



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

No. 261 – JULY 2016

EDITORIAL

After a week-long artillery bombardment of German positions, the infantry began their advance at 07:30 hrs on a clear midsummer's morning of 1st July 1916. Many thought that a walk across no-man's land to take possession of the enemy trenches was all that would be happening. Then the machine guns opened up. By the end of that first day, some 57,000 Commonwealth and 2,000 French soldiers had become casualties – more than 19,000 of whom had been killed. When the Somme offensive was halted in November, more than 1,000,000 Commonwealth, French and German soldiers had been wounded, captured or killed. So let's remember that the lifestyles and freedoms that we take for granted came at a price.

For information on the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Thiepval Memorial visit: www.cwgc.org

Some 150,000 Commonwealth servicemen lie buried in 250 military and 150 civilian cemeteries on the Somme. More than 100,000 more were never found or identified. All are remembered by name on six memorials to the missing.

Happier times on 1st July 1952.

The Daring class destroyer HMAS VAMPIRE was laid down in Cockatoo Island Dockyard Sydney, on 1 July 1952, and launched on 27 October 1956. Lady Slim, (Wife of the Governor-General Sir William Slim), performed the launching ceremony. (Editor's note: was this Bill Slim of "the forgotten Army" in Burma fame?) The destroyer HMAS VAMPIRE, (CAPT E. J. Peel, DSC, RAN), was commissioned at Sydney 23 June 1959. VAMPIRE was decommissioned on 13 August 1986, and transferred to the Australian National Maritime Museum in 1991, as a permanent exhibit.

Perhaps a NWS member in Australia has photographs from the ANMM which could be included in a future edition of AGB or in the next edition of "Battlefleet".

Cheers

Norman Bell

Gen Con returns to Indianapolis from August 4-7, 2016. Last year, the convention set records with a unique attendance of 61,423 and a turnstile attendance of 197,695, creating a six-year span of record growth.

OOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOo



Gen Con 2015 - a **new world record of most players in a Sails of Glory** game was set, with 79 people playing together, overcoming the 53 players mark at Gen Con 2014. Will the record be beaten again in 2016?

Answers to Sea Quiz 53.

SEA QUIZ 53.

Not so easy, this group, or so it seemed....

1. This was the fleet's name for the Royal Naval Division.
2. A name '*frequently given*' (?) to the force of British and Canadian DUKW's Buffaloes, etc, operating in the flood waters between Nijmegen and Cleves in the Winter of 1945.
3. This was the night train from King's Cross to Thurso, carrying naval personnel destined for Scapa Flow. It really must have been an appalling journey, judging by the stories related.
4. HMS Vengeance. ...in *Romans 12. V 19*.
5. These were two heavy coast defence guns at Dover. Winnie after Churchill naturally, and Pooh just follows.

SEA QUIZ 54.

'Another round of naval 'whizz-bangs' this month' As '*The Navy's*' original compiler used to say.....

1. In WWII, what was known as a 'Winkle Barge'?
2. Who and what were the '*Uriahites*' in 1917?
3. HMS Timber Town? Where and what was it?
4. HMS's Pembroke, Vernon, Excellent and St. Vincent, are all...?
5. What was known as '*Stodger*'?

Navcon is part of What Khan Game Convention for 2016.

October 21st - 23rd, 2016

**Location: Wedgbury Indoor Sports Center
8800 East Riverside Blvd., Rockford, Illinois 61111**



Picture from "Broadside" 2016.

Nice models are so much more visually impressive than cardboard ship counters. Which is not to say that I am not a fan of hex boards and cardboard ships. In addition to many boxed games available on the market, I suggest you check out Topside Minis with their top class ship counters. Top down views of ships are slightly different for ships of the same class. Therefore your HMS King George V will be different from your HMS Prince of Wales. The website includes free to download naval war game rules. The company produce a growing number of high quality ship and aircraft counters for the Great War and WW2 at a reasonable price. These can be used with your choice of rules. Whether you have models or not, the object of wargames surely is to have fun and perhaps learn something of history, tactics and strategy.



Lieutenant Nick Grimmer of 814 Naval Air Squadron rescues a Kitten.
Picture: POA(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

It is easy to forget the land bases and facilities that are needed to support and maintain the dreadnought fleets that countries had 100 years ago. The following details are from Drew Jarman.

Floating Docks

The following docks were available in 1914:

Britain [measurements in feet L/W/D]

(Any dock less than 520 cannot take a Dreadnought)

Plymouth – Devonport,

730 x 95 x 44 745 x 95 x 32

741 x 95 x 44 659 x 95 x 32

Portsmouth

680 x 112 x 36 Floating 33000 tons

563 x 94 x 33 563 x 82 x 33 [enlarging to 700 x 100]

560 x 82 x 33 485 x 80 x 33

Plus four other smaller ones which could not take Dreadnoughts

Chatham

800 x 100 x 33 plus four smaller which could not take Dreadnoughts

Queenstown – Ireland

720 x 94 x 32 608 x 94 x 32

Malta

By doubling up the short docks they have

520 x 94 x 35 468 x 80 x 34

536 x 73 x 25 550 x 95 x 35

770 x 95 x 33

Gibraltar

850 x 90 x 35 550 x 90 x 35

450 x 90 x 35

Pembroke – Wales

404 x 75 x 24

Bombay

500 x 65 x 28

Colombo

708 x 85 x 32

Singapore

846 x 100 x 34 plus four 478 or smaller

Hong Kong
750 x 88 x 35 700 x 86 x 30
555 x 95 x 39

Canada
Esquimalt
450 x 65 x 26
Halifax
572 x 89 x 29
St Johns
569 x 85 x 24

South Africa
Simons Town
750 x 95 x 30
Cape Town
600 x 66 x 24

Bermuda
545 x 100 x 33 Floating [17500 tons - Dreadnought]

Australia
Sydney
638 x 84 x 32
675 x 83 x 28
477 x 59 x 21

Melbourne
470 x 80 x 27

New Zealand
Auckland
521 x 80 x 33

There are 12 other commercial docks listed of various sizes [Dreadnought plus] but what ability they would have to repair a warship other than to make is safe to sail for repair is debatable.

Example sizes are WL/B/D

Dreadnought 520 x 82 x 31	Bellerophon 520 x 82 x 29
St Vincent 530 x 84 x ?	Neptune 540 x 85 x 27
Colossus 540 x 86 x 27	Orion 544 x 85 x 28
KGV 596 x 89 x 27	Iron Duke 620 x 90 x 28
QE 650 x 94 x 28	Invincible 560 x 78 x ?
Indefatigable 578 x 80 x 28	Lion 675 x 87 x 30
QM 720 x 87 x 30	

Some of the old armoured cruisers are as large as the Dreadnoughts.

For Germany there's plenty of docks in Germany of course.

Kiao-Chau
420 x 98 x 30 Floating Scharnhorst and probably Blucher and VdT

There's nothing else listed but I guess the Germans could have a private floating dock at the main colony base in Raboul. Their battle cruisers are huge in the beam when compared to their British contemporaries.

VdT 558 x 85 x 28
Moltke 590 x 97 x 28
Blucher 489 x 81 x 27
Scharnhorst 450 x 71 x 25

Outside continental USA
Pearl Harbour
800 x 114 x 34

Philippines – Olongapo – Luzon Island Subic Bay
500 x 100 x 70 Floating 18500 tones

Japan has a fair number of large docks in 1914 all of which are in Japan proper
The dock in Ryojun [Port Arthur] is stated as too narrow for any battleship.

France
Outside mainland France, Algiers, Bizerte and Saigon 518 x 72 x 30 only

Russia
Vladivostok
Two docks large enough to take any warship in the world – got to love those Russians
618 x 90 x 34
572 x 90 x 30

All in all a fascinating array of docks but indicates the problems some ships will have being fitted in to a nearby dock due to their length, beam or draught and of course none of this indicates the level of expertise those docks have repairing large warships or even the crane lifting capacity or spares in stock.

Floating docks are only limited by their lifting capacity and the beam of the ship being lifted as it was very common for ships to poke out at each end as long as the main central keel before the propellers is fully supported. I remember seeing a huge cargo ship in Hamburg in one and it looked like 25% of the ship was hanging out of each end of the dock.

Regards

Drew
<http://drewjarman.blogspot.co.uk/>
<http://www.essexwarriors.org/>
Historic Miniature Figure Gaming
EBay Seller ID Dyson690

Early Days Part 3 below is the last Part from Phil Dunn.

EARLY DAYS, Part 3

We are still in 1967 and the NWS is less than a year old. Member Bill McKenzie set up a survey of members interests, shown here, and it will prove of interest to compare your own preferences with the then membership favourites. Bill also co-wrote the Napoleonic naval rules for the society, published at 25 pence (5/-) Wages at this time were around £12 pw. Profits went to NWS funds.

Are you interested in attending meetings to discuss warships and Naval affairs? YES 90%
NO 10%

Are you prepared to attend excursions to places of interest? YES = 100%
Depending on (a) date = 10% (b) where to= 10% (c) Finances permitting = 15%
(d) sometimes, where possible =10% (e) Not during summer holidays = 5%

Have you recently become interested in Naval Games? YES = 25% NO = 75%
The average time is 7 years, the shortest 6 months, the longest 15 years.

Are you mainly interested in Naval or Land Wargaming? Naval = 65% Both = 35% Land = nil.

Are you keen on Amphibious Operations YES = 80% NO =20%
Comments:- (a) rarely. 10% (b) as long as Navy dominates. 10%

The members who returned the survey have 1,800 models between them.
Average size 95 models, Largest 300. Smallest is "one". Percentage of members that collect (or build?) various scales are as follows:
1:500 scale = 10% of members (returning the survey) 1:600 scale = 70% 1:750 scale = 5% 1:1200 scale 90% 1:1250 scale 85%* The NWS uses these scales.
Although 70% have 1:600 scale and larger, these only account for approximately 200. One member even has models to a scale of 1:3000** Everone is willing to let their models be used. **= Models in this scale were not produced commercially until 1971, when members John Hammond and Tony Anderson founded Skytrex and Navwar respectively

What type of action do you prefer to fight?
Single Day= 5% Yes. 35% never. 25% sometimes. Map Campaign? Yes= 60% . Never = 5%
BOTH = 35%

Favourite Periods: Pre 1860= 20% 1860-89= 35% 1889-05= 60% 1905-19= 65%
1919-38= 55% 1938-50= 55% Post 1950 = 10% No date restriction = 45%

Do you wish to see any of the following in future battles?
Submarines YES = 90% NO= 5% Aircraft YES = 80% NO = 20% Mines YES =75% NO= 25%. Convoys YES = 95% Logistics YES = 85% Uncompleted Warships YES =80%
Projected warships YES = 75% Ships of OWN design YES =35% M.T.B. YES = 85%
Minor warships YES =90%

Preferred frequency of meetings FORTNIGHTLY = 80% THREE-WEEKLY = 5% MONTHLY=15%

There followed a preference of halls and areas to meet for wargames. Chessington took 100%, the other three 45% 25% and 35% Unlisted were two others, at Stoke Newington and Barnet. Probably 95% were at Chessington which cost £5 all day to hire! Meetings started at 10 am and continued to 9pm with one or two breaks between.

The survey said every single member was interested in the projected Jutland refight, in fact, it never materialised despite all the 1-1250 models for it being collected. But that is another story.....

Range Estimation was advocated by 20% only. Battle Reconstructions 25% Another proposal was to raise funds for 'our own hall', that too never happened!

A few words about John Hammond, an early member of the NWS who later founded Sky-trex in 1971. I remember him as a very young guy who used to regularly come to the London venues all the way from Cardiff and sleep in his car until the hall was open. Like Tony Anderson of Navwar, he started producing plastic resin 1-3000 scale warships, later in metal. He expanded over the years to producing a huge range of wargame products at his factory in Leicester, employing over 30 workers. I met him at his stall in 1991 at a model meet at Hengistbury Head and bought a very nice 1-1250 scale model of HMS 'Lion' that he manufactured, which I still have. I also bought ships from his stalls at various conven-tions, and he once proudly told me that he had bought out one of the major model ship producing firms called Mercator that "we used in some of our games at Chessinton" That firm produced exquisite 1-1250 predreadnought ships. I once has several but only 'Navarin' is left now. Unfortunately, John wanted around £40 each for his from the moulds (painted I think) and that was to much for me!

I was shocked to find out that around 2013, 'Shytrex' had gone defunct with debts of many millions, a sad end to what had been a major producer of all things wargaming. Last year while browsing in 'Kit Crazy' of Bexleyheath, I stumbled on one of his superlarge metal display models among all the plastic stuff! I got it for a fraction of its original cost, and it was obviously bankrupt stock sold off by receivers. The ship was "Achilles" of River Plate fame. A sad end for an ambitious and extremely likeable former member of the NWS. That model takes pride of place among all the others for its nostalgic value.

My call to revive the great mass participation naval games of yesteryear, (Deember News-letter) brought a great big response of ZILCH! Which means I suppose, that in these modern times, naval gamers are no longer interested in pushing model ships around on hall floors. To me, combined with the excitement of hidden movement on campaign maps, it is the very best of naval wargaming, but as always, times change!

SIGNAL PAD!

Welcome to new member Paul Ayers.

I'm having more joy now with getting my scanner to work with Windows 10. It must have been me, it could not possibly be Windows 10 to blame. So Rob Morgan, if you are wondering where your articles are – they should be beginning to make an appearance from next month. Also people, any articles for the next edition of "Battlefleet" to Stuart Fieldhouse please.

fintactica@googlemail.com

JOINING THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY

If you have been lent this newsletter and would like to join the Naval Wargames Society, please follow this link to join our Society:

www.navalwargamessociety.org.

Membership secretary: simonjohnstokes@aol.com

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2014

NWS Northern Fleet – Falkirk East Central Scotland

Kenny Thomson, 12 Craigs Way, Rumford Grange, Rumford, Stirlingshire, FK2 0EU

Tel: 01324 714248

e-mail: kenny.thomson@hotmail.com - Website: <http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk/>

Falkirk Wargames Club meets each Monday night at 7pm with a variety of games running each evening. Naval games are popular with 2 or 3 run each month. Campaign games sometimes feature in our monthly weekend sessions. Games tend to be organised week to week making a 3-month forecast here a waste of time. Please get in touch if you'd like to come along.

- Popular periods – Modern (Shipwreck), WW1 and 2 (GQ), WW2 Coastal (Action Stations), and Pre-dreadnought (P Dunn's rules)
-
-

Devon and the West Country

Naval Wargames afternoon/evening/all day on a regular basis.

Contact Stuart Barnes Watson to arrange the details.

stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com

3 Clovelly Apartments, Oxford Park, Ilfracombe, DEVON, EX34 9JS

Tel: 01271 866637