



THE H.M.S. HOOD ASSOCIATION

(Official Website www.hmshood.com)

Message from the Chairman

Shipmates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Unfortunately last year's Remembrance Service at the Portsmouth Naval War Memorial was not the usual event as promised by the Association. Firstly, we failed to find a preacher for our Service, but I stepped in and composed a Service, produced a large number of service sheets and agreed to conduct the Service. Only Alec Kellaway and myself from the Committee intended to attend and were present. Then secondly, Portsmouth City Council passed a message a few days before the event to Frank Allen, our webmaster in the USA, that we could not hold our Service at the War Memorial because the Riders Division of the Royal British Legion were to hold their event there. About 200 motorcyclists were anticipated to be present. Both problems occurred due to 11th November being a Sunday. However, we have never had any similar problems in the past even when our Service has occurred on a Sunday.

On Sunday 9th December during the Service at Coventry Cathedral, our Chaplain the Venerable John Green was collated as Archdeacon Pastor and installed as Honorary Canon. Keith Evans, Alec Kellaway and myself, represented the Association at the Service.

Along with the Christmas cards, I sent out a request form for members to indicate their preference for the location of 2014 Reunion Dinner. Tragically, we have been having problems with the membership database and only 214 members were listed. Consequently, I apologise to those current members who were not notified.

Of the 214 requests sent out, 46 members responded. 24 wished the Reunion to remain in Portsmouth, whilst 12 preferred the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) in Staffordshire. By statistically adjusting their suggested attendance figures, Portsmouth will attract 35 attendees whilst the NMA will attract 19 attendees. These figures, of course, ignore the views of the 168 members, including 3 Committee Members, who did not respond and I can only assume they preferred our Reunion to stay in Portsmouth.

The Reunion Dinner this year will again be held in the Nelson Lounge at the Maritime Club. We will follow our previous years' arrangements of not having a top table and with officials spread around the tables. The proposed Guest of Honour this year is the Principal Medical Officer at HMS Collingwood.

Enclosed with this Newsletter is an application form for Reunion Dinner tickets. Please return your application as soon as possible to help us with the arrangements and enclose a SAE. The maximum number is restricted to 80 attendees in the Nelson Lounge. Please also make your overnight accommodation bookings soonest at the Maritime Club, mentioning the Association, as we have agreed a special rate of £40.00 pppn. A number of rooms have been reserved for us. May I also remind you that membership renewals are now due for the year May 2013 to April 2014.

Due to the continued problems with the Membership Database I am unable to report the membership statistics with any meaningful accuracy. Hopefully the difficulties will be resolved before the AGM.

Last year only 16 members plus 6 Committee members attended the AGM. This is the worst turnout yet. For those attending the Reunion and any other members, please make every effort to join us for the AGM. This takes place in Brocks Bar at 1600 before the Dinner. Your contributions to the meeting and ideas on the future are essential.

God bless you all,
Peter Heys

Important Events.

- **2013 AGM/Reunion Dinner:** Saturday 25th May at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth
- **2013 Memorial Service:** Sunday 26th May at St Ann's Church in the Portsmouth Naval Dockyard
- **2013 Boldre Church Service:** 1100 on Sunday 2nd June
- **2013 Remembrance Service:** 1045 on Monday 11th November at Portsmouth Naval War Memorial
- **2014 AGM/Reunion Dinner:** Saturday 24th May

Committee Members (By the Chairman)

Recently Paul Bevand, who has been responsible for Membership Administration, Meeting Secretary and assisting Frank Allen maintain the Website, has decided to retire from the two former responsibilities. This is mainly due to the changed work requirement in his full time employment and he can no longer guarantee to devote the required time necessary to progress the tasks promptly. The Meeting Secretary function has been taken over by George Wronski, our Treasurer, although George is part time being only resident in this country from April to December each year. One of our members has offered to take over responsibility for Membership Administration and after agreement by the Committee will be put to the AGM for approval.

I have also been advised both Keith Evans and Derick Collins intend to retire from their Committee posts at the AGM in 2014. Keith, who will be 95, is currently responsible for arranging and organising our memorial services and liaising with Boldre Church. He feels he can no longer devote the time required to fulfil these duties satisfactorily.

Derick holds the onerous job of being responsible for composing, editing, printing and distribution of the Newsletter. In addition he distributes the Reunion Dinner Tickets. He has been ill and undergoing treatment for many years.

Keith was originally press-ganged into the job by me, and Derick actually volunteered. Both have done a wonderful job over the years and will be sorely missed.

In the past we have had great difficulty filling vacant Committee posts, in most cases taking some three years. If we cannot replace these incumbents, the Association will be difficult to continue functioning. I would like each member to consider how he or she can contribute to the survival of the Association. Certainly, I need a volunteer to take on each of Keith and Derick's jobs within the timescale indicated. Please write to me, my address is on the back of your membership card.

Portsmouth WW2 Memorial (By Mr. M.R. Nottage)

A new 2nd World War Memorial is being installed by Portsmouth City Council and will record the names of all Portsmouth born citizens killed during the war. The Memorial will record the names of the 98 Portsmouth born sailors killed when HMS Hood sank on 24th May 1941. The Memorial is being financed by voluntary donations and the first memorial sections containing 600 names now stand in Portsmouth Guildhall Square. Members and particularly those related to the Portsmouth men who perished in Hood can donate to the cost of this Memorial by sending a personal cheque/postal order made payable to *WWII Memorial Fund to: Portsmouth Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO1 2AL*. Alternatively payments may be made online at Portsmouth City Council Website.

Reunion Weekend 25-26 May 20013

The memorial service on Sunday 26th will be held in the Portsmouth Dockyard church of Saint Ann's starting at 1000. Due to the security of the dockyard we are required to inform the dockyard police by name of those who are attending and a list is to be provided by Friday 10th May. Will those who wish to attend the service please let me know with your membership renewal to enable the list to be compiled in good time. The Tenacity band will form up just inside the main gate of the dockyard and members are requested to be there by 0940 ready to march to the church. It is regrettable that if you are not listed you will not be able to attend church.

Membership renewals and Dinner tickets are being processed by Derick Collins. If you require accommodation you must deal directly with The Maritime Club Telephone Number 023 9283 7681(advance booking)

Association Chaplain Reverend John Green.

On 9th December 2012 John was collated as Archdeacon Pastor and installed as Honorary Canon of Coventry Cathedral and three members attended in support of John and as representatives of the Association. To commemorate this occasion the association presented a copy of Bruce Taylor's book *The Battlecruiser H.M.S. Hood* to The Bishop of Coventry, The Right Reverend Dr Christopher Cocksworth. A letter has been received from him as follows:-

It was a very great pleasure to meet you and your colleagues in the cathedral yesterday. Thank you very much indeed for the gift of the marvellous book about H.M.S. Hood and for the file of fascinating information about her. Unfortunately, because of other commitments, I was not able to see the programme in the evening. One of my sons, though, has assured me that he recorded it for me, so hopefully, I shall see it at some point. I very much look forward to discovering more about the important history of this great Battle Cruiser. The presence of so many naval men and women in the Cathedral was a great honour for us all and a particular mark of support for John Green, which I know he appreciated enormously. With every good wish for the work of the Association.