

*HMS Phoebe  
Association  
October 2013  
Newsletter*



S/Mates Bob Hobbs - Stuart Bundy & George White

On their booze cruise

Entering Grand Harbour

Malta

Where did the forty days of rain and storms go to. I cannot remember when we had a proper rainfall in the South Oxfordshire area. My garden dried out and flowers did not materialise, it looks a shambles. But the gloriously sunny weather has made up for it, a bit too hot at times. If it was only a bit cheaper to holiday in this country there would have been no need to go abroad!

A week later and the weather here has changed to cold and windy, I say cold perhaps all the hot weather we had makes us feel so, it still has not rained much though, and we could sure do with it.

I hear that Stuart & Yvonne Bundy, Bob & Pat Hobbs, and George & Josie White had a great time on their cruise round the Mediterranean, drinks were about the same price as an English Pub. Malta was a good visit, of course the 'Gut' is no more, and the RNA club is also a thing of the past. Josie was taken ill at the end of the trip and spent two days in the liners hospital. We hope all is well now Josie, and look forward to seeing you at the reunion. Social Secretary Sharon is off to visit the reunion hotel next weekend to do a bit of sorting out and arranging, I may be able to write a bit about her visit later on.

Were you aboard during 1941/46, can you remember a ordinary seaman, later an able seaman, name John Boast. In the torpedoing off Tobruk he was in the galley when the torpedo struck, all the pots and pans fell on him, a huge iron pot hit his head, he was in sick bay for quite a while, John went on to be drafted into the Fleet Air Arm as a Radar Plot rating. Ten years ago John was found to have a brain tumour which was diagnosed as being caused by the head injury he received in 1942 torpedoing. Sadly John passed away soon after. If anyone from that era remembers John; his son Peter would like to hear from you. Peter has joined us as an Associated member and will be attending the next reunion. Please put his details in your members list:- Mr Peter Boast 45 Priory Avenue Swavesey Cambs CB24 4RY (01954 230086)

**Reunion.** Please can we have your booking for Weston Super Mare. All you need to send at the moment is the booking form and a deposit of £10 per person. The savings club is running, save what you like, its a good way of paying for your booking. You will get a receipt for every payment made; and your savings can be withdrawn at any time you need them. Cheques for the reunion must be made payable to HMS Phoebe Association. (Welfare). This keeps reunion funding separate from the main account. Lilian Treasurer / Sharon Social Sec.

ARE YOUR SUBS UP TO DATE?? Check here 01235 211501 Lil.

Shipmate 'Rattler' Martin who until a short while ago had a long spell in hospital is now residing in a care home where he will have constant care, his daughter writes to say Rattler has no appetite, but they are doing all they can for him. In future we will be sending his newsletter to his daughter, who will pass it on to him. If anyone would like to drop Pincher a note, or a card, please ask me for his daughters address. We hope with the care he will now be getting his health will improve quickly..

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Social Sec's report on her visit to the hotel: The rooms I saw looks out over the sea, and some had balcony's, being a smoker I checked that it was ok to smoke on the balcony, thankfully it was! The rooms I saw had all the usual requirements, bath, shower, TV etc. They were clean and tidy but I expect some are a little dated. A lift goes to every floor, including the restaurant There is a conference room that we can use for the AGM. Two rooms have a bar and seating, one of them has a small dance floor, this will probably be our room, the reception area is not very big. The manager Simon was away on holiday, so I had to deal with a very nice under manager, I put to him all that we wanted and although he could not give his ok, he said he did not think Simon would have any objections. Evening meal times are from 6.30 pm. But for Saturday I arranged for it to be at 7 pm, & start serving at approx 7.10, this allows time for the 'rum bosuns' to make their issue, and for Grace to be said. Breakfast is from 8 am daily. Car parking? It was not hard for me to find a parking space on a Saturday afternoon, on a Friday I would imagine there would be plenty of spaces, Claremont Road is a one way street, it has two hotels and residential housing. Parking on street is free, its just a matter of finding a space, which is much easier than it was at Eastbourne. I will be getting in touch with the manager on his return to duty. If anyone has to park in the council car park, (£3 for 24 hrs) keep your tickets; we may be able to reimburse you, providing its only for two or three. Sharon.

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We have not heard from Pincher Martin, so we do not know how well he is coping with his illness? But we hope he is getting better. We have not had any calls or notes to say if other shipmates are unwell, that could be either a good thing or a bad thing. If you are unwell but able to be reading this, or if indeed someone else has to read it to you we do hope whatever is wrong with you will get better, and that you soon get on the road to a full recovery. I am sure all shipmates join with us in making this wish. Roy & Lil.

When Stuart, Bob & George settled in at home after their cruise I asked if one of them could write a bit about their trip for the newsletter , and Bob got the job of doing it, the following is the result:-

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*Well after 3 or more years talking about it and 9 months planning it we finally did it. Sunday 4th August around midday, Stuart and Yvonne Bundy, George and Josie White and ourselves (Bob and Pat Hobbs) met at Southampton for our 17 night Med cruise aboard The P&O Arcadia.*

*After spotting this cruise in PO magazine back in November 2012 there were a few reasons it would be ideal. Stuart and Yvonne had never cruised before, Pat and I had been once and caught the bug, and George and Josie had never been with P&O before. George had been talking at reunions for a couple of years about us all visiting Malta and showing us a few sites.*

*Stuart and I have always wanted to visit Malta, we had heard many stories of the "Gut" and the "Navy club" but had never been there.*

*Stuart and I have been talking for a few years now about revisiting Gibraltar, we served as guard ship there on Phoebe over Christmas and New Year 1969/70, before we went south to the Far East. Also as "Arcadia" was going to be in Gib on the 18th August, the same day as Pat and I would be celebrating our 40th wedding anniversary, it would be great to be able to show her a little of it. The cruise was calling at Cadiz, Malta, Venice, Dubrovnik, Corfu, Cartagena and Gibraltar, it seemed perfect? We met in one of the ships many dining areas to wait for our cabins to be made ready for 2pm. We decided to have lunch, my god what a choice and this was to be the same for the next 17 days (food available 24 hrs a day somewhere on board).*

*We left Southampton at 16-30 with a sail away drink on the aft pool sundeck; we headed up the Solent past Pompey and out into the Channel.*

*After a few days at sea and the stop in Cadiz, we finally arrived in Malta - What a beautiful looking Island from the sea. Approaching Valletta harbour we could see all the work being carried out, many high rise hotels are being built for the increasing tourist trade, with still a lot of the old war damage visible. We arrived around 8-30 am in Grand Harbour, we were disappointed to see the old naval barracks being pulled down George was trying to point out where he was stationed for 2 years or more. Dressed to kill in our new HMS PHOEBE tee shirts we left the ship around 9. We decided to get two cabs to the war museum to save time, it was extremely interesting and very well laid out. We saw some HMS Phoebe memorabilia as well as a great deal of the islands war history. We decide then to make our way into town to find the "Gut" and the "navy club"*

*after a long uphill walk we finally made it to the Square and after talking to a few locals we found out that the street that was the gut, although still partly being there, was under a massive revamp and upgrade and the Navy club had been closed for approx 2 years .We decided to take a trolley train ride around the town ,which was very interesting.*

*We then had a quick local beer before returning to the ship which was leaving Malta at around 1700 for a few days at sea before Venice (for our Gondola ride and visit to the Doge's Palace) - then going on to the beautiful Dubrovnik, Corfu and Cartagena before arriving at Gibraltar.*

*Due to reasons as yet unknown we were told the night before our arrival in Gibraltar that we would only be staying for 4 and half Hours .We arrived at 8 am ,the top of the rock was covered in mist. Stuart, Yvonne, Pat and I went ashore for our pre booked tour at 8-30. We were taken by mini bus to the cable car (not there when we were!!) We were taken to the top (we both remembered doing the Christmas day run up the rock when we were there!!! no chance now ).We had a talk from our guide who told us the do's and don'ts about the rock apes ,the mist lifted and we got some lovely photo,s and we could see how much land had been reclaimed from the sea for the new housing and marina's ,we then walked passed the ape's ,they had conveniently just been fed so were not any trouble .We walked down to the Caves which were lovely and just as I remembered them. We were then taken back up to the old caves that were carved out for the guns ,very interesting - then back in the bus for a tour round the Rock and across the airfield and back to the ship, no time for shopping we went back aboard to meet George and Josie who had been into town shopping.*

*We had our final sailaway drinks party and sing song at 1pm. We then rested an hour or two on our balconies before meeting in our cabin for a glass or two of champagne before going for our celebration dinner at the "Ocean "restaurant (Marco Pierre White's on-board place) then a show and a couple of brandies at the "Oriental "restaurant bar.*

*After two more days at sea we returned to Southampton. I would just like to say how much we all enjoyed the cruise, we all had one or two things we would have liked to have been different (like more time in Malta and Gibraltar, but overall we had a lovely time with some very dear friends .*

*Best Regards to everyone, Bob, Stuart & George*

Shipmate Bob sent me some photos he took while on the cruise, I am hoping to put some in this newsletter. Previously I had been using a HP laser printer to add coloured photos, (cheaper than a deskjet) but the printer belonged to the Sheffield Association and they claimed it back last weekend, however the committee have allowed me to purchase our own laser printer, a refurbished one, unfortunately no installation CDs came with it, so I have to ask HP support for a driver to download. If I do not get it up and running in time the photos will be in B & W. My apologies to everyone.

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### Scams:-

We are all open to scams, how do we know what are, and what are not? Well a lot of scams are so unbelievably wonderful get rich quick schemes that look so genuine we can easily be taken in. But! that is why you should always steer clear of such offers, you will never get anything for nothing? if they come in the post, trash them, if its a caller just say 'no thank you' and close the door or, replace the phone, that's another thing, cold phone callers, they are paying for the call, either hang up or leave the phone off the hook for a few minutes, its costing you nothing, they are paying for the call. Never respond quickly to these schemes give them some serious thought, ask someone about what you should do, but if you feel doubtful, or think you should ask for someone's opinion, that's the time to call it a day and trash it. Cut down on unwanted post, go on line to [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk) or phone 0845 703 4599 and register. [www.mpsonline.org.uk/mpsr/yourchoice](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk/mpsr/yourchoice) stops post not specifically addressed to you. [www.royalmail.com/personal/help-and-support/how-do-I-stop-receiving-any-leaflets-or-unaddressed-promotional-material](http://www.royalmail.com/personal/help-and-support/how-do-I-stop-receiving-any-leaflets-or-unaddressed-promotional-material) This will include mail addressed to the OCCUPIER. Register with the Telephone Preference Service to cut down on unwanted phone calls, texts and SMS messaging.

Visit:-[www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk) or call 0845 070 0707

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Do you know any of these A/Bs from the 1941/50 ERA

The rating on the left is named John Leanie. I was a seaman aboard 48/50. But I do not recognise them or the name.

Are you one of them.

Please Phone me 01235 211501



## The HMS ALBION Disaster

The *Albion* was a first-class cruiser of around 119 m (390 ft) in length and 23 m (74 ft) in width. The Admiralty had commissioned her from the Thames Ironworks at the height of the Anglo-German naval race. Work on the ship had been delayed partly because the yard was undermanned and also because the 1898 engineering strike had put contractors behind in their deliveries of parts.

Eventually the work was completed and the *Albion* was ready for launch. But at 6000 tons, she was less than her intended weight. This was because the contractors did not supply enough armour plating to clad the ship. The launch was due to take place on 21 June 1898. Around 30,000 spectators had crammed into the shipyard to watch the launch by the Duchess of York. Yard workers and local schools were given the day off. Up to 200 people, keen to get a good view, had made their way to a temporary slipway 'bridge'. The bridge was not designed to hold so many, and in fact, was signposted as dangerous. But a large crowd had gathered, ignoring the warnings from yard workers and police. After three failed attempts to smash a bottle of champagne against the hull, the Duchess cut the cord. This signalled to the workmen to release the dog-stores holding the *Albion*. The width of the river at Bow Creek was relatively narrow. As a result the larger vessels were built parallel to the shore and launched sideways into the water. This was to be the case with the launch of the *Albion*.

The momentum of the vessel's launch created a large wave. This raced along and engulfed the bridge, smashing it to pieces and plunging onlookers into the river. Many were killed and injured. Their cries of panic were drowned out by the cheers of the main crowd applauding the launch. The Duke and Duchess, unaware of any problem, returned to their own boat and the crowds began to move away. The Thames police used rowing boats to rescue people and the ironworks ambulance corps was soon on the scene. Despite their best efforts, 38 people, including women and children, died in the incident. Most of the dead were buried in a communal grave at East London Cemetery the week after the accident. Huge crowds gathered along the routes of the funeral processions. Mrs Eliza Tarbot was the oldest victim at 64 and she was first to be buried. Mrs Tarbot was followed by Mrs Isabel White, 30, and her two children, Lottie, five, and Queenie, two. When Mrs White was pulled out of the water, rescuers found her daughters still clinging to her frock. All were drowned. As for the *Albion*, she served in the Middle East during World War I before being sold for scrap in December 1918.

Somewhere at sea?  
taking a restful lounge  
and a quiet drink or  
two



George and Josie

Relaxing on a  
Gondola, George  
recalling past  
memories.

(Was he the stoker  
who fell into the  
Grand Canal)??

It looks like  
They're  
still at it

