

EXETER FLOTILLA
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 9TH.MAY 2023
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Membership:

Over the last twelve months membership has changed slightly with eight new members, five deceased and two resigned. We will remember those who crossed the Bar at the start of our AGM.

We currently have 124 full members plus one, our first, associate member and I am determined to increase both these figures by the end of this year. As the last remaining Flotilla we need to keep our numbers up to survive. We particularly need younger members.

The Committee:

As the “new boy” in the Chair, I am grateful for the considerable amount of behind the scenes work that is done by your Committee, without whom the Flotilla could not function. I am most appreciative of all their individual efforts and also for the contribution they make to the general running of the Flotilla.

Currently, your Committee is made up of:

Newsletter + Membership Secretary	Surg. Cdr Mike Wilson
Trafalgar Day Co-ordination,	Cdr Trevor Waddington
Website Secretary and SCC Liaison	Cdr Trevor Waddington
Visits Secretary	Capt. Mike Croxford
CTCRM Camp Liaison	Major Ralph Howard Williams
Golf and Summer Dinner Secretary	Surg. Cdre Robert Harland
Lecture Secretary	2nd Officer Dita Dixon
Treasurer	Mr Ian Yule FRICSS
Zoom Secretary	Lt Cdr David Scott
General Secretary	Capt. James Luard

The Lecture Programme:

The Lecture Programme has been wide ranging and fascinating and I thank Dita for her hard work and expertise in both arranging the lectures and then organising each lecture evening. Considering the quality of the lectures, it is a pity that not more members make the most of their subscription and attend. We have had reasonable audience numbers, but could do much better. Members are encouraged to fit these talks into their busy diaries.

Over the last twelve months, we have enjoyed:-

2022

June	Patron's Address	Cdre Rob Pedre
July	HMS DEFENDER	Cdr Storton
Aug	No Lecture	
Sept	Postponed	Official Mourning
Oct	The Perisher	David Parry
Nov	Cdr "Buster" Crabb	Ken Atherton
Dec (Woodbury)	Shackleton Footsteps	WO Baz Gray

2023

Jan	Hydrographic Service	RA Hatcher
Feb	Spitfire Girl	Candy Adkins
Mar	Autonomous Mayflower	Brett Phaneuf
Apr	No Lecture	
May	Ghost Ships	Ken Atherton
Jun	Patron's Address	RA Rob Pedre
July	WW2 Intelligence at Sea	Clovis Meath Baker

HMS Defender:

Our affiliate ship has been on patrol and in the news. We are kept updated on her tasking through her newsletter which is forwarded to all, electronically and posted on the website. The Flotilla were delighted to be able to send a small team to sea on their Affiliates day last May and sent a Christmas Card to their Commanding Officer, Commander George Storton RN. An alongside visit has been organised for 13th April for up to ten members. We were delighted to be represented as witnesses to their Ship's Company marching through Exeter as Freeman of the City on 11th February, under their new Commanding Officer, Commander Peter Evans RN.

Our Patron

Our Patron, Rear Admiral Rob Pedre, remains very busy but still manages to find the time to keep us in the picture. He exchanged Christmas cards with us and met a few at the Trafalgar Day Service. He looks forward to meeting more of us personally.

Annual Lunch

The first Annual Lunch for three years will be held here on 19th April and our Guest of Honour will be the Corps Colonel, Lt Col Simon Tucker RM. The Flotilla Guest will be Cdr Chris Cole and his wife, Carol.

Visits

There were no visits last year apart from the Sea Day in HMS Defender last May but Mike Croxford has organised an alongside visit for 13th April. He is hoping to be able to reinstate the pre Covid planned visit to HMS Queen Elizabeth before long. He has now arranged a visit to MSUB in Plymouth on 28th June, following the excellent lecture from Brett Phaneuf in March. More details to follow. Ian Yule has arranged an evening visit to Fenix Carriages on 23rd May, potentially most interesting.

Annual Golf Competition and Summer Dinner:

Last year's competition at East Devon Golf Club was its usual success. This year's competition is planned for Thursday 20th July 2023 at the **East Devon Golf Club**. **Golfers of any ability are welcomed with the first tee booked at 1230 for 18 holes off the yellow tees. Dinner (three courses) is booked at 1830 for 1900 for everyone, including wives/husbands/partners, taken in delightful surroundings with the presentation to the winner of the unique trophy.**

Trafalgar Day Service:

The excellent Service on 23rd October was much enjoyed by all attendees. Sharing the organisational load has been a great improvement on the overloaded one man band of yore and Trevor Waddington has kindly agreed to oversee this year's service on Sunday 22nd October 2023, for which the Rt Revd Nicholas McKinnel, former Bishop of Plymouth, has already agreed to preside and the RM Band has been requested.

On Sunday 23 October 2022 the service and reception were attended by 75 Flotilla members and guests. 31 attended lunch at the Cote Brasserie.

Senior Attendees

The Rt Revd Nigel Stock, former Bishop of Lambeth and Bishop to the Armed Forces, preacher

Adm. Sir Mark Stanhope, Deputy Lieutenant of Devon

Cllr Yolanda Henson, Lord Mayor of Exeter

Mr Richard Youngman, High Sheriff of Devon

RAdm Rob Pedre, Commander UK Strike Force and Flotilla Patron

Cdre Andrew Stacey, Commander FOST

Col Chris Haw, Commandant CTCRM

Band

CTCRM provided a brass ensemble of 6 musicians. Although the Flotilla had been forewarned that a charge of about £230 could be expected, to date no invoice has been received.

Collection

The collection, shared with the cathedral, raised £311.73 for the RN and RM Charity

Sea Cadet Assistance

Once again the Exmouth Sea Cadets assisted in overseeing parking at Palace Gate and in the Cathedral School yard at the Trafalgar Day Service on 23 October 2022 and £100 has been paid from Flotilla funds to that worthy charity.

Sea Cadet Liaison

On 9 November 2022 Trevor Waddington attended the Exmouth Sea Cadets AGM and prize-giving and had the pleasure of presenting several prizes, including the Flotilla's 'Harry Jagger Trophy' to the cadet achieving the highest marks on an engineering course.

Website Secretary

From 9 February 2022 to 9 February 2023 the website had 10,464 visits.

The average length of visit was 22 seconds;

83% of visits were from desktops, 17% from mobiles.

70% of visits were from the UK, 16% from Russia, 14% from the USA!

Zoom Meetings

Your Committee agreed that even after Covid there was merit in arranging some zoom meetings, especially for those members who cannot attend the usual monthly meetings in person. David Scott has joined the Committee as the Zoom Secretary. Currently, Chris Cole is prepared to use his professional zoom log for this purpose. At present there are 11 members registered with the Zoom Secretary and the first post Covid Zoom Meeting took place with 8 members on 25 October. Participants were able to update each other, even in 2D! The second Zoom session, on 28th March, was joined by 6 members who were able to brief about their intentions for celebrating the Coronation. The plan is to meet twice a year, on a Tuesday evening while avoiding clashing with other Flotilla events.

David is our name badge contact (email - davidbscott@sky.com) and also our link with the Daily Telegraph for promulgating Flotilla events, having taken this task over from Bob Symons to whom I am extremely grateful. These announcements keep our Ensign flying in an excellent way.

Annual Dinner

We were unable to meet in the Officers' Mess but were kindly invited to use the Sgts' Mess instead and enjoyed a successful dinner there on Friday 25th November. Our Guest of Honour was General Andy Salmon and music was provided by The Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Band, with a Mess Beating by the Plymouth Maritime Corps of Drums.

Memoirs.

May I make a short plug to encourage more members to provide their memoirs – reduces difficulties when obits required! It is also a good way of getting to know each other – informally. Although these memoirs are password protected within the Members Only area, I remind you that nothing on the internet is totally safe so information you would not wish others to see should not be included.

Conclusion:

2022/3 has been an enjoyable year for me. The Flotilla is an excellent and unique organisation and I am determined to ensure our survivability by increasing our membership. Our first “Yachtie” member Tim Baker, becomes a full member at our AGM and then has the capacity to invite other suitable “Yachties”. This “going back to our roots” initiative should help member numbers. I am also grateful to the Britannia Association for advertising the Flotilla in their publications. I ask you all to help in this recruiting drive. Finally, I am most grateful to all the members of the Committee who have aided and guided me through my first year as Chairman.

I look forward to meeting you all at future lecture evenings.

Ian Moore

Chairman

April 2023.