



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH RUSSIA CLUB

9/88

NORTHERN LIGHT N° 13 MIL DERCE SEPTEMBER 1988

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> > Art Work by Les Lawrence.

LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

EDITORIAL

Once again I find that there is a great shortage of space, but I am certainly not complaining. Too many items and articles is far better than not enough! I simply apologise to those members who's contributions have not been used - and also to those who have complained that the type size is too small - if I increase type size I have to cut down further on content, We simply cannot afford to use more pages - in fact, I am already in the 'Rattle' for using more that my quota in a couple of previous N.Ls.!!

Our Art Artificer has supplied me with several new cartoons and captions - you have already seen Jolly Jack on page 1, but you will have to wait for some of the others.

At the A.G.M. I asked all present to sign a 'Get Well' card which I would send to the chairman of Murmansk Veteran's Club, Mr Michail Kemerov. He received it o.k. and is now in much better health. His reply, translated from Russian reads:

Dear Dick, I'd like to inform you that I received your message where you encourage me to recover and I thank you very much. I was treated in the Seamens Hospital Cardiological Centre, for several weeks....I am in good form now. The weather has also helped me, being used to capricious and changeable weather we were granted a warm and sunny July.

Dear Dick, I am well aware of your plans for the 1989 visit to Murmansk, so we shall arrange everything to make it pleasant and happy for you all.

May I wish you, your wife Peggy and all members of the 'North Russia Club' good health, good luck, success in your efforts, clear sky and 'Peace'.

With regards, yours Michail Kemerov.

Galina Shamanskaya, from the Seamens Club, who translated the letter, added - 'We are together inventing some ideas on what we can include in your next years visit'.

This edition is being completed during the Postal Strike which is 100% at the moment on Merseyside - I just hope that the delay (if any) will not be too long. But please, dont blame the poor old Editor!!! As we had no space in the special 'Pilgrimage' edition of Northern Light to answer or publish your letters from the previous (N°11) edition, the more topical letters are now published. My apologies to those who have missed out - but please, keep on writing.

S.F Tiffen had asked if any members recalled the U S Navy vessels, 'South Dakota' and 'Alabamha', commenting on the food, being "fed up with fried chicken, Pepsi Cola and Camel cigarettes. By your correspondence it appears that half of you wangled a voyage on a Yankee cruise liner, but none of you agree with Shipmate Tiffin, regarding food.

Hugh Davey, (ex 'Rhododendron') says, "I remember the two ships well, there may have been a third battleship as I recall 'Washington', also the cruisers 'Witchita' and 'Tuscaloosa' and five destroyers. I served with our R.T.O.for about ten days on the destroyer 'Wainwright', we never lived so well in our lives, the food was out of this world.

I am a non-smoker but the perfume of their cigarettes was quite nice in my opinion, but I did miss my Tot!

Cyril Bush, (ex 'Berwick') was coxswain of the 'skimming dish' and always looked forward to the trips to 'South Dakota' and 'Alabama' as they always returned with plenty of 'rabbits'.

Edward Hennessey, was a maritime gunner and he joined the American S.S.'Olopana' for PQ 17. The skipper informed them that as they were sailing to Russia they were to be rationed to three eggs per man for breakfast and for dinner they were only allowed a beef course or a chicken one, but not both! He says it was 'big eats' all the way.Edward goes on to say that after they were tinfished they had a hectic time before arriving in Archangel on 'Empire Tide'. In Archangel he met a matelot who sent a telegram home to his wife for him, and, he also got a cablegram back addressed c/o B.O.S.C.O.M. Archangel. He did no know the matelot's name but he will always be grateful to him. Editor's note: We have several members who were Telegraphists based in Archangel in Naval Party 200, so, perhaps you owe one of them a Tot, Edward.

Now, for a couple of your letters following the Pilgrimage edition of Northern Light.



were considered by the Russians unable to cope with the Vodka. Out of kindness they forbade its sale whilst Engleskis were ashore (or so we were told). The second watch ashore anticipating a night of very watery beer, found none,only Vodka.

However, the natives were kind and very well organised. No man missed the trot boat; most were accompanied by females on either side, supporting as necessary. One A.B. arrived alongside in a wheelbarrow, pushed by a very large Amazon.

Five of you have written seeking information on one of Alf Lewis's encounters. I quote from Joe Bennet's letter, "Elizabeth, tall, well built, eyes that had a hypnotic effect on Alf". Later, at the airport, her parting words, "until tomorrow". Hastily I scanned the few remaining pages, eager to read the ourcome of the invitation - but nothing!!

Joe asks, "Was this part censored by the editor? fearful of the effect on the blood pressure of 700 odd readers" Or, "Is it a serial and the next issue will reveal more"?

"Did they meet at her flat"?

"Or, did our Alf merely forget to write the sequel to the story"?

We sent an S.O.S. to Alf, pleading that Northern Light could not be published without this information....his reply, by return of post:-

Dear Dick,

Your S.O.S. to hand. Good God is nothing sacred anymore?

Who are these randy old sods who wish to know more about Elizabeth?

What exactly do they wish to know? Would they like to hear the traditional Mills & Boon version, or would they prefer to hear that the whole thing sizzled out at the Airport?

Let's cast my mind back to that fateful day last May 9th. I'd boarded the coach with my Oppo, Aubrey Ellis,.... as I looked out of the window I saw Elizabeth standing by her car with her father. I raised my hand in salute, she responded by putting her fingers to her lips, sending me an invisible kiss. Aubrey nudged my arm. "Who's that?" he enquired. "A very nice lady, Aubrey.....we may be seeing more of her, very much more, I hope." I then recited the episode of.our meeting on the plane.

On the evening of the following day a few of us had gathered at the bar where we were assured drinks would be available about 9 pm. Aubrey had brough some tapes on the trip which the barman kindly consented to play for us. Couples glided over the floor to the melodic sound of the late Jim Reeves. My eyes glanced occasionally to the door... I fully expected to see 'Her' arrive and visualised the effect she would create. The minutes slipped by ...Jim Reeves faded out to be replaced by Reginald Dixon...Chas & Dave...but still no sign of Elizabeth. It was now approaching midnight, the table littered with empty bottles. Time to retire we decided.

The Dragon Lady smiled and bade us 'goodnight' as we passed her desk. Aubrey and I had a last noggin of Hines before we retired for the night, As I nodded off I couldn't help but wonder why Elizabeth had n't kept her promise...sh'd seemed so sincere on the plane.

Since that day three months ago the memory has dimmed. That is until last week when a ring on the doorbell announced the arrival of the postman with an 18-inch square parcel.

The sealing wax seals, plainly marked with 'Mypmahcke' had been tampered with, indicating that officialdom had been interested in the contents. Inside were three L.P. records, one of Russian folk songs, another a female Russian Pop Singer, and the third a Russian love story with enchanting background music. No letter enclosed, in fact nothing to indicate from whom it had come. But there was an address of the sender on the wrapper. Who better to decipher it than the man who had been with me on the plane and who spoke the language like a native, ...Bill Loades! I sent him the wrapper asking for a translation. His reply confirmed my supposition:-

"Dear Alf,

Writing this at work....0300hrsunearthly hour unless you're at a booze-up party in Murmansk with a Russian, Amazon-type doctor.YES SIR,IT'S FROM "SHE"".

Now, whereveer did Bill get the notion that Elizabeth and I met up that fateful evening and what's all this about a booze-up? On top of that, how on earth would I have got Elizabeth past the Dragon Lady and into Room 101? One of us must be under a misconception. As I said, after three months the memory tends to dim a little.

P.S. By the way, Dick, stick me at the top of the 1989 trip to Murmansk!!!

Yours, with tongue in cheek,

Alf Lewis.

"THE TIME HAS COME FOR

YOU

TO GIVE A HAND"

RON WREN, OUR MEMORIAL SECRETARY REQUIRES

A FEW SHIPMATES TO DO SOME RESEARCH INTO

ORGANISATIONS FOR HIS FUND RAISING

ACTIVITIES.

Phone: "RON" on 0707 55846 or write to:-13 Sherwood Ave, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 2LD

N. R. C. M. F.

YOU WILL BE SEEING A LOT OF REFERENCES TO (N.R.C.M.F.) BECAUSE WHAT WAS JUST AN IDEA PASSED TO CHRIS TYE SOME TWO YEARS AGO HAS NOW DEVELOPED INTO A FIRM PROGRAMME. WHAT DOES IT STAND FOR? "THE NORTH RUSSIA CLUB MEMORIAL FUND".

THE PLAN IS TO RAISE A SUM OF MONEY TO SET UP A TRUST FUND, TO BRING ABOUT A MEMORIAL TO THOSE SHIPMATES WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES ON THE NORTH RUSSIA CAMPAIGN, SO THAT WHEN WE HAVE ALL PASSED ON, THE MEMORY OF WHAT HAPPENED WILL BE KEPT ALIVE, AND THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED.

£1 MILLION IS THE TRUST FUND TARGET AND MANY SERVICES WILL BE TAPPED. AN ACCOUNT WILL BE OPENED UP IN THE NAME OF "NRC MEMORIAL FUND" IN SUCH A WAY THAT INTEREST WILL BE EARNED ON THE MONEY UNTIL IT IS USED. TRUSTEES WILL BE APPOINTED, PROBABLY THE BANK WHICH HOLDS THE ACCOUNT.

YOUR COMMITTEE HAS APPOINTED ME, RON WREN, AS YOUR FUND SECRETARY, AND A SMALL COMMITTEE TO PLAN THE WORK HAS ALSO BEEN SET UP. A FLOAT HAS BEEN ALLOCATED TO GET THE PROJECT STARTED, AND OUR PLANS IN GENERAL TERMS FORMULATED AND AGREED BY COMMITTEE.

CONTACTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH TRADE AND INDUSTRY SECRETARY, ALAN CLARKE MP AT WESTMINSTER, WHOM I VISITED A SHORT WHILE AGO. DICK SQUIRES HAS SPOKEN TO THE CHAIRMAN OF MURMANSK CITY COUNCIL, WHO IS MOST INTERESTED IN THE PROJECT. I WILL BE CONTACTING DOZENS OF PEOPLE, INCLUDING ALL THE CHARITIES, ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE, MERCHANT SERVICES, MANY DIGNITARIES, MP'S, SENIOR OFFICERS OF MANY ORGANISATIONS, SHIPBUILDERS, ARMAMENTS PEOPLE, EVEN MARGARET THATCHER, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, ALL THE RELEVANT AMBASSADORS, AND MANY MORE.

MEMBERS OF OUR CLUB HAVE ALREADY GIVEN LOTS OF IDEAS AND HELP, AND THE RUSSIAN CONVOY CLUB SECRETARY HAS BEEN APPROACHED AND HAS PROMISED HER PERSONAL SUPPORT. NOW IT IS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER THIS PROJECT AND WORK OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP. PLEASE CONTACT ME BY PHONE OR LETTER AND OFFER YOUR IDEAS, HELP OR WHATEVER.

THE MEMORIAL COULD BE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS IN MAJOR CHURCHES, OR PLAQUES IN KEY PLACES, OR ONE LARGE EDIFACE SITED IN A MAJOR CITY OR PORT. WHEN THE TIME COMES, WE WILL GIVE YOU THE CHANCE TO DECIDE BY VOTE, BUT UNTIL THEN I WOULD LIKE ALL THE HELP THAT A SHIPMATE COULD EXPECT.

RON WREN, 13 SHERWOOD AVENUE, POTTERS BAR, HERTS. EN6 2LD. Tel: 0707 55846.

Shipmates,

Welcome to all 720 of you, there is no need to issue a "Welcome Aboard" list with this newsletter, You all now have an up to date list of all of our members - this has been produced through the joint efforts of the Membership Secretary, and both Dick and I. It should now be possible for you all to keep your own updated record when we announce the new entries with each issue of the newsletter. Unfortunately, as we were about to go to print with the new book, we received news of another member 'Crossing the Bar'. Consequently, we sadly announce that Shipmate Fred Barker of Brigsteer, Cumbria, has passed away. We, through the Welfare Officer, will be contacting Fred's family on your behalf.

<u>VIDEO FILM OF U.S.S.R. TOUR:</u> It was originally intended that one, three-hour film would be produced by Harold Hewitt. But, after many weeks editing Harold has realised that there is so much interesting material that should not be erased, that it will now be published as two, three hour tapes, plus an additional one hour tape of the special concert that was laid on for our party in Murmansk by the Saami Ensemble Group of dancers and singers. The necessary price adjustment will be advised, but please be patient. I (Chris) have personally visited Harold in Devizes on two occasions and can tell you that editing is a time consuming operation (often going on into the night). Your original cheques have not yet been banked, so dont worry that they may have been mislaid.

<u>REUNIONS ABOARD H.M.S.'BELFAST'</u>: Owing to changes on board, we are no longer able to hold our regular 'get together' reunions in the Social Club. We are making alternative arrangements for future venues. The 4th Annual Formation Buffet for members will now be held at the <u>UNION JACK CLUB</u> on Saturday 26th November 1988.(Form enclosed)

<u>RUSSIAN CONVOY BOOKS</u>: By placing such a large order we caught the supplier with his bell-bottoms at half-mast, so again, please be patient.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 1989 - A FEW DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

29th January 1989 Members Reunion at Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London.

22nd April 1989 London and Home Counties Member's Dinner Dance at the Kent Boat & Ski Club, Cuxton, near Rochester, Kent.

29th July 1989 Annual General Meeting and Ladies Night, at the Victory Services Club, Marble Arch, London.

4th to 13th May 1989- ten-day tour to Moscow, Murmansk and Leningrad including Victory day in Murmansk. Fifty of you have already sent Dick a refundable deposit of £40.00, so if you are interested in the trip do likewise, as we do not intend to exceed the 1988 total of 122 tour participants. Final itenaries will be available later this month. Dick's phone number is 051 487 9567. (He is already working on a few surprises, like this year's voyage down the Kola Inlet! He wont even tell me, his mate, what they are! He says it is Classified Information, available to himself and Murmansk War Veterans friends so the Hon. Sec. has to wait too, but I have made sure of not missing





We are about to launch our own car windscreen sticker for affixing on the inside of your windscreens. They are printed in gold, navy blue and white and the (very) rough sample opposite is approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ size We are expecting delivery after the postal strike backlog and chaos has subsided. They will be on sale at the Annual Dinner Dance or through the post.

Costs: Three for £1.00, or 35 pence each <u>plus</u> stamped addressed envelope. From Tie & Badge Bosun,Les Sullivan, 2 Broadlawn, Woolavington,Bridgewater, Somerset or from Asst.Hon.Secretary, Dick Squires, 28 Westbrook Road, Gateacre, Liverpool, L25 2PX.

That's all for now shipmates. Carry on reading Northern Light and keep up the good work with more articles and letters to the editor.

Good On Yer, Chris and Dick.



THE KOLA INLET, MAY 9TH 1988 - NO DUFFLE COATS !!!



<u>RETURN TO MURMANSK</u>

by David Chance

Although I left the Kola Inlet in May 1945 after a year plus with Naval Party 100, I found myself back there in May 1946 to supervise a 'caviar' party. The cruiser 'Liverpool' was sailing to Murmansk to pick up a tonnage of gold bullion and I was told to go there to see that the transfer was effected without mishap. I was A.N.A. (or stooge to the Naval Attache), in Moscow and my boss was a four-ringer fresh out from England. I persuaded him to come with me because, as I told his wife, he needed some experience of Russian life. Lets fac it I didn't want to make the journey on my own! It went like this:

FRIDAY 17th MAY 1946: We leave Moscow at 1500 by train in a four bunk 'soft' compartment and with a mass of food and drink. My boss decides he wants the window open, so he gives it a violent push and the whole thing comes out in his hands. I get a carpenter at the next station, who nails the window tight shut and tells my boss to leave it alone.

SATURDAY 18th MAY: Soviet sailors join the train, very drunk, returning from leave. The 'heads' become indescribable, and, my boss decides, unusable. I arrange for the train to stop at a strategic woodland area so that he can relieve himself in the country.

SUNDAY 19th MAY: Another stop for the relief of the Naval Attache. The engine driver, endowed with a sense of humour, blows the whistle. My boss returns at a rush, trousers at half mast, and blames me for the interruption, perhaps because I cannot stop laughing.

MONDAY 20th MAY: We reach Murmansk, having shaved in the last thermos of cold tea. Met by a Lieutenant U.S. Navy and an Intourist girl who greet us with the news that the Bank Manager has taken the day off with the keys of the safe in his pocket! H.M.S. 'Liverpool' berths on time, and fortunately Jan Pismenny, an excellent interpreter and a breath of fresh Polyarnoe air, arrives with the pilot. He and I find the Bank Manager, arriving home after a day's fishing, and tell him we want him, and his bullion, on the jetty sharp at 0900 the following morning.

<u>TUESDAY 21st MAY</u>: The Bullion, the Customs, the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and the Bank Manager are formed up by 1100, and I embark in the barge with the bullion two hours later. The bullion is still the responsibility of the Soviets until it is formally handed over on board the cruiser, so it is guarded by four guards with tommyguns at the ready. There is nowhere to sit except on top of the stacks of bullion, so I sit there and they point their guns inboard, straight at my stomach.

WEDNESDAY 22nd MAY: After a hectic night aboard the 'Liverpool', we disembark with boxes of stores, scrounged from the NAAFI, to comfort and sustain us in Moscow. By this time, my boss is becoming better 'Russianised', and we face our return journey, by train, via Leningrad, with geater fortitude.

P.S. I believe the international treasury accountants got their sums wrong and sent the bullion back again later!!!

Submitted by Shipmate Walter Riley, the following is a true story - it happened on April 14th 1945. In the circumstances didn't the skipper have an unfortunate name ?

THE SCENE

U 1206 A SNORT-FITTED U-BOAT IN THE NORTH SEA OFF PETERHEAD.

With acknowledgement to Jochen Brennecke.

The commander disappeared into the little compartment that was no bigger than a small cupboard. The red light flashed - ' cupied".

Normally the W.C. could only be used when the U-boat was in comparatively shallow water. U 1206, however was fitted with the newly designed apparatus which would function at any depth. It was more complicated and difficult to use than ever. Beneath the normal pan was attached a pressurised cistern which could be opened and closed by means of a special sliding device, and most important of all, could be emptied outwards by compressed air by means of a special locking system of overcoming the pressure of water outside, even at great depths.

After an interlude of leisurely but reasonable propottions Schlitt decided that the time had come to set the machinary in motion. As a precaution he read through the official instructions which been issued to all U-boats. He read it through a second time. "Ha"! he thought, "Too easy!"

It was, however, by no means easy. Schlitt must have been a little ham-fisted in his procedure. He puffed and grunted and fumbled but nothin happened. He thought that perhaps, after all, he'd better send for one of the artificers who had obtained his W.C.B.A. on the special course. While he was struggling with the levers, and generally messing about, the door suddenly opened. The chief engineer, fearing the worst, had on his own responsibility sent Moebius, W.C.B.A. to his commander's succour. The wretched fellow could not know, of course, that the commander had not yet closed the sliding valve which cut off the actual pan itself. Full of zeal, he leapt to it and opened the ejector valve. A column of water as thick as a man's thigh burst in, thundering and paming. The commander and his specialist assistant were first deluged by the anything but fragrant contents of the lower cistern and then by a cascade of water. The sea-water burst in at such tremendous force that both men were hurled back helpless.

"Close the ejector!" Moebius managed to yell, "Close the ejector!"

He tried in the miniature whirlpool around him, to move forward. Blinded by the water, he fumbled gropingly, to find the valve. But had no luck. The sea continued to pour in with such force that Moebius was hurled back again and again. The U-boat at the time was at a depth of 300 feet, and it was with a proportionate force that the water was shooting through the contraption.

Realising what was happening, the chief engineer in the control room swiftly took over. Without waiting for orders he brought the U-boat up to periscope depth. That would, at least reduce the water pressure sufficiently to enable Moebius to close the ejector valve. But in the meantime the salt water had penetrated into the interior of the boat. It had seeped through the floor plate and penetrated into the battery compartment. White gasses started to rise.

Lieutenant Schlitt was suddenly conscious of a paralising numbness in his head. He grew dizzy, and at once realised what was happening.

Chlorine gas!!

Shlitt saw his men start fighting for breath, choking and gasping, and some of them vomiting. The deadly white wisps swept ghostlike in ever gathering numbers through the boat, and his shipmates looked like shadowy spirits in some supernatural cavern.

Unless something happened quickly, U 1206 was lost. "Blow the tanks chief, take her up", Schlitt managed to gasp as his knees gave way beneath him.

The chief engineer blew the tanks. Schlitt crawled to the conning tower ladder and laboriously dragged himself up it. With a last effort, he opened the hatch. Fresh air came pourining into the U-boat, the ventilators sucked out the poisonous gasses.

Two aircraft cruising in the vicinity sighted the U-boat ans attacked at once. Before the crew had time to man the AA guns a hail of bombs was descending upon them. U 1206 received no direct hit, but near misses damaged her so severely that she was no longer capable of submerging. U 1206 was lost, Schlitt threw in his hand, "Abandon Ship" he ordered.

What had started as a rather ludicrous predicament developed into a serious material loss and had culminated in tragedy. For not all the crew escaped from the doomed U-boat. The chlorine gas had taken it's toll.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Who the hell heard of a Captain of the Heads with a degree? The writer calls them W.C.B.As.

LAUGH OF THE MONTH 'THE SAILOR WHO WANTED TO LEAVE THE SEA'

Once upon a time there was a sailor who yearned to leave the sea and settle down far, far inland where he would never see another wave or hear a seagull cry, ever again. so he resolved that when his ship paid off he would walk inland and live out his days where no one would recognise him for what he was.

He had been told that the best way to achieve this was to take an oar with him and when someone asked him what it was,that would be the place to settle down. The voyage ended and the sailor, his pockets full of cash, set off up the beach and picked up the first oar he saw. Never once looking back towards the sea, his face and footsteps turned resolutely inland.

For many weeks the sailor and his oar travelled through the land, through both town and country. Yet never once did anyone pose the question the sailor so desperately wanted to hear. On and on he trudged aching to settle down, but he never could.

At last, footsore and penniless, the sailor arrived at a large town where seagulls cried and waves beat upon the shoreline and harbour walls. He and his oar had travelled right through the land, his ruse had failed. Broke and hungry he signed on another ship and the oar got a job in the local brothel where her odd accent made her very popular and rich.

P.S. Sorry about the spelling mistake.

"SCHARNHORST"

Here is a photocopy of the signatures of the Scharnhorst survivors. Our official photographer on 'Duke of York' got them to sign a paper for photographing as a memento. Also included, bottom left, Sir Bruce Fraser, C in C Home Fleet, and bottom right, Robert (Nutty) Burnett, Vice Admiral 10th Cruiser Squadron. Has any other club member got a copy? Shipmate Douglas Jones.



CONFLICT AT SEA 1939-1945

Onboard our headquarters ship H.M.S.'Belfast' there is a display of 60 paintings by John Hamilton under the above title. Included in the collection are 11 depicting various events that are of particular interest to our members. A very brief description of them follows:

1. A small armed trawler HMS 'Northern Pride' is seen in severe weather conditions on escort duties. The artist, who was not a seaman, has captured the scene very accurately in my view.

2. Arctic daylight and the edge of the ice pack,with merchant ships, despite their drab painted hulls, looking like sitting ducks against the icy background.

3. PQ 18 on 13 September 1942, with Ju88 and Heinkellll torpedo bombers attacking. Flying at low level, almost wing tip to wing tip, despite an intense barrage from the escorts.

4. This is the artist's impression of the destroyer action on 31 December 1942, with HMS 'ONSLOW' in the fore-ground. Also in the painting is HMS 'Orwell'.

5. The former cattle boat SS 'Rathlin' acting as rescue ship in horrendous seas that put a shudder down my spine, even now. N.B. 'Rathlin' saved more lives in the Arctic and Atlantic than any other rescue ship.

6,7 and 8. All feature the Battle of North Cape. One shows HMS 'Duke of York', the next HMS 'Belfast' and the third, the sinking of 'Scharnhorst'. I was least impressed with these, having been on deck, manning the torpedo tubes, throughout the action, I have vastly different memories of the conditions shown in the paintings. And what a pity that the artist didn't include a destroyer or two in the pictures!

9. This shows HMS 'Sheffield', HMS 'Duke of York' and HMS 'Jamaica' shadowing a distant convoy - a good painting!

10. So is this one! A raging gale, with the escort carrier HMS 'Biter' struggling against the elements that we all feared so much.

11. Finally, another good painting, this features the 'Silent, unseen navy, with the submarine HMS/M 'Trident' on patrol in the Barents Sea.

The entire collection of 60 are worth seeing, being totally absorbing to an ex-matelot, whether it is the Arctic, the Med, South Atlantic or Home Waters.

Has anyone got any photographs of Pompey Barracks or of Whale Island? Club member John Gilhooly, who belongs to a local camera club, would like to borrow photos of HMS 'Excellent' and HMS 'Victory' to take copy prints - he will return them promptly.

DID YOU KNOW?

During World War II a total of 30,248 merchant seamen died. This was 13% of all who sailed. 4,654 were reported 'Missing presumed dead", 4,707 were wounded and 5,707 were taken prisoner.

Over 80% of all operational U-boat crews died at sea. The sinkings of German U-boats were:-

> 1939..... 9 1940..... 24 1941..... 35 1942..... 87 1943.....237 1944.....242 to May 1945......<u>151</u>

785

246 Of these were sunk by ships

245 were sunk by shore based aircraft.

45 were sunk by shipborne aircraft.

48 were sunk by combined ship/aircraft action.

21 were sunk by submarines.

62 were destroyed in bombing raids.

16 were sunk by mines laid by aircraft.

9 were sunk by mines laid by ship/submarine.

7 were sunk by Soviet forces.

40 were sunk by accident or marine causes.

17 were scuttled before surrender of Germany.

29 were lost through unknown causes.

Figures published by courtesy of the Imperial War Museum.

TRUE STORY

A general knowledge test given to a 16year old applicant for the Royal Navy included the question: "Complete the saying 'More haste less.....'"

After some thought, he wrote "Overtime".

THE EXCLUSIVE CLUB

We would remind all members that membership of the North Russia Club is exclusive to persennel who served in the Arctic Campaign, not on ships that had previously or latterly served there. We are reminded of this by a non-member, Hooky Walker of Newark R.N.A.

> My Oppo is Sam off 'Sharpshooter' He's been up t' Kola Inlet. He keeps saying to me, "You can join us", "On a months Tot with me you can bet".

'Cos I was on't 'Seagull' in wartime, I joined her in mid forty four, After she'd been on them North runs, And crawled into Lowestoft Port.

A refit was what she was in for,-Her end in the Arctic been spelt, And she joined up with the old 1st Flotilla, Just sweeping some mines up the Scheldt.

Sam is a good bloke, I like him, But I cant get it into his head, That I'm not entitled, to wear precious prizes, Which belond to the survivors of death.

All those who fought in the last war, Did their duty as best as they could, - But for those who fought Japs Or, Arctic wolf-packs. Have MY admiration and that of the nation, And should stay EXCLUSIVE for THAT.

'Sharpshooter' and 'Seagull' were Halcyon class ships and both belonged to the 1st Flotilla of Fleetsweepers and they, along with others of the class did the Russian run. My 'oppo' thinks that anybody can join NRC as long as the ships been there. For the sake of the Lord, even for Christ's sake, TELL HIM !! I herewith return the Entry Form. "Hooky".

AN APPEAL

Dear Editor,

I wonder if any of our members could help me please, I realise that this is a long shot, because according to the membership list there are only eight of us within the membership who survived the sinking of H,M.S.'Trinidad' in the Barents Sea on 14/15th May 1942.

I have been asked by the nephew of the late Richard (Dick) Lee, if anyone knew of the circumstances of his death. Dick was a Leading Stoker who had 'done his twelve' and gone on to the reserve and then was recalled at the outbreak of war.

On the casualty list, he is under 'Missing presumed Killed'. This was after the second and final engagement on the 14/15th May.

Any information will be gratefully received:-Frank Rose, 18 Stanhope Road, Northampton, NN2 6JX.