hearts when we started digging back the coal, trying to find the bomb. The bunker was full of good British steaming coal which we were saving for the homeward run, so we used a derrick to bring it up on to deck, hoping to replace it when we got the bomb out. When the Russian authorities heard what we were doing, although they had many unexploded bombs to deal with in the town, they kindly offered to send one of their Bomb Disposal officers to remove the detonator if we could get the bomb on deck. When we had dug

about ten feet down into the coal we found the tail fins and, by their size, we decided our bomb was probably a 1000 lb one. Unfortunately, the Germans also discovered what we were up to and came back and bombed us again, hoping to set off the bomb we were digging for. Between bomb explosions and the concussion of our own guns, the coal used to fall back into the area where we were digging and things got difficult at times. We had to dig down approximately twenty-two feet before we got to the bomb, but after two days and two nights hard work we finally got it up on deck.

I was standing beside the bomb with two of my fellow officers as our Russian friend started to unscrew the retaining ring of the detonator, when after a few turns it stuck. He then took a small hammer and a punch and tapped it to get it moving. I can honestly say that every time he hit it I could feel the hairs on the back of my neck standing up against my duffle coat hood. After removing the detonator and primer we dumped the bomb into the Kola Inlet where it probably lies till this day. We then moved back to Murmansk for repairs.

Of the fifteen ships which had come to Murmansk in February, one had been sunk and four damaged. On 17th May, in company with three other ships we left the Kola Inlet and set out for the White Sea. We arrived in Economia on the North Dvina River where we stayed until 18th July when we moved to Molotovsk (Severodinsk) and finally on 26th November, with eight other ships, some damaged, we set out for home. Since it was now dark for almost twenty four hours each day and we could only do seven knots maximum speed we went north to the edge of the ice. Knowing that a Russian bound convoy was coming up to the south of us we expected the Germans to attack it and leave us alone. This in fact happened and we eventually arrived in London on 14th December 1943, in time to be home for Christmas.

The time spent in the White Sea area was mostly peaceful but our main problem was lack of food and for part of the time we suffered from malnutrition, but we survived. I do not think it did us any harm as it makes us appreciate all the peaceful times we now live in.

When we sailed up London River towards Surrey Commercial Docks to pay off, with our Red Ensign flying and patches on our deck and side, we were as proud of the old ship as if she had been a spick and span Navy vessel arriving in port. Incidentally, the Red Ensign had a hole in it where an Oerlikon shell had gone through it during the fighting, but it was the only one we had left.

DOVER HILL finished her days as a Naval Special Service Vessel and was sunk as a blockship on 7th February 1944, but I do not know where. This is a kind way of saying that the old ship had taken a bigger hammering than we thought and she was now no longer fit to go to sea.

To finish on a personal note, I was the youngest of the young squad who took part in the incident in Misukovo Anchorage, having had my eighteenth birthday on my way up to Russia. I was no greenhand however, having joined my first ship in Plymouth as a cadet in 1940 when I was fifteen years and three months old.

I have returned to Murmansk in 1980, 85 and 87. On each occasion we have had great kindness and friendship shown to us by the people of Murmansk who greatly appreciate the help we brought to them during the war. In 1987 I also found out that the name of the Russian Bomb Disposal Officer was Panin and that he had survived the war but had died a few years before my last visit. It would have been wonderful to have met him after all those years - but it was not to be.

David B. Long

THE MERCHANTMEN OF JW51B

Many words have been written of the Battle of the Barents Sea and of Captain R. St V. Sherbrooke, V.C., D.S.O., and quite rightly so. But little is said of the fourteen heroic merchant ships which comprised this convoy, all of which, despite the enemy and atrocious weather conditions reached their Soviet destinations. They were of British, American and Panamanian registration, several with crews of mixed nationalities.

Setting out from Loch Ewe on Tuesday 22nd December knowing that they were to spend Christmas and New Year at sea, and in almost total darkness. Leading the merchant ships was the Commodore, Captain R. A. Melhuish of the Royal Indian Navy in **EMPIRE ARCHER**. She was a deceptive looking ship, having been built in Dundee the previous year of wartime design, having the engine room and funnel aft and looking like a 'pregnant tanker'. The Rear-Commodore sailed in the U.S. Liberty Ship **JEFFERSON MYERS** which was carrying a deck cargo of huge crates and which would prove hazardous in high seas and winds, whilst the Vice Commodore was the Master of the U.S. registered, small, Canadian built, **CALOBRE**. Two British tankers, **EMPIRE EMERALD** and **PONTFIELD** both carried cargos of aviation spirit. The crews were paid a pitiful 'danger Money' allowance for sitting on these potential time bombs. The **DALDORCH** whose master had reluctantly refused to take a deck cargo, because the crammed hatches had taken the Plimsol Line well below the permitted mark. Two of the remaining vessels were to ensure that the convoy's maximum speed was not to exceed eight knots - **VERMONT** was a coal burning relic of the First World War and the 22 year old American Export Line's **EXECUTIVE** had a history of engine trouble. The U.S. ships, **RALPH WALDO EMERSON**, **JOHN H.B. LATROBE**, **CHESTER VALLEY**, **PUERTO RICAN** and **YORKMAR** with the Panamanian **BALLOT** completing the number.

Throughout the voyage and particularly during the period when **ONSLAW** and Captain Sherbrooke were leading the naval action against **HIPPER** and **LUTZOW**, the weather was the continuous danger to the convoy. Five ships were to lose contact with the convoy, firstly by altering course because of shifting deck cargo and other vessels playing 'follow my leader' in the absence of clear signals, then as a strategic option to avoid the enemy.

The importance of this small but valuable convoy can be measured by the following charts drawn up from the ship's cargo manifest:-

	Vehicles	Tanks	Fighters	Bombers	Fuel tons	Aviation Spirit	Gen.Cargo. Tons
BALLOT	115	25	18	-	-	-	5534 tns
CALOBRE	166	8	-	-	250	-	4534
CHESTER VALLEY	2	25	10	4	250	-	4371
DALDORCH	264	-	-	-	-	-	1744
EMPIRE ARCHER	141	18	21	-	-	-	4376
EMPIRE EMERALD	-	-	-	-	2580	7400	-
EXECUTIVE	130	-	-	4	450	-	4210
JEFFERSON MYERS	376	-	-	4	500	-	5336
J. H. B. LATROBE	191	58	10	4	640	-	4397
PONTFIELD	-	-	-	-	5500	5250	-
PUERTO RICAN	14	23	15	8	100	-	5345
RALPH V EMERSON	160	45	13	5	780	-	5090
VERMONT	299	-	-	4	300	-	4058
YORKMAR	188	-	-	-	150	-	5326
Total	<u>2046</u>	<u>202</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>11,500</u>	<u>12,650</u>	<u>54321</u>

"PQ17" THROUGH THE EYES OF A U-BOAT OFFICER

An excerpt from "**U-boats at War**" by Harald Busch of the
U-boat Arm of the Kriegsmarine.

(Published by Ballentyne Books of New York in 1955)

We well and truly cursed the fog, the officers and I, at the continually shifting vision, at the same time swearing, come what may, we would be tough, wily and patient, like a true fox on the trail - our emblem was a fox's head painted on the conning tower

At last, fortune relented. After thirty hours of groping through dense fog, we came out of it at last and turning south lay in wait off the Matotschkin Straits. Sure enough there she came rearing her fat funnel right into the fox's jaws.....improved position slightly, then a textbook runout. We couldn't miss, but to make sure, we gave her a salvo. Two explosions. She stopped, took on a list. Boats lowered. One more from the stern tube, to finish her off. She split open and sank. From a raft, with our scraps of English, we managed to get her name and tonnage: the American ship **ALCOA RANGER**, 10,000 tons - some hors oeuvre! The boats had red sails we handed them bread and water and gave them a course for far off Nova Zembla - they'd have a rough trip before they reached their 'friends'.

Victory mood in **U255**. We signalled headquarters with a suggestion that the ships of the convoy had been told to try to reach Nova Zembla - we turned out to be right. Our long chase at high speed had brought us to the van of the scattered merchant ships hurrying to reach safety, while thier escorts were busy scrapping with other U-boats further north or picking up survivors of ships sunk by the Luftwaffe.

Soon another pair of masts came out of the fog towards us, followed closely by two more. The traffic here was about as thick as that encountered off the American coast earlier in the year - the U-boat paradise all over again, except that this one was rather colder. We had to fire at the first ship at an acute angle because the second was almost on top of us, and we missed. As a result, both got away. But we had no need to chase after them, for at that moment a third conveniently put in an appearance to the northward. This time the torpedo found its mark. Then we got up the ammunition, and the sailors were allowed to amuse themselves gunning her from the surface with the 88 millimetre. They left the good ship **OLOPATRA** a blazing wreck. We were getting our hands in now, and soon after our cannon claimed another victim. The gun's crew were right in their element. Smothered with smoke and steam, another steamer went to the fishes.

By now the area must be getting a bad name, we felt, so we headed southwest to a position on the escape route to the White Sea, where Russian ice breakers had cleared the approaches to Archangel. One morning off the Kola Peninsula we saw a strange sight - two enemy merchant ships with an escort apparently sailing upside-down in the clouds, their inverted masts balanced on the tips of the real ones which at that moment were coming over the horizon. We wondered whether the outline of **U255** was similarly stamped in the sky. Soon, in fact,

the Russians did send a rickety biplane after us and we had to cover a good distance underwater before the perpetual daylight would allow us to escape at high speed to the north.

Concluding U-boat operations against PQ17, those boats not yet run out of fuel were ordered to comb certain areas of the route over which the convoy had passed so as to pick up any stragglers. We were allocated the northernmost sector, extending to latitude 76°, then south to Bear Island and home via Andfjord and Narvik. We came upon a Dutch ship, the **PAULUS POTTER**, stuck fast in pack ice and abandoned by the crew. She had been torpedoed from the air and her engine room was under water. The crew had obviously left in a hurry - the breakfast was still on the table - and we found a deed box, stove in but the contents intact, that no one had bothered to throw overboard. Among other useful information it contained the new signal book for convoys and a complete list of all ships in the convoy. Thanks to our find the German High Command was able, a few days later to announce the fate of the famous PQ17 before even the enemy knew it himself.

Translated from the German by L.P.R. Wilson.

GERMAN POST-WAR ASSESSMENT OF BRITISH, ALLIED AND NEUTRAL SHIPS DESTROYED IN ALL AREAS (ATLANTIC, ARCTIC, AND OTHER THEATRES BY GERMAN U-BOATS.

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
January		40	21	47	35	12	11
February		43	38	69	58	15	15
March		23	41	82	100	21	12
April		7	43	66	46	9	13
May		13	58	120	44	4	3
June		59	61	119	15	10	-
July		38	22	85	44	11	-
August		56	23	101	16	17	-
September	40	59	51	91	18	7	-
October	27	63	30	86	17	-	-
November	13	32	12	106	9	6	-
December	24	37	17	55	9	9	-
Total	104	469	417	1027	411	121	54

2,003 ships: We salute their gallant crews.

SOME SHIPS ARE LUCKY - OTHERS ARE NOT.

On 14th September 1942 while on convoy PQ 18 the **ATHELTEMPLAR** was torpedoed by U457 and was eventually sunk by escorts. This brought to an end the wartime service of a very unlucky ship. As early as 14th December 1939 she limped to port after striking a mine, then on 1st March 1941 she was bombed and again made port. H.M.S. **IMPULSIVE** brought the story to a satisfactory end by sinking U457 just three days after her strike against **ATHELTEMPLAR**.

More Merchant Navy after the blue pages:



NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER - 1989.

Once again it's time for the Newsletter, the ink hardly seems dry on the last one. How time flies and 1989 moves forward so quickly. Or is it that we are getting old? I am delighted to tell you that our membership continues to rise - despite the sad loss of members who have "Crossed the Bar" our total now stands at 796. - it's quite amazing!

Our A.G.M. has taken place and you will have seen our new list of Officers and Committee. I am sure you will join us in wishing Dennis Whitehouse a long and happy Vice Presidency of the club. Dennis was forced to relinquish the chairmanship on the instructions of his specialist. Thanks for everything Dennis. The A.G.M. was followed by a Members & Ladies Night at the Victory Services Club. We had an excellent attendance of 178, thanks for your support. It was an excellent evening, unfortunately marred by the heated condition of the room which became quite uncomfortable. Added to this we had a little problem with the band who encountered problems getting through London and then encountered a 'Lift Out Of Order' sign on arrival. Let's hope these little snags do not recur on September 2nd., for the "Those Were The Days" Night.

The Annual Dinner Dance which takes place on Trafalgar Day at the Swallow Hotel, South Normanton is nearly fully booked. It could be by the time you read this, but if you are interested please phone me at once - 0634 32884.

The 5th Annual Formation Reunion will be held on 2nd December - a nice early start to the seasonal festivities. A separate booking form is enclosed.

All of the 1990 functions and dates will be published in December's Northern Light.

Our Editor and Assist. Hon. Secretary Dick Squires is to be honoured on Thursday September 7th, by the Merseyside Council of Ex-Service and Regimental Associations with their Certificate of Appreciation, for his outstanding work for Ex-Servicemen and Women of Merseyside. The presentation will be made by the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside at the Liverpool R.N.A. Club. Good on Yer, Dick, Congratulations.

In June I had the honour and privilege to be invited to attend the 3rd Reunion of H.M.C.S. 'Nene' as Guest Speaker. The five-day reunion took place at the Radisson Hotel in Ottawa, Ontario, from 22nd to 26th June. I received a most warm and friendly welcome from the 'Nene Family' and specially from the 11 N.R.C. members amongst them. Before the reunion was over a further four members were enrolled - see the 'Welcome Aboard' list on a following page.

My personal thanks to Alan and Margaret Turner for their hospitality whilst I was in Ottawa, also to Rick and Brenda Martin (Dick Squires' nephew and niece) whilst I was in Toronto at the start and finish of my visit. And a lovely evening with the daughter of N.R.C. member Cliff (Stormy) Fairweather of Colchester.

Now, over to Dick for his news.

Good on Yer,
Kindest regards.

Not much space left, so just a few brief reminders:

We will again be sharing a plot with the Russian Convoy Club at Westminster Abbey "FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE". Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, will visit all plots commencing at 1130 am on Thursday 9th November 1989. Please be early and help us prepare our plot. If you are unable to attend on that day, the Field will remain open until 1600 on Thursday 16th November.

We have not proceeded with an application to take part in the Cenotaph March Past on Remembrance Sunday due to lack of numbers. Many members stated that they did not wish to change their routine of visiting their own, local War Memorial on that day.

LENINGRAD AND MURMANSK 6th to 13th MAY 1990. That's definite. Please give me your names if interested. No commitment at this stage - price not yet agreed with Intourist.

N O R T H R U S S I A C L U B

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FROM 1st APRIL 1988 to 31st MARCH 1989

<u>I N C O M E</u>		<u>E X P E N D I T U R E</u>	
B/Fwd 1988/89	3,708 - 75	Auditor's Fee 1987/88	35 - 00
Interest from Deposit a/c	107 - 71	British Legion Poppy Factory	30 - 15
Membership renewals 1988/89	455 - 00	Cost of Badges	422 - 62
New members 1988/89	717 - 00	Cost of Ties	431 - 58
Donations Received	684 - 25	Cost of Blue Nose Certificates	227 - 86
Membership renewals 1989/90	2,680 - 00	Cost of USSR Trip plus refunds	53,930 - 91
Sale of Badges	630 - 00	Donations from members for Armenian Disaster	570 - 00
Sale of Ties	600 - 50	Donation by N.R.C. to Disaster	250 - 00
Sale of Blue Nose Certificate	256 - 75	Cost of Convoy Books	305 - 67
U.S.S.R. Trip 7-5-88	53,703 - 44	Cost of Car Stickers	184 - 50
Donations received for Armenian Disaster...	570 - 00	Memorial Trust Fund	250 - 00
Convoy books	460 - 50	Honorarium Secretary	110 - 00
Car Stickers	169 - 35	Honorarium Asst. Secretary	110 - 00
Memorial Trust Fund	25 - 00	Secretary's Postal Float plus Printing Costs.....	353 - 00
Return of Part Honorarium by Asst. Secretary	27 - 50	Costs of Printing N/Light	2,394 - 99
Returned by Secretary	150 - 00	Secretary's Telephone a/cs:-	
		APRIL 1988	100 - 00
		AUGUST 1988	100 - 00
		NOVEMBER 1988	100 - 00
		JANUARY 1989	78 - 00
		Assistant Secretary's Tele a/cs:-	
		MAY 1988	126 - 50
		AUGUST 1988	85 - 15
		NOVEMBER 1988	96 - 28
		MARCH 1989	122 - 95
		Cost of Electric Typewriter	330 - 00
		Asst. Secretary's Postal Costs Plus postage for N/Light.....	936 - 14
<hr/>		<hr/>	
SUB TOTALS C/FWD	£65,144 - 96	SUB TOTAL C/FWD	£61,681 - 30

<u>I N C O M E</u>		<u>E X P E N D I T U R E</u>	
SUB TOTAL B/FWD	£65,144 - 96	SUB TOTAL B/FWD	£61,681 - 38
<u>F U N C T I O N S</u>			
Union Jack Club 12-3-88	9 - 00	Kent Ski Club D/Dance	831 - 20
Kent Ski Club D/Dance 23-4-88	332 - 00	H.M.S. Belfast 14-5-88	126 - 00
(£448 received in 1987/88 a/cs)		Victory Services Club 2-7-88	1,640 - 74
Proceeds from Raffle	116 - 00	H.M.S. Belfast 3-9-88	157 - 50
H.M.S. Belfast 14-5-88	175 - 00	Annual Dinner 22-10-88	3,061 - 69
Proceeds from Raffle	47 - 00	including refunds.....	8 - 00
Victory Services Club 2-7-88	1,480 - 00	Transfer donations	40 - 00
Proceeds from Raffle	163 - 10	Hire of Coach	50 - 00
H.M.S. Belfast 3-9-88	170 - 00	Donation RNA Mansfield	18 - 00
Proceeds from Raffle	40 - 00	Refunds	18 - 00
Annual Dinner 22-10-88	2,822 - 00	Union Jack Club 26-11-88	510 - 80
Proceeds from Raffle	261 - 00	Victory Services Club 25-2-89	482 - 25
Coach Trip 22-10-88	130 - 50	Printing tickets for London Home Counties	35 - 00
Union Jack Club 26-11-88	580 - 00	Deposits USSR Trip May 1989	1,600 - 00
Proceeds from Raffle	38 - 00	Refunds USSR Trip	2,400 - 00
Victory Services Club 25-2-89	450 - 00	British Legion Poppy Factory	75 - 00
Proceeds from Raffle	58 - 80	Treasurer's Postal Float	105 - 00
London Home Counties 22-4-89	385 - 00	Membership Secretary's Postal & Stationery costs.....	524 - 00
U S S R Trip May 1989	32,054 - 00	Committee Meeting Expenses H.M.S. Belfast 4-6-88.....	44 - 88
Payments received for Extra copies N/Light	39 - 70	UJC including Lunch 11-8-88	150 - 50
		Victory Services Club 10-11-88	46 - 90
		Victory Services Club 25-2-89	31 - 08
		J.Challands	5 - 00
<hr/>		<hr/>	
T O T A L	£104,496 - 06	T O T A L	£73,624 - 84
<hr/>			
INCOME	£104,496 - 06	CURRENT ACCOUNT	£17,888 - 68
EXPENDITURE	73,624 - 84	DEPOSIT ACCOUNT	£12,982 - 54
BALANCE	£ 30,871 - 22	TOTAL	£30,871 - 22

NOTE: After 31st MARCH 1989, the sum of £24,784 - 78 has been paid for the U.S.S.R. Trip May 1989.

I have audited all accounts, inspected all receipts and relevant papers pertaining to The North Russian Club and certify that everything is correctly accounted for.

E.W. Reckhow Hon Treasurer.

W.S. De Auditor

MEMBERSHIP LIST & ROLL CALL

ADDITIONS AND AMENDMENTS

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

R.PURCHASE, 26 Stanley Cohen House, Golden Lane Estate, London EC17 URL.
 C.WALDRAM, Bromhill, Seabank Road, Chapel St Leonards, Skegness, Lincs PE24 5QT.
 G.KING, 16 Sherwood Drive, Model Village, Shirebrooke, Mansfield, Notts.
 E.R.PHELPS, 89 Tyle Teg, Garden Suberbs, Burry Port, Llanelli, Dyfed SA16 OSR.

"CROSSED THE BAR"

DENIS MULFORD, 12 Marine Crescent, Tankerton, Whitstable, Kent. (ex-TRINIDAD)
 C.MANTLE, 243 Addington Road, Selsdon, Croydon, Surrey CR3 8LR. (ex-ELECTRA)
 KEN RICHARDS, 25 Brascote Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicester. (ex-BELLONA)

NEW MEMBERS - "WELCOME ABOARD SHIPMATES"

CHAPMAN Peter H. 35 Devon Road, South Darenth, Dartford, Kent DA4 9AA.
 DOUGHERTY Patrick 28 Belvedere Park, Belfast BT9 5GS.
 DUBROY Louis 18 Thorncliffe Place, Nepean, Ontario K1G 1K9, Canada.
 HANDSCOMBE Cecil 88 Castleford Road, Normanton, W.Yorks WF6 2EE.
 JENKINS Jack 11 Bushey Road, Queens Park, Bournemouth.
 JOHNSON R. 14 Linacre Avenue, Sprowston, Norwich NR7 8PE.
 LEVESQUE Alfred J. 80 Ivy Crescent, Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1X6, Canada.
 McNULTY John Rhu Vaal Lighthouse, Port Askaig, Isle of Islay, Argyll PA46 7BR, Scotland.
 PEARCE Frank. 61 Longmead Road, Paignton, Devon TQ3 1AX.
 POIRIER Fernand E. 2206 Marth Avenue, Ottawa K1G 1K9, Canada.
 PROFFITT Clifford. 4 Belgrave Avenue, Alsager, Cheshire ST7 2BX.
 PUCKETT John H. 20 Mayberry Road, Baglan, Port Talbot, W.Glam. SA12 8DF.
 ROSE G.A. 152 Wycombe Lane, Wooburn Crescent, Bucks. HP10 0HH.
 SHAW Eric. 547 East 6th Street, North Vancouver, B.C. Canada V7L 1R2.
 SPARKES Jack. 93 Owenford Road, Radford, Coventry, Warks.
 TYLER Launcelot G. 7 Friars Waye, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 2AZ.
 WADE Kenneth G. Little Orchard, 26 West Lodge Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NL.
 WRAIGHT Leonard J. Pean Farm, Pean Hill, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3BQ.
 CASWELL C.A. 20 Primula Street, London W12 0RG.
 LILLIE D.G. 5 Roman Road, Twyford, Winchester, Hants SO21 1QW.

AMENDMENTS:

Please alter Ernest L BENNETT to EDWARD L BENNETT.
 " " C.WALDRON to C.WALDRAM.
 " " H.M.S. LOCUS to H.M.S.LOTUS.

ADD TO "SHIPMATES ROLL CALL" LIST:

BELFAST: L.G.Tyler. EMPIRE GARRICK: J.McNulty. FURIOUS: C.Handscombe. HUSSAR: P.Dougherty.
HONEYSUCKLE: P.H.Chapman. INGLEFIELD: J.H.Puckett. LAWSON: L.J.Wraight. MARTIN: D.G.Lillie.
NENE: L.Dubroy; A.J.Levesque; F.E.Poirier; E.Shaw. OAKLEY: J.Jenkins. OBEDIENT: G.A.Rose.
SHAKESPEARE: K.G.Wade. STARLING: C.N.Proffitt. SWIFT: J.Sparkes. TRINIDAD: F.Pearce.
TRACKER: K.M.Wheeler; W.Kenney-Taylor. VINDEX: C.WalDRAM. WAR PINDARI: J.McNulty.
N.P.100: C.A.Caswell. EDINBURGH: D.G.Lillie.

STOP PRESS: We have a 66 verse 'Red Duster' poem entitled OCEAN VERITY. Too long for N.L., so send stamps to Editor if you want it.

STOP PRESS: At the A.G.M. it was unanimously agreed that the rate of subscription be increased to £6.00 per year from 1st April 1990. The decision was taken solely so that we can maintain the standard of printing of Northern Light. Printing costs are continually going up, and we will soon be paying additional postage charges. This is the first increase in subscriptions in the lifetime of the club. We hope to maintain the new rate for several years without further increase.

DID YOU KNOW THE LIBERTY SHIPS?

Few people, apart from merchant seaman, could instantly recognise a Liberty Ship - the mass produced, basic designed William Kaiser style, cargo vessel.

Kaiser's original connection with the Liberty Ships was with his special prefabricated construction methods. The original conception and planning were the brain child of the design staff at Joseph Thompson Shipyard in Sunderland. The prototype, **EMBASSAGE**, was built in 1935, to the order of Hall Bros of Newcastle on Tyne. The first of the wartime vessels to be built in Britain, **EMPIRE LIBERTY**, was launched early in 1941 and was managed by R. Chapman & Co., under contract to the British Government. Eventually, they were mass produced in Britain, Canada and the United States. The ship's name usually defined where it had been built.

Ships built in Britain were immediately recognised by the suffix '**EMPIRE**'. The names of Canadian built vessels were either suffixed '**PARK**' or prefixed '**FORT**', the former for those crewed by Canadians and the latter for those under the Red Ensign with British or mixed crews. American built 'Libertys' carried either the suffix '**LIBERTY**' or the prefix '**OCEAN**'. But some were named after prominent U.S. citizens.

Another way to recognise the American built ships was by the distinctive deckhouse which was built around the funnel and used as officers accommodation.

 A TYPICAL CONVOY FORMATION - PQ 16.
 Liberty Ships in Bold type.**

Empire Lawrence GB	Alcoa Banner USA	Steel Worker USA	Carlton USA
Empire Baffin GB	Richard Henry Lee USA	Ironclad USA	John Randolph USA
Low Castle GB	City of Omaha USA	West Nilus USA	Hybert USA
Empire Selwyn GB	Nemaha USA	Michigan Panama	Empire Purcel GB
Ocean Voice GB	Heffron USA	Massmar USA	American Express USA
Atlantic GB	City of Joliet USA		American Robin USA
Empire Elgar GB	Minotaur USA	Alamar USA	Syros USA
Cheritshevsky USSR	Schols USSR	Stary Bolshevik USSR	Mormacshul USA
Revolutsioner USSR	Peter de Hoogh Holland	Exterminator USA	

Of the 34 vessels which sailed, 27 reached Soviet ports.

A PROUD SALUTE

A letter and a poem to the Merchant Navy:

3 Park Place,
Whitby,
N. Yorks.

Dear Dick,

.....I note you are doing the next issue on the Merchant Navy. I worked for a long time with the R.A.F. at Fylingdales, I often used to get a bit 'chokker' at the Battle of Britain Day - first of the few etc!!! Whilst in no way detracting from their deeds.

I used to say to the R.A.F. lads, if it hadn't been for the Merchant Navy bringing in the petrol and oil etc., all you lot would have been flying would have been kites!!

We should have a Victory at Sea Day, for without the Merchant Navy we would have all been up the creek!! So, I've written a loose poem on the theme.

Bill Johnston.
ex-N.P.100.

A PROUD SALUTE

Our Merchant Fleet which sailed the Seven Seas,
this country's lifeline in the dark, dark days of war -
right from the start when the first shots were fired,
they were the first to suffer loss, yet still they brought
to port, the vital needs of war, though high the price
they paid in blood and tears.

So many times indeed their ships were poorly armed to
defend themselves, and protective escorts were often
scanty guard, yet still, across the oceans vast, in tropic
climes or bitter, frozen seas, they sailed their ships,
braving the bombs, the gunfire, minefields and torpedoes.

Freighters and tankers, troopships, coasters too, all
played their parts. Indeed a varied fleet, with many a
famous name in days of peace, belonging to companies
known the world over, but even more of humbler means,
but equally important in the schemes of war.

Thus we recall these many ships and men, saluting them
afresh across the years, and the Red Ensign too, under
which they sailed, proud flag, served by a gallant host
our Merchant Navymen, who manned them!

Rightly we remember the Few, who braved the heavens above
our land, fighting the foe from out our native skies -
so equally anew, with pride, recall the men who sailed
the Merchant ships, giving our land the sinews that
she sorely needed, and that war demands.

Oft their ships sunk under them, cast adrift in
open boats or rafts, hoping to be rescued and survive,
often to sail again, despite their ordeals, whilst others
had paid the price of life on their last voyage.....

Their graves lie scattered deep beneath the restless seas
REMEMBER THEM

They were our comrades, a gallant band indeed, who failed us not!

One very important group that are often forgotten when the wartime Merchant Navy is the men of the Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships - the D.E.M.S., but they are not forgotten in NORTHERN LIGHT, thanks to Bill Weeks (s.s. Fort MacMurray)

THE D. E. M. S.

No it isn't in the papers and you do not always know
Where to find the D.E.M.S. you address them c/o G.P.O.
For today you can't be certain where tomorrow they will be,
For yesterday they were 'somewhere' and the day before 'at sea'.

You have seen him on the streets rolling groggy on his feet,
You have seen him grab the pavement for support,
You have watched him arm in arm with a dame of doubtful charm,
Who was steering Jack safely back to port.

You shudder with disgust as dead drunk he hits the dust,
You scorn him when you see him on the spree,
But you never see the trip on that dark and lonely ship,
Ploughing furrows through a mine infested sea.

You cheer your Air Force lads in their well-armed ironclads,
You give a cheer to boys in Khaki too
You tremble in a funk when you read "D.E.M.S. sunk",
But you never give a damn about the crew.

You moan about the cost of the vessels sunk or lost,
It puts you in a pessimistic mood,
You forget to say "Well Done" or congratulate the one,
Who brings the wives and kiddies home their food.

He has brought the old tramp home through sub-infested zone,
He has braved the Channel with troops for France,
He fights the lurking Hun with a four point seven gun,
Yet you don't consider that he takes a chance.

You'll find the D.E.M.S. where the big ships come in from the sea,
With wheat and meat, and fighting men - sugar for your tea,
They bring their cargoes from far across the rolling main,
A brief few days they stay in port then off to sea again.

For him no flags you wave he's not thought of with the brave,
But he'll help to beat Old Adolph at his game,
Yes! You hate him when he's drunk, and no one cares if he gets sunk,
He's the kind that put the 'GREAT' in Britain's name.

(Editor's note: We also add the men of the Royal Maritime Artillery to this dedication. We were, we are, and we always will be proud of you all.)



D.E.M.S.



A DEMS CHRISTMAS CARD



One swallow does not make a summer!

With best Wishes for Christmas and
the New Year, from

Christmas, 1944

THE FATE OF "BOLTON CASTLE"

At 1600 on the 27th June 1942, the convoy left Iceland and headed for sea to form up. The 5083 ton **BOLTON CASTLE** (Captain Pascoe), was in the second column, port side, astern of **EL CAPITAN**. All was normal until we were spotted by a Condor reconnaissance aircraft on 1st July. From that moment onwards the convoy was subjected to a variety of attacks - high level bombing, low level torpedo runs and of course U-boat attacks both day and night until July 4th.

At 2215 on that fateful day, the signal to scatter was hoisted, because it was assumed that **HIPPER** and **TIRPITZ** were at sea and were a direct threat on the whole convoy PQ17. **BOLTON CASTLE** was armed with a 4" anti-submarine gun, a Bofors and four oerlikons. Captain Pascoe chose to take us on a north easterly course towards the ice. We were joined by a Dutch vessel **PAULUS POTTER** (mentioned previously on page 8) and the American **WASHINGTON**. At about 1500 on the following day, 5th July, all three ships were dive bombed by JU.88s. I was manning the starboard after oerlikon and I saw three bombs leave the aircraft and penetrate N° 2 hold. There was a huge, brilliant flash which shot up to thirty or forty feet. **BOLTON CASTLE** immediately began to list to starboard. I have since found out that the cargo in N° 2 hold included a large amount of cordite. This went up like a huge firework, (unlike the unfortunate **PAN ATLANTIC**, which was apparently bombed whilst carrying the same cargo and her bow disappeared, sadly with the loss of 26 members of the crew).

The Abandon Ship order was given and I with Mr. F. Brown the D.E.M.S. gunner, who is also an N.R.C. member, found ourselves in the Mate's boat. In eleven minutes we saw **BOLTON CASTLE** go down by the head with ensign still flying. We remained in the lifeboat until 13th July, when we were picked up by a Russian ship and taken to hospital in Polyarnoe. From hospital we were eventually transferred to Vaenga and after a while we went by lorry to Murmansk and then a two-and-a-half day train journey to Archangel. We remained there until we returned home in **H.M.S. BLANKLEY** in QP 14.

It is an interesting fact that of the 153 lives lost in PQ 17 more than half were British seamen.

R. WALLER (Gosport).

WHO WAS THE YOUNGEST ?

A question which is probably unanswerable has been posed whilst producing 'Red Duster' is, "Who was the youngest boy man (They were all men!!) on PQ 17? Was it Ron Lang, who put his age forward? He was actually thirteen years and eight months old when he signed on as Galley Boy aboard **S.S. OCEAN FREEDOM**. Incidentally Ron Lang was not his real name either!!

MERCHANT NAVY OFFICERS AND MEN WHO WERE DECORATED DURING WORLD WAR 2 FOR "SERVICES TO U.S.S.R.", "FOR CARRIAGE OF ARMAMENTS TO U.S.S.R.", OR "FOR CONVOYS TO NORTHERN PORTS".

ORDER OF THE RED BANNER

Captain J. Lawrie, D.S.O. D.S.C., Master **S.S. TREHATA**.

ORDER OF THE PATRIOTIC WAR 1st Class

Chief Engineer W.K.S. Robinson, M.N. **S.S. HARMATRIS**.

Chief Officer W. Prance, M.N. **S.S. EMPIRE BYRON**.

ORDER OF THE PATRIOTIC WAR 2nd Class

Boatswain F.J. Kendle, M.N. **S.S. ATLANTIC**.

Seaman A. Martucci, M.N. **S.S. EMPIRE BAFFIN**.

Diesel Greaser C.Irvine, R47866. Ship not stated.

Acting Coxswain S.A. Kerslake, X21479A. Ship not stated.

ORDER OF THE RED STAR

Captain G. Black, Master M.N. Ship not stated.

Chief Engineer J. Mummery, M.N. Ship not stated.

Chief Officer J.E.S. Cook, M.N. Ship not stated.

Second Engineer W.L. Laurie, M.N. Ship not stated.

Steward R. Quick, B.E.M., **S.S. EMPIRE BYRON**.

Cook B.T. Coffey, **S.S. RIVER AFTON**.

MEDAL FOR VALOUR

Captain E.J. Rice, Master M.N. Ship not stated.

Chief Engineer V.T. Millington, M.N. Ship not stated.

Second Officer A.A. Grieves, M.N. Ship not stated.

Second Officer J.A. Banister, M.N. Ship not stated.

Second Engineer J. Maxwell, M.N. Ship not stated.

Able Seaman C.L. Morrison. Ship not stated.

MEDAL FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE IN BATTLE

Junior Engineer H.A. Wallace M.N. Ship not stated.

Chief Steward T. Smith, M.N. Ship not stated.

Boatswain K. Campbell M.N. Ship not stated.

(Can anyone help with names of the missing ships?)

(Records taken from London Gazette)

"EPILOGUE"

The following is an excerpt from the Epilogue to Doddy Hay's book "War under the Red Ensign" and is reprinted in 'Northern Light' by kind permission of the publishers, Jane's Publishing, Company, Ltd., London.

"In Murmansk and Archangel today the men of the British Merchant Navy at war are remembered* with gratitude, with reverence, and with pride. They are remembered by those, both men and women, who fought and suffered by their side, by the seamen, by the dockers, the longshoremen, and the winch drivers who shared with them the hardships and the dangers, the shock of the torpedoes and the horrors of aerial bombardment throughout those terrible years, four decades past, of the time of the arctic convoys.

In those two cities, the war memorials and the graves of the dead are not forgotten monuments to be hurried past or ignored. Men and women will stand bare-headed in the snow to pay tribute, and high among those who receive this posthumous respect are the British and Allied merchant seamen who died in bringing to Russia the food, the fuel and the equipment so desperately needed by that country's armies as, with twenty million of their people dead, they continued to fight on against the armies, air force and navy of Nazi Germany.

YOUR LETTERS

(Mainly about Escort Carriers and the last edition.)

From Warwick Kenney-Taylor:

"I think that Morley and I will have to put the story right about the 'shot down' Wildcat, particularly if we can get hold of Lucey - the pilot. That should be good enough for a couple of paragraphs in a future Edition."

From A. H. Crathern:

"I am very interested in your reference to 825 Squadron when they were aboard **VINDEX** - I'm hoping you can follow on from the Vindex-run and refer to the squadron when aboard **AVENGER**.

We were six Swordfish and six Seafires, **AVENGER** came through, but alas with no planes. I was a seaman attached to Fleet Air Arm for Hangar Duties and came ashore to **DAEDALUS** after our Murmansk run.

I got to know the sailmakers and riggers of 825 and I would like to know if in fact, they did perish in the 'Bay'. I would also like to know if any of my 'oppos' who used to help me pull the chocks away are still about.

If the ships company all perished and the same maintenance crew of 825 were aboard on that run to the Med. it is likely that me and my 'hangar oppos' are the only survivors of that Murmansk run. I was only 19 at the time.

Can anyone out there remember leaving **DAEDALUS** and making tracks for Campbelltown to join 825, then rendezvousing at Reykjavik aboard **AVENGER**?"

From Alexander Armstrong:

A short note to say how much No 16 was enjoyed by non-members in the village. (Ed.) Donald McInain, an ex-Aircraftman who has a photograph almost identical to the one of **NATRANA**, and Fred Reay ex-Stoker, who was on **EXETER** at the Battle of River Plate and later served in **KENYA** on the Murmansk run.

From John Lees-Jones:

"I have really enjoyed this issue, having been in 846 Squadron. There is a minor error on Page 8 in the 3rd paragraph - 846 Squadron was on **TRUMPETER** and not **PREMIER**,

as reported. I thought that you would wish to have this information, for the record.

Editor's note: This information came from a museum document, I have taken it up with them, but to date have had no reply. However, you are quite right as I have now got documents from Arthur Howes with summaries of war service of **TRACKER**, **TRUMPETER** and **846 Squadron**.

Arthur's letter states:

Once again a superb 'Northern Light' N°16, especially, Sid Conley's letter and report on the Escort Carriers and their Squadrons. I and other N.R.C. members of **846 Squadron** joined **TRACKER** in February 1944.....we left **TRACKER** in June 1944 and joined **TRUMPETER** in July 1944 - she was a specialist at carrying out offensive and mine-laying operations in the Norwegian area.

Other details from Arthur's documents will be published in the next edition featuring Escort Carriers.

And now from Sid Conley - mentioned in previous letter:

Congratulations on a good product in June 1989's 'Northern Light'. You obviously would not have had sufficient space to have included the whole of my letter of 22/2/89. Unfortunately, the necessary editing has destroyed what was my prime objective, which was to give my version and thanks to the effort played by each part of the Ships Company and, to all sailors, in all ships on that particular convoy.

However, owing to demand for copies of the letter from various sources, a large number of copies were made and should any member wish to read the letter in full I will gladly forward a copy to them.

Thanks Sid, the whole letter is well worth reading. If any member requires a copy, Sid's address is:- 19 Wisley Rd., St Pauls Cray, Orpington, Kent, BR5 3DR. Dont forget to send a stamp).

Finally, excerpts from a letter from New Zealand:

Dear Dick,
NORTH RUSSIAN CONVOY CLUB
Thank you for the copy of your club's magazine. We are only a small club seeking to get established and cannot afford such an up-market publication as yours.....
....enclosed please find copies of our newsletters.
Is there a chance of getting a copy of your membership list? I have a copy dated 22-11-86 and is up to N°457. Most of our members are from the U.K. or served in the forces there.
My kind regards to you and yours, and also to the members of the "North Russia Club".
John G Middleton.
Organiser.

Members wanting further details contact editor (Tel 051 487 9567)

More letters - this one in reply to Bob Brighton's in the last edition:

Dear Dick,

With reference to Bob's **BAMBOROUGH CASTLE** story I can give the following reply:

"STILL LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER, HAVE JUST STOPPED RUNNING LONG ENOUGH TO WRITE THIS TO YOU, TO CONFIRM THAT I STILL HAVE THE KNIFE.

WOULD DEARLY LOVE TO REVISIT KOLA, BUT SHE MAY BE WAITING! THINKING ABOUT IT THOUGH, SHE WOULD BE LOOKING FOR A BOY SEAMAN, NOT THE DODDERING OLD CHAP OF TODAY"

YOURS AYE.

"Midnight" (or Chas Taylor as known these days)

And now a letter from 'Curley' Morris, which he thought he had sent to me in mid-April. (Better late than never, Curley!!)

Members from the South West area held their fifth Annual Dinner at The Bell, Buckland Dinham. As organiser I thank those members who travelled from Kent, Avon, Devon, Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire.

The dinner commenced with paying silent tribute to those members who had recently 'Crossed the Bar', with special mention of Shipmate T.J. Mansfield of Swindon.

In the company were Willie Bryant and Arthur Sutton J.P. who is President of Frome Branch R.N.A., a post he has held for more than twenty years. The occasion was a surprise to both of them, who 48 years ago served as young officers aboard **ARGUS** in Arctic Waters.

A North Russia Club plaque was presented to 'mine host and his good lady', Maurice and Doris. The plaque was suitably inscribed to mark the fifth annual dinner there and had been purchased from last year's raffle proceeds.

E. (Curley) Morris.

THE NEXT EDITION - "NORTHERN LIGHT" N° 18.

The next edition will be published in December. To mark the 46th anniversary of the sinking of **SCHARNHORST** the edition will be the North Cape Edition.

Send me your stories if you were on one of the vessels that took part.

Or were you based ashore in North Russia at the time?

Or at home on Christmas leave? Or in one of the convoys that were in the area?

You all have a story to tell!! Send them to me as soon as you can and let us keep up the standard that the Red Duster lads have produced in this edition.

My address to remind you: **R.D.SQUIRES, 28 WESTBROOK ROAD, GATEACRE,
LIVERPOOL, MERSEYSIDE L25 2PX.**