

## THE BRITANNIA NAVAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

### BNRA Interim Calendar Autumn 2023

**Sunday October 15th Woodstock Town Hall Assembly Rooms  
10am Extraordinary General Meeting 'The Way Forward'**

Other Meetings Planned/Attended all start at 10am at the Town Hall

Date	Speaker	Title
17-Sep-23	Brian Hill	'Mr Bligh's Problem' a viewpoint on Bligh's voyages and commands.
17-Sep-23	Neil Datson	The Battle of May Island' : Steam powered submarines of WW1.
15-Oct-23	Extraordinary General Meeting	The Way forward for the BNRA
15-Oct-23	Paul Brown	Elizabeth's Navy- Seventy Years of the Post-War Royal Navy
15-Oct-23	Brendon O'Farrell	tba
19-Nov-23	Rob Brassington	"Some Guns mounted in late Victorian coastal defences"
19-Nov-23		tba
10-Dec-23	Sea Poetry and Mince Pies	
21-Jan-24	AGM	

For more details please contact John Foreman at  
[Treasurer@britannia-naval-research-association.com](mailto:Treasurer@britannia-naval-research-association.com)

Please note our website address has changed to:

**[www.britannia-naval-research-association.com](http://www.britannia-naval-research-association.com)**

[www.britannia-naval-research-association.com](http://www.britannia-naval-research-association.com)



#### ...From the Secretary/Vice Chair

Dear Member/Friend

As per my statement at the BNRA meeting of 17th September, due to personal commitments and my long standing service as Secretary of Sunday Meetings (in addition to my Secretary and Vice Chair roles) it is time for me to step back and allow others to take this role forward. With the variety of other pressures on the BNRA this is now also a time to reflect on how the association develops.

John Wain BNRA Secretary

#### ...From the Chairman

Dear Member

As a result of numerous pressures, we are facing some major changes in the BNRA. Rising costs and venue issues are part of these. This has necessitated moving the September Bear Meeting to Woodstock Town Hall. Despite the increased parking costs at Woodstock and the meeting room being on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, this proved to be a useful venue. However, discussions at the meeting and concerns of the committee have identified many other issues to discuss to agree a way forward to best meet member wishes.

**So please try and attend this extraordinary general meeting at Woodstock Town Hall at 10am (before the meeting presentations) on 15<sup>th</sup> October.** The latest BNRA Journal V8N4 is in the process of being printed and will be distributed shortly at the EGM.

We look forward to seeing you soon

... Dr Vaughan Michell, Chairman

**October – EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING**  
10am 15<sup>th</sup> October Woodstock Town Hall

A number of major changes and events have or will impact the BNRA going forward. As a result of these and discussions among the committee we wish to convene an extraordinary general meeting to identify with members the best way forward.

The BNRA faces a number of pressures:

- a) Increases in costs of meeting venues
- b) An increasingly elderly membership demographic despite excellent attempts by John Wain to secure younger members
- c) Increased ill health and family commitments that can reduce member attendance
- d) There are different ideas for moving forward
- e) The committee has been in post since founding in 2002 and has required increased commitment and work pressure. As a result the committee fully understands the need for all types of change, including roles, leadership etc

To avoid interaction with the meeting schedule, but ensure contact with members we plan to start the extraordinary general meeting at 10am at Woodstock Town Hall – the venue for our next meeting.. It is very important that you attend if possible as we need to discuss and make major changes.

Thank You Dr V Michell BNRA Chairman

**Change in Meeting Venue - No more Bear Meetings**

We have traditionally held our BNRA meetings from September to April at the Bear at Woodstock for the last 20 years. However, very large price increases at the Bear and also parking charges at Woodstock have resulted in the BNRA seeking an alternative venue that offers better value to members. This has resulted in a delay to the publication of the Journal as we are in the process of confirming the venue for the meetings in Woodstock as we go to press

**Woodstock Town Hall - Assembly Rooms**

The committee arranged to meet in September at the Town Hall in Woodstock as a temporary measure to test views of the venue.

**Future BNRA Meetings**

Going forward John Foreman has kindly arranged for meetings to continue at this new venue and has produced a draft timetable on page 1, based on the planned meetings.



### April Meeting at the Bear

The April meeting at the Bear continued the *HMS Ramillies* theme begun the previous month. John Foreman concentrated on the 4th *Ramillies*, a Royal Sovereign Class Battleship launched in 1892 and, with the help of Rob Brassington's 3-D animated video graphics and a short Pathé News clip, he explained how the loading and priming of the main armament differed from the later Dreadnoughts. Vaughan Michell followed on with a presentation on the 5th *Ramillies*, a *Revenge* Class Battleship launched in 1916, and highlighted the further advances in this area. John Wain then brought the ship to life with some of his father's photographs taken while serving in this ship during the 1930s. John Wain had also brought along a splendid presentation tompion from one of the ship's secondary guns. A 6th *Ramillies* was to have been a *Resolution* Class Submarine, ordered in 1964, but cancelled in 1965.

The ship's motto *Fidelis per res adversas* translates as *Faithful through Adversity*; In heraldry the hand is emblematic of faith.



The 5th *Ramillies* in dazzle camouflage by Charles Pears © the artist's estate. Photo credit: IWM (Imperial War Museums)

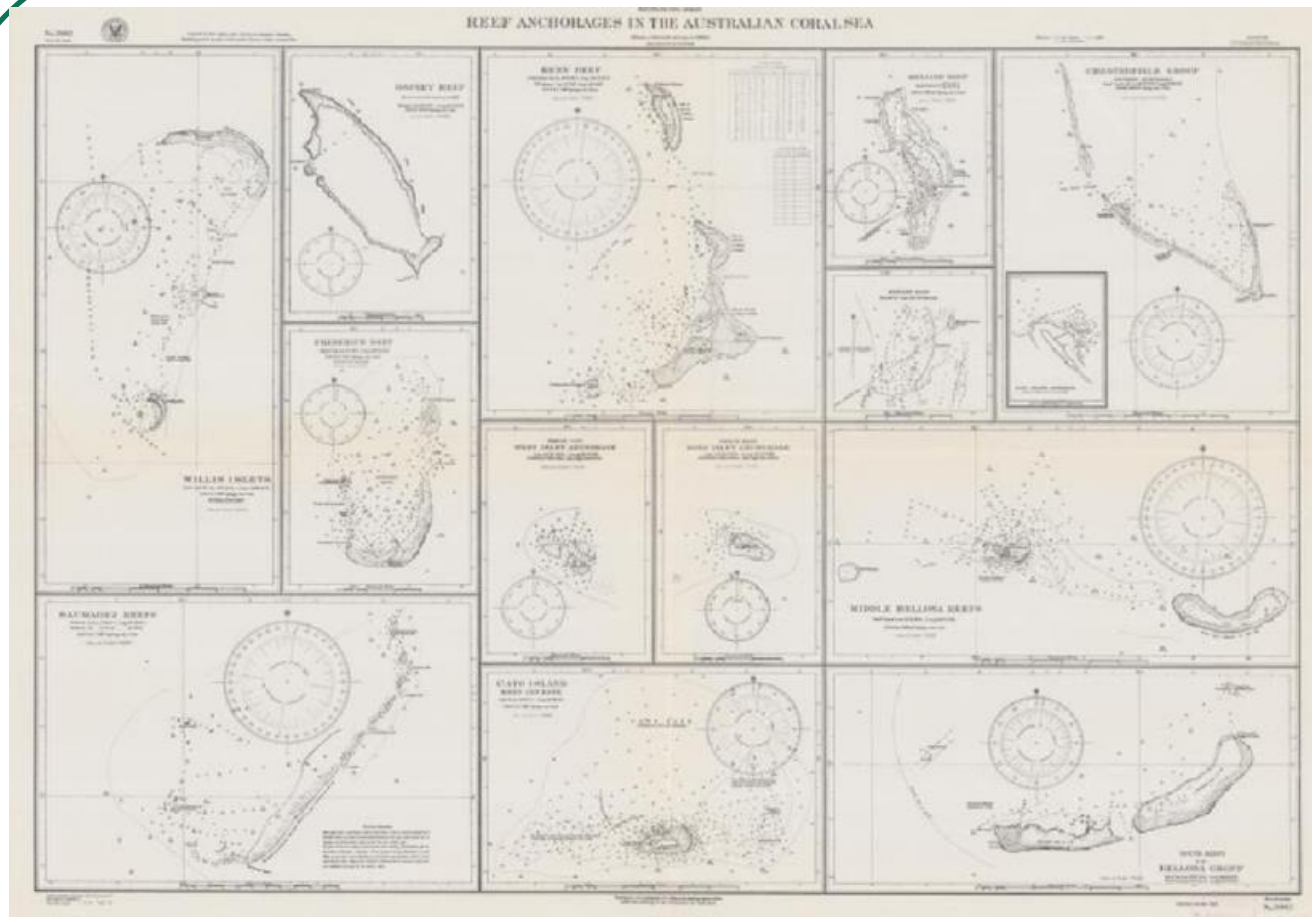
<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/dazzled-a-camouflaged-battleship-hms-ramillies-in-a-gale-of-wind-6169!>

### September Meeting at Woodstock Town Hall

The first meeting of the Autumn/Winter series took place in the first floor Assembly Rooms at the Woodstock Town Hall. We enjoyed two very interesting presentations, the first by Brian Hill questioning whether Captain William Bligh really deserves the reputation of a tyrant, overly keen to award the lash as punishment, an image made popular by Hollywood films; followed by Neil Datson who told us about the development of the Royal Navy's K-class steam-propelled submarines and, briefly in passing, about their involvement in the Battle of May Island in 1918.





**RESEARCH NOTES & QUERIES****Research Project - Navigating The Coral Sea**

I have been reading Eric Hiscock's *Beyond the West Horizon* which covers his second circumnavigation in his 30' sloop *Wanderer III*. Together with his wife, Susan, sailing the reef strewn waters between New Caledonia and New Guinea in 1961, he consulted two Admiralty charts for the area - No.2763 Coral Sea and Great Barrier Reef Sheet 1 and Reef anchorages in the Australian Coral Sea, both largely based on surveys made by Captain Henry Mangles Denham in his surveying ship *HMS Herald* one hundred years earlier. The larger scale chart carries the following General Remarks "These plans and a masthead look-out will enable a ship to round to under the lee of the reefs where (as under the Plymouth breakwater) she may caulk topsides, set up rigging, rate chronometers, obtain turtle, fish and seafoal eggs. On some of the more salient reefs beacons were erected by Capt. Denham, and for the sake of castaways, coco-nuts, shrubs, grasses and every description of seed likely to grow, were sown in the way to promote the superstructure; and it is most desirable that these refuge-spots should be held sacred for universal benefit and not ruthlessly destroyed by the guano-seeker."

The weather being uncertain, the Hiscock's did not stop to investigate. I briefly mentioned Captain Denham during my talk at the 2018 ONS and will now be diving deeper into his survey work in the Western Pacific.

More information here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coral\\_Sea\\_Islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coral_Sea_Islands)

Frances Miller (bateaudolfijn@hotmail.co.uk)

Image credits: All images are in the Public Domain unless otherwise credited.

## NOTES & QUERIES

### Book Recommendation

One of the books I have been reading over the Summer, or in this case re-reading, is Henry Swain's *Return to Murmansk* (Seafarer Books 1996). In 1990 the author sailed his 34' yacht *Callisto* to Murmansk, the first British yacht ever to do so. He had been there 45 years earlier as an Able Seaman (one of the three coxswains) serving in the corvette *HMS Lancaster Castle* escorting Arctic convoys. As Henry travels north, in warm sunshine with 24 hours of daylight, all the terrors of those winter trips through Arctic waters, with U-boats lurking below and Luftwaffe bombers overhead, come back to haunt him. An excellent account and very well written.

### BNRA Subscriptions

If you haven't yet paid your dues for 2023/24, the easiest way is by BACS transfer. The BNRA bank details are:

Single membership: £29.00.

The information needed to make your transfer is as follows:

Branch: Lloyds Carfax Oxon

Account Name: Britannia Naval Research Association

Sort Code: 30-94-04

Account No.: 01885668

When you have made your payment, please email both John Wain

(chinook1970@gmail.com) and John Foreman

(johnforeman@outlook.com) Treasurer so that they can update their records.

### HMS Victory Model

In August this year, 80 year old Oxfordshire resident Michael Byard put the finishing touches to his five foot model of *HMS Victory* begun 50 years ago. See this link:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-53579079>

### Early 20th Century Navy Lists

This is a very useful website if you are looking for details of upper deck personnel serving in Royal Navy ships in 1908.

[https://www.battleships-cruisers.co.uk/navy\\_lists.htm](https://www.battleships-cruisers.co.uk/navy_lists.htm)

Image credits: All images are in the Public Domain unless otherwise credited. Frances Miller (bateaudolfijn@hotmail.co.uk)

## NOTES & QUERIES

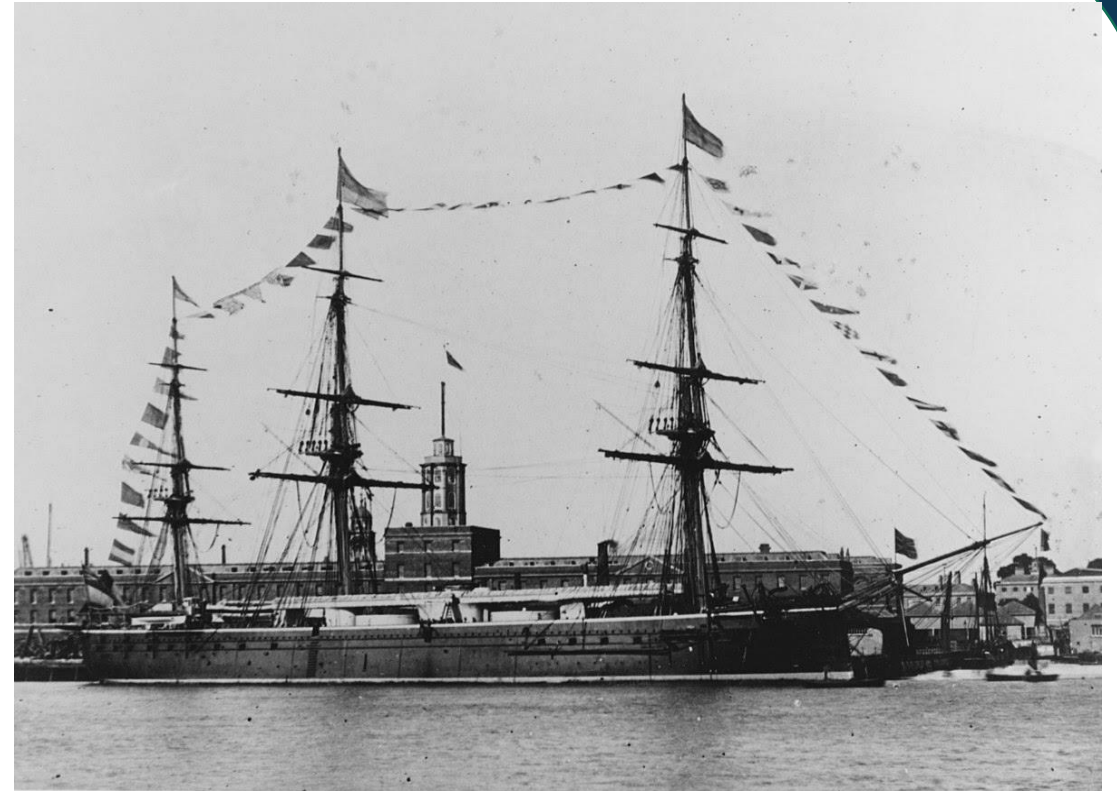
### Paul Brown's Christmas Quiz

#### Answers to Questions 11-15:

11. John Byng
12. Acting Captain (J S 'Fish' Dalglish for the 4 months prior to Flag Officer Royal Yacht, Vice Admiral Sir Conolly Abel Smith, who took over in Malta)
13. Commander
14. Foudroyant
15. Glamorgan

#### Questions 16-21

16. In what year was the rank of lieutenant commander introduced into the RN? a) 1908 b) 1930 c) 1914.
17. Which admiral secured a victory in the battle of Saintes, 1782?
18. Which fleet tug sank in the Firth of Forth in 1976?
19. Whose flagship at the battle of Sole Bay, 1672, was HMS Royal James?
20. What is the name of the newest Astute class submarine, fifth of the class?
21. In naval slang who was a 'killick'?



*HMS Monarch (1868)* was the first seagoing warship to carry her guns in turrets, and the first British warship to carry guns of 12-inch calibre.

[https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:HMS\\_Monarch\\_%281868%29\\_%2851071127412%29.jpg](https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:HMS_Monarch_%281868%29_%2851071127412%29.jpg)

Where questions, answers and links to maritime things can be shared with other members there. We include notifications of events that we do and others we decide you might be interested in. Links to films, comments and questions.  
See John Foreman & James Walters

#### BNRA Facebook Group

