



## THE H.M.S. HOOD ASSOCIATION

(Official Website [www.hmshood.com](http://www.hmshood.com))

### Message from the Chairman

Shipmates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with deep regret I have to report the death of veteran Frank Pavey on 28<sup>th</sup> January after suffering several heart attacks. Those of us who knew Frank will remember him for the endless stories he told and his eagerness to pipe everyone aboard at all our gatherings. Latterly he willingly accepted the roll of Master of Ceremonies at our Reunions.

As many of you will have heard, Ken Clark, our Treasurer has been unwell for some time and was taken into hospital with a blocked prostate. After spending several weeks in hospital he was discharged to complete his recovery at home. However, at the time of writing he had been taken back into hospital with a severe chest infection.

Some better news; I can now report that Hood veteran and our oldest member Bill Stone (106 years old) is now out of hospital and doing well after his two falls and broken femur.

With this Newsletter we have included the application form for tickets to this year's Reunion Dinner. We wish as many of you as possible to attend this event and hope to increase on the numbers who attended last year. It is anticipated about fifteen cadets from TS Hood, St. Austell, will be participating as well as several members of the Mers el Kebir Association from Brest in France. Application for tickets must be received before 1<sup>st</sup> May.

In early December, Keith Evans, Derick Collins and myself visited The National Arboretum in Staffordshire and made arrangements for a tree to be planted in memory of those who lost their lives in HMS Hood. As soon as the design has been agreed we will also arrange for a memorial stone with suitably inscribed plaque to be fabricated and installed alongside the tree.

Our membership numbers have improved since I reported in the last Newsletter and currently stand at 240 of which 22 live abroad. This increase has mainly resulted from late renewals. So far this membership year we have welcomed 38 new members to the Association.

Finally may I remind those of you who have not already paid, your subscription for membership is due on **1<sup>st</sup> May**. The fee remains at £5 per person for UK and Channel Islands residents and £10 for those living abroad. In future, members with bank accounts in the UK or Channel Islands may renew their membership automatically by Bank Standing Order. Forms are available from your bank and by contacting me I can provide details of the Association's account. My address and telephone number are on the back of membership cards issued in the last four or five years. For those living abroad, a Pay Pals arrangement can be set up. Paul Bevand, our UK Webmaster, can give you details of this. However, the instruction for both methods of payment **must** include your membership number to enable us to identify your payment on our statements.

God bless you all,

Peter Heys

### Important Events for 2007

- **AGM/Reunion Dinner:** 1600/1830 on 26 May at Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth.
- **Memorial Service:** 1130 on 27 May at St George's Church, Portsmouth.
- **Boldre Church Service:** 1100 on 13 May
- **Remembrance Service:** 1100 on 11 November at the Naval War Memorial, Southsea.

ObituariesFrederick (Dick) Turner

Dick was born in Wilton on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1918 and entered the retail trade when he left school. He fulfilled his boyhood ambition by joining the Royal Navy on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1936. After four months of initial training he was drafted to a Benbow Class ship and on 7<sup>th</sup> September of that year he joined *HMS Hood* as a stoker. *Hood* was to become 'the pride of his life'. On board, he met up with Jack Kiddle, another stoker, who ultimately married May, one of Dick's old school friends.

Dick left *Hood* in 1939, after serving as night watchman for 12 months, to undergo a further three months of training ashore. On completion, he was promoted to Leading Hand Petty Officer and drafted to *HMS Gladiolus* a Flower Class Corvette in which he served until summer 1941. His next draft was to *HMS Vetch* for nearly four years and finally to *HMS Whitshed*, during which time peace had been declared. Dick was finally drafted to Portsmouth in a staff post before leaving the service on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1948. Whilst in the RN, Dick had just missed the sinking of two of his ships, the *Gladiolus* with the loss of all hands in October 1941 and *Hood* in May 1941. The latter sinking had a profound effect on him for the rest of his life.

Dick returned to his former career in retail and retired in 1978 having been manager of Boots in Salisbury since the 1960's. It was here he became friendly with Betty, a supervisor, whom he married in 1985.

He was one of the founding members of our Association and has been a respected Committee member for many years being Minutes Secretary and Master of Ceremonies at Reunions. In addition he regularly played golf and bowls up to the last and was an active Committee member and organiser at his bowls club.

Dick died in Salisbury Hospital on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006 after three heart attacks. He was a man with the highest integrity and it was a privilege to have known him. We all miss him deeply.

Edward (Eddie) Goggins

Eddie was born on 24<sup>th</sup> January 1921 in Ardrossan, Scotland, and joined the Royal Navy on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1937. He was initially drafted to *HMS Ganges* for training as a Boy 2<sup>nd</sup> Class and left the ship as a Boy 1<sup>st</sup> Class on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1938. After brief service in two ships he joined *HMS Hood* on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1938 and left the ship on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1940 having been promoted to Able Seaman during that year. Whilst serving in *HMS Aurora* during March 1942, flying debris from a nearby bomb explosion injured him.

Eddie left the Royal Navy on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1952 and spent his last years at the Scottish Veterans Residence in Edinburgh. He was a regular attendee at our Reunion Dinners right up to his death on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2006 and was well known as a loveable old rogue. He will be sadly missed.

Kenneth Arthur (Dixie) Dean

Born on 29<sup>th</sup> February 1920 at Crowthorne in Berkshire, Dixie was keen on sport throughout his school and adult careers. He admired the Royal Navy during his boyhood and joined as a Boy 2<sup>nd</sup> Class in October 1935, in spite of his parents wishes. Dixie's first draft was to *HMS St. Vincent*, the boys training establishment in Gosport, for eight months, where he passed out as Boy 1<sup>st</sup> Class, and then joined the training ship *HMS Iron Duke*. In October 1936 came his first sea going draft to Battleship *HMS Royal Sovereign*, which lasted six months before returning to barracks in *HMS Nelson* for two months to await his next draft to *HMS Neptune* as an Ordinary Seaman. This draft only lasted a few months before joining *HMS Hood* in the autumn of 1937.

Dixie's time in *Hood* coincided with the Spanish Civil War where she was responsible for protecting refugees and British merchant shipping entering Spanish ports. Whilst serving in *Hood*, Dixie was promoted to Able Seaman in January 1939 and chose to specialise in torpedoes. He left her in April 1940 to undergo further training in his torpedo speciality in *HMS Vernon* after which he was rated Leading Seaman Torpedo Operator. This was followed by two short drafts before returning to *Vernon* as Petty Officer Instructor in January 1941 until April 1943. Dixie spent the latter part of the war in *HMS Howe* serving in the British Pacific Fleet. After leaving *Howe* in January 1947 and after drafts to three further ships, he returned to *Vernon* and discharge from The Royal Navy on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1954. In his civilian life, which followed, Dixie finally retired as an Executive Officer in the Civil Service.

Dixie crossed the bar in November last year and had been an active member of the Association from its early days. His many friends will miss him greatly. Rest in peace Dixie.

Francis William Pavey

Frank joined the Royal Navy as a Boy 2<sup>nd</sup> Class on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1937 and was drafted to *HMS St. Vincent* for six weeks initial training after which he passed out as Boy Seaman 1<sup>st</sup> Class and was drafted to *HMS Iron Duke* for sea training. His training in *Iron Duke* lasted almost one year after which he joined *HMS Hood* at Malta in April 1938. Frank often told the amusing story of wearing his boots on the quarterdeck on joining *Hood* and being screamed at by the Officer of the Watch – it was bare feet at all times for ranks below Petty Officer. After a couple of spells on ‘Spanish Patrol’, followed by a spell in Gibraltar and fleet regattas in the Greek Islands, *Hood* returned to Portsmouth in January 1939 for refit and then to Scapa Flow. As war was imminent, the fleet was assembling there. By this time Frank had specialised in gunnery and the day before outbreak of war he had been fusing shells in the 5.5inch magazine. *Hood* spent the next few months on ‘Northern Patrols’ before sailing to Devonport and a spot of leave.

Frank left *Hood* in March 1940 and was drafted to Portsmouth Barracks and thence to *Foylebank* an ex Bank line merchant ship which had been converted for anti aircraft duties. On 4<sup>th</sup> July in Portland harbour, the *Foylebank* attacked by over twenty Stuka aircraft. Twenty-six bombs fell on the ship, which sank with the loss of seventy-two lives from a complement of 380. Of the men in charge of the guns, only four survived. After a couple of weeks survivor’s leave, Frank was posted to Whale Island on a gunnery course and became a Leading Seaman. He then joined *HMS Lance*, an ‘L Class’ destroyer escorting convoys across the Atlantic and then convoys to Gibraltar and Malta, finally staying there as part of ‘Force K’. Finally their convoy ran into a minefield, which sank *Neptune* and *andahar*, and damaged *Lance*. During repairs in Malta dry-dock, the ship and dock gates were hit by bombs from German aircraft flooding the dry dock and sinking *Lance*. Frank returned to the UK in March 1944 and was drafted to *HMS Odzani* in the Pacific Fleet for the remainder of the war, finally returning home in November 1946.

Frank was well known for his great sense of humour and his superb piping. He was always on hand at Association events to pipe members to order. He crossed the bar on 28<sup>th</sup> January this year at the age of 85 after several heart attacks and will be sadly missed by all those who knew him

*A Discovery worth more than Gold.*

In September 2006, after a second surfing of the HMS Hood Association website in a three year period, it was noted that a photograph had been added in January of this year by a nephew of a Royal Marine bandsman who was onboard HMS Hood when she was sunk in May 1941, with the loss of so many lives. The Royal Marine bandsman was DAVID ROT TAWNEY, who was born and raised in Gosport, Hampshire. His age in May 1941 is recorded as 21, although his birth certificate shows him as being 22 years old. Roy was my father, although sadly I never knew him. A printout of the website details was passed to me, Rae Hay, presently residing in Dunoon, Argyll, Scotland. I was born in 1941 after the Hood was sunk. The photograph was the first I had ever seen of my father. When the war ended in 1945, my mother unfortunately lost touch with her in-laws, and any continuing contact with other family members ceased. She remarried in 1946 and died in 1989.

Phone calls were made by me to the Association, who then contacted the nephew on my behalf. Two days later a voice on the other end of my phone announced “ I think I’m your cousin”. During a lengthy emotional phone call, I discovered that he is one of eighteen surviving cousins, the majority of them still residing in the Portsmouth area. Then there are the off springs of these cousins, totalling more than 100. Many phone calls and exchanges of letters and documents later, I flew down to Portsmouth at the end of October, to meet for the first time the family of which I knew nothing and who knew nothing of me. To say it was emotional is very much an under-statement, and increased substantially my Christmas card list.

Travelling down on Monday 30 October, I was met at Southampton airport by Colin Smith, the cousin with whom the initial contact had been made. Quite a few tears mostly by me. The car trip from Southampton to Portsmouth was one of much chat about the family I was suddenly part of, and the rest of the day and evening were spent in the company of Les Smith, the oldest of that branch of the family, and his wife Jean. A lunch had been planned for Tuesday, in order for me to meet as many cousins as were able to attend. In the event, there were 15 first cousins and some partners at a wonderfully decorated venue (it was Halloween). A most ample buffet lunch was provided. This too was an emotional occasion for me, with firstly the applause as I crossed the room, then introductions, hugs, kisses, flowers, photographs and much information about my father from almost every individual. The lunch was a great success, lasting from 12-30pm until 5pm, with lots of laughs, tears and a final sing-along of the songs that were regularly sung by my paternal grandfather.

On Wednesday, I went with Les, Jean and Colin to the beautiful Church of St John the Baptist at Boldre in the New Forest, which has a direct bearing on the Hood and its subsequent history, and which houses much memorabilia,

including a framed photograph of the Hood, two long oak benches carved with ship's crest and an illuminated Book of Remembrance in the North Chapel. We laid flowers at the church, another emotional moment. On Thursday we went to the War Memorial on Southsea common and spent considerable time there. This is a wonderful monument to those who lost their lives, again very emotional moment. The rest of the day was spent sightseeing, including a trip to the upper level of the Spinnaker Tower with its amazing view of the surrounding countryside, much of it famous in its own right.

On Friday morning Les, Colin and I visited the Royal Marine Museum and spent two hours in this fascinating building, with its marvellous exhibits from all conflicts, and including the amazing medal room. What a tribute. All too soon it was time to bid farewell to my wonderful hosts. An emotional farewell at the airport, and a promise to return to Portsmouth as soon as possible, I was gone. Future visits are in the planning stage, and in particular to the annual Memorial Service at Boldre Church in May. And as though he was looking down on us, for five days we had the most glorious weather. I cannot thank enough my new found family for their wonderful welcome and hospitality, which will never be forgotten, and for all the photographs and information I brought home to Scotland, to relate to family and friends here. I hope that some other families will be motivated by my experience and seek out information about their own relatives, perhaps from HMS HOOD, but also from other conflicts. I can assure you, your lives are likely to be greatly enriched, as mine has been. A big thank you to my cousin Colin, without whose input into the HMS Hood Association website the above would never have occurred. From start to finish – five weeks. A true wonderful good – news story. Rae Hays

#### Newsletter Editor

Due to my movements I apologise for the late November newsletter but now I have a fixed abode normal service will resume. To keep the newsletter interesting I do need articles for publication from members, all items will be gratefully received. Anyone who wishes to contact me my new address is

**Mr D M Collins, 12 COGLAN CLOSE, FAREHAM, HAMPSHIRE. PO16 7YF**