



ROYAL NAVAL ENGINEERS' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

March 2004

Volume 2, Issue 2

The Society Newsletter

Artificer's Title under Threat

The Title "Engineering Artificer" is under threat from The Board of the Admiralty .

Remain Royal Naval Engineering Artificers and proud of it

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.

First the uniform and training.

The change to the uniform and training of Artificer Apprentices has reduced the profile of the Artificer. To remove the ability of young people to enter the Royal Navy knowing that they will become a skilled engineer at the end of an apprenticeship will mean few aspiring engineers will view the Royal Navy as a good choice.

Now the Name

Remove the distinctive name Artificer will be following the lead of the American, Canadian and Australian Navies. The Artificer is a craftsman capable of doing any task requested of him or her. A supreme technician ready for anything. Not just another technician in a forest of technicians. To be an Engineering Artificer means something.

Read on to find out more

Next the Service

Once we have become technicians—like the Army and the Royal Air Force where is the distinction? Why have three separate services - combine the services to a single Armed force, lose the different uniforms, save more money!

Is it just the Tiffy they are after? Could it be the jobs at the Admiralty under review?

Branch Development

Why have I found it difficult to get more details about the Branch Development? What is the secret?

Support the Artificer's Society

We need all serving Engineering Artificers who are members of the Society to spread the information about the Branch development. Get Engineering Artificers to join the Society.

Write to your MP or Admiral Kerr - with your views? Please use the included letters or write your own using the address.

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

Branch Development

The present Branch Development is another example of the Armed forces changing the working practise of its men and women without prior notice or any discussion with those it will effect.

The Warfare branch development was the same type of change and is now acknowledged as a failure. The workforce was not properly con-

sulted. If the workforce had been asked for their opinion some might have indicated that the operator and maintainer were not the same person for a good reason.

Many of the present changes are reverses of earlier decisions. Perhaps it would be an idea before making such a radical and major alteration to the structure of the whole Royal Navy -

excluding Officers (the only ones so far consulted) - it would be wise to make the changes being suggested known to the whole Royal Navy.

This would have two effects: first it would reduce the shock impact of the changes and second it may elicit some suggestions and comments that would reduce on waste of both time and money.

Second Sea Lord backs families before Ratings

The Second Sea Lord Vice-Admiral Burnell-Nugent is backing a Federation that will give families an independent voice. While this is a laudable action and fully supported by the Society why is it that the Ratings and Officers are not allowed an independent voice of their own?

The Society has asked the Second Sea Lord to allow ratings and officers to have a method to voice concerns without having to go through the chain of command.

The Society consider the present Divisional system to have many drawbacks repressing the genuine con-

cerns of the ratings and officers. Only an independent body will enable the men and women of the Royal Navy to voice their concerns without prejudice.

The Royal Navy need to act now to allow the serving men and women to have an honest voice.

Engineering Artificer Entry by a single route?

Will the Royal Navy manage to attract Engineering recruits when they can not enter with an assured path to an Apprenticeship?

This Society believes that the present combination of being able to enter directly to an apprenticeship or later take the option to become a candidate

and undertake a late qualification allows for the greatest range of people capable of being trained to the Artificer standards obtaining those qualified standards.

What will happen if all engineering entrants are to be fully skilled? Is there going to be no requirement for anyone who does not want to have a

degree? In an earlier statement the Development team stated that Weapons engineers will need a Mechanic assistant - where are they to come from?

The present Branch Development solution obtained by the Society has many questions in the training and future roles of the Artificer

Old Caledonia Artificer Apprentices' Association

Artificers 1903 – 2003

The Old Caledonia Artificer Apprentices' Association commemorated this centenary with their book – HMS Caledonia The Apprentices' Story. Since its launch in May last year we have been privileged to present copies to HMS Caledonia and the establishments involved in training today's artificers, HMS Sultan, HMS Colling-

wood and HMS Raleigh. It was interesting to see how the training and trainees had changed in the fifty years since my own apprenticeship. The classes are much smaller, the apprentices older and now include young ladies, and they wear 'square rig', except for those ratings selected from the Mechanic branches who are al-

ready Petty Officers. The apprenticeship no longer concentrates on 'skill of hand' but on the diagnosis of problems in complex systems. In spite of all these changes they seemed as proud to be a Tiff today as we were in our time.

Managing Secretary 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

This report is being posted to about 2,400 members - a marked increase on last year. OK, so most of the extras are new recruits, but significant numbers have 'updated contact details'.

Sadly, still only about 15% have updated subs to £10 pa - please keep on 'sharing the news' with colleagues, who may want '**increased benefits**' or may not be at their '**last supplied address**'!

Max Benefit payable, on £10 pa subs, is now a levy of 50p per member (£3 / £5 pa max is 10p / 12p)

N.B. Increase must be backdated to include any payment since 02/04/01. If in doubt about what you are paying, or when, check your bank statements, contact your bank or contact me (particularly apprentices when you complete - or fail - your training!) write to: Chris Heaver, RNEBS Managing Secretary, 5 Brimhill Close Plymouth PL7 1XP telephone / email home: 01752 342547 (Chris, Gill or ansaphone) / cheaver@members.swis.net or Chris at work: 01752 325060 (Site Services, Devonport Royal Dockyard, military ext. [93765] 5060)

The Society regrets to announce the deaths of:

	Service No	Mem No / joined	D o B	Deceased
MEA/A Robertson, Duncan	D253680N	14577 Jul 2002	06/03/76	4/06/03
WEA/A Port, Andrew	D252806W	14493 Mar 2002	27/12/81	8/07/03
Lt.Cdr Andrews, J A	D/mx60645	05979 Jul 1943	22/12/23	2/10/03

. . . . notified since previous Annual Report.

It is worthy of note that two had not completed their training - one was lost in a road traffic accident, the other, even more tragically, to a 'malignant melanoma'

The proceeds from the sale of Holland House continue to draw more income than the rent ever did.

The Chatham & Marrack prizes, at Collingwood, Sultan & Raleigh, continue to be awarded.

We have experienced a change of tenant at one of the Plymouth flats, with rent increases.

We have considered marketing the Plymouth Property - several valuations have agreed that it should fetch about £250,000, however, interest on that is far outweighed by current rents (around £14,000 pa).

Please make your views known by attending a Section Meeting!

Plymouth 113 North Hill - 19:00 - 4th Tuesday monthly (ex Aug & Dec) contact Managing Secretary.

HMS Sultan Grapevine Centre - 20:00 - 2nd Friday monthly, contact General Secretary.

Society Accounts: for year ended 31/03/04 have not yet been prepared, but will be published, with comparison figures for previous year, at the earliest opportunity.

The inclusion of your 'personal ledger balance' on previous annual reports has been the most labour intensive part of the mailing process - It may also have been the source of a drastic error: e.g. the member number quoted may have come from the page before or after yours! Your bank may then have used it as a reference on a Standing Order, and not included your name! That credit may then have gone to the wrong member!

The creation of our database and (fuller) use of mail-merge, will ensure elimination of this error.

In the meantime, check that your bank is quoting the correct number, and / or if you are in any doubt of your Member No., Payments, etc. contact me for confirmation / clarification,

Chris Heaver, Man Sec.

Why have three separate Armed Services?

The general movement to follow other Navies and the other services in this county would lead to the expectation that the next move is that of following the Canadian example to have just

one armed force.

Why have three separate services?
Continue the present unification of the three services and reduce on the need for Flag Officers and the general staff

of the Army and Royal Air force.

Will this be a decision that will be made by the Government and political parties without discussion with the Flag Officers?

Greater Access - Working with the Society

On a trial basis the General Secretary Mr Les Dancy will be taking time to work with the Society members.

The Portsmouth area - Les will be available for direct contact and meet-

ings on Wednesday mornings from 8 am until 12 pm - midday.

For other areas - Les will be able to visit any location within reason and given notice of the requirements.

Telephone access should also be better during the Wednesday morning on telephone no: 07816787745.

The Naval Engineering Review - 100 years

It is hoped that the Naval Engineering Review will have a special issue this year to help mark its anniversary.

In line with this the Editor is looking for items from members to help show

the work of the Society members now to compare with the work undertaken in the past. Please send articles about your work or requests for areas that should have an article written about to The Editor Naval Engineering Review

Mr Steve Woodford
24 Brookfield Road
Churchdown
Gloucester
GL3 2NZ

ed.ner@rnebs.co.uk

Portsmouth Section Meeting

The Portsmouth section meetings - at the Grapevine Centre.

The Grapevine centre in HMS Sultan is the point to meet and find out more.

The meetings discuss the future of the

Artificer and what the Society should do. The next meeting is in April.

Help the Portsmouth section represent your views.

The meetings of the Portsmouth sec-

tion are held every month on the second Friday.

The meeting starts at 20.00 hours. All members are made welcome. Next meeting — 9 April 2004.

Devonport Section Meetings

The Devonport Section meeting held in the Society Office at 113 North Hill.

The Office is located on the top floor of the building.

Like the Portsmouth Section, the

Branch Development will be a major subject of discussion. It will also be considering the Executive Council meeting and its agenda.

The meetings of the Devonport Section are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month (No meeting in August or December). The next meeting 27

March 2004 at 19.00 hours.

For further information about any other event or information about the Devonport Section contact the Managing Secretary, Chris Heaver 01752 32 [93765] 5060 / chris.c.heaver@devonport.co.uk

Scotland Section Meetings?

Scotland Section - First meeting. An Important meeting to be at.

There will be a presentation and discussion on the Branch Development from the Society's point of view.

There has been a change in the location of the first meeting in Scotland. It

will be held in the Faslane area. The first meeting will be in early June 2004 in the Faslane area to accommodate members in Faslane and surrounding area. All members are welcome to attend. Time and place will be in the next Newsletter.

The General Secretary Mr Les Dancy will open the meeting at 20:00.

For more information please telephone: 07816787745 or Email: Faslane.sec@rnebs.co.uk

A second meeting will be in October in the Rosyth area. More details of this meeting will be published in the next newsletter.

Please only return this form to the Managing Secretary if you NEED TO!

(but keep it for future reference - if in doubt please ring / email / write)

WHO IS YOUR NOMINEE, HOW MUCH ARE YOU PAYING, HOW MUCH MIGHT THEY GET?

Membership is approx. **2,200** - for subs of **£3** pa the max levy is **10p**/member (2,200 x 10p = **£220**).
 For **£5** pa (since 1994) the max levy is **12p** (= **£264**) - and for **£10** pa (since 2001) it is **50p** (= **£1,100**)
 (for 'Free Life Members', the level was frozen as at the time of your final payment!)

Return this form to Chris Heaver, RNEBS Managing Secretary, 5 Brimhill Close, Plymouth PL7 1XP

Name (in full) Official N^o

Postal Address

Rank/Rating DoB: entry to RNEBS:

Relationship, name
 & address of Nominee
 to whom Death Benefit
 Levy may be paid

Signature Date:

Annual Subscription - £10.00 in advance (no joining fee)

(the society sends this part to your bank)

Bankers Standing Order

ANY QUERIES TO BANK CLIENT PLEASE

To: Bank plc

Address

Please Pay to Barclays Bank plc, 48 Mutley Plain, Plymouth Devon PL4 6LP, (Sort Code 20-68-10)
 for credit to the Royal Naval Engineers' Benevolent Society, Subscriptions account, - (Acc N^o 30779741)
 the following at regular annual intervals.

PLEASE QUOTE: *Members Surname & Intls* & *RNEBS N^o*

AMOUNT: an Initial Sum of _____ pounds and _____ pence on or soon after _____

and each following year, an Annual Sum of _____ pounds until further notice

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PAYMENTS: 45

Signed Date:

Sort Code Account N^o

Account Name

This Order cancels any previous Order between these accounts.

The Society and You - News

“History is the witness of time, the light of truth and the life of memory”

Cicero

From the earliest days of Rome existed an organisation of workman under the name of the COLLEGIUM ARTIFICUM or COLLEGIUM FABRORUM, that is the College of Artificers or the College of Workmen. They were regularly organised into an Association, which was marked with all the peculiarities that afterwards distinguished the guilds, or in corporations of the middle ages.

Advancing a further several centuries and W G Barrett with other Grand Originals emulated their Roman forbears and founded our Society. This, in the half way glory of Queen Victoria's reign and building towards the greatest Empire the world has known.

Commensurate with the decline of that empire one observes the de-

cline of our Society. The eclipse of the Nore Command, the subsequent regrettable disinterest in the two remaining Port divisions, with barely a quorum of members at each meeting, bravely attempting to staunch the slow downward slope to perdition.

“Indifference is the invincible giant of the world.”

Anon

V Blackman 2/2/04

Items for the Newsletter and returned Newsletters should be sent to:

newsletter@rnebs.co.uk

Royal Naval Engineers' Benevolent Society

Useful RNEBS Addresses and telephone numbers

The RNEBS Offices
Devonport Section
Top Floor
113 North Hill
Plymouth
PL4 8JY

General Secretary
Mr Les Dancy
07816787745
gen.sec@rnebs.co.uk

Managing Secretary
Mr Chris Heaver
01752 342547
man.sec@rnebs.co.uk

Editor Naval Engineers Review
Mr Steve Woodford
ed.ner@rnebs.co.uk



We're on the web
www.rnebs.co.uk