

HCMS Phoebe Association

Newsletter

June 2013



The lady seated next to me is Sally, our 'Just For Groups' Representative. She has been very helpful in organising our reunion.

Once again the reunion was a great success, thank you everyone who phoned to say so. The weather was very sunny the whole week end, it was a bit chilly in the wind but still enjoyable.

Friday - On arrival members found there was a mix up with hotel rooms. My list had not been given to the manager, consequently the rooms I had allocated to member were different. But it got sorted out ok. Entertainment that night was quite good, with people singing and dancing., and making the entertainer stay for extra time.

Saturday after the AGM was a free day, and members made the most of it, the evening went well too, although the entertainer this time was not very good, I reckon he could not decide how to entertain us, no one sang and no one danced, and dead on 11 pm he packed up and left, I don't think many noticed he had gone?

On Sunday with everyone attending the reunion reserving a seat for the coach trip, meant we had to hire two coaches, something we have never achieved before. But price wise the two coaches were cheaper than last years hire. The paddle steamer didn't steam but it looked real. Most of us sat inside as it was a cold wind, it was supposed to be a two hour trip in fact it was just one hour and thirty minutes, but it was still enjoyable, some members choosing houses overlooking the Broads that they would like to own. but had to win the Lottery to do so? We went a few miles then to Wroxham Barns, we should have spent a couple of hours there, but it was crowded and a bit expensive, so after an hour it was decided to leave and go to Wroxham. After a couple of hours there and we were off on our way back to the hotel. It was a good day out, chilly but loads of sunshine.

The entertainer on Sunday night was BGT winner 'Craig Catchpole' He sang well and got people involved, Josie White gave us a rendering of Memories, well done Josie, it was good to see you looking so well. At the end of his show he was clapped and whistled so much, and called upon to do more, that he spent another thirty minutes with us.

I don't think people are aware that entertainment can only go on till 11 pm, another licence is required to go further to 2am but the cost is horrendous. But there is an allowance of 15 minutes for a entertainer to finish his/her act. Some do carry on a bit longer, but it could cost the hotel dearly.

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We had 'T' Shirts and Caps for sale at the reunion, the 'T' Shirts had either a picture of the cruiser or the frigate across the chest, the caps were the same, above each pictures was the words HMS Phoebe Association. I ordered a number of Medium and Large size T shirts, the caps were all one size that could be adjusted to fit. Prices were £9 a T shirt and £7 a cap. We still have some left, Frigate Caps 0 T shirts - Large 3 Medium. 6
Cruiser Caps- 6 Tshirts Large 1 Medium 5 The medium sized T shirts are for chest sizes 38/43 inch. If we need to order more of each item we can do so quite easily. (a cap and T shirt we posted to a member cost £2.50).



This set is the Frigate type Cap and 'T' shirt, the Cruiser type has the cruiser outline.

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Our two 'Tanky's performed the Up Spirits for Saturdays Dinner, this time they wore larger and more appropriate straw hats, I am not sure what era of the navy they represent, its got to be roughly late 1700 or early 1800, I have a photo of my grandad in Navy rig taken about 1870 in a much different outfit..

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Lil and I personally invited our Group representative Sally and partner Paul to join us for dinner on Saturday night, it was nice to meet them both, and it was the first time Sally had been to a naval ships reunion dinner and she found it interesting, especially being piped in, and sitting down for the toast. Unfortunately she did not stay long after the dinner, but she did meet some of our members. We hope everyone got home safely on Monday, it was a long trip for some, especially for Doug Harris going to Plymouth, and Bill and Sarah Main, although having a stopover in York; still had to get up to Aberdeen. Next reunions accommodation is already arranged, how ever Sharon our new social Secretary (See AGM minutes), will be visiting the hotel in September to make sure everything we usually have is available, and definitely to check out car parking, she wondered if we could also run a coach to Bath on Sunday as well as the coach to Bristol on Saturday. The Bristol trip is definitely on, but the Bath trip depends on numbers really, it would have to be nearly full to be viable. Only book seats for Bath if you definitely wish to go. (Prices are £3 pp each trip and are not refundable due to cost of coaches).

We are once again asking where to go next, in other words where do we go for the 2015 reunion. OK, it's a long way off at the moment, but it still needs looking into. Gt Yarmouth was a good venue, but for some it was either too far or awkward to get to. 70% attending reunions want a sea side venue, now that our time for holding a reunion is round about May, we are more likely to get at least a bit of good weather, we do not want to go back to a March venue, although hotels are a lot cheaper then, but also lots of hotels are shut as well for cleaning etc. Location is the main thing?

In the distant past we travelled quite long distances to our venues, it was ok then, fuel was cheap and so were train fares, even taxis fares were quite reasonable? But as the years troll by prices go up and up, and now nothing is cheap anymore, and journeys seem to take longer too, whether by train, coach or car. So? What do we do, well first we have to pick a place that has a railway station, then sort a hotel that does not have so many rooms that we have to share it with other visitors, not very easy nowadays with smaller hotels closing down. The hotel facilities have to be to our liking, free car parking is definitely required. An average distance for shipmates to travel is not viable, some will always have many miles to travel. Its often been suggested we go to Blackpool. We went to the FNA reunion there in March a couple of years ago, the actual reunion was great, but Blackpool in March is a definite No! No!. And that could be the same when we hold our reunions in May, it could be teeming with visitors and difficult to get booked in, its also a very long way for most who attend reunions.

Eastbourne was a good venue, pity about the parking but the hotel was good. We did look at Eastbourne again and found a reasonable hotel that has a private car park, we will also look at other resorts along the south coast. Then there is the east coast from Clacton down to Folkestone. Lots of these places are ok to get to by road and train, no further from say Coventry to our next port of call at Weston Super Mare.

Going away on holiday to a hotel? If its got no more than 50 rooms and you think it might be suitable for us to hold a reunion there get a brochure and send it to us. We would definitely look into anything you recommend, but as we keep saying a free car park is one of the things we require. Pay Car Parks are ok, but I well remember staying at the Britannia hotel in Coventry and all they have is the large public car park, on leaving Monday morning one of the guests found all four wheels missing from his car, others had been broken into.

Minutes of the 2013 AGM

Chairman opened the meeting at 0945.

Roll call of past shipmates was read, followed by one minutes silence.

Apologies for absence were named.

The minutes of the 2012 AGM was put to the meeting, no matters arising therefrom, minutes agreed upon.

2013 AGM called to order, 1st address by the Chairman: Remembrance Sunday 2912 in Bournemouth was attended by S/m Bob Hobbs & Pat, and myself and Yvonne, Bob carried the Standard, and I even joined in the march to the Town memorial. The TS Phoebe Sea & R Marine cadets were extemporary in parading with us at our own memorial. Roy had given me 50 service handouts, they were all snatched up my the crowd that gathered around our memorial, we could have done with more. Roy later sent a letter of thanks to the Sea Cadet CO, which I will read to you.

The Secretary made his address.

Good morning all I hope you enjoy the weekend. We have tried to make it a bit more interesting but more of that later, A bit different in the toast this evening, not the usual Pussers rum but one specially produced for the MOD, I am sure you will like it. (At £30 a bottle you better had).

An auction tonight of a pair of Pussers Rum Collectors items, a sealed decanter and a hip flask, the flask was refilled with Pussers Rum last December, but the sealed decanter, also filled with Pussers, is not less than 40 years old., its contents could well blow your head off. These Wade porcelain collectors items were discontinued in 1973.

The trip tomorrow was almost a no go. But it turned out ok in the end. I tried for a reduction in bar prices for tonight but with no success.

Maybe next year???

The year has gone by quite quickly, during which we have seen eight shipmates cross the bar. Some of you will be asking where is the lady in the wheelchair, Mrs Neilson. They were one of the first to book in for this reunion, and both were looking forward to meeting you all again so much. But I am afraid Mrs Nielson was in great pain and succumbed to her illness a month ago. Jim Neilson sends his regards to you all, and promises to meet up with you all next year. He asked us to donate their reunion payment to a shipmate who cannot afford to come to the reunion. Unfortunately it was too late to do that, but maybe we can do it next year, meanwhile they are held in the savings fund. Our membership dwindles, we usually managed around 140 members, but now we are down to 97. Losing members is mainly down to shipmates not paying subs for three years, even longer, officially we

carry for only two years , but we usually wait longer to hear from members before taking them off the list. Most of them must have moved on; or died, we try to get in touch but all to no avail, which is a pity, after all we are only a phone call away. But we do have a healthy back-up of 29 Associated members, and 5 honorary members.

There is an official opening of the new TS Phoebe headquarters at 11 am on the 13th July, our standard will be paraded by S/m Bob Hobbs, so far Stuart and Yvonne Bundy, Pat Hobbs, Lil and myself will be there, if anyone else would like to join us it would be most appreciated. We will probably go for lunch somewhere after the ceremony. The old TS HQ has been demolished and a block of flats have replaced it, It has been named Phoebe Court and dedicated to HMS Phoebe.. Thank you for your attention.

Treasurer: Nice to see you all again. Our accounts are all up to date and here for your perusal. Both accounts are looking healthy with £2,030 in one and £2,050 in the other it is partly due to the grant we experienced last year. Another seven years and we can apply again?? Thank you for making your cheques out to the correct account, it makes it so much easier for me when banking. I apologise if my voice is a little hoarse its because of a thyroid operation I had, hopefully it will be ok soon. I sent a letter and card from all of us to the Queen, congratulating her on her Diamond Jubilee, we had a nice letter thanking us, unfortunately I left it at home! During the past year Roy and I attended three funerals. Which leads me to ask, please get someone to tell us if you are unwell, the worse thing for us to receive is a letter or email to say a shipmate died weeks or months ago, in some cases years ago. If we cannot get to a funeral we always ask if we can send a donation.

Welfare: As we have said we attended three funerals and donated to others. I had a nice letter from Pincher Martin, he sends greetings to you all and wishes to be remembered. He said he did not think he would be capable of attending another reunion unless his trouble diminishes enough to let him travel, at the moment there is no likelihood of that happening. I'm sure you all join me in wishing Pincher a speedy recovery, and happier times.

Election of Officers: Only one nomination received, and that is for Social Secretary assisted by Roy, are there any other nominations for the post. No. Roys daughter Sharon has been nominated. I for one know she is well capable of doing the job, what say you, raise your hand if you want Sharon to take the job. Thank you shipmates, it appears Sharon is elected. Please join

Us up here Sharon. Do you want to say anything?

Sharon:- Yes please, I'll read from what Dad has written down for me.

Thank you for electing me. I hope I can do the job. First is next years reunion. Its at Dauncys Hotel in Weston Super Mare, and is on May bank holiday weekend, May 2nd to 5th. Plenty of on street parking, and a council pay and display at £3 per day, we may be able to help with this providing its only a couple or so. I am visiting the hotel for a week end in September, many thanks to or group organizer Sally for this. I can sort the parking and what facilities etc the hotel has. Hope fully we can get the rooms sorted out and adhered to this time. A trip on Saturday will be arranged to Bristol, very interesting place to visit, why not experience the city bus tour or visit SS Great Britain, the docks have been updated lots of outlets to see there too. Sunday we could organise a trip to Bath, also a interesting place, but this trip would only be on if more that 30 seats are wanted. Fare on each trip is the usual £3 pp. Both trips will be on your hotel booking sheet so make a definite trip booking, due to cost of coaches, once seats are booked there is no refund if a seat is cancelled. Possibly a slight change in the raffles next year, I am looking into making them a lot quicker, still using the machine, its the collecting of prizes that takes up most of the time. Also we sometimes get prizes not wanted or asked to call again. A raffle means you win a prize, collect it, it does not matter if you don't want it, its yours, take it away, give it to someone else, even bin it, leaving it wastes time. Also when you buy a heap of tickets write the first number down then under it write the second number, a number called between those two numbers means you have won, simple! And quick?

Meeting Closed at 10 am.

I am very sorry that your newsletter is arriving so late. It is all due to a culmination of events during the past week. The first thing to happen was when my Citroen car developed a hydropneumatic suspension leak from the two rear spheres, which meant a hunt on ebay for new ones. Then a hunt for the almost extinct special fluid, and have the repair done. As if that was not enough I developed what I thought was 24 hour flu, but no not me? I got the whole whack, I was useless for a week, no sleep, couldn't eat and felt so listless I could not even water the plants, last night was the first night I did not spend most of coughing, but today I feel fit enough to finish the newsletter, only to find we forgot to get another box of C5 envelopes, so it will be two days before we can send. Please bear with us, we send you our apologies. Roy.

BBC Warship Series

Whilst we were in refit in Chatham Dockyard we were told that HMS Phoebe was to be HMS Hero in the new TV Series called Warship.

Doug Harris and Alf Larkin were chatting over a beer in the P.O.'s Mess (The Mess Bar was aptly named "The Shy Talk Inn") and realized that the forthcoming TV Series had the potential to earn us some extra Beer Vouchers. The next day we armed ourselves with 200 Blue Liners and wondered off into the Dockyard in search of the Paint Shop and arranged with the Dockyard Matey's to produce HMS Hero Ship's crests.

As I was the PO Caterer, I was also in charge of Cap Tallies and so I wrote to the Cap Tally firm and arranged to purchase HMS Hero Cap Tallies in great quantity !

The buzz soon got round that you could buy HMS Hero crests and cap tallies at the Catering Office and we were soon doing a roaring trade. As well as our Ships Company we sold them to the Actors and TV Crew as well as Matelots from other Ships in the Dockyard.

A lot of the filming at sea was done around Gibraltar and on returning to the Dockyard the Admiral sent his Flag Lieutenant on board to purchase a Cap Tally, the 1st Lieutenant found out about this visit and then decided that the sale of all future HMS Hero products must be done via the Welfare Fund thus ending our little venture !

On leaving the Service Doug and I both became "Dodgy Double Glazing Salesmen" from Alf Larkin and Doug Harris, Association Rum Bosun's

The Dodgy Double Glazing salesmen must have done really well. I seem to remember seeing quite a few double glazing vans running round Weymouth with 'Larkins Windows' sign-written all over them. Although Alf has now retired from the business. And I am pretty sure Doug began a learner driving school in Plymouth and still operates there.. I think it is great to know at least two of our shipmates bettered themselves in their after-life (civvies). Anyone else had similar experiences?? Anyone got a Hero Crest or cap tally spare, the Association could do with one.....Roy.

