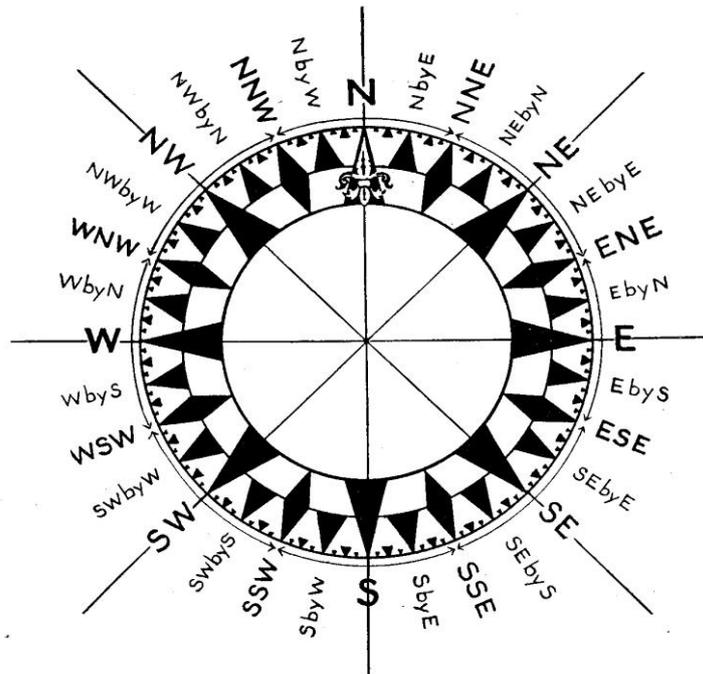




SEPTEMBER 2015

ISSUE 81



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Editors Note

Its good to be back and we hope you find our article interesting. Mick got pinged with a speed camera, but as yet no fine.

Next meeting 15th November 2015

SKIPPER'S LOG July 2015

Each Vindi year for our S.A. Branch has always been from July 1st to June 30th. July has always been our AGM where supposedly we the committee vacate our chairs for a new lot of faces to run the branch. Many offices go for a three year term. We had to be different as there have not been many changes to our team. This has been due to the fact that unlike government the chosen committee has been really good ('til death do they part). If candidates do not enjoy their job they would say so and Anne and myself wish to thank them for their dedication. So what is the point of an AGM in our group? We have never embraced the boring journey through votes, minutes, constitutions and all that goes with it. We are a special social gathering of fun loving people and I would not change that for the world. Long may we continue in that vein.

The saddest news of all was the passing of our dearly beloved member Thomas Verdun Evans known to us as Vern. He lived to a grand age and lived life to the full, leaving behind his loving wife, partner and friend, like two peas in a pod. He has also left a large, loving and supportive family that will see that Eunice is cared for and looked after. We do hope that Eunice will remain one of our members because without her our meetings would not be the same. Vern's funeral was well attended by our Vindi boys and partners, many friends and family, whom we thank sincerely for their hospitality after the service back at their home where it was evident that Eunice was indeed surrounded by love from them all.



We welcome Jill and Mick back into the fold from their globetrotting (back to work team!).

Merchant Navy Day went a lot better than last year the organizers having taken note of our concerns that a solemn ceremony should not be marred by union and labor diatribe. It is a service to our fallen as well as to its survivors. Next year we must boost our numbers (so I am not left standing on my own).

For those experiencing ill health both Anne and I wish you all a speedy relief from all your sufferings and a return to good health.

God Bless Tony.

PS SUBS DUE NOW. I thank those members who do pay their subs promptly but we still have a few outstanding same old few each year, so if you haven't paid your subs for 2016 then please do so ASAP. It helps

me collate the information of name, address, rank and position in class ready to send by mail to HQ in UK. They also have to put these particulars through MI5 so that we know how many survivors there are. December is the deadline. Don't make me come around to your house and charge you double. Thank you for your cooperation.

PPS. Our next meeting will be our usual Picnic in the Park on the 15th November. Best to get there early to get a parking spot.

From the Almoner's desk

Our close association has been saddened by the passing of Vern Evans in August. Vern and Eunice were dedicated members attending meetings, social events and interstate Vindi reunions. Verns funeral service was well attended by Vindi members and Winston delivered a touching eulogy on behalf of Verns family. Flowers and a condolence card were sent as a token of respect from Vindi members. Vern trained at the Vindi in 1943 and was a deck hand. He saw war service, jumped ship in Australia and met the love of his life Eunice. They were happily married with four children, six grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Vale Vern.

John Tamkin and Margaret Maddocks would love to have Vindi members visit them. They reside at Resthaven, 48 Dorrien Street, Mitcham, Contact John direct on 8272 9118 and Margaret on 8272 1904 to arrange convenient times.

Noticed recently the Seamans mission building in Port Adelaide now has a sign outside 'Backpackers Hostel'.

Birthdays

September - Bill Robinson 16th, Peter Rix on the 18th and Margaret Maddocks will be 92 on the 19th.

October - Jill on the 8th, Phil Mason 12th and Marlene Robinson 25th.

November - Betty on the 11th and Mike Day 14th.

December - Keith on the 11th and Mick on the 26th.

Wishing you all a very happy and special birthday.



Spring is here banishing those winter ills, keep well everyone and remember, a smile has immense face value.

Anne Withey

TRAGEDY MARS TWO BRAVE ACTS

Two outstanding acts of bravery - one of which ended in tragedy, the other in triumph - were enacted in the Thames early on Friday evening.

Mr Edward Stanley Everett, a 27 year old radio operator with the Thames Navigation Unit at Gravesend, lost his life in an incident which lasted only a few minutes, and shocked scores of people along the riverside, many of whom had just left the ferry.

The drama began when seven year old Nicholas Broad, of 108 Wilberforce Way, Gravesend, fell into the river near the Town Pier. It is understood that he lost his footing on a low wall near the pier. In seconds the swift running tide swept the boy downstream.

This was the moment for heroic act No 1 which ended in death.

Seeing the boy's plight Mr Everett dived into the river from the pier fully clothed, but as he couldn't swim got into difficulties himself before he could reach the boy. Both of them were now helpless victims of the tide.



And this was the moment for heroic act No 2.

Twenty six year old Anthony Michael Iles, of 21The Knoll, Istead Rise, Northfleet, a salesman with Reliance Cars Ltd for whom he is also a part-time taxi driver, had just arrived to pick up a fare from the Town Pier. Noticing a crowd of people he went to investigate. A young lady said 'For God's sake do something.' Athletically built, 6'2" tall Mr Iles, who holds several awards for life-saving leapt out of his vehicle and saw two struggling figures in the water. He flung off his jacket before diving into the Thames. With powerful strokes he reached the almost exhausted boy who clung frantically round his neck and floated with him to a lifebelt that had been thrown from the pier then they were picked up in a boat.

But Mr Everett, whose home was at London Road, Averley, Essex vanished before help could reach him.

Both Nicholas and his rescuer were taken to Gravesend Hospital, but were not detained after treatment.

On his way home from hospital Mr Iles told the 'Reporter': 'After I had got to the boy and reached the lifebelt, the man who had jumped from the pier had disappeared. I had never thought of myself as a strong swimmer. As far as I was concerned this was just a life-saving exercise I was taught many times at school.'

Some years ago while serving in the Merchant Navy, Mr Iles stopped a man who had gone berserk, from jumping off a ship near the Canary Islands.

Tribute to his bravery was paid by Mr H Jones, of 106 Chalk Road, Gravesend, who had just got into the taxi with his wife. He said: 'We had just sat down when the cabby opened the door, walked over to the river's edge and casually jumped in. It was marvellous. I have never seen such courage. He did not say a word. In my opinion he deserves a medal as big as a plate.'

Article taken from 'THE REPORTER' 1964

Tony's name was put forward to the Royal Life Saving Society for the Mountbatten Medal, sadly it went to somebody else. However he received a certificate for bravery from The Queen.

Tony was refused his taxi licence, the reason given was that he acted before he thought. An outcry by the public soon changed the mind of the licence authority and he was offered his licence, which he politely told them to shove it.

YOUR HUMBLE CUPPA

When you next sit down for a cup of tea, give a thought to the smugglers who helped to make it possible. In the early 1700's the East India Company were importing tea into England at very high prices controlled by them to keep tea in demand. Their monopoly on this product and also the high taxes charged by the Crown to finance a war in Spain gave smugglers a good incentive to bring tea into the country illegally. The impending war led to an increase in tax and the price of tea leaves rose to five shilling per pound in 1711.

In 1745 Henry Pelham (Prime Minister 1743-54) slashed the duty on tea which led to more brought into the country legally resulting in the amount doubling. The increase of tea import on which duty was being paid actually led the government revenue from tea increasing. However, in the 1750's with another war looming the need to increase the tax on tea was raised yet again, bringing the tax paid to 119% per pound weight. Thus leading to a surge of smuggling which continued up until 1784.

The extent of tea smuggling in Britain was so popular that people ignored the activities of the smugglers, being as it was an illegal trade the quantity smuggled into Britain was not known during the high taxation during the

eighteenth century. Although tea consumption was increasing especially in Scotland and the south coast of England the legal importation was not increasing at the same rate. It has been estimated that the amount of tea smuggled at this time was between 4 and 7.5 million pounds weight, which is a lot more than was imported legally. So many people at this time were involved in the illegal trade that it was having an impact on finding workers on farms.

A majority of smuggling was taking place along the southern coast of England, the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands and also the Scottish borders and the Isle of Man. Most of the smuggled tea came to light because the East India Company had grown to a size that was edging out competition from the Dutch, French, Swedish and Danish East India Companies who in turn sold their tea to the English smugglers to the benefit of the lower classes as tea was a luxury enjoyed by the upper classes.

The surplus of tea imported by the East India Company led to the Boston Tea Party in 1773 when they attempted to dump the excess onto the American market and eventually contributed to the American War of Independence in 1775. The only way to slow down the smugglers which had devastated the profits of the company was to lower the tax on tea making the legal product cheaper. The Commutation Act of 1784 saw the tax on tea cut from 119% to 12.5% stopping smuggling immediately. This act was brought in by William Pitt the Younger who had become Prime Minister in 1783. Tea consumption grew greatly after this and the revenue was soon restored making tea to become the standard drink for the majority of the UK population, however to pay for this the Window Tax was brought in.

Some smuggling operations became larger and more ruthless due in part to the peaceable conditions in Europe during the mid 1760's, this in turn led to more European trade with China resulting in more tea imported to the continent which could then be smuggled into Britain. This form of smuggling was called the New Mode by Scottish excise officers. Heavily armed ships carried gallons of rum and brandy and hundreds of chests of tea which were distributed through highly organized gangs who carried the smuggled goods inland for sale. In London the dealers of smuggled tea were thoroughly respectable using their ships which were insured by Lloyds of London however the smugglers themselves, being hardened criminals, thought nothing of using violence and intimidation.

The East India Company allowed officers on their ships to have a certain amount of space for their private trade, many of which made a substantial profit by taking tea back to Britain and selling to smugglers who met the ships offshore.

In September 1747 a boat was intercepted off the Dorset coast by customs officers, it was carrying two tons of illegal tea, which was taken to the customs house at Poole for storage. The smugglers behind this operation were called the Hawkhurst Gang and about 60 members raided the customs house and retrieved their goods. They then headed into Hampshire to the town of Fordingbridge where the villagers watched them ride through, the gang made no attempt to hide themselves. John Diamond, one of the smugglers gave a small bag of tea to Daniel Chater a person he recognized. Local people were intimidated by the gang and kept quiet through the fear of being attacked. However the authorities decided that something must be done. Customs officials received evidence that Daniel Chater had recognized John Diamond and was pressured into giving evidence against him. In February 1748, Chater and William Galley a customs officer set out for Chichester to see a magistrate stopping on the way at the White Hart Pub in Rolands Castle which proved to be a fatal decision. The landlady who had two sons that were smugglers got in touch with the Hawkhurst Gang and they proceeded to get Chater and Galley drunk. They were both horse whipped and taken on a 15 mile ride to another village. The men who were tied to the horses were frequently sliding upside down from being constantly whipped, hanging underneath the horses with hooves striking their heads. The smugglers showing no mercy, despite Galley begging to be killed quickly. When they reached the Red Lion pub at Rake, Galley appeared to be dead so he was buried and they chained up Chater. They then returned home to establish their alibis. Fourteen men returned later intent on killing Chater, they took him to a well. Whilst he knelt to pray one of the gang took out a knife and cut off his nose and almost put his eye out with the knife. He was hung above the well but was still alive some time later so they cut him down and threw him down the well, even this did not kill him so they threw rocks on top of him until his groans stopped.

Large rewards were offered for the gangs arrest, one member agreed to give evidence against the others in exchange for leniency. The location of the bodies of the two men was obtained and the full horror of the crime was revealed. When Chaters body was recovered from the well one of his legs had been severed by injuries inflicted upon him. When the customs officer Galley was dug up he was found in an upright position with his hand in front of his eyes and was obviously still alive when buried.

Eight of the gang were tried and sentenced to death, one of them dying before the execution could take place, however his body was still put in chains and hung up as a warning.

Since the introduction of tea into the Western world it has grown in popularity, it is now the second most popular beverage in the world after water. Its demand has dramatically increased as a result of its good taste.

DID YOU KNOW?

The tradition of issuing sailors with rum dated back to 1655 when Jamaican rum replaced brandy as the drink of choice for the Royal Navy.

Jamaica had just been captured from the Spanish and rum was a cheap and plentiful by-product of their sugar-refining processes.

The rum ration was issued daily at noon and 5pm or 6pm with a call of "Up spirits".

More than 80% of the world's rum still comes from the Caribbean.

In 1740 the English Navy ordered the rum ration be diluted because of the drunkenness it caused.

It is believed that more sailors died by falling from the rigging drunk than were killed in battle.



WARSHIP LONDON

After 350 years the River Thames has given up another one of its treasures. A gun carriage along with the apparatus for firing the gun were also recovered from the wreck of the warship *London*. Weighing approximately one ton, with a length of 1.6 metres and a width of 70cm the carriage would have carried a 9ft long cannon which was capable of firing a cannon ball a distance of 2 miles.

Commissioned by the Government of Oliver Cromwell the *London* was one of three completed Second Rate Warships built at Chatham Historic Dockyards between 1642-1660 and is the only one to survive.

Following the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658, the *London* formed part of an English convoy in 1660 that was sent to the Netherlands to escort Charles II home and restore him to the throne.

Laying in thick clay and 60ft of water the gun carriage is in remarkably good condition. It is hoped clues are forth coming as to why the ship sank. Divers on the wreck have also found glass windows, parts of shoes and a sundial.

It is thought that the gunpowder stored in her magazine caught fire whilst the ship was on route from Chatham to Gravesend to pick up final supplies after being mobilised to fight in the second Anglo Dutch war from 1665-7. The crew of 300 perished in the aftermath. Of the 76 bronze cannons on board only five are known to have been recovered.

Before her sinking on 7th March 1665 she was used to protect the Channel coast in an attempt to boost trade for the English and her allied merchants.

EDITORS TRAVEL TO UK

In July we packed our bags and flew to England to visit Mum in the sleepy village of Brockenhurst in Hampshire, the New Forest was to be our base for seven weeks. After a long flight we landed at Heathrow passed through immigration and began looking for our taxi driver holding our name. For twenty minutes Mick walked up and down trying to find him, in the end we decided to phone and see if we had been forgotten, just then Mick saw him. He had been waiting outside at the wrong end of the arrivals hall, (Not our usual driver). We arrived at Mums just over an hour later. Hugs all round and a cup of tea, it was good to finally stop moving.

The following day we walked into the village to say hello to the shop keepers and stock up on goodies and beer. After carrying out a few minor maintenance jobs we caught up on some sleep before picking up our hire car on the Monday. Jill's brother and his wife arrived from Canada a few days later, and as we had not seen them for a couple of years there was a lot of catching up to do and plenty of talking.

A few days later we caught the ferry to the Isle of Wight where we visited Queen Victoria's summer residence, Osborne House. After taking the grand tour inside the house we made our way outside to walk through the gardens. Very interesting and well worth a visit. From there we made our way to Carisbrooke for lunch and then walked to the castle, as usual we took the long way round. The first building we entered we were greeted by a volunteer who asked Mick where we were from? 'Australia' we said, to which he replied 'I'm going to make your day, your cricket team have just been bowled out for 60 odd runs in the first innings of the third test'. We took our time wandering about looking at the exhibits and decided that we had time to walk around the ramparts as Mick said that we didn't have to leave until 4.30pm. On getting into the car Mick said bugger or something similar, 'we should be back at the ferry by 4.30pm as we were booked to sail at 5.05pm. After driving like a maniac, we arrived at 5pm, and the man at the gate said that we were pushing our luck, to which Mick said that we'd had a bit of an episode, he then stuck a sticker on the windscreen and told us to see the guy in lane number one who let us go on before the goods vehicles. This meant that we were one of the first vehicles off at the other end at Lymington.

Point of interest - while driving around the IOW we passed the prison where Brian spent some of his younger years before emigrating to Australia.

We did a lot of walking and even managed to get lost more than once. The whole area of the New Forest is surrounded by cattle grids allowing the horses, cattle and donkey's to roam at will, including standing in the middle of the road and stopping traffic. At a certain time of the year pigs are also let out to eat the acorns, this is called 'Pannage'. Three times a year the horses are rounded up, they are checked for injuries and are either cared for or humanely put down, some are sold, and the remainder are released back into the forest. One day whilst out walking we surprised a small deer which took fright and jumped over a six foot high fence into a garden.

One sunny morning in shorts and sandals we caught the train to visit Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, just before arriving it began to rain, perfect.

As we had explored *HMS Victory*, *The Warrior*, *The Mary Rose* on a previous visit we caught the ferry making our way to the submarine museum where the *HMS Alliance* is on display, along with the excellent museum.

HMS Alliance was laid down at the Vickers shipyard in Barrow-in-Furness on the 13th March 1945. It entered service in 1947 and performed many different rolls over the next three decades during the post-war era. Many hundreds of submariners served in her during her twenty six years in commission. She was modernised in 1958 making her more streamlined and quieter for her new role in countering the



submarines of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. She was finally paid off in 1973 at HMS Dolphin in Gosport, then the home of the Royal Navy Service where for a few years she served as a static training submarine. In 1979 the Navy embarked on the task of preserving the *Alliance* as the last surviving submarine of WW1.

We did a most interesting guided tour of the *Alliance*, an A Class submarine, ex submariners were our guides who explained about the conditions endured by all on board whilst on patrol. An hour or two was spent looking around the museum before returning on the ferry in the pouring rain, Mick was asked if he was Irish as he had shorts on, he replied no I'm Australian, to which the man said 'say no more'.

Finally we came to the latest acquisition at the Dockyard the *HMS M33*, launched 22nd May 1915 to break through the Turkish defences during the Gallipoli Campaign, to cover landing of reinforcements along the Gallipoli peninsula. Her low hull and flat bottom made her ideal for bombarding the shore as well as being a small target. However, the benefit of the low hull didn't help much with her handling at sea. Choppy weather could lift the rudder from the water, affecting steering and stopping the ship from making headway.

In January 1916 she acted as a guard ship and defence vessel at the allied base at Salonika.

Whilst under enemy fire in 1916 in the Gulf of Smyrna she assisted in salvaging guns from the *M30* which was beached on Long Island and also covered the evacuation of the aerodrome and telegraph station. *HMS M33* operated in the central Aegean almost until the end of WW1 controlling shipping and general control work and the blockade and bombardment of the Turkish coast. July 1918 saw the *M33* deployed to the allied base of Mudros on the island of Limnos in the Aegean. She was also one of the vessels that supervised the armistice with Bulgaria and Turkey in November 1918.

1919 saw the return of *HMS M33* to England where she had the reputation of being a lucky ship where she was adapted for service with the White Sea Squadron. After being commissioned at Chatham on the 10th May she sailed for Russia, arriving at Archangel in June where she was at once ordered to the River Dvina to support troops fighting with the counter - revolutionary forces against the Bolsheviks. She received a number of direct hits from enemy guns but suffered no serious damage or casualties.

She was laid up until 1924 on her return to England, after which she was converted to mine-laying duties. Being re-commissioned in 1925 and renamed *HMS Minerva* where she became a tender at HMS Vernon, the Portsmouth School of anti- submarine warfare.

In 1939 she was used as a floating staff office at Portsmouth for the Wrens. After her boilers and engines were removed she was converted to a defence workshop and towed to the Clyde. After WW11 she returned to the Solent and was based at Gosport where she was used as a floating workshop and office.

The Hartlepool Ship Preservation Trust purchase her in 1987 and transported her to Hartlepool where her funnel was restored. Hampshire County Council acquired the ship and towed it back to Portsmouth to prepare her for restoration as she was only one of two surviving vessels of WW1. In 1995 the forward 6-inch gun was re-installed and work is in process with the intention of bringing her back to her original external state.

The engines and boilers that were take out in 1943 will not be replaced so that it can be observed in the raw with every plate, every rivet and every layer of history exposed.



On entering the lower deck of the ship, a volunteer gives a talk on the history of the ship after which you

proceed further inside where a ten minute audio visual show is displayed all around the bulkheads of the ship. You are not prepared for the dramatic scenes and sounds of the landing and battles that took places on the shores of Gallipoli. You can then continue to explore the remainder of the ship.

After a very late lunch it was time to catch the train or should we say trains, it took three to get us home.

On returning our hire car to Southampton we had a walk around the dock where three cruise ships were loading passengers, and if you were interested, or could afford it, the annual boat show was on with multi-million pound boats on display.

On our way back to catch the train we came upon this memorial to the Merchant Navy, Mick is standing by the plaque set into the ground beneath the anchor, with the inscription below.



The Church of Holyrood erected on this site in 1320 was damaged by enemy action on 30th Nov 1940. Known for centuries as the Church of the Sailors the ruins have been preserved by the people of Southampton as a memorial and garden of rest, dedicated to those who served in the Merchant Navy and lost their lives at sea.

IN MEMORY
OF
ALL THE VINDI BOYS
THAT TRAINED AT THE
T.S. VINDICATRIX 1939 - 1966
AND PASSED THROUGH
THE PORT OF
SOUTHAMPTON
DURING THEIR SEA GOING
CAREERS.



When the UK entered the Second World War in September 1939 George VI issued this message:

In these anxious days I would like to express to all Officers and Men in The British Merchant Navy and The British Fishing Fleets my confidence in their unfailing determination to play their vital part in defence. To each one I would say: Yours is a task no less essential to my people's experience than that allotted to the Navy, Army and Air Force. Upon you the Nation depends for much of its foodstuffs and raw materials and for the transport of its troops overseas. You have a long and glorious history, and I am proud to bear the title "Master of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets". I know that you will carry out your duties with resolution and with fortitude, and that high chivalrous traditions of your calling are safe in your hands. God keep you and prosper you in your great task.