



# The Society Newsletter

## Time for Independent Representation.

### Present practises do not give enough support

**The Divisional system is under pressure from all sides.**

It is the view of the Society that there needs to be a change. This change is fundamental to the improvement of conditions within the Royal Navy.

The changes being brought about by the Navy Board's Branch development will only have the significant improvement to morale, recruitment and retention if there is a major change in the way that individuals are represented.

The views of the individual are not always heard and considered important. It is the most essential change that can be made to allow individuals the ability to make a difference regardless of rank.

There needs to be a direct and confidential means of communication with an independent body that can ensure

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.

every person is valued and able to report any incident without fear.

The process for such a system could be only a minor change to the present Divisional system, chaplain and other support services.

The suggestion that a radical new system and removal of the present divisional system is not advocated by the Society.

The Society is proposing an augmentation to the existing system that allows the individual an alternative reporting system that is independent of the chain of command. Confidentiality to allow a discrete investigation of the facts that may prevent the need to have action taken by removing stress and enabling communication and understanding.

The target would be protection of not only the person who makes the representation but also the person or system against which representation has been made until problem has been isolated.

A key to any good system is clear, open communication without prejudice. The present system effectively prevents low level enquire of more effective procedures and routines be-

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cause of the blame culture that exists in society and the Royal Navy at present.

There are many good avenues of support within the present structure of the Divisional system but if it allows even one individual to feel there is a lack of support and understanding there is a need to improve.

There are many examples where the lack of understanding of an individual within the Armed forces that has led to an attack by the media. The Royal Navy - the senior service - should lead the way to improvements. We need to act now.

If you have strong views about this please contact the Society.

# Society Meetings

## Annual General Section Meetings

Both Sections look forward to meeting new faces and old shipmates.

The Annual meeting of the Executive Council and its agenda will be discussed. The future direction taken by the Society and the work of the next years are often directed by discussion and suggestions first presented at the Section AGMs.

It is the standard form that changes to meeting times, dates and locations will be posted on the Society Website.

If you are a serving member you will have no problems in attending meetings, however, ex-serving members must contact Mr Dancy before attending meeting in the Portsmouth area because it is held in HMS Sultan and prior notice is required.

If you do not have the ability to look at the internet or prefer other means of communication please use the addresses on the last page of this newsletter.

## The General Secretary

The Society is seeking a new General Secretary as Les Dancy has been fulfilling this position for a number of years and would like to stand down and concentrate on other areas of Society business.

The ideal candidate is a member who is just leaving or has just left the Royal Navy and has been active in the Society.

The post is centre to the future development of the Society and it is a pivotal position.

Those who are dissatisfied with a Navy or the Society come to a meet-

ing and look at improving our delivery of services and its approach to the naval hierarchy.

### Devonport Section - Annual General Meeting. 1915 - 23 May 2006 Shearsby Suite - 113 North Hill Plymouth

#### Agenda

- Welcome to the meeting by the Chairperson.
- Election of Section Officers and Representative.
- Executive Council Agenda
- Any Other Business

## Devonport Section

The Devonport section meetings are normally held at 113 North Hill, Plymouth, the Society Offices.

Please try to attend a meeting. Meetings are held every month, except August and December, on the fourth Tuesday at 19:00. All members are welcome.

Next meeting is 23 May 2006. This meeting will be the Section Annual General Meeting (AGM) and all members in the Devonport area are requested to attend.

Any information relating to the Devonport section can be obtained from the Managing Secretary.

## Portsmouth Section

The Portsmouth section meetings are normally held at the Grapevine centre in HMS Sultan.

Please try to attend a meeting. Meetings are held every month, except August, on the second Friday at 20:00 All members are welcome.

Next meeting is 12 May 2006. This meeting will be the Section Annual General Meeting and all members in the Portsmouth area are requested to attend.

Any information relating to the Portsmouth section can be obtained from the General Secretary.

## Faslane Section.

Due to the failure to elect a committee the Faslane Section meetings will be suspended until further notice. Please contact the General Secretary for any further information.

## Annual Executive Council Meeting.

Executive meetings are held as required and an Annual meeting is held in June. This meeting sets before the Council matter brought forward by the sections.

### Provisional Agenda:

- Open the meeting by the President.
- Election of the President.
- Election of the Vice President.
- General Secretary's Report.
- Election of General Secretary.
- Managing Secretary's Report.
- The presentation and adoption of the accounts.
- Naval Engineering Review - Editors Report, The Robins Prize award.
- Society Budget.
- Memorial to Royal Naval Engineers.
- Navy Board Personnel Change Programme – Branch Development
- Proposals to be considered by the Trustees of the Society - Purchase of a property in the Portsmouth area.
- Proposals to be considered by the Trustees of the Captain Marrack Prize and Chatham Trust funds.
- Any Other Business.

### Portsmouth Section - Annual General Meeting. 2000 - 12 May 2006 Grapevine Centre - HMS Sultan

#### Agenda

- Welcome to the meeting by the Chairperson.
- Election of Section Officers and Representative.
- Executive Council Agenda
- Any Other Business

## Royal Naval Engineers Memorial

### The next meeting of the Executive Council will decide on what will be the shape of the Royal Naval Engineers Memorial.

The allocation of money and donations will need to be undertaken in the near future. There is a need to have a reasonable understanding of the sums involved for this project and therefore it is requested that any members who wish to donate money to this project need to have contacted the Managing Secretary

or General Secretary by 1 June 2006. This will allow the Executive Council to ensure the project is moved to the next stage.

On behalf of the Executive council I would like to thank all those who have so far contributed to this project.

There is also still an opportunity to contribute ideas as to its design as well as monetary contributions. Any ideas of how to Commemorate the range of Engineers that now serve in

the Royal Navy would be welcomed.

### Important tasks

#### For Members:

- Inform the Managing Secretary of any changes in your personal details and those of your nominee.
- Let the Secretaries know if you have an email address that we can use.
- Attend a Section meeting.
- Get another serving engineer to join the Society.
- Get another engineer to contact the Secretaries

## Branch Development - The views of an Apprentice Artificer

There continues to be anger at the decision to remove the title of Artificer from the rates of the Royal Navy.

In a letter, that is not the first, an Apprentice gave a view that has been overlooked by many.

"Nowadays we are referred to as 'Tiff' and every one (in the navy) knows who we are. Leaving HMS Sultan as an LMEA he will be referred to as an engineering technician 'ET' from then on, although our rights are reserved we will never be known as Chief Tiff let alone Artificer. This is a longstanding profession and their traditions have just been thrown in the bin unceremoni-

ously, without thought that we are proud to be Artificers and all that it stands for.

"You tell someone you are an ET they think you are the bottom of the ladder, an Artificer everyone knew you were more than qualified. In the forces technician normally refers to the bottom of your trade and just learning. The Navy is giving the general public and future employers that you have basic/limited knowledge regardless of what rate you achieve."

While some older members of the Society take the view that the present Artificers do not reach the level of craft

and knowledge to which they aspired they are glad that the new breed under new training will not be known as Artificer in the future preserving the quality achieved by the Artificer of old.

Should the Society replace the Royal Naval tradition of awarding it best Engineering practitioners with the title of Artificer? If you feel that the Society should take action to maintain the ranks of the Artificer once an Engineering Technician reaches an appropriate level of knowledge and practice contact the General Secretary. We could award the title of Artificer and certificate to those who qualify?

## The Society welcomes all.

**With the advent of the Engineering Technician the Society has opened its doors to all members of the Engineering branch.**

New entry and those under training or at the start of their career will be able to apply to be Associate Members.

If a servicing member has reached the status of Engineer Technician as stated by the Engineering Council UK or above, they will be able to join as full members.

Therefore any one who reaches the rate of Petty Officer Engineering Technician will be able to be full members.

Application forms can be obtained from any Society Officer or the web site at: <http://www.rnebs.co.uk/html/membership.htm>

### 'The Shearsby Suite'

An affordable meeting / conference facility in Plymouth for up to 12 people.

Newly refurbished with a well equipped kitchen for the preparation of tea, coffee and snacks.

Please Note: It is situated on the fourth floor and is therefore unsuitable for many people with physical disabilities.

- for further information contact Mr Heaver, Managing Secretary - contact detail as given on this page.

## The Society and You - News

### **The Society goes to the HMS Sultan Summer Show**

With the changes in the recruitment in the Royal Navy and the changes to basic training which has reduced the time spent in Plymouth, the Society has decided to go to the show. The Society is going to be present at the HMS Sultan Summer show this year.

Both the General Secretary and the Managing Secretary are taking a keen interest in this event and will be present most of the time.

There will be a game from the Artificers at present under training in HMS Sultan. There will be back issues of the Naval Engineering Review for purchase and some historical issues on display.

It is hoped that there will be an input from the RNEBS

Alston Memorial Historical Society, The RNEBS Captain Mar-rack Prize Fund and the RNEBS Chatham Memorial Fund.

Additionally there will be a quiet area for individuals to discuss any concerns or projects they wish the Society to be involved in.

It is hoped that the display will be supported by members living in the area and if any of you have any time you can spare the Society it would be gratefully accepted. If you can help in any way please contact the General Secretary.

## Royal Naval Engineers' Benevolent Society

### Useful RNEBS Addresses and telephone numbers

The RNEBS Offices  
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**We're on the web  
www.rnebs.co.uk**