

# Raid on Zeebrugge 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1918

Game Show Report from Salute 2018 and

National Museum of the Royal Navy Centenary Commemoration

By Simon Stokes

South London Warlords Salute wargames show was held on 14<sup>th</sup> April at London Excel. The theme for this year was the centenary of the end of the Great War. For the NWS game we chose to mark the centenary of the raid on Zeebrugge. The game we staged was a 1/300<sup>th</sup> scale public participation game that concentrated on the naval action in the harbour as a whole including the marines landing on the mole from Vindictive, Iris and Daffodil, actions of the CMBs inside the mole, destruction of the mole viaduct by submarine C3 and last but not least the actions of the block ships in sealing the entrance to the Bruge canal which was the main object of the raid. It played as a 5 player co-operative game, with each player taking a separate command of British ships, these being (i) Vindictive (ii) Iris, Daffodil, C3 and the off table Monitors (iii) Thetis and 2 CMBs (iv) Intrepid and 2 CMBs (v) Iphigenia and 2 CMBs. A full write up of the game including a more complete account of the historical action and the rules we used to re-create that action will appear in the next issue of Battlefleet.

Below are some photos from the game from the Salute show and the Zeebrugge Raid centenary event held at the NMRN the following week. For the NMRN event we were joined by the Maidstone Wargames Society who had coincidentally put together their own Zeebrugge Raid game in 28mm, concentrating on the action on the mole. That game deservedly won them the best historical game show prize at Salute.

## Salute Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April

We ran the game twice during the show, each run through taking about 1½-2 hours. In both games the players managed to get the blockships inside the harbour but only in the second game did they manage to get a blockship in position to block the entrance to the canal. Thanks to NWS members Drew Jarman, Dave Sharp, Jim Trappit and Rob Hutton for their help on the day and especially to Dave for the scratch build of Iris & Daffodil and Rob for the photos.







#### **NMRN Portsmouth Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

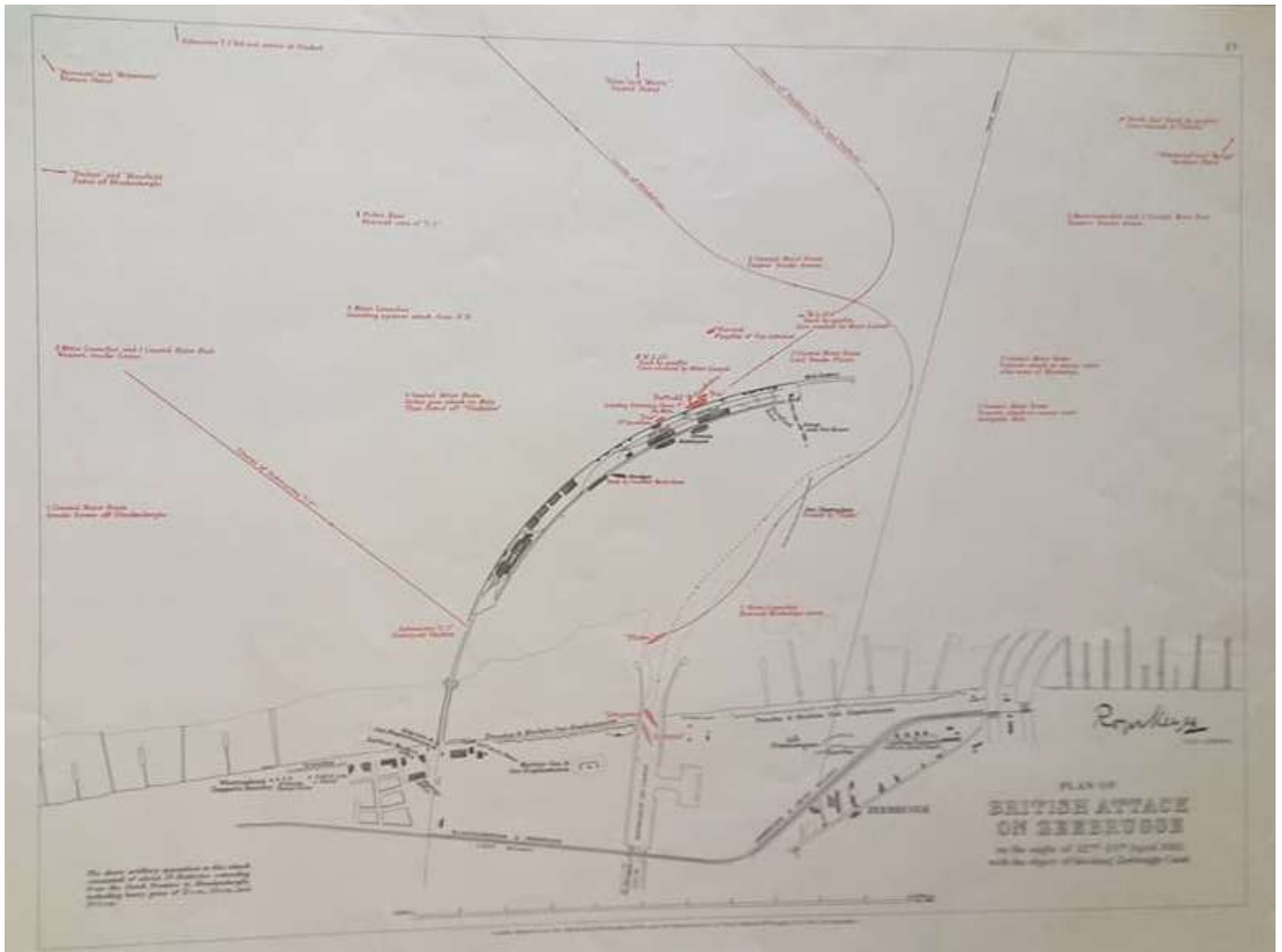
The museum made us wargamers very welcome. There was a steady stream of visitors coming and asking us about the games, which we ran as demonstration participation games with NWS as participants for the Maidstone Club's game in the morning and then roles reversed as the NWS game was played in the afternoon. All good fun. The results in both games were successful for the British. Guns and block house were demolished on the mole in the morning whilst in the afternoon HMS Iphigenia came steaming at full speed in between the burning and stopped wrecks of HMS Thetis and HMS Intrepid to ram the lock gates at full tilt and then managed to scuttle herself jammed right into the canal entrance.





Maidstone Wargames Society game "Twisting the Dragons Tail" featuring a scratch built HMS Vindictive:





This above photo is of one of the museum's artefacts made available to attendees of the preceding Zeebrugge Centenary Conference and is of a detailed map of the raid drawn up in 1930. The conference was organised by Chris Gale of the NMRN and was well attended. It featured talks on motor launches at Zeebrugge and Ostend, CMB small boats in a big raid, Norman Oughs model of Vindictive showing her alterations for the raid, 1920s silent movie of the raid (complete with piano accompaniment), Andrew Lambert on the history of attack at source, Andrew Gordon on the Dover Patrol, Zeebrugge feature plans for the new Royal Marines museum, raising and training of 4RM battalion, VCs from the Zeebrugge raid. All really interesting stuff.

Many thanks to the Maidstone Wargames Society, to NWS members Dave Sharp and Norman Bell and to Chris Gale senior curator at the museum for organising the event.

Dragons tail well and truly twisted.