



## The Society Newsletter

# New status for Charge Chief

### Important tasks

#### For

#### All Members:

- Tell the Managing Secretary of any changes of address and nominee.
- Let the Secretaries know if you have an email address.
- Attend a Section meeting.
- Get another serving engineer to join the Society.

The Royal Naval Engineers' Benevolent Society has been in existence since 1872, for the promotion of the social, intellectual and general welfare of its members, and conforming with the MOD (Navy) Regulations

## Warrant Officer status for Charge Chiefs after thirty three years.

Why has it taken so long to recognise that there was a basic failing in the design of Fleet Chief/Warrant Officer categories which took place thirty three years ago.

When the rank and standing of Chief Artificer was reduced to Charge Chief and an additional rank of Fleet Chief added to the career path of all CPOs, the Admiralty effectively stated that the non-technical rating was equal to the technical rating regardless of the additional training. This failing has been re-enforced in the recent past by putting Apprentice Artificers into square rig.

The RNEBS warned that these developments would lead to a reduction in recruitment and retention within the Artificer branch. Why undertake long hours of training when the financial rewards can be obtained as quickly or more quickly without training?

Technical ratings are needed to maintain the fighting capability of the fleet. Why put hurdles in the path of the artificer that do not exist for the other ratings? The existence of an examination to gain Charge Chief status is an effective brake on ad-

vancement. It does not signal that more effort and higher knowledge bring greater rewards.

Belated recognition has now caused some of the old animosity between the non-technical rates and technical rates to resurface. The non-technician has always failed to accept that additional training and knowledge should be rewarded. The many extra hours spent ensuring the effectiveness of the fighting ship, while the non-technician has been ashore, is still being disregarded.

If this is a significant change why is there not an increase in the rate of pay?

Any change in rank which recognises extra responsibility must also bring extra reward. Having at last acknowledged that the position of the Charge Chief is one of additional responsibility it is now time to address the question of pay for that responsibility.

### Finally

What about the Charge Chiefs that persevered with little or no acknowledgement of the additional work and responsibility? Some have already died. Is it not time to increase the pension of those remaining?

## The Society

### Executive Council Meeting.

The Executive Council (EC) meeting in June will discuss the way this Society is to be run and the main objectives of the Society for the year to come.

Have your say in the way this Society is run. Come to the section meetings and especially the Section Annual

General meeting to put your opinion so that your views can be considered by the Executive Council.

We are now at a stage in the life of the Society where its role in the Navy has reached a critical point. If you are a serving engineer in the Royal Navy it may be your last chance of representation.

Do you want representation? What effect would you hope it to have?

**“What representation do people have in the Royal Navy?”**

**“Is the representation of the rank and file of the Royal Navy independent of the Officer Corp?”**

## Portsmouth Section Meetings

The Portsmouth section meets in the Grapevine centre in HMS Sultan.

The meetings of the Portsmouth section are held every month on the second Friday.

The meeting starts at 20.00 hours and lasts for approximately 90 minutes.

Members then adjourn for informal discussion in less formal surroundings!! All members are made welcome. Next meeting — 11 April 2003

The Section Annual General Meeting will be held on 9 May, prior to the June meeting of Executive Council. It will include a light buffet and refreshments after a short meeting

For details and venue information please contact Les Dancy. Contact information is on the last page of the Newsletter.

## Devonport Section Meetings

The Devonport section's meetings are held at 113 North Hill, Plymouth on the top floor (the Society Offices), on the fourth Tuesday of each month (No meeting in August or December).



The next meeting 22 April 2003 at 19.00 hours.

The Section Annual General Meeting will be on 27th May. It will include a light buffet and refreshments after a short meeting For details and venue information please contact Chris Heaver. Contact information is on the last page of the Newsletter.

### In the Plymouth area

The 6th Annual NCOW Dinner will take place on Thursday 10th July 2003 1930

for 2000 in the Warrant Officers and Senior Rates Mess, HMS Drake. Guest speaker Commodore A Mathews Royal Navy. Dress: Formal. For more details contact: - WOMEA George Neder Mil: 9375 67649, WOMEA Mark Close Mil: 9375 65787 or CCMEA John Richards Mil: 9375 65559

This dinner is supported by the Society.

## Scotland? Section Meetings?

**Where do you want them? It is for the members living and working in Scotland to decide.**

Get active — have a meeting in Scotland. I have suggested the meetings should be in Faslane but that is up to

you! I am just waiting to attend the first meeting, wherever that may be.

Even a social meeting of a number of members in a bar with the occasional reference to the Society would equal some of the meetings held in both Devonport and Portsmouth in past

years.

If you need help to inform other members in the area I would be prepared to act as the link.

## Managing Secretary — News

Our first 'newsletter' seems to have been a success, in terms of distribution at least! It was posted to all our "known" members' addresses before Christmas 2002 and only a handful were returned 'Not Known At This Address' (perhaps it was 'small & insignificant' enough for ex-partners, parents, new tenants etc. to throw in the bin!).

Please keep me up to date with your 'permanent' mailing address + nomi-

nee details (& email / telephone / ship etc. if desired).

Due to lack of interest (only a small number of people have made enquiries) there will NOT be an event in Plymouth to mark 100 years since the start of the first Apprentices' Course.

### **Managing Secretary volunteer needed**

The present Managing Secretary — Mr Chris Heaver wishes to stand down from the post at the earliest opportunity.

Any member wishing for more information on this pivotal role in the Society should contact either Chris himself or the General Secretary Les Dancy at the contact addresses supplied on the last page of this Newsletter.

## The Fisgard Association

The Society has watched with interest a small idea grow into a very good old boys network for those that served in HMS Fisgard, Fisgard block and the Fisgard squadron in HMS Raleigh.

Insufficient numbers have supported a commemoration of the first Apprentice Course in Plymouth, it is hoped that this is because all those who may have considered it found the time and energy to travel to the Fisgard Association day in Portsmouth.

By the first apprentice course the Artificers were already represented by your Society.

I would like to point out to all Society members that if they wish to join a reunion organisation, the Fisgard Association is an excellent one as also is the Caledonian Association.

The Society is and always has been for the representation

of serving engineers and Artificers and not in the business of reunions.

If you wish to join either of the above associations and do not have the address it can be supplied by us.

Congratulations for a successful weekend to the Fisgard Association - from the Society.

## General Secretary — News

### **Independent Representation.**

It is time that the divisional system was replaced by a more truly representative system for the presentation of ideas and complaints. Recent information has been poorly communicated to the ranks and ratings of the Royal Navy. This has led to an increase in the number of complaints being addressed to the Society.

The present system is seen as being a tool of the officers. Information directed at senior officers is being

passed through well meant filters to convey the feelings of the men and women, but these unfortunately remove the true feeling of the lower ranks.

While the Society can only represent the views of the Artificer and Engineer, it is time for a more general and independent system to be created which can voice the opinion of all ranks without prejudice to good order and discipline within the Royal Navy.

### **Make a difference — have a voice.**

The present General Secretary, Les Dancy, has now been in the position for over ten years, since he left the Royal Navy in 1992.

He and the Council are looking for new blood and new ideas.

To get a better idea of what is required come to a meeting or contact Les for more general information.

## Communication — The Society and You

### How can the Society improve it's communication?

Thank you to those who have taken the time and trouble to write or send an email and let me know something about yourselves — I have even learnt something about horses and sheep!

By telling us about yourself you are enabling us to be more in touch with you. I am hoping for more responses please. We would like a short note (from each of you) telling us about your Naval career so far and what you did afterwards if you have now left the Royal Navy.

I would also like to know why you left? Was it like me after serving a normal amount of time? Did you leave early enough to have a second career?

## E-Mail Addresses

### If you have an email address let us know.

If you would prefer to receive items like the report and newsletters by email please tell us.

This does not include the Naval Engineers Review which will continue to be posted using the Royal Mail service.

If you know someone who has not received a Newsletter or Review and you feel they should - get them to join the Royal Naval Engineers' Benevolent Society - or update the Managing Secretary with their details - your Society working for you!

## Royal Naval Engineers' Benevolent Society

### Useful RNEBS Addresses and telephone numbers

The RNEBS Offices  
Devonport Section  
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113 North Hill  
Plymouth

General Secretary  
Mr Les Dancy  
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We're on the web  
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