

HMS DIDO

STEADFAST



<http://www.hms-dido.com>

NEWSLETTER No 7

October 2012

Association Officers

President for life: *Mike England*

Chairman: *Ralph Price*

Secretary & Founder: *Colin Bates*

Treasurer: *Colin Bates*

Membership: *John Bouchier*

Welfare Officer: *Dave Eivers*

Newsletter Editor: *Bill Matthews*

SUMMER DRAW

RAFFLE WINNERS

The Summer Draw was made on Saturday 29th September at the Bawn Lodge Hotel, Chester.

- First prize of £150.00 was won by Tom Blackman
- Second Prize of £100.00 went to Terry Bishop, one of our Wartime Warriors from the cruiser.
- Third Prize of £50.00 to Pete Slyn, one of our long serving members.

The Draw raised over £700.00 before costs and prize monies were deducted and an overall profit of over £300.00 was made. Thanks to everyone who sold or bought tickets.

A fourth prize of a run ashore with Bill Matthews and his aunt Ada was not claimed!

*** PRESIDENT FOR LIFE ***



After a unanimous decision by your committee, Mike England, who celebrated his 80th earlier this year, has been elected as President for life in recognition of his outstanding efforts in support of the Association.

Mike has been our President following a couple of years as our Treasurer and has done an excellent job representing us at formal functions, making strong speeches on our behalf and using his influence and experience to progress the activities of the association.

As the CO of the 7th Dido, when she was awarded the Freedom of the Borough of Bolton, he says it was the absolute best time of his twenty years in sea-going appointments.

On Saturday 23rd June, an Armed Forces luncheon was given in the Albert Hall, Bolton Town Hall. We have attended this function for the last couple of years and this year it gave us a chance to meet the new Mayor of Bolton.



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email: secretary@hms-dido.com

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2012 REUNION TORBAY

Once again, we returned to Torbay and the Livermead House Hotel agreed to host our event. Saturday morning, we boarded coaches and were transported to Britannia Royal Naval College and enjoyed a guided tour which included a cream tea buffet. Everyone who attended the tour all said how enjoyable it was. Captain Robert Stewart and his wife Michelle were our guests of honour at our evening event. They said at the end of evening that we were invited back to the college at any time (as service commitments allow) in the future. Photo ID's were required to enter the college, these ID's are now our new membership card. The rear side of the card holds information for discounts that were agreed with the Rew Hotels on production of the card. If any member does not already have a card, please send me a passport type photo either by post or email.

2013 REUNION PLANS

The reunion is shaping up well and is expected to be the best attended yet. The full details are on the website, but the venue is the Hallmark Hotel, Gloucester and the plan is for a canal boat trip up the River Severn on the Saturday, with lunch onboard. Make sure you have sent your deposits!

This is the website:

[http://www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk/
our_hotels/gloucester/](http://www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk/our_hotels/gloucester/)

Reunion Pics



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SALLY HAYES



Poor Sally, who worked in Bolton Town Hall until her retirement earlier this year, has been in hospital for surgery but is now thankfully on the mend.

Sally has been a stalwart in promoting the link we have with Bolton and is a good friend of the Association.

Send your goodwill greetings for a speedy recovery to Colin and he will make sure they get to her.

She is seen here receiving her Lifetime Achievement Award from the Mayor of Bolton, Cllr Noel Spencer

All the best from the Dido, Sally!

PHIL THOMPSON'S STORY

Lt Phil Thompson was the DMEO (deputy Engineer Officer) during the 73/74 commission

(This part of his biography covers his naval service, to find out how he became a successful civilian see his full life story on the website.)



I was born in 1934 and lived in Greetland, a small Yorkshire Village, for my early years. My brother had gone into the family business and there was no room for me, so I spoke to Dad. He had been in the Navy during the 1914 - 1918 war and suggested I joined as an Artificer. I didn't know or care what an Artificer was and said OK. I just sat the exam, passed an aptitude test and was off. I was just over fifteen by then.

I joined HMS Fisguard on 12th September 1949 with 174 other boys and started what was reputed to be the best engineering apprenticeship in the World. It was hard work but a great training. We started early and finished at 1930 so there wasn't a lot of time to get bored. Many did not survive the four years. There were many examinations on the way and some failed. Others couldn't stand the pace and a few "naughty boys" left for other reasons.

Then it was off to sea to consolidate the training and qualify for the tickets. In September 1953 I joined HMS Duchess at Invergordon and before leaving her in 1956 had qualified for all my tickets, was a CPO, 3rd Class Tiffy and could take charge of 56,000 HP, of the most powerful engines afloat. A daunting task, but the tot made it easier. I joined the Rampura at Malta for a spell and steamed the largest triple expansion engines afloat, ever. The Low Pressure cylinder was 8ft 4ins in diameter and as a repair ship we could make anything including our own piston rings. From there it was to the Loch Killisport for a spell in the Red Sea and up the Persian Gulf when the Suez crisis was on. After a year in Newcastle on Tyne helping the Germans ruin some of our destroyers they had bought I went to the South Atlantic in the Puma and a diesel ship this time with eight main engines. That was a great commission visiting all the flesh pots of South Africa and most in South America. We met John Steinbeck who gave us a live Puma as our mascot and we kept her at Paignton Zoo.

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We are now in 1961 and I was a Chief Tiffy serving in the Cruiser Lion. We went to the Far East and had a major fire in the boiler room which put us out of action for a while in Singapore. Our Commander was called Clayton and he was destined to be the Commander in

Chief Far East Fleet when the Dido arrived there. More of that later. After Lion I had another brief spell ashore then up to the Persian Gulf again on Mine-sweepers where I was Squadron Engineer before joining the Scarborough in the Dartmouth Training Squadron. I was glad to get off that one to join a group ashore doing trials on new ships. It was there I was invited to become an Officer. Acting Temporary Engineer. I guess they were short of Engineers. Anyway I did it and after a few months having a ball at Greenwich and the Engineering College at Manadon I joined the Dido in 1971 as the Deputy Engineer Officer.

I was the oldest Officer in the Wardroom and the most junior, not counting the Midshipmen. I suppose anyone reading this may have served in the Dido at some point and I hope you enjoyed it. I did, though it was hard work for me yet very rewarding. We had a good team and not too many reprobates in the Stokers Mess. When we were in the Far East the C in C came onboard to meet the Captain and Officers. We were all lined up in the Wardroom in order of seniority (guess where I was) and having been introduced to a few said, "Where's Phil Thompson". So he by passed most and came down to the end of the line, shook hands and suggested we have a run ashore for old time sake.

Thanks to Mike England, I got promoted after leaving the ship in Australia then went on to become the MEO of Endurance for two trips into the Antarctic. The Navy did not have to promote me beyond Sub Lieutenant, thank you Mike. So I knew on leaving Endurance that there would be no



more promotion for me. I could live with that but when told that I was too old to go to sea anymore I decided to retire. After all where are all the engines. I wasn't much good at driving a desk, but that is what I was destined for in my next career. I left the Navy aged forty five after thirty years man and boy.

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A SERIOUS MESSAGE FROM OUR WELFARE OFFICER, DAVE EIVERS

LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY

I have a horror story which I need to share in the hope that it will save our members from any grief in the future. This is about a woman who was married to a retired senior police officer.

They were travelling by air to Australia when the husband had a DVT develop in his brain. He was hospitalised in Australia on arrival. When they could travel home he was admitted to a psycho-geriatric hospital for treatment.

Everything they owned was in joint names, the car, the house, investments & bank accounts and they thought they were safe. The court of protection took over and then told the wife that all her accounts had been frozen. She could not write cheques or withdraw from the account leaving her with nothing. Her husbands old age pension did not come until he was 65 and he was 64 at this time.

A teachers pension she received went straight into the joint account which was frozen so she gained no benefit from that. She was then given cheques from the court to pay the fees to the nursing home her husband was eventually moved to and had to submit receipts for everything she bought for him.

She had to open a receivers account to pay the cheques into but found herself visiting four banks before bank number five would do this for her. She then had to open an account to redirect her teachers pension into and by this time had gone for some months with little money.

She was allowed to keep the car and was given free car tax, but told that the car could only be used for the benefit of her husband such as hospital visits. She was not allowed to use it for her own private purposes (remember this is a joint owned car)

After two and a half years her husband died and the woman went to her solicitor on the day to ask for her husbands will and for the address of the court of protection to inform them. The solicitor said she would do all this her and named her price per hour. As the woman was by now so hard up she said she would do it herself and asked the solicitor for the court address to which she was told. " I have spent four years learning how to be a solicitor, I give nothing away"

It took along time for the court to settle her affairs and to send the widow the cheque for the remaining sum of money that hadn't been used for her husbands care. When she asked for any interest that had been accrued she was told this had been used for court expenses.....and she still owed them £61.

She never knew who the court was protecting, It wasn't her or her husband as she did it all for him, the court of protection just hung onto the money.

The lesson of this story is that illness of this type can befall any one of us, and we should put into place a 'lasting power of attorney' while we are of sound mind.

Dido snippet

The cruiser Dido had a very eventful, strenuous and dangerous war. She operated in the Mediterranean, the North Sea and Russia during which she suffered damage and casualties on several occasions. To see the full timeline of her history, go to this website -

<http://www.naval-history.net/xGM-Chrono-06CL-Dido.htm>



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Secretaries Corner

Once again it has been a busy year. At our AGM it was decided to have our next reunion in the Midlands. This threw up a few problems to say the least. I took a month or so off before I started my research. When I did eventually start, I contacted a number of hotels in various areas throughout the Midlands. Not one of these were prepared to reserve us more than 40 rooms. I then moved further out until I found the Hallmark Hotel at Gloucester. After the initial contact they were extremely helpful. My wife and I visited the hotel and had a meeting with their events manager, he agreed to reserve the whole hotel for us. I then looked around for something to do for our excursion and finally ended up with a cruise up the Ship canal. That was the easy part, this was then followed by the inevitable paperwork to inform everyone.

I also made a number of visits to Bolton Town Hall during the year. These included an Armed forces day luncheon, where we were accompanied by Keith Blackburn and his partner. This was a two fold visit, as I also wanted to introduce my self to Sally's replacement, although I did eventually meet Janet it was not a very helpful meeting as she only had the time to say "hello" and then move on.

Later in the year, a return to Bolton for Remembrance day, a bit of a misunderstanding between Sally's replacements and me, meant we missed out on the Concert, but after a little pushing from me we once again were included in the Remembrance day parade. I would like to say thank you to Bob Blackburn, Tony Brady, Alan Pickthorne and of course Ralph Price, for travelling to Bolton to attend the parade, we all met up on Saturday evening when I passed on all the information for the Sunday morning ceremony and parade. Hopefully we will have more members for the parade in 2013.



Later in the year I started contacting as many Leander class associations as I could find, with the purpose of creating a Leander Class Federation. This to include all association and groups of any crews that served on board Leander Class frigates. I contacted Ken Williams of the Jupiter association who has the same idea, we are now working to holding a meeting with other Association/group representatives. It is hoped to hold an inaugural reunion for all associations/groups interested.

I have found that many other associations are losing members, in fact a number of associations have now folded because of this. We seem to be one of the few that are increasing in numbers, we now have around 310 members, although only half are full paid up members.

Finally, I would like to thank all members for their continued support to help keep our ship alive.

Colin Bates, Secretary

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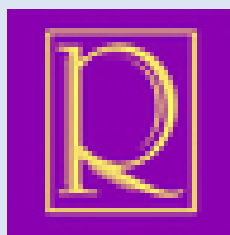
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