



# HMS Caprice (World Cruise 1968) Association



# Newsletter

**April 2010**



**Issue No 051**



## Inside this Issue

**New members**

**Percy Newell**

**2009 Reunion Pics**

**2010 Reunion in Portland**

**2010 Reunion Package**

**2011 Reunion**

**1968 Movie DVD**

**Mini Reunion**

**Destroyer D01 - Book Update**

**Malcolm Farrow**

**Members Profiles - Roy Johansen**

**Book Offer**

**Treasurer's & Spirit Room Report**

**Slops**

**Association Website**

The front cover picture is a very early photo of Caprice, probably during her maker's trials in 1943. Note the wartime livery and the original pennant number R01. She was originally fitted with 4 x 4.5 inch guns and two sets of torpedo tubes although these and X gun were removed during subsequent refits in 1958 & 1966.

We are delighted to welcome yet another three new members:

**Tim Bevan** - the old skipper (who, much to his regret, missed the second half of the cruise). Tim retired in 1987 with the rank of Rear Admiral. He has requested that his contact details are restricted but is very happy to keep in touch with the Association – any one who would particularly like to talk or write to Tim please contact us and we will put you in touch.

He also regrets that he is probably unable to make any Reunions (he has just turned 80) but says he is always interested to hear news of his old ships.

**Malcolm Farrow** – who was a watch-keeping officer during the second half of the '68 cruise and subsequently attained with the rank of Captain. He currently is Assistant General Secretary of the Forces Pension Association and also President of the Flag Institute. He has written a brief article on these activities on page 7.

**Malcolm Hawley** – who was a Mech 2 onboard and resided in the after PO's mess. He is now retired and hopes to make the reunion at Portland.

**Members, past & present, now number 83**

**Graham Latter**

## Percy Newell RIP

With great sadness we learnt that Percy Newell has finally crossed the bar aged 84. Percy served on the Caprice from 1944 -1946 and has provided us with a huge amount of information about the ship during that time. Pershore RNA ensured that Percy was sent off in some style as this press clipping shows.





## 2009 Reunion Pics



**Dave & Diane H**



**Fran & Bob L**



**Jean & John B**



**Eleanor & Brian W**



**Bob & Donna M**



**Ron & Sandra K**



## 2009 Reunion Pics



Jean H, Sue & Mike S



Lonnie gets a hard time from Shirley S



Jean L & Margaret Mac



Rip gets his tot

## 2010 Reunion in Portland

*The view from the hotel gardens, looking out over Chesil beach and Weymouth.*





The Reunion weekend is on October 1/2nd 2010 at the **Portland Heights Hotel**. We shall be reverting to our normal procedure where members send their booking form and deposit to us and NOT to the Hotel. Not unexpectedly this caused a few problems last year.

Booking forms are enclosed with this Newsletter. This promises to be a very good and well-attended reunion and we have provisionally blocked off 50 rooms, the hotel only has 65 rooms so do not leave it until the last minute! Graham Latter has recently visited the hotel and was very impressed with it - a 2-3 day stay is definitely recommended (or even longer). We have the exclusive use of the Portland Suite for the entire weekend.

**VOLUNTEERS** - Several members have asked how they could help out at Reunions so here are few ideas:

- \* Set the quiz - John Bishop has again agreed to do this for this year.
- \* Sell Raffle Tickets or help put up decorations and set table place names.
- \* Take photographs of people at every table at the Reunion Dinner.

## 2010 Reunion Package

**Please note** the information we gave in the last newsletter was incorrect, showing a 3 night package price - these are the options and costs available:

**2 NIGHT PACKAGE** (Friday & Saturday), bed & breakfast.

Includes Friday evening meal (probably with a hot buffet in the Portland Suite from 1900 - 2100 - we have also laid on (background) entertainment. Includes Reunion Dinner Saturday 1900 followed by raffle & disco - bar open until 0100 on Sunday .  
...£135 per person (Single room £145 per person)

**SATURDAY NIGHT ONLY** - bed, breakfast with Reunion Dinner  
...£75 per person (Single room £90 per person)

**SATURDAY** - Reunion Dinner only ...£30 per person

**ADDITIONAL NIGHTS** - before or after the weekend - bed and breakfast ONLY.  
...£30 per person double/twin room (Single room £45 per person)

Sunday Morning 1000 - Quiz marking & "AGM" in the Portland Suite

**PLEASE DO NOT attempt to book with the Hotel direct - they will only accept bookings via the Association**

## 2011 Reunion

Despite looking at several options we have not yet finalised the venue for the 2011 Reunion apart from saying that it will definitely be North of the Watford Gap! (as promised at the Reunion meeting last year). Lonnie Skeet is currently looking at venues in the Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire areas.



## Caprice 1968 Movie DVD now available

The 8mm film, shot by Mark Ruddle, has now been enhanced and edited onto a DVD. This is NOT a slick modern DVD but it is some 40 minutes of pure nostalgia featuring:

**Crossing the line ceremony, with most of the ship's company viewing the proceedings, including the Skipper Tim Bevan. If you are not actually on this you will almost certainly recognise someone.**

**“Roughers” filmed from the bridge.**

**Beira Patrol mail drop with Postie John Bishop retrieving the floating canisters with the sea-boat.**

**Several hairy RAS scenes, including one where Mark Ruddle and the deck party nearly get washed over the side!**

**Squid Firing.**

**HMS Eskimo finally relieving us.**

**Horse Racing Day.**

**Beard Growing Competition.**

**Some good shots of the visit to Miazu, Japan.**

**Also Hong Kong & the Star Ferry, Sydney, Tonga, Fanning Island, Pearl Harbor, Manzanillo, and transiting the Panama canal with HMS Puma.**



Members featured include: Tim Bevan, Mark Ruddle, Peter Fowler, Dick Couch, John Bishop, John West, Gordon Duffy, Harry Winterbottom and many others.

Trevor Cole initiated this project with a very generous financial contribution but in the end we had to help out with quite a substantial (and unforeseen) contribution from Association Funds. However it is the ONLY movie of the cruise we are aware and is of historical importance.

Now available to members for £9.50 + £1 P & P. Why not order one when you send back your Reunion booking form to help us defray the cost?

## Mini Reunion in Dorset

Several Association members arranged to meet up at The Fox Ansty near Dorchester on Thursday 4th Feb. The Association is all for informal occasional regional events and is happy to promote them, providing they are open to all Association members.

With their partners in the photo (L to R) are Arthur Ginn, Colin Gannaway, Syd Pawley, Robin Davis, Bob Coles (non-member but we keep trying to persuade him to join!), Graham Jackson, Gordon Duffy and Richard Couch.





## Destroyer D 0 1

### The Story of HMS Caprice and the men who served in her 1943-1979

Progress is slow but sure! We now have 95% of the factual information and photographs and are currently obtaining detailed layout drawings from the National Maritime Museum.

It is hoped to have printed copies available for the Reunion this year. Printing costs will be quite substantial so we will be hoping for some good sales to offset the cost.

### Captain Malcolm Farrow OBE RN



One of our latest members, Malcolm, is a vexillologist of long standing, and has been President of the Flag Institute since 2005. His primary interest is improving the knowledge, understanding and usage of our national flags, and he engages with government and parliament on constitutional and legal issues concerning this.



He is an advisor to the All Party Flags & Heraldry Committee, and in 2006 facilitated the national flag to fly every day of the year from all Whitehall government departments and (since 2010) from the Houses of Parliament also. The Flag Institute has recently published a guide to flying our flag which is being distributed widely throughout the UK.



Malcolm's day job is Assistant General Secretary of the Forces Pension Society. The Society campaigns to protect, and where possible improve, Armed Forces Pensions, and runs a busy help-desk to resolve individual member's pension problems. When not negotiating in Whitehall or Westminster he is often travelling the country speaking to Service audiences about the Society and what it does.



He is the author of the Unique Nature of Military Service concept which underscores the Military Covenant and which is gaining ground nationwide under the imprimatur of Confederation of British Service and ex-Service Organisations (COBSEO).

**Editors Note** - Having been a member of the Flag Institute for many years I can testify to the excellent work it does. As for the Forces Pension Society I do not qualify (having ONLY done 12 years so get sod all!) but those members in receipt of pensions can contact Malcolm at malcolmf@forpen.co.uk - Tel **0208 820 8226**



## Roy (Joe) Johansen

I was born in Yorkshire in 1948, a son of an illegal immigrant, my father jumped ship after the war as he was wanted in the Lofoten Islands, Norway, for distilling illegal whiskey and getting a young girl pregnant whose father was after him, but that's another story!

I started working at a local butcher's shop aged 13 whilst at Osmondthorpe school in Leeds, then left school at 15 and went straight into butchering, went to Leeds College of Commerce to do City & Guilds in Butchering, and was managing a butchers shop for the Co-op at 17, but always wanted to go to sea and the older staff didn't like a young boy as manager as I was unwittingly exposing all their fiddles!

On 2 April 1966 when I wanted to join the Royal Navy my father went crazy when asked for his birth certificate, as his secret was out and he had to send back to Norway to get a forged birth certificate from a 90 year old retired priest.

Did my basic training at **HMS Raleigh** where I met Gordon Chapman and Phil Briggs. After basic training went to **HMS Dryad** to do a course on radar and to my surprise Gordon Chapman was also there. After completing the course was drafted to **HMS Pembroke** whilst waiting to go to sea, and guess what so was Gordon Chapman! Then came my draft to **HMS Caprice**, all very exciting, and to my surprise teamed up with Gordon Chapman & Phil Briggs, can't I ever get them out of my hair! In 1968 at Cape Town whilst on shore one night I was very drunk (surely not!) got rolled, lost my ID, wallet and bottle of Brandy, and was so mad at losing the Brandy I was picking fights with the locals and Gordon carried me back to the ship, he saved my life that night, and he never lets me forget it!



Roy in 1968

After my spell on Caprice I was drafted to **HMS Eagle** in 1970, stationed in the Mediterranean and guess what? So was Gordon Chapman, can't I ever escape him! On the Eagle my duty was Homer's Assistant (The "Homer" was the officer responsible for aircraft landings), really enjoyed it as we never worked in rough weather as aircraft could not land and take off. After Eagle I went to **HMS Dryad** to complete an RP2 course, then to **HMS Londonderry**, doing fishery protection in the Caribbean, guess what, a draft without Chappy! we also visited east coast of USA and Londonderry in Northern Ireland. On the Londonderry I passed for leading seaman, really enjoyed this commission as I was now experienced as with Caprice everything was new as it was my first ship. After the Londonderry to **HMS Warrior** in Northwood, London, where I was sent over to Admiralty



House to work with the civilian gardener. Best draft ever, living in the Admiral's mansion, sharing same chefs, met lots of British and Foreign dignitaries - the Queen, and Defence Secretary Dennis Healey, to name just a couple.

The Admiral, Sir Peter Ashmore, was so pleased with my work he wanted to keep me there, and managed to for a further 6 months but the coxswain said he'd be doing me no favours as I had to get sea time in to pick my 'hook' up. If I could have stayed there I would still be in the Navy today!

After Admiralty House I joined **HMS Fife**, and by this time my brother, Raymond, had joined the Navy. Fife was going out to the Far East so I put in to swap drafts to **HMS Ghurka** to be with Raymond, so was dropped off in Gan in the Indian ocean, where the Navy forgot about me, and I spent 10 great days with the locals partying on the beach. This is where I invented Malibu!

Eventually got to the Ghurka and went to Scandinavia, and teamed up with my brother, we also were sent to the Med when the Turks invaded Cyprus. I put a request form in to see the skipper and told him that I should be taken off the ship in case it got sunk so that my parents wouldn't lose two sons. I volunteered my brother to go as I had joined the Navy to see the world, not get my head blown off! The captain was not amused! (no sense of humour!) so finished my time on the Ghurka and was demobbed in 1975.

After leaving the Navy I decided I liked a drink so thought I might as well get paid for it and got a job as a drayman at

Musgrave & Sagar, working behind the bar at a local Working Men's Club on a night.

After 3 years I was offered a job in Insurance where I worked my way up to Manager, and was one of the top sales people in the company, winning awards for my achievements.

In 1993 I was diagnosed as having Oesophageal cancer. The prognosis wasn't very good, only 3% survived 2 years and of that 3% who survive 95% don't survive 5 years. I was asked if I would like to take part in a new Government experiment where they fastened the stomach to the throat. During the operation my vocal chord was cut by accident, which is why my voice is occasionally high pitched, I haven't turned queer!

After the operation it was touch and go whether I survived, and I was 5 days in intensive care, and six months in and out of hospital treating an infection on my spleen. The doctors said I wouldn't have survived if I didn't have such a strong heart. During this time I got very depressed, and my weight went from 15 stone to 8 stone, and I was skin and bone, and so weak that I had to be pushed around in a wheelchair..

My daughter, Natalie, was eleven at the time and she told my sister that her dad didn't smile anymore, and when I was told I was so hurt that I made a concerted effort to get well. I was determined that one day I would be able to give her away should she get married, as I couldn't bear to think of someone else taking my place.

One day Natalie asked me to draw a picture for her school project, and I told her that I liked to paint with pastels when I was at



school, so at Christmas 1994 she bought me a set of pastels and I started to paint. That first night I painted I slept all night for the first time in 2 years, and I have never stopped painting since.

The doctors were amazed that I started to put weight on, and then after 2 years they realised I wasn't going to die so they admitted me again to have the operation completed by stitching my stomach to my ribs to reduce the discomfort

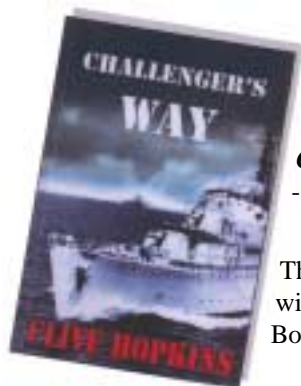
After surgery and treatment I took up painting as therapy to help me come to terms with my illness. I joined the local art club in 1997 and a year later Lorraine also joined, and we struck up a friendship. In 2001 our friendship turned into something more, and we have been together ever since. Lorraine is now my organiser, secretary, manager, agent (and chauffeur when I've had a drink - see likes and dislikes!), partner and fiancé, and I love her to bits! I have had a one-man show in Solihull, produced a limited edition print, and I have paintings in private collections worldwide. I also do demonstrations to raise money for various cancer charities, and have qualified as an Art Instructor and run day workshops and painting holidays.

My daughter Natalie got married in 2009 and giving her away was the proudest moment of my life, as I had not expected to live to see it.

#### Likes

Guinness, Painting, & more Guinness \*\* Screaming Kids, Margaret Thatcher & Tomatoes

#### Dislikes



## Book Offer

Written by Clive Hopkins (one of the Cavalier Volunteers) three excellent books are on offer to Association members. *Challenger's War* and *China Sea Challenger* (and new for 2010 - *Challenger's Way*) are based on a fictional C class destroyer.

They are just £8 each or £20 for the set of three - postage FREE within the UK. Just send cheque to Clive at 3 Boscobel Lodge, 16 Boscobel Road, St. Leonards on Sea, E. Sussex. TN38 0Y



## Treasurer's & Spirit Room Report



**Funds in Bank** Better than UK plc! We have adequate funds to cover expenses during 2010, thanks to all the vast majority of members who pay their subs. Not being a charitable institution, regrettably, we have had to cease sending newsletters to 2 members who have contributed nothing for a long time despite numerous reminders.

**Rum** - Enough for the next 2 reunions and the Association should shortly have its own Rum Tub!

### *Harry in the Spirit Room*

#### Slops

All profits go to Association funds  
Please make out cheques to **HMS Caprice 1968 Association**

#### Caprice Painting - Prints



Roy Johansen has given permission to reproduce prints of his painting that we auctioned at one of the reunions. Print Costs (inc P&P):

A4 in A3 Frame £25 - Print only £10  
We can quote for other sizes if required.  
Eg A3 print only £14.50

#### DVD Cruise of 1968

See Page 6

#### Wall Charts

Coloured map depicting the 1968 World Cruise and personalised with member's name £16 each inc postage within the UK. (£8 - unframed). Frames are as shown or in a curved perspex desk mount.



### Association Website

[www.hmscaprice1968.org.uk](http://www.hmscaprice1968.org.uk)

Our website is kept fully up to date and you can view newsletters online in colour. It has had nearly 7000 hits to date and attracted several new members. There is also a very good picture archive of the Caprice from 1943 until she was scrapped in 1979 and up to date Association & Reunion News.



# HMS Caprice (World Cruise 1968) Association

[www.hmscaprice1968.org.uk](http://www.hmscaprice1968.org.uk)

The Association, founded in 1995, is open to all who served on HMS Caprice at any time during her memorable 11 month World Cruise in 1968.

An annual subscription of £12 is payable in January.

## Secretary & Newsletter/Website Editor

*Graham Latter*

[gl@hmscaprice1968.org.uk](mailto:gl@hmscaprice1968.org.uk)

62 Mill Rise, Swanland, North Ferriby

East Yorkshire HU14 3PW

Tel/Fax **01482 632 276**

## Treasurer & Rum Bosun

*Brian Hobbs*

[bh@hmscaprice1968.org.uk](mailto:bh@hmscaprice1968.org.uk)

Bulwark Lodge, New Road, Acle Norfolk, NR13 3BE

Tel **01493 751 640**

**The 2010 Annual Reunion Dinner is on October 2nd 2010  
at the Portland Heights Hotel**

*Absent shipmates who have crossed the bar:*

### **Ex Association Members**

**AB (QA2) John Dunn RO2(T) Dave Windsor**

**ME1 Bob Harris LS Mick Walsh AB Dougie Richardson**

### **Ex Crew Members**

**LRO(G) Ali Dow RO2(G) Dave Matthews ChME Nick Carter**

**CEA Don Farrow CERA Paul Hockey PO Writer Dave Walters**

**ME1 Don Swain Lt. Peter Higgs**



*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,  
We will remember them*