

HMS Phoebe Association Newsletter December 2008



When Lil and I went to the HMS Sheffield reunion at the Trecarn Hotel, Babacombe, we had a coach trip to the White Ensign Club in Exeter where a buffet was laid on. A "Up Spirits" ceremony was enacted by club members, it was most enjoyable to watch. The 'rum bosuns party' marched onto the dance floor dressed in old uniforms and performed the ceremony, we all got a free tot and were invited to go round the bouy for gashers which was almost two more tots each. This was all free, and apparently, so I was informed, is performed every Saturday. The ladies were not left out either, they had the choice of Rum, Sherry or Wine. There was one thing missing! no Rum call on the bugle, I, and my Sheffield RM Bugler 'oppo' would have volunteered if we still had our own front teeth, but false ones try to escape down the mouthpiece. Roy.

Here we are again, into December and looking forward to the Christmas festivities. Lil and I will not be home this year, we will be up in the north, well! Middlesborough anyway. Only for a few days but it will make a change from our normal routine. The association has had a good year, even had a couple of new shipmates join, I get emails from others via the web site, and try to get them to join, likewise those asking after their relatives, as long as they have feelings for HMS Phoebe we welcome them, we have not had any lately though, perhaps that will change when I learn how to get things put onto the web site, I get photos etc all ready to go onto the site then can't work out how to do it, believe me I have spent hours trying, I am just not intelligent enough to comprehend the information of how its done, but I will persevere and conquer it one day. I owe a few emails to shipmates too, sorry but the days seem to be getting shorter or I am getting slower.

I get a bit frustrated when things do not go right, like the arrangements for Remembrance Day at Bournemouth, I could not get any joy from the local RBL standard bearers, one said there was not time to attend our service and get to his RBL one, and the other RBL branch did not answer our calls. Caroline from the WRNNS Ass' attended with her Standard and some shipmates. The Sea Cadets turned out in full strength making a grand showing. Thank you Ernie.

This year we arranged for our service to be 15 minutes earlier, in doing so we were informed it did not allow the Mayor enough time to attend because he had to meet up with VIPs in the Town Hall, I thought the priority on this day was for those who gave their lives for us. However a representative was found in Councillor Bob Chapman, who I must say was most responsive to our needs and has willingly agreed to attend any of our venues in the future, and at the time we stipulate. The reason we made it 15 minutes earlier was because we all attend the Bournemouth ceremony first, and then go round to our own memorial after the March Past.

Our memorial is just a couple of minutes walk away. Normally we have to wait ages in the cold for the Mayor to come, it seems like hours, none of us are getting any younger, and other attendees have other ceremony's to go to. Our service next year will start after the march past, as soon as we are in place, it was arranged this way to save everyone standing around in the cold and possibly wet conditions like it was this time.

If you still have savings in the reunion fund you will find a reminder pinned to this newsletter.

Change of Address:- S/m Eric Carman. 39.5 Invermara Ct. Orilla. Ontario. Canada L3V 8B4

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Associated - Mr Eric Roper. Old Dairy Court. 64c Spring Road. Ipswich. IP4 2RR

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S/m R Randell. "Roselea" Browns Lane. Cross-in-Hand. Heathfield. E.Sussex TN21 0QJ

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S/m David White. Apt 302. Penhaven Ct. Island Crescent. Newquay. TR7 1DZ

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*New Members: 234 S/m David Priest Tel 01427 891195.
20 Marsh Lane MEM(1) 1979.84
Misterton
DN10 4DL*

*235 S/m John Hickling MEM(1) 1979/84
The Springfield Fish Bar
Springfield Road
Grantham
NG31 7AY*

We have seen quite a lot of people wearing miniature Poppy lapel badges and wondered where they got them from, at first I could not find out, then I phoned the RBL store at Maidstone and found we could buy them in batches of fifty, I have now got them to hand, and we are offering them to everyone at £1 each, this includes VAT & Post. If you would like any please send cash or cheque, at the moment we are limiting it to two per order. A picture of the pin is on the back cover, I have put it next to a 5p coin so you can judge the size.

I have updated our web site to include some photos of reunions and other items. Sorry it took so long to do, but every program I used did not tell me how to get the photos to load into the site until I tried this one its www.smilebox.com ideal if you want to make up a slide show, and it is completely free to use.

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Does anyone know an PC Macpherson from the 39/45 era, I have someone who bought his medals from a sale and wants to know about him.

After 20 years of marriage, a couple were lying in bed one evening when the wife felt her husband begin to fondle her in ways he hadn't done for some time. It almost tickled as his fingers started at her neck, and then began moving down past the small of her back. He then caressed her shoulders and neck, slowly working his hand down over her breast, stopping just over her lower stomach.

He then proceeded to place his hand on her left inner arm, caressed past the side of her breast again, working down her side, passed gently over her buttock and down her leg to her calf. Then, he proceeded up her inner thigh, stopping just at the uppermost portion of her leg.

He continued in the same manner on her right side, then suddenly stopped, rolled over and started to watch the TV.

As she had become quite aroused by this caressing, she asked in a loving voice, "That was wonderful. Why did you stop?"

He said, "I found the remote."

I had this sent to me a short while ago by a shipmate who has sent some other items as well, but for the moment I will stay with this one.

It is Headed “Why join in the first place”?

The question was asked by the secretary way back in a February newsletter “Who are You? Did you join the Andrew to forget? To see the world, to study ornithology & pick up birds of various kinds? In my particular case none of these reasons applied. To answer the first question, I admit to being Mr Albert Hoyle, Ex Leading Signalman, a rating achieved whilst serving aboard HMS Phoebe 1943 - 1946.

I was a conscript, designated Hostilities Only, or HO. WWII had been in progress for 2 years and 5 months, the allies, (that’ our side) were having trouble with a particularly nasty character, him being the one with the same initials as Mine A.H.

What was needed at that time was someone to get things sorted out, so they called on me and many others of my generation. I was then 19 years and 4 months of age, and hoping to reach 20?

Previous to this I clearly remember listening to the radio and Neville Chamberlain explaining that we were now in a state of war with Germany and the reasons why. Germany had invaded Poland, whom we had promised to support, I was at that time approaching my seventeenth birthday, and was also at that age very impressionable, very patriotic and of course very naive, knowing full well that this was the right thing to do. I must admit that I felt a sense of exhilaration and pride that we, as a country, were standing by our obligations. Little did I realise what this decision would involve over the next six years.

I was employed working on war work, for me it involved working on a farm, starting at 5.30 am milking, then during the day into the fields working with horses, unearthing crops of potatoes, harvesting wheat and hay. Later building an RAF camp and an MOD project, which later turned out to be an atomic energy plant. We were expected to spend our spare time joining a defence force, Auxiliary Fire Service, Fire watching, Air Raid Wardens and the like. I joined the LDV, Local Defence Volunteers, later to become the Home Guard. now affectionately known as “Dads Army”.

I took this all very seriously, weekends and evenings were spent at drill parades, and weapon instructions, (Yes! We did have live ammo!).

I reached the rank of sergeant and set my sights on a Army career

By training with the Regular Army, and with the wholehearted support of my boss, an MOD Engineer who was convinced that a successful future awaited me and gave me no end of encouragement. whoever.

I think I may have been more impressed by the sight of an older cousin of mine with his friend on leave, just pre warm.

One a Coldstream Guardsman, the other a Scots Guardsman, in walking out dress uniform of red & black with white piping and very highly polished boots and brass buttons. That might well attract the girls.

As I mentioned previously I was impressionable and naive. It did occur to me that I would, amongst other things, need stilts to look like them, and times were very different anyway. One could easily end up a the wrong end of a rifle.

When, having received my call up papers and was being interviewed, everything seemed to be going as expected until I was asked if I had a choice of Service, I replied without delay. "Navy", God only knows why. I had never even considered it before this moment. When asked which branch I would prefer I did not have a clue. I did not know what was involved in any of them. I explained that I would like a job in the fresh air, as I had suffered with asthma as a child. Little did I realise at the time that the comedian interviewing me was a Chief Yeoman of Signals.

He then produced some extra tests, like spelling, dictation and colour tests and suggested I join as a communications rating in visual signals. One thing for sure I did get was plenty of fresh air. After initial training I had an immediate draft to HMS Baldur and spent the next twelve months in Iceland! Why did I open my big mouth??

That covers before and why I joined! Iceland is another story.

PS. With the benefit of hindsight I am certainly not sorry that fate took a hand when it did, and directed me to serve in the Andrew, in spite of serious doubts in the early days. Also having seen fairly close up what soldiers had to put up with, especially during amphibious landings on enemy held territory. We had our temporary home with us at all times, both sheltering and feeding us. So of course, I would have had the privilege of meeting up with Phoebe and being part of a special crew. We looked after her, and in my case, after two and a half years on board, she protected and brought us safely home. Ex L/Sig A. Hoyle. January 2000.

(Something else I never expected was to see, the 21st Century).

Portsmouth Eye - Aye

(Vic Chanter)

In 1995 an application was submitted for a proposed tower at Portsmouth. This structure, in keeping with many cities throughout the world, would be known as the Millennium Tower. It wasn't until 1998 that planning permission was submitted, which, by now, was getting a bit close to the Millennium celebrations. It became obvious that the erection and final opening of this prestigious structure would take the powers-that-be long past 2000.

Because my wife was born and grew up around Portsmouth, I have spent regular visits to a website and watched many minutes of the webcam at Portsmouth Harbour Eye. In the early days of viewing, I would be more interested in the spider that had taken up residence on the lens as it swayed back and forth in the wind.

What would have been the Millennium Tower became known as the Spinnaker Tower, because of its unique spinnaker sail design. With the advent of the Spinnaker Tower the webcam was relocated - and subsequently cleaned up. I then became interested in checking the movements of shipping and the Isle of Wight Ferries, and keeping my wife up-to-date with the weather conditions around Portsmouth.

A little while ago, I decided that it was time that we should visit the sunny south and a few relatives. We plumped for Bournemouth because of a brother in Poole, then we took a trip to Portsmouth for another branch of the family. There I saw for myself the tower itself. Impressive? Well the views from it certainly were, and the photography - spectacular.

What is missing from the panoramic view from the tower is the mighty Naval Port that Portsmouth was. My old base of Chatham has succumbed to a quaint old port, and Portsmouth has now become a museum of memorabilia. All the nice girls love a sailor - but how can they tell when nowhere ashore can you see a matelot in uniform?

New Members:

S/m PAYNE George 01622 884374 AB (T) 1942/46
High View. Wormshill. Sittingbourne ME9 0TU

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S/m Kippin Leslie.

CPOSM 1948/51

Phonetics

(Paul Iddlesod)

ABLE, BAKER, CHARLIE, DOG - or was it DUFF? It's so far back in the distant past that, although morse and semaphore, have remained the same, the phonetic alphabet has altered tremendously through the years, dependant upon who is 'in the driving seat'.

I recall my first experience of our changeover during WW2, when the Yanks entered our waters, and we had to master this new language. Having to learn and memorise a new phonetic alphabet at that stage of the war was annoying, but necessary for speed.

Signalling by morse or semaphore was okay, because it was pretty international, and flag signals were not so bad, as long as one didn't get confused between flags of the Royal Navy and those of the International Code.

At this point it might be opportune to recall the procedure for the bending on of flags from the flag locker; each flag tucked carefully and correctly in its little compartment with the clips readily available - **we hope!** Two blokes, one bending on from the top and one from the bottom, meeting in the middle with *...the same two flags in the middle*, and in the process of making amends one of them letting go of his end of the halyard. Chaos! Ignominy! As several flags would rise uncontrollably to the heavens above. What would follow would be: upsetting the Sparkers by having to 'collect the boards' and stopping W/T communication; having all V/S staff on hand to read the derisive signals from the fleet, such as, 'Your washing should be dry by now!', and never been allowed to live it down.

I still have in my possession a copy of 'A Seaman's Pocket Book', just in case I want to coil down a rope or am called upon to lower a boat with the Robinson's Disengaging Gear, and you'd be surprised at the out-of-date stuff contained therein.

You certainly would not recognise any of your present day flags and pendants; well, you might recognise them, but not the letters that they represent. Flag O seems to have survived, and the old Flag Z, used to signal the end of motor races etc., has simply literally turned the letter over to N. So, those two I'm not likely to forget!

Back to phonetics, however, and there in the new makeover we have developed further American influence. Two surviving letters are Charlie and my name, which coincidentally are my initials. I know these things; you see, I watch The Bill.

Victor Charlie, over and out.

FRIENDLY FIRE: Time The early Thirties of the 20th century.

By A Hoyle.

I was a young teenager when I arrived to live in Wesham in the Fylde district of Lancashire. The memory of heavy snow falls and freezing conditions come readily to mind. Living at some later stage in Garstang Road North. The land further up beyond the recreation ground being flat and fairly low lying sported a football pitch with goal posts and a pit full of water, elsewhere it would be called a pond containing freshwater fish like roach, tench and eels, locally known as “snigs”. Moving further on into the countryside were several acres of fields named Moss meadows.

This area having recently flooded was now a few feet under water and very frozen, locals described this ice as ‘burrin’, meaning it would bear weight to skate on, consequently there are crowds of people either skating or sliding about on it. Those with real ice-skates glide gracefully around in various attitude, some with long sweeping footwork, hands behind their backs. Others, not so proficient, stagger along grasping onto anyone handy and often dragging that person down with them. All great fun especially as there are several strands of barbed wire about two feet above the ice which normally would divide the skaters from the grazing cattle. The more efficient skaters would show off by jumping over the wire barriers, others would try but usually came to grief with torn garments and sometimes cuts to the body’s.

Common footwear for the working class was clogs, not all were wooden Dutch type, some had leather uppers and laces, others more like shoes than boots and fastened with a metal clasp. Clogs had an inch thick or so wooden soles and were shod with ‘cokers, quite sharp and fitted around the under edge of the clog. Some used clogs as ice skates, decribed as clogsliding. To do this one turned the foot over and used the edge of the coker as a blade. A few did this quite well.

Considering the temperatures and activities, it was interesting to note the different modes of dress. Ladies wore various types of headgear and some sombre looking but warm clothing. Men with cloth caps and thick tweed jackets, with long scarves trailing in the wind. Most looking obviously cold but determined. At the end of the day all would return home to a hot drink in front of a roaring fire and toast their slices of bread on long toasting forks, probably recounting how they had spent the day.

Late Thirties: Other cold working days that I remember working in my teens were the days I spent working for George Wimpey on the construction of “RAF Kirkham”, an air force training camp on the Preston /Blackpool by-pass adjacent to Freckleton Rd junction. It involved working as the chain boy for the surveyors, setting out the site work for the roads and drains, and maintaining their surveying equipment, as well as being on one end of tapes with leveling equipment. This all co-incided with cold and frosty weather, and much time was spent standing about cleaning and drying equipment. Then the cold cycle ride home in the evening to a hot drink and food, a cosy sit in front of the fire admiring the flames and sparks going up the chimney each time the fire was poked, and the steam from the kettle on the trivet. Listening to the news bulletins on the radio, and maybe Henry Halls orchestra.. Certainly more comfortable thawing out after a day’s work, and the focal point now being the ‘**FRIENDLY FIRE**’.

It being war time I continued to work on the same site, as building progressed, yours truly became involved with ‘hard labour’, such as mixing and placing concrete in large quantities as part of a gang of Irishmen from Northern Ireland. One episode I remember was cleverclog’s (me)! cycling on packed snow and ice down Poulton Street towards Fishstones in Kirkham and having an accident when the tyres lost their grip, the bike went one way and I the other. I felt embarrassed being helped up by a Army Sergeant who made me mount up again and ride off. Back on site no concrete work could take place due to the weather, men standing around stamping their feet in the cold.

I found an empty oil drum. made holes in it, filled it with paper and wood and set light to it, within minutes we were gathered around warming ourselves, hands reaching out to a different kind of a ‘**FRIENDLY FIRE**’

Early Forties:

Moving on in life to service with the Royal Navy. being taught a lot of new things required to be done and how to do them. But wherever I went, I cannot remember seeing a Friendly Fire as experienced in civilian life. Even in Iceland we were kept warm indoors, but by different means, other than coal and coke. Heating being supplied by hot water generated naturally by volcanic action. Also during my life at sea there did not seem to be a place for open fires nor were they encouraged. But as time went by, I was to learn not to jump to any misguided conclusions.

One of our busier periods of service at the time involved regular trips into the Aegean Sea. Later, in the 21st century this is now a popular area for holidays. Our purpose there involved stealth with aggressive intent. Which meant we only came in amongst the islands after dark, and hopefully attempt to avoid being easily detected. Most of the islands were occupied by enemy invaders, but a small group of islands including Leros were still in allied hands.

We were escorting extra troops to protect them, and enemy troops were at this particular involved in launching further invasion tactics on particular islands. Our orders were to seek out and destroy any of these enemy craft we encountered, as well as bombarding enemy occupied territory.

On one of our predatory incursions, we noticed two vessels, in line ahead, and on a parallel, course creeping silently in the opposite direction to ourselves. This required a challenge from us to identify themselves. The challenge was made with a small hand held morse signal lamp, and required a reply of two different coloured lights or Very Lights. The code for these pairs of lights was changed every 24 hours at midnight. The reply of two coloured lights we received was inconsistent with the colours of the present time code for the hour we were in, although they would have been correct before midnight. The time now was 0330, or three and a half hours after their colour code should have been changed, we now had a problem to quickly solved, were they allied vessels who had overlooked the change-over times, or were they enemy who had discovered the code, but not how, or when to use it.

The challenge was repeated, we got a repetition of the previous reply, whereupon the gunnery officer ordered our main armament to fire star-shell which immediately illuminated the scene exposing two stealthily moving motor vessels who responded rather quickly our attention being drawn to several pink lights, which seemed to hover momentarily and looking very pretty then gradually increasing speed until at an alarming rate passed over us amidships making sizeable holes in the funnels and other parts of our ship, they turned out to be 40mm tracer shells coming in the wrong direction for the continuance of our good health. Something I had not experienced at close quarters before. But it is surprising how quickly one can learn to react even at a young age. The action was to duck quickly and present as small a target as possible, by lying flat on the deck.

At sea during WWII. The orders were to keep W/T silence at sea unless in actual contact with the enemy. Once in contact, report to you base, the enemy know where you are anyway. Simultaneously with the firing of our starshells and the instantaneous re-action of the suspicious gun-boats, our radio telegraphists picked up (enemy contact) reports being transmitted to our base in Alexandria by our own coastal craft, indicating that they were engaging a large enemy ship at close range. Recognising that we were being fired upon by our own Navy we communicated to them in morse code, explaining who we were and obviously wished them no harm and would they please reciprocate. This kind of event is known as “Blue on Blue” in service parlance and does infrequently happen in certain circumstances.

At a later date after the enemy had succeeded in taking the island of Leros, one particular evening we duly arrived off the Island again and whilst one of our destroyers entered harbour with the intention of creating as much havoc as possible we laid off and supported her with bombardment of the shore bases. Having seen large flashes ashore one of signal yeomen reported enemy gunfire. Fortunately for us, it turned out to be incorrect, but we did not realise that in these early morning hours of darkness enemy aircraft were above us, suddenly we were aware of bombs whistling down and exploding very close to our ship, the previous experience of survival resulted, and I dived onto the deck pronto! this worked alright.

But a new experience of being in close proximity to a large exploding device was learned, not, strangely enough due to fear! although that did come into it, but the fact that those explosions disturb air pressure in the vicinity which involves air being drawn out of a persons body momentarily. A new unfriendly experience to be remembered, but after all it was created by enemy action and not “blue on blue” described as Friendly Fire.

On another occasion somewhere at sea in open water of the coast of Burma, an unidentified aircraft was reported approaching at sea level. As it came into view as a mere dot, we mad the usual challenge with the 18” signal lamp. which is un-mistakable for those who know one. The challenge also required a reply of two coloured Very Lights which did not materialise. “X” Turrets twin 5.25s opened fire, the shells bursting in line but ahead of the aircraft, instantly the aircraft changed direction and two correct coloured Very shot out of the aircraft. Fortunately there was no

either of us, but another example of “blue on blue” or Friendly Fire.

At times we used to exercise between Naval ship and RAF or other allied aircraft to test the accuracy of Naval gunfire. This exercise involved an aeroplane towing a windsock or drogue some hundreds of yards behind the plane and maybe two or three miles distant from the ship. The actual shell bursts, like puffs of smoke were easily discernable from the ship and the distance short or over would be recorded by the flyers using R/T which would be heard via a loudspeaker on the ship's bridge. On one particular occasion we noticed that the shell bursts were getting closer to the aircraft and not the drogue, to the amusement of those on the bridge came the measured tones of the pilot. “To Mother Hen from Chick One, for your information I am towing this drogue, not pushing the bloody thing” No doubt yet again a near miss of “blue on blue”.

At anchor 1st week of January 1945.

Akyab Harbour the Arakan Coast. Burma. I was on the flag deck with Lofty Jordon, a Yorkshire lad of my own age who spoke with a broad Yorkshire accent. I'm reading a semaphore message through binoculars being sent by a signalman on the bridge of a destroyer which was between other ships and the headland. Lofty was writing down what I was saying when the destroyer's signalman suddenly dropped down out of sight. Lowering the glasses, I became aware of a large plume of water just beyond the destroyer, also an aeroplane followed by three others heading directly for me on eye level, it is amazing how quickly these situations develop. From the moment that the signalman jumped down, I heard one of the officers on our bridge wing say “I make them out to be spitfires” at almost the same time I noticed bright flashes along the front edge of the leading plane and heard metal on metal explosions and ricochets. Now was the time for avoiding action. Hit the deck, lay there very temporarily facing your mate, even now when I see the name Mitsubishi I dive out of the way. This was not “Blue on Blue” But it feels no different to me. The point of the exercise is to say I prefer the Friendly Fire I experienced before contacts with real or possible “Blue on Blue” situations. These do happen, and terrible suffering can be the result. Whoever coined the phrase was probably a news reporter. Yes it can be described as fire, but not Friendly Fire it is no different to the action of an enemy the results are the same, and certainly does not allow anymore comfort or satisfaction.

Yours Truly, Albert

HMS Phoebe's Shortest Deployment

Close to the end of the life of the Frigate, Phoebe, we were given some interesting tasks to perform. One of which was to pick up the outgoing Governor of Jersey. This was going to be as simple as steaming to Jersey, anchor off, pick up the Governor the next morning and then transport him to Portland Harbour. We would then head back to sea for the evening before arriving in Guz. As is common with best laid plans they never seem to materialise in the way expected. The actual story is more interesting.

After sailing from Guz in March 1990, we sailed full steam for the island of Jersey. Everyone was relaxed, it was Monday and most men had had a brilliant weekend leave with wives, girlfriends and some with both. The journey was smooth and gave Jimmy time to practice several fire exercises. The ship's company took this in their stride.

We were due to anchor at approx 1700. As in all pusser's warships buzzes started doing the rounds of the lower decks. It was a good buzz nonetheless, Rumour had it that we were actually going to go alongside the harbour wall as, due to poor weather conditions the Jersey ferry would not be alongside for the evening. From the initial outset of the buzz, there was an omnipotent smell of aftershave hanging in the air of the Burma Way. I hung around the Ros mess for a few moments to observe any movements which could confirm the buzz. Within an hour, the Jimmy made the most welcome broadcast; it was conformed. The ship's company roared with excitement. The Burma Way, messdecks and bathrooms were alive with bodies, there was ten or more sailors waiting for each shower in the after bathrooms. Tooth-brushes hung from mouths, towels hung from waists, shoulders and necks, and shaving foam sloshed from bulkhead to bulkhead. Only the duty watch mundanely carried out their daily tasks.

Once alongside, it seemed that everyone who had the opportunity was lined up at the gangway ready to hand their station card to the duty quartermaster. There were nevertheless a few stragglers. One, Charlie Chuff Chuff, named after his hobby of train spotting, (That's another story)? also known as the 'gangway prowler' was as usual prowling the gangway waiting for his unsuspecting prey. Once he pounced on you with the words you with the words, "I'm only going to make a simple phone call" he would be on your tail for the rest of the evening. But My buddies and I managed to evade him and got ashore safely. What a wonderful feeling to feel dry land under your feet after so long at sea? well! it was almost twelve hours since leaving Guz?

With the traditional sway of the British matelot we headed off the nearest bar, then the next, and so on. After ‘splicing the main brace’ with many of the locals we finally made it back aboard ready for a good nights sleep and a good day’s sailing the next day. Tuesday morning and we prepared for sea, Yankee Patrol were closed up, while the rest of us lined up on the upper deck for procedure Alpha A huge crowd thronged the jetty to see the Governor off. The Captain decided to broadcast his instructions for leaving harbour, that went down well with the crowd. after an emotional farewell for the Governor we set sail for Portland. As we left the island behind us we met an increasing swell, the ship lurched about, there were some sick looking faces in the heads for a couple of hours, then the sea flattened out, now we were full ahead for Portland. This would have been possible if fog had not descended suddenly it was a real pea-souper, there was even a suggestion that we anchored, this was the advice from Portland Harbour Master, the captain discussed it with the Navigator and Jimmy and they decided to sail into Portland and land the Governor.

Once we were in Harbour and the Governor had left the ship, we were stopped from sailing by the Harbour Master who would not give permission for the ship to leave. Portland has always been an excellent run ashore, and we were not disappointed. First stop was the Green Shutters. The landlady stood directing her staff to serve us with copious amounts of beer and then informed the other hosteleries along the street about a forthcoming onslaught of matelot’s. The ships company seemed to gravitate to The Jolly Sailor. From there, the unique comradeship radiated as we gave the locals many renditions of the Wild Rover, Sunshine Mountain and many others. The voices echoed through the establishment, the streets, and across the harbour long into the night.

We sailed without any fuss on Wednesday morning and spent the day at sea. It was welcomed by all the ships company. The ship fanally arrived back at our home port, Guz during the afternoon ready for a busy weekend, and that, is what I believe was the shortest deployment known for the Phoebe.
Shipmate Dave Parry (HMS Phoebe L/Ck 1989 1991)

(Sorry Dave Had to Edit it a bit to get it in. Roy.)

Will you be getting a congratulatory Diamond Wedding card from the Queen,

NOT unless you apply for an application form at least 3 weeks before the day, fill it in and send off, also send with it a copy of your marriage certificate.

The address to write to for the application form is:

The Anniversary Office. Buckingham Palace. London.. SW1A 1AA.

You will definitely get a card if you apply in time.



The
Poppy Pin
Lapel Badge
Compared to a
5p Coin.

Obtain from Secretary - 3 Bridge Close. Didcot. OX11 8DU

THE FINAL INSPECTION

The soldier stood and faced God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.

'Step forward now, you soldier,
How shall I deal with you ?
Have you always turned the other cheek ?
To My Church have you been true?'

The soldier squared his shoulders and said,
'No, Lord, I guess I ain't.
Because those of us who carry guns,
Can't always be a saint.

I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent,
Because the world is awfully rough.

But, I never took a penny,
That wasn't mine to keep...
Though I worked a lot of overtime,
When the bills got just too steep.

And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear..
And sometimes, God, forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.

I know I don't deserve a place,
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around,
Except to calm their fears.

If you've a place for me here, Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don't, I'll understand.

There was a silence all around the throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the soldier waited quietly,
For the judgment of his God.

'Step forward now, you soldier,
You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets,
You've done your time in Hell.'