



THE HMS HOOD ASSOCIATION

(Official Website www.hmshood.com)

Shipmates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

November 1999

I do hope you have all been keeping well over the summer months. By the time you receive this it will be time to get on those winter woollies. The very thought of it makes me shudder, Brrr !!

Your Association is getting quite strong now with a lot of new members joining. I think this is a lot to do with our being on the Internet. If you can get onto the Internet, the website address is an easy one to remember, www.hmshood.com. This is the **official** website of the HMS Hood Association.

It is nice to know that there are a lot of younger people taking an interest in HOOD, thus keeping the name of such a great ship going on, and remembering those who lost their lives in her.

Tom Hooper, our Hon. Vice Chairman, crossed the bar recently and a number of his shipmates attended the funeral with Den Finden, our Standard Bearer, parading the Standard.

To commemorate Remembrance Day quite a number of us gathered at the Southsea Memorial on Thursday 11th November, some members travelling from as far afield as Penzance, Gloucester and Dorset. Ted Briggs, our President, laid a wreath and our Chairman, J.R. Williams, laid a poppy cross for member Peggy Jones. This was in memory of her two lost brothers. Den dipped our Standard as the guns signalled the two-minute silence. Afterwards some of us assembled in the Royal Sailors Home Club, where the lamps were soon swinging and a few drinks were downed.

On the 22nd November Ted, JR, Ken and Jim Taylor were invited to Portsmouth to visit the destroyer HMS Newcastle for a tour of the ship. On arrival we were piped aboard, which we thought was a great honour. During lunch in the Wardroom with the ship's officers we swapped a few yarns and drunk a few drinks. A wonderful day was had by all.

The Association Reunion 2000 will be held in the Royal Sailors Home Club on 20th May 2000 at 18.00hrs for 19.00hrs. The AGM will be held in the club Boardroom at 1700hrs. The price of tickets at £18.00 per head is the same as last year. I have enclosed a booking form for the tickets. **Please, please** return these by 1st May 2000. We are able to subsidise the cost again due to the good bookkeeping of our Treasurer, Ken Clark. The church service will be held at St. Georges Church, on the 21st May 2000 at 11.00hrs, with the Boldre Church service on the 28th May 2000. ***Please be there early if you want a seat !!***

Recently a few of us went to Portsmouth University to answer questions about our service in HOOD'. This was for a film being made by an Australian company for Channel 4 called 'BATTLESHIPS'. We are told it may be shown in about 12 months time. The film is not just about 'HOOD', but about all the battleships of the world.

For your interest, over the page I have included an article and photos concerning the HOOD stones above Loch Eriboll in Scotland.

Just a reminder that Association subscriptions for 2000 are to be paid by 1st May 2000.

However, if you no longer wish to be a member of our great Association please be so kind as to let us know.

I will end by wishing you all the best of health.

God Bless you all

Your Chairman John Russell Williams, and the Committee.

The Hood Stones at Loch Eriboll

Since 1935, stones on the hillside west of Laid above Loch Eriboll in Scotland, have marked the spot where the then crew members of HMS Hood, ('The Mighty Hood' as she was known) added their mark to the other names of ships on the hillside. This was when Loch Eriboll was a popular Royal Navy anchorage. A memorial plaque to HMS Hood was unveiled in Eriboll Church in 1997 and with the stones on the hillside stands as a testament to the crew and a ship that stood as a symbol of Britain's supremacy as a sea power. Several other warship names are depicted in stones on the hillside.

The children of the local Durness Primary School have taken the lead in preserving and maintaining this memorial. In 1993 the school children first climbed the hill and painted the stones white. As the years have passed a regular communication has been established between the school and the HMS Hood Association and recently a framed print of the warship, signed by Ted Briggs, the last surviving crew member of her sinking, was presented to the school. Apart from HRH Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, expressing an interest when opening a local high school, funding has never materialised to ensure this site is permanently marked. Repeated attempts by local community groups have failed to raise the necessary interest despite appeals to the MOD, the War Graves Commission and the Queen. Recently the school children again climbed the hillside, cleared away the growth around the site and repainted the stones making sure that the name of 'Hood was once again clearly visible.

The Association very much appreciates this gesture by the school children and is pleased to print below a copy of a letter sent to us from the children together with photographs of them at the site.

'Dear Mr. Williams

We thought you might be interested to know that recently we went to repaint the Hood stones above Loch Eriboll. We painted them bright white so that people could see them clearly. We also painted other ships names, Valiant, Whirlwind and the submarine H43. It was a lovely day when we went to do it and it was great fun and really interesting. All the school went, even the little ones. Some of us got covered in paint! The Navy provided the paint, as did the local painter and decorator and some of our parents. We got our photo taken beside the stones.

*Julie McLellan, Eilidh Veitch, Lorraine Kay
Durness Primary School
Durine, Lairg,*

8th October 1999

The children leaving Durness school



The children at the 'H' for Hood stones

