



THE H.M.S. HOOD ASSOCIATION

(Official Website www.hmshood.com)

Message from your President

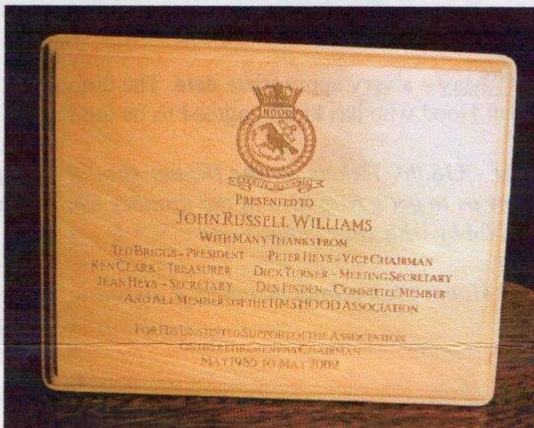
March 2003

Shipmates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

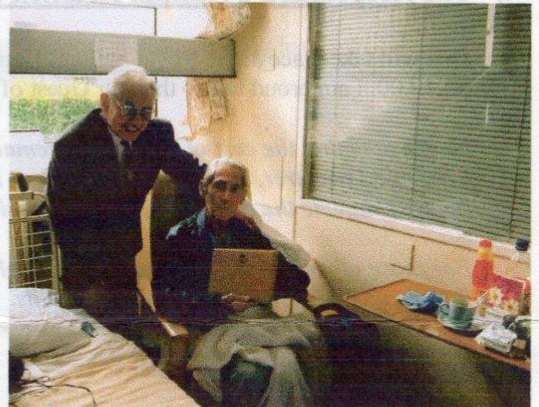
We, the President, Chairman and Committee must apologise for the delay in sending this Newsletter due to our new Chairman, Peter Heys, having barely had time to settle into his new position due to many illnesses and misfortunes culminating in the death of his sister in Yorkshire following two strokes. Peter has had to deal with many problems including probate etc. At his request I have offered to draft this newsletter on his behalf.

Below you will find photographs of us visiting "J.R." during his penultimate spell in hospital in May of 2002. The photos show:

- The Plaque that was presented to J.R. on behalf of the Association
- The then Vice-Chairman, Peter Heys, making the presentation.
- Presentation of the pencilled print of H.M.S. Hood to the Sister and Nurse of the Ward in recognition of taking care of J.R. This was done by me at J.R.'s specific request.



The Plaque



Peter Heys and 'JR'



Ted Briggs and Ward Sister and Nurse

forthcoming events (these are in chronological order :)

1. **A presentation to Commodore Wilcocks, H.M.S. Collingwood,**

This has been suggested by yours truly and agreed by the Committee and Chairman. A copy of the book "*Hood and Bismarck*." will be presented by the authors – David Mearns and Rob White, duly signed by them both in appreciation of Commodore Wilcocks' support for the Association. The presentation will take place on Friday 28th March, 2003 in Brock's Bar at the Royal Sailors' Home Club Portsmouth at noon. All members are welcome to attend.

2. **Book Launch**

Hood Association Member Brenda Glass has published the memoirs of her Uncle, Leonard Williams, who served in the Royal Navy from 1927 to 1953 and in Hood from 1939 to February 1941. The book "*Gone A Long Journey*" (242 pages) is to be launched at Havant Museum on 29th March at 14.00. The event is to be attended by the Mayor of Havant and David Willets MP. Any members who wish to go along would be welcome. If you can't make the launch but would like a copy of the book, please send a cheque for £12.00 (includes P&P) payable to "Hillmead Publications" to Mrs B Glass, 3 Hillmead Gardens, Bedhampton, Hants. PO9 3NL.

3. **The Boldre Service of Remembrance for H.M.S. Hood**

This will take place on Sunday 18th May at 11.00am.

The following is a quote from Commander Tony Pearce: "Boldre is proud of the 'Hood Corner' and other naval artefacts in the church. The two models of Hood and Bismarck used in the documentary "The Battle of Denmark Straits" will be seen in place in the Hood corner by the time the service. This is being done at the request of David Mearns."

4. **The Association's Annual Reunion and Dinner**

This will take place at the Royal Sailors' Home Club on Saturday 24th May – a very appropriate date. The dinner will be 18.30 for 19.00. I am proud to say that our Guest of Honour will be Viscount Hood who has kindly agreed to be our Patron.

Please note that the cost of the Dinner remains the same as last year - £18.00. Tickets for the Dinner should be requested from our Treasurer, Ken "Nobby" Clark as soon as possible to allow us to get a firm idea of the number who will attend. Please complete the enclosed ticket application form and send it to Nobby with your cheque and a S.A.E.

For those of you wanting accommodation please remember that the Home Club allows members a discount for the night of the Reunion Dinner – see below for details.

5. **The Association's A.G.M.**

This will take place on the same date at 16.30 in "Brock's Bar" – next to the Ballroom, prior to the Reunion Dinner.

6. **The Memorial Service at St. George's Church, Portsmouth**

All Members wishing to take part in the march to church should muster outside the Royal Sailors' Home Club at 10.30 on Sunday 25th May.

7. **The Remembrance Service at Southsea Naval Memorial**

This will take place on 11th November at 11.00. It is hoped that as many as possible will attend.

Other information

Royal Sailors' Home Club

The Home Club offers accommodation for members according to the following tariff:

| | 1 night | 2 nights or more (per night) |
|--------------------------------------|---------|------------------------------|
| Single room with shower and toilet | £31.75 | £29.75 |
| Children under 16 | £12.25 | £11.25 |
| Double/twin with en-suite facilities | £63.50 | £59.50 |

NB A discount of £8.00 per person is offered for the night of the Reunion Dinner only.

Tariff includes accommodation, full English breakfast and use of swimming pool/ Jacuzzi.

3 night "Bargain Breaks" are also offered at £90.00 per person.

The Home Club can be contacted on (0239) 2824231.

Clay Pigeon Shoot for the HMS Hood Memorial Trophy

This year's shoot was between the crew of HMS Sutherland and the Durness/Laid team and took place on Tuesday 18th February, 2003. The event is organised by the Laid, Polla and Port-Na-Con Residents' Association, members of the Gualin Gun Club and HMS Sutherland. We'll bring you a report and the results once we have them.



Those of you with the internet can keep up to date with events in the north. The Laid web site is at www.laid.org.uk and Durness at www.durness.org/

Web site update (www.hmshood.com)

The dark winter nights have seen us catching up with some larger projects that we have had on the back burner for some time. We have almost finished typing up and posting on the site the Official file that covers the Boards of Enquiry held to investigate why Hood was lost (over 400 pages!). The Admiralty were keen to learn all that they could from Hood's loss in order to protect other ships of the fleet from suffering the same fate.

Photographs of the men lost with the ship continue to come in and we have now reached a total of 415. The photos will, as usual, be on display at the Reunion in May.

Paul Bevand visited the Public Record Office in February and met up with Hood Association member Bruce Taylor who had flown over from his home in California to continue his research into the ship for the book he is currently writing.

Association Member in the Front Line

Some members will recall the very enjoyable visit that we had to USS Winston S Churchill during the summer of 2001 when she was at Portsmouth for the Festival of the Sea. That visit was kindly arranged for us by Association Member Bob Adamcik, a Lieutenant Commander in the US Navy. Bob has since returned to sea as Navigator of USS Bataan (LHD 5) – a WASP class amphibious assault ship (the equivalent of a Royal Navy Commando Carrier). At present USS Bataan is part of the military build up in the Middle East and Bob says that he is “somewhere in the Arabian Gulf.”



USS Bataan's statistics are:

Displacement: 40,000 tons

Length (feet): 844

Width (feet): 108

Draught (feet): 27

Armament: 2 NATO Sea Sparrow SAM, 2 Rolling Air frame Missile (RAM) SAM, 2

20mm CIWS

Aircraft: Up to 42 CH-46 type helicopters

Troop Capacity: 3000



Bob is pictured on USS Bataan wearing his Hood Association brooch

And finally...

“Our Treasurer Ken Clark, has requested that I point out that the Membership subscriptions of £5.00 are due on 1st May and that his computer automatically deletes anyone who has not paid! So, make sure that you renew your membership before the deadline and please remember to send Ken your current Association Membership card to be re-stamped together with a S.A.E. so we can return it.

Your President,

Ted Briggs,

Edited and produced by Michael Ware