



The Rum Tub or Norrie's  
Nocturnal and Nautical Natter.

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### Deep Thoughts

**I live in my own little world  
but it's OK; everyone  
knows me here.**

**I don't do drugs 'cause I find I  
get the same effect just by  
standing up really fast.**

**I saw a rather large woman  
wearing a sweatshirt with  
"Guess" on it. I said,  
"Thyroid problem?"**

**Money can't buy happiness  
but it sure makes misery  
easier to live with.**

**I don't approve of political  
jokes. I've seen too many of  
them get elected.**

**No one ever says, "It's only  
a game!" when their team  
is winning.**

# HMS Ulster

Volume 3,

Issue 4

August, 2014



Hi! Shipmates,

How are you guys enjoying the heat wave? I said in last issue looks like summer is here, well it certainly is and with a vengeance. I emailed my brother in Canada about extreme temperatures and he replied that he had not had to run his central house air conditioning so far this year as the temperatures were untraditionally low; 61°F (16.1°C) in daytime and 42°F (5.5° C) at night.

I do not ever remember temperatures that low in the normally very hot and extremely humid Canadian summers. Which begs the question "Why, in winter, do we try to keep the house as warm as it was in summer when we complain about the heat in the summer?"

I have included in this issue Part II of "Under Two Flags". Having a 'senior's moment' I almost forgot to include it.

I wore my tropical (summer RNA) rig to the dedication of the Torbay Civic Society plaque, honouring Commander Philips Johns RN, a bit of dark horse as you will find out reading the article I have included about him.. Buy some epaulettes from our 'slop chest' and you can be smart as a guardsman too!

My appeal and constant 'nagging' for material as at last turned up trumps. Shipmate Bob Mims (1947-48) has sent me in an article of his time onboard Ulster which due to its length I will run in two parts. Also my grateful thanks to Shipmate Ken Jones (1961-63) and sent me 'stacks' of material from another association newsletter he wrote "The Tenby Times"; however you can still search your ditty boxes and 'old grey cells' for additional material which I can add to my Rum Tub database

It's amazing that I am still in contact with 58 of our 1958-60 commission and 41 from other commissions and yet surprisingly I only receive about 6 or 7 replies to my emails and website updates. In closing - Remember communication is a two-way medium, think about it!

*The way I see it any way!*

## Memoir of a National Service Seaman on HMS Ulster 1947/ 48

*Shipmate Bob Mims sent me an account of his very short but interesting time on HMS Ulster in 1947 when it was part of the "Kings Navy" just after the war. There may be some, especially ex Boy Seamen from HMS St Vincent or HMS Ganges who could relate to this period which was so different in many ways to the Navy of later years. -----"Dry Ships" for a start and rowing boats!*

### **AB/O.Sea Robert Mims CJX/821161**

#### *Part I (Part II next issue)*

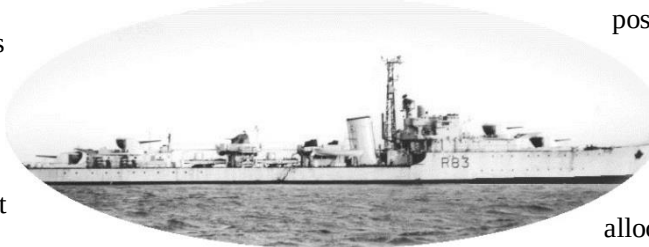
I was called up for National Service on the 5th February 1947 to HMS Royal Arthur at Corsham, Wiltshire, and following kitting out etc. spent the next month with the Naval Parties formed to help during the Snow emergencies in Bath caused by the heavy snow storms of 1947.

On the 7th March having been allocated to the Seaman Branch, I was sent to HMS Raleigh at Saltash, Cornwall for Basic Training.

On the 11th July having completed both sections of my basic training I was sent to my allocated Port Division at HMS Pembroke, Chatham.

On 17th July 1947 I was drafted to HMS Ulster on the Clyde where she was due to take part in the Home Fleet Review by King George VI on 20th July.

Only three ratings were in my draft, a PO Tel. a three badge Leading Seaman and me, a very "rooky" O/Seaman!!----- I felt very inferior!!



We left Euston Station late at night on a Special train full of Naval personal on draft to the various ships of the Home Fleet at the Review.

We arrived in Glasgow in the early hours of 18th July, transferred to a Naval Canteen for Breakfast then those who had been drafted to ships that had already arrived and anchored in the Clyde were transported to the pier head at Greenock. On arriving at the pier we found it and the river shrouded in a thick fog, making the waiting very cold, damp and uncomfortable.

After a rather long wait boats started to emerge out of the fog and eventually the motor cutter from HMS Ulster arrived and took the three of us on board. The visibility was very restricted and progress was very slow, but eventually after passing several grey silhouettes of various ships

the stern of a ship displaying the pennant number R83 came into view and we had arrived alongside HMS Ulster.

I then had a problem, getting my large kit bag and hammock up the rope ladder to deck level, some 15 ft above the motor boat bobbing up and down on the bit of a swell that had developed. However, this poor "rookie" was helped admirably by the other two without them taking the "mickey" too much.

I was now on board a real ship for the first time, and my real training was about to start!!

Having been received by the Officer of the Watch, and informed that the reason I had been sent as the odd one on the draft was because my papers indicated that I was a student architect in my civilian life and although the Navy had no use for anyone with architect training I must know something about "paint" and therefore I had been

sent to relieve the Ships Painter (a position I held throughout my short time in the Navy), and answered to the title of "Putty"

I was then allocated a berth and locker

in the forward Seaman's Mess and introduced to the other members of the Mess and the Rating that I had been sent to relieve for Demob following the Review.

Following Lunch, the fog cleared and the ships lying at anchor came into view. At this stage only the ships of the Rosyth Escort Flotilla were in position, consisting of HMS Wakeful (Capt. D), HMS Wrangler, HMS Whirlwind, HMS Rapid, HMS Rocket & HMS Ulster, the main Home Fleet was due to arrive later.

I was allocated to the same watch as the Rating I had been sent to relieve which had been tasked to wash down the bows using a timber staging slung over the bows. Such a contraption I had not seen or trained on during Training and the water seemed a long way down!! However, I had to look as if I had done it all before, so over the side I

HMS Ulster - 1947 Destroyer

went and down the rope until my feet touched the staging. Now I began to panic, as although I had managed to sit on the staging I was hanging well away from the ship's side which I was required to wash, using a sponge and soapy water from a bucket lowered down by a Rating from the deck above. A horizontal line had been rigged nearer the ship's side, set within the overhang of the bows, which I was required to reach for to pull the staging nearer to the area of work, hanging most of the time immediately over the water below! I was not enjoying this; and lost several sponges into the drink without washing much of the hull. After a while I got used to the situation and began to gain some confidence, to the extent that eventually I took this job in my stride! As many other tasks I had later to do as part of my duty on a sea-going ship.

This type of work was being undertaken on all the other ships of the flotilla, and now pleasure boats of all sizes were sailing around us giving the Public a closer view of the Navy at work with a suitable audio commentary as they sailed by.

That night was my first time slinging and sleeping in a hammock-----quite a problem until I got used to it and soon learnt how to sling the thing to get a good night's sleep despite all the wrong advice and comments of my new messmates

During the next day the Home Fleet sailed in led by a flotilla of the latest "Battle Class " Destroyers, followed by the Flag Ship HMS King George V, her sister ship HMS Anson, the Cruiser HMS Blake, the Aircraft Carrier HMS Illustrious and the two Submarine Depot Ships Maidstone and Montclare and one or two Submarines and MTB's.

They formed quite an impressive sight sailing slowly up the Clyde, especially when they all anchored as one and the flags were raised to dress ship on each ship at the same time. It showed just how well the Royal Navy could do things, and made me quite proud that I was now a member of it as my Father was before me.

The Royal Party arrived on the Flag Ship the next morning, King George VI, the Queen and the two Princesses, and the Royal Standard was raised. Following Lunch on the Flag Ship the Royal Party embarked onto an MTB, acting as the Royal Barge, and the Royal Standard transferred accordingly, and with an escort of MTB's and other craft the review was ready to start. (The future Royal Yacht Britannia was not launched until 1952)

By now all the ships companies, dressed in their best uniforms with white caps, lined the side of each ship and cheered, ship by ship as the Royal Barge passed down each column of ships all of which were laying at anchor in perfect formation, Crowds were lining the banks of the Clyde and from every available vantage point. It must have been a very impressive sight.

Following the Review pleasure boats came out to sail round the Fleet and in the evening there was a firework display. After lunch the next day the Royal Party left, the Royal Standard lowered and the Fleet got ready to leave.

In the evening the Fleet weighed anchor and proceeded in line ahead down the Clyde led by the Battle Class Destroyers, bound for their respective Ports of Plymouth, Portsmouth and Chatham. The Rosyth Escort Flotilla would be returning in company to Rosyth by the northern route and therefore proceeded at the end of the line, until reaching the Isle of Aran where we left the Fleet and proceeded north west around the western isles, through the passage of the Kyles of Lochalsh in the early morning (the road bridge to the Isle of Sky across this passage had not been built) then proceeded north, then east through the Pentland Firth, then south as far as the Firth of Forth arriving at Rosyth in the following evening.

Having settled into our new berth outside Rosyth Dockyard, the next day the off duty watch was given 48 hour shore leave. I joined other members of my mess and caught the special naval train that ran from the Dockyard station to Waverly Station in Edinburgh passing over the Forth Bridge on the way. (I doubt if this service still exists today) All this was a new experience to me as I had never been to Scotland before.

This was the first year of the Edinburgh Festival, and events were being held all over the city, especially at the Castle and in Princes Street Gardens. We booked a berth for the night at the "Sailors Rest" hostel situated behind Princes Street, which was ideal for what we required and at a price we could afford. A very interesting time was enjoyed.

On our return the other watches were allowed leave and when they returned batches of Boy Seamen arrived from their Training establishments HMS Ganges and HMS Vernon and distributed among the three ships allocated to provide their sea training, HMS Whirlwind, HMS Wrangler and HMS Ulster.

The next day these three ships left in line ahead, down the Firth of Forth to the open sea en-

route to Scapa Flow. On reaching the destroyer anchorage off Kirkwall all the ships had to moor to a buoy. This was the first time that I, as (the designated buoy jumper) had to actually connect to a buoy! A bit scary first time, especially having to wear the bulky cork life jacket that made one feel like "The Michelin man"!

Leave ashore was rather dull as Scapa Flow is a rather desolate place with the "natives" mainly speaking Gallic and only the professional "naughty girls" being interested in sailors! As a result I spent much of my free time rowing around the anchorage in one of the ship's Whalers. This allowed us to pass over the wreck of HMS Royal Oak that was sunk by a U-boat early in the war and is now a designated "war grave". It could be still seen lying on the bottom with its top mast sticking out above the water a very moving sight!

After spending the weekend in Scapa Flow each ship left to undertake exercises in the Training area of the Atlantic off Northern Ireland where we were due to spend several days operating full sea watch routine with various exercises imposed on us by day or night under various conditions. The Boy Seamen had not experienced this before neither had I, but to "the old salts" this all came as second nature.

At any time "man overboard" could be piped, and then the Whalers or Seaboat had to be launched to retrieve the lifebelt and smoke float that had been thrown overboard. This could develop into a race and competition between the Boy Seaman's boat and that crewed by the Ship's Company crew, who usually were dropped on the weather side of the ship and consequently usually got rather wet as the boat hit the waves! The smoke float by this time could have drifted quite a long way from the ship which involved a long hard row to collect and return it. On reaching the ship the boats had to be connected to the falls and be hoisted back to hang on the davits and secured ready for further use. This took a little time so the last boat back had to lay off until it could be connected and raised-----rather wet and tiring after a hard row!

This exercise was the basic of what was to come later. A torpedo could be fired at any time; the ship was underway at speed simulating a torpedo attack on another vessel. The Ulster had eight torpedo tubes in two mountings of four, normally trained fore and aft but turned outward for attack. Only two training torpedoes fitted with floating heads were installed and only one fired at a time in training. When the torpedo had completed its run it would turn vertically with the

floating head and smoke device bobbing up and down in the waves, often a mile or so away from the ship. The ship would then move to shorten the distance then the Seaboats would be dropped, as described above, to pick up the torpedo and return it to the ship for connecting to the deck winch for hoisting and storage back in its tube.

This operation was quite tiring and sometimes uncomfortable and wet, it could prove hazardous when trying to get a line onto the lifting ring at the end of the torpedo head which was bobbing up and down often disappearing below the waves, this could result in it coming up under the boat and possibly causing a serious leak! Once a line had been connected, the torpedo had to be secured alongside the boat and rowed back to the ship and secured.

These training trips varied in length from a few days to two or more weeks and returning to Rosyth to change the classes of Boy Seamen. The ships normally sailed on their own or sometimes in company for full flotilla exercises led by HMS Wakeful----these could be quite "hectic" as anything could happen at any time and we were not allowed to relax.

If we were away from base over a weekend we usually dropped anchor in one of the sea lochs among the Scottish islands which were very quiet and desolate among wild but beautiful scenery. Off duty watches were allowed recreational leave and spent the time by "make and mend" or rowing or sailing on the loch in the ships whaler, we were allowed to go ashore to roam the hills dressed in any rig provided we wore our caps with the ships name tally. On one occasion there was a group of Crofts at the head of the loch, so we rowed over to see if there was any life or a means of sending our "tiddly" tobacco and cigarettes "up the line"! As the two Whalers approached we observed some movement around the group of buildings, and it appeared that the inhabitants were rounding up all their daughters and getting them all indoors before we got ashore. By the way we were dressed we must have looked a rather rough lot.

However we found that the larger Croft acted as the local Pub, village shop and Post Office. We made ourselves known and were all welcomed into the living room which also served as the Pub. Crates of beer were brought in, arrangements made for our "contraband" parcels to be posted, and then we all settled down to a good party. A piper entertained us with rousing tunes on his bagpipes, we all had a good sing song and gradually the girls of the village joined in. We all had a very enjoyable time and eventually returned to our boats to row back to the ship. Having broken the ice the next watch ashore also had a good time. **Part II next issue**





The Canadian destroyer "Annapolis" (the former U.S. ship "Mackenzie") which gave her name to the Canadian class that included five ex-American destroyers. Side number changed to **I 04** on becoming a Canadian ship

## Under Two Flags

### The Story of Seven Canadian Destroyers

#### Part II

Under the Stars and Stripes the armament of the 1917 flushdeckers had uniformly consisted of four 4-inch, 50 calibre rifles, one 3-inch, 23 calibre anti-aircraft gun and four 21-inch torpedo tubes. Their old guns came along with them when they were turned over to Canada, but the number of torpedo tubes was increased to twelve, mounted in four banks of three each.

Thus equipped, the old ships which had missed their chance at the Hun in World War I entered the second war's Battle of the Atlantic. At the time of writing only two are reported still on active service, the *Niagara* and the *St. Clair*. The latter has been stationed for some time past at Halifax for the training of ratings from the high-sea fleet in fire-fighting operations.

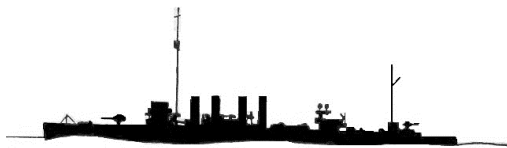
The *Niagara* also has been a training ship for some time. "Boots" fresh from shore-side training camps received their induction and first high-sea training aboard her on runs between Halifax and Newfoundland.

In keeping with traditional American naval nomenclature, all seven destroyers were originally named after men prominent

in U.S. naval affairs. In fact, the name list of the seven ships almost provides a short-cut review of American naval history. Two of them, the *St. Clair* and *Columbia*, were named after two Massachusetts seadogs who exchanged the poops of merchant vessels for the quarterdeck of men-o'-war during America's Revolutionary War.

The *St. Clair's* American name was *Williams*, after Capt. John Foster\* Williams (1743-1814), of Boston, who was commissioned as captain in the Massachusetts State Navy at the outbreak of the rebellion against Britain. He became famous for his victory in one of the most sanguinary sea battles fought during the war, when his ship, the *Hazard*, 14 guns, fought it out with the British privateer *Active*, 18 guns.

A year later Williams, now in command of a new State cruiser, the *Protector*, had a fight with the famous privateer *Admiral Duff*. The outcome was very much in doubt for the Yankees when a lucky shot from the *Protector* struck the *Duff's* magazine and she blew up. At once hostilities were forgotten and the erstwhile foemen turned lifesavers. Yet only fifty-five



of the *Duff's* original complement of well over a hundred could be saved. After independence was established, Williams became skipper of the first American revenue (Coast Guard) cutter, the *Massachusetts*.

Captain John Haraden (1745-1803), of Gloucester, gave his name to the *Columbia* when she was the U.S. DD 183. A new American destroyer, the DD 585, launched at the Boston Navy Yard in the spring of '43, is now bearing the name of the old skipper who, also a commander in the Massachusetts State Navy earned his niche in history with his fight in the *General Pickering* against the British cruiser *Achilles*.

Courage and conduct of both, Yankees and British, during that fight inspired Admiral Farragut, the victor of New Orleans during America's Civil War, to say many years afterwards: "I would have rather fought that' fight than any other ever fought on the ocean."

The American Civil War also had two representatives among the seven Canadian destroyers, the heroic little *St. Croix* and the *Niagara*. The former was originally named *McCook*, after Commander Roderick S. McCook. (1830-86). The *Niagara* was the *Thatcher*, for Rear-Admiral Henry Knox Thatcher (1806-80). Both men commanded vessels in the Atlantic blockading squadron that reduced the southern Confederate States' strongholds along the shores of North and South Carolina in a series of amphibious operations. Something of the spirit of the man I who commanded a quickly landed battery of naval howitzers before I Fort Fisher, North Carolina, on Christmas Day, 1864, was exhibited by a new *McCook*, the DD 496, when she; steamed close inshore at Normandy on D-Day last year and, using her 5-inchers as field artillery, blasted the way clear for the amphibious forces storming ashore from their barges.

Another vessel, replaced only in May last on the U.S. ships' list, is the *Mackenzie*,

which became the Canadian *Annapolis*. She was a monument to the memory of two men, father and son, by the identical name, Alexander Slidell Mackenzie. The older of the two was captain of the training ship *Somers*, whose name has become connected with one of the most tragic chapters in U.S. naval annals.

In 1842, on her return from Slave Patrol station on the West African coast, she became the scene of the famous " *Somers Mutiny* " and the subsequent court-martial and hanging of Midshipman Philip Spencer, a son of the U.S. Secretary of War, as ringleader. Though a court of inquiry acquitted Captain Mackenzie of all fault in the unhappy affair, the public criticism evoked by the felon's death of a cabinet officer's son hastened his own death.

He died in 1848, when his son, the younger Alexander Slidell Mackenzie, was only six. He, too, found a relatively early end. In 1887, as a lieutenant commander, he led a landing party on the coast of Formosa that was to extract punishment from the natives for the wholesale murder of the entire crew of the American barque *Rover* some time earlier. Mackenzie's party fell into an ambush and he himself met the fate he had intended for the savages.

Symbol of American-British friendship was the original name of *Bancroft* for the *St. Francis*. She was named after George Bancroft (1800-1891), the famous historian. As ambassador to the Court of St. James, from 1846 to 1850, Bancroft was -able to settle the so-called Northwest Boundary dispute between Britain and the U.S., becoming thereby not merely responsible for much of Canada's present-day western borders, but also for the removal of what had long been a serious obstacle to closer Anglo-American understanding.

Deservedly the *Hamilton* also has found a new American namesake in the *Kalk* (DD 611). The man after whom she was named was Lieutenant Stanton F. Kalk (1894-1917), who was posthumously cited for his

gallantry when the U.S. destroyer *Jacob Jones* was sunk by a German submarine during the First World War.

Times of stress, of passing misunderstanding and of close-knit friendship were reflected in the names of the seven little ships, whether they bore their original U.S. Navy designations or, later, the names of Canadian rivers – rivers mostly that both neighbours north and south of the border have in common – rivers that, far from being barriers, have become bonds between friends. Whether it was "Old Glory" or the Union Jack, that was fluttering over their decks, "Beneath it rung the battle shout and burst the cannon's roar" of the fight in a common cause.



*With all the terrible plane disasters of late, I thought this comical anecdote would be appropriate. Not that I take the terrible disasters lightly.*

### **The Sniffer Dog**

A man had just boarded and settled into his seat next to the window on the plane when another man sat down in the aisle seat and put his Black Labrador in the middle seat next to the man.

The first man looked very quizzically at the dog and asked why the dog was allowed on the plane.

The second man explained that he was from the Police Drugs Enforcement Agency and that the dog was a 'sniffing dog'.

'His name is Sniffer and he's the best there is. I'll show you once we get airborne, when I put him to work.'

The plane took off, and once it has levelled out, the Policeman said, 'Watch this.'

He told Sniffer to 'Search'.

Sniffer jumped down, walked along the aisle, and finally sat very purposefully next to a woman for several seconds.

Sniffer then returned to his seat and put one paw on the policeman's arm.

The Policeman said, 'Good boy', and he turned to the man and said, 'That woman is in possession of marijuana, I'm making a note of her seat number and the authorities will apprehend her when we land.'

'Gee, that's pretty good,' replied the first man.

Once again, the Policeman sent Sniffer to search the aisles.

The Lab sniffed about, sat down beside a man for a few seconds, returned to its seat, and this time he placed two paws on the agent's arm.

The Policeman said, 'Two paws mean that man is carrying cocaine, so again, I'm making a note of his seat number for the police.'

'I like it!' said his seat mate.

The Policeman then told Sniffer to 'Search' again.

Sniffer walked up and down the aisles for a little while, sat down for a moment, and then came racing back to the agent, jumped into the middle seat and proceeded to poop all over the place.

The first man was really disgusted by this behaviour and couldn't figure out how or why a well-trained dog would behave like that.

So he asked the Policeman, 'What's going on?'

The Policeman nervously replied, 'He's just found a bomb.'



Ever notice that people who spend money on beer, cigarettes and lottery tickets are always complaining about being broke and not feeling well?



**Commander Philip Leslie Johns RN, who played a prominent role in both the SOE and SIS (Later MI6) against Nazism in WW2.**

A new Blue Plaque has been unveiled in Torquay to honour a WWII secret service hero.

He was born 18 Jan 1900 in Exeter and lived at Ebrington Terrace, St Thomas. His parents were Philip Charles (clerk and later a director in Tremletts Tannery at Exeter) and Mary Mabel Johns. Philip, known in the Coldridge family as Leslie, had joined the Royal Navy on 17 July 1917 aged 17 and at his own request would retire as a Paymaster Lieutenant in 1922. In 1923 at St Jude's church, Kensington, he married Amelia (known as Millie) Sarah Coldridge of Teignmouth. After only 5 years of marriage they separated in 1928 and later were divorced in 1931. Later he married Canadian born Dorothy Elliott in Paris and they had two children Angela and Michael both born in Torquay. 5 years after Dorothy's death in 1962 Philip would marry again, to Sussex born Veronica Anderson in San Francisco, and she died in Alicante, Spain in 1976. He died on 9 Mar 1993 in Hillsborough, Florida, USA.

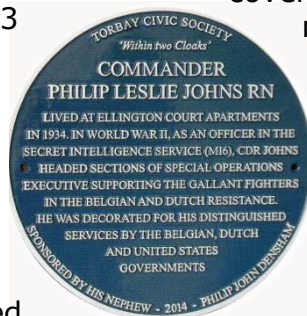
The Special Operations Executive (SOE), in which Philip was to play a significant covert role, had been formed in mid-1940, a secret organisation concerned with espionage, sabotage, etc. in Axis dominated countries. Prime Minister Churchill had ordered the SOE to "set Europe ablaze" and this newly formed group was regarded by SIS colleagues as something of a troublesome upstart. The organisation was disbanded in early 1946. The Secret Intelligence Service formed in 1909 became the organisation for



foreign intelligence gathering activities and later was to be known as MI6. Its function continues to gather foreign intelligence.

Philip's fascinating published memoir "Within Two Cloaks: Missions with SIS and SOE" recounts how his intelligence mission started in April 1939. While serving in Naval Control Operations in Antwerp, Philip was recruited by a civilian from the Passport Control Office (i.e. British Secret Intelligence) of the British Embassy in Brussels in neutral Belgium.

Shortly after September, Philip became an officer in Military Intelligence 6 (MI6) Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). He was to retain his cover as a Naval Control officer while maintaining a watch on known German agents and any contacts with the Belgian pro-Nazi party. He built up a clandestine network for coastal and port watching covering enemy shipping movements and especially submarines operating in the North Sea and North Atlantic. Through close friendly contact with the Head of Police Judicaire in Antwerp - responsible for registration and issue of



The Plaque

identity papers - many suspected agents of the German SD (Sicherheitsdienst) and collaborators were identified. In 1939-40 he set up sleeper agents to provide intelligence by radio if and when Belgium was invaded which soon after, it was. In early 1941 Philip took over as Head of Station, Lisbon for 2 years, followed by a spell in Argentina. On being



recalled to London he was appointed Head of the Belgian and Dutch Sections of SOE during the final 18 months of the war. In this period he served in those countries arranging the supply of arms and materials to the various Resistance groups for sabotage and harassment of the Nazi enemy and for the final armed rising of the underground units. In his memoir he comments and seeks to do justice, to the courageous exploits of the thousands of men and women of these two countries



Ellington Court as it is today. One time home of Cdr. P.L. Johns RN

which have been much overlooked in English books published since. Philip's WW2 RN service record reads:

- 1939 -1940 - served with MI6 [the (SIS)] in the Brussels Station (Belgium)
- 19.05.1940 - (02.)1941 - Naval Intelligence Division, Admiralty [HMS President: a stone frigate] (serving in Section III
- (Naval) of the SIS)
- (04.1941) - (07.1945) - Naval Intelligence Division, Admiralty [HMS President] \* (serving from the spring of 1941 with MI6 (SIS) as Head of Station in Lisbon, Portugal
- Dec. 1942 as Head of Station in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and from late 1943 in charge of Dutch & Belgian sections of the SOE
- Nov. 1943 - New York, USA Head of Belgian Section SOE
- 1943 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Head of Station
- July 1945 - He retired with the rank of Acting Commander (S).

In recognition of his services in World War 1 Philip was awarded the

British War Medal and Victory Cross in 1919.

Then after World War 2, in 1946 he was awarded the Officer Order of Orange-Nassau (for services to the Netherlands); and in 1947 was awarded the Legion of Merit (USA).

In 1948 he was awarded the Croix de Guerre (Belgium) the latter being re-established in 1940 by the Belgian Government in exile in London in recognition of bravery and military

virtue during WW2. The Order of the Crown was bestowed to military

and diplomatic personnel of other countries stationed in (or providing support to) Belgium, and were bestowed on him by HRH Charles, the Prince Regent. During World War 2, the Order of the Crown was extensively authorized for award to Allied military personnel who had helped to liberate Belgium from the occupation forces of Nazi Germany. Finally, he was further honoured when it was gazetted by order of King George VI that he may wear all his foreign decorations on all occasions when in uniform.

Philip and his first wife Millie started their early married life in Antwerp, Belgium. His cover was as London company director of the Fisk Tire Export Company (New York) (1923-1945), manufacturers of automobile tyres.

Millie, who died in 1972, never knew anything of his undercover activities but was reportedly suspicious when she became aware that he was meeting a number of 'strange people'. This led to the subsequent breakdown of their marriage resulting in divorce.

Philip's second child Michael Philip (1934-2009) from his second marriage was born at the then next door Mount Stuart Maternity Home \* on St Lukes Road South, while the family was residing at Ellington Court apartments in St Luke's Rd South, Torquay, Devon.

With war imminent, and at age 4 years, Michael was sent to the USA to stay with the Fenton family with whom his father Philip was well acquainted through the Fisk Tire company, of which Mr Fenton was President. David, the Fenton's son and Michael Johns became very close friends. Michael's older sister Angela (born January 1933) at Mount Stuart, went to Canada together with her mother Dorothy where they lived with Dorothy's sister.

*This was written for Torbay Civic Society by Philip Densham, nephew of the Commander*



Seems we constantly hear about how **State Pensions** (OAP) is going to run out of money. How come we never hear about **Welfare** (Benefits) running out of money? What's interesting is the first group "worked for" their money, but the second didn't.

#### Jack's dictionary

**Dust**, ..... Mud with the juice squeezed out.

**Egotist**, ..... Someone who is usually ME deep in conversation

**Wrinkles** ..... things other people have similar to my character lines.

**A Handkerchief**, .... Cold storage

Today's Short Reading from the Bible... from Genesis: "And God promised men that good and obedient wives would be found in all corners of the earth." Then He made the earth round...and He laughed and laughed and laughed!

## Out and about

*By Norrie Millen*



As I predicted, the breakwater Dawlish idea is being examined to see if it is viable! They are dragging the sands from one beach to another currently to help further erosion! The alternate railway line maybe years away too. It was top of list during storms, now like a submarine the idea has sunk out of sight for the foreseeable future. Why am I not surprised?

The Inglewood reopens this week after months of refurbishment, new mattresses, and slim line TV's in all rooms, all sorts of improvements and the new owner looking forward to meeting us all at our October reunion.

*"That's all for now folks"*