

CFV. LONDON NEWSLETTER June '07.

Our last meeting on HMS Belfast proved to be a pleasant gathering - a bit of laughter, a bit of serious stuff – it all mixed well and (hopefully) left everyone glad they had made the journey.

We were glad to see Sybil and Dennis Reeve with us again, Sybil is moving around so much better and is looking more her old self and Bill MacAngus is still finding out that Cruisers were never designed for people with two sticks. The latest on Edna Randall from Wallis is that she is still improving and in good spirits. Our one piece of sad news is that Fred Ellis, one of our London members has passed away. Fred moved to Huddersfield some time ago but continued to belong to the CFVA London. Rather than floral tributes, the family have requested that donations be made to the RNLI and in keeping with this request a letter of condolence has been sent together with a donation.

We listened with great interest to member Ted Else on the subject of websites. Ted, together with Terry Barclay, have given invaluable help and assistance in our pursuit to get our own site, and no apologies are given for again thanking them for their efforts on our behalf. Technicalities regarding our own site need to be resolved, but with the advice we have been fortunate in receiving, these are relatively minor. There are expensive ways of operating a site and there are less expensive ways. We are hastening slowly with a view to the later. Thanks to Ted's efforts we have been offered a temporary domain (home) on the British Military Powerboat Trust Site, subject of course to observing current practices and conditions that govern the site. Work is still underway constructing our own site which hopefully will be found at <http://royalnavycoastalforces.org/> when it eventually 'goes live'. We would value feedback from all those interested in what we are doing, particularly CFVA non- Branch members who are now left in limbo following the demise of our National Newsletter.

During our May meeting attention was drawn to the notices thereon. Of great interest to members was a letter from Clem Mills, National Secretary, concerning our Associations De-Commissioning at Hornet last month. Clem had attended the ceremony and noted the presence of BBC South cameras busy recording and looked forward to the evening news to see who he would recognise. The transmission lasted all of two minutes and one minute of that was taken up by somebody talking. To cut a long story short, Clem was so incensed that he contacted BBC South and said this wasn't quite right! The outcome came when 55mins of un-transmitted recording on DVD was sent to him with the Editor's compliments on condition no infringement of copyright law takes place, no display on any web site, etc. etc. As a final bid, Clem went back to them and asked if he could have the DVD copied for CFVA members only. He succeeded, subject to that proviso, and the CFVA London members who were not present at the last meeting can obtain a copy by sending a cheque for £5.00 to our Treasurer John Williamson. 7 Old Downs, Hartley, Kent DA3 7AA within 7 days of the publishing of this Newsletter. We are doing one bulk Order only, no repeat orders.

Another offer of a DVD covering the Hornet ceremony, this one of 30mins duration, has come from Zagreus Films of Portishead Bristol. Cost of the DVD is £5.00 to include p&p. Ring them on 07974 954978 to place an order or obtain more information on other DVD's that are of interest to CF members. Please note – no money or orders will be taken by John Williamson, - it is a do it yourself thing and Zagreus Films will deliver to your address.

Also on the Notice Board, a letter from Reg Ellis, Southern Branch Secretary, giving details of a ten day holiday departing on 26th September from Gatwick, to coincide with the unveiling of a CFVA memorial plaque at HMS Gregale in Malta. Staying at the Plevna Hotel in Sliema, cost is £390.00 per person for two sharing a room. There will be flights from other airports and anyone requiring flights from there local area should contact Patricia Hebditch on Freephone 0800 0918897. Mention Reg's name and quote CFVA reference No 18965. Further information, if needed, is available from Fred on 01243 585716 during weekdays and 02392 824149 on week ends.

During the meeting we enjoyed an informative talk given by Terry Barclay, who is CPO City of London Sea Cadets on the Belfast. We asked Terry afterwards whether he could give us a brief coverage for this Newsletter. He very kindly agreed as follows; A trip to Hamburg. Laboe and Lubeck. On the 10th of May a small group of members from the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society (based on HMS Belfast) went to Germany on a weeks visit. We were guests of our German counterparts –The Marinefunker.

We stayed in a family Hotel outside Hamburg itself. The main reason for the visit was to take part in the Hamburg Festival, lots of marine activities in the Harbour and visits to many Ships, including large three and four masted sailing vessels. On one of the days we hired a boat and took part in the Parade of ships, the atmosphere was fantastic.

We also went to Laboe. Near Kiel where my wife and I took part in a Wreath laying ceremony at the U-Boat memorial which is dedicated to all nationalities that lost lives in Submarines. During the week we also went aboard two submarines – one of which is the largest non-nuclear submarine in the World. A trip to Lubeck was also made where we stocked up on the world's finest marzipan!

During the week we also visited many fine restaurants and sampled the local beer. Our German hosts, as usual looked after us well and we had a fantastic time. We are now planning the next visit in 2010 where we shall be staying on board the German sail Training Ship "Deutschland" in Bremen.

"Long live maritime brotherhood and friendship" - Terry Barclay.

Thanks Terry. The true bonds that exist between those that go down to the sea in ships transcend political boundaries and territorial borders and allow old adversaries to become friends. Long may this be so.

Best Wishes from London. **ED.Sec**