



April 2018

Dear Shipmates and Members of the Association,

Presidents Letter of March 2018

I am looking forward to seeing you all in Bristol next September. We have been unable to arrange a separate dining room for our Gala Meal at the Reunion, I am sure we will have an excellent evening none the less. Luckily for me I am excused making a speech, so at least one person is in luck. It is great that we have so much support for the Association from our younger generation, us veterans have undoubtedly slowed down a bit, though we still do our best at the Bar. In particular we are most grateful to Trudy, Daughter of Eric and my Daughter, Gillian, for their good work in keeping the Association running. We have now survived the cold spell, I hope we can look forward to Spring Flowers and the Summer. Best wishes to you all, Stewart Hett

Our Welfare Officer Report

I would like to introduce myself as The Welfare Officer for the HMS Amethyst Association and proudly took on this role after our previous officer, Ray Kitto, sadly 'crossed the bar' in 2016. Ray carried out this role to perfection and I always knew he would be a hard act to follow!

I have been fortunate enough to attend many HMS Amethyst Re-unions, firstly with my parents, Joe and Edna Ferrett and from September 2012, just with mum after dad passed away in February 2012.

My dad, Joe Ferrett was aboard HMS Amethyst as Leading Signaller when it ran into difficulties in 1949 on the Yangtze River as the communists on the north bank of the river fired shells at the ship. The bridge suffered a direct hit along with other damage and the coxswain steering the ship from the wheelhouse, fell onto the wheel taking it round to port so that the ship became stuck in mud about 50 yards from the south bank. As the Chinese batteries continued to fire at the ship and she could not reply, men not required on board were instructed to leave the ship. About 60 men and all the wounded men remained on board. My dad swam for his life amidst shells landing in the water and believes he only made it safely as a Carley raft saw him, waited and picked him up.

My career has spanned 40 years in education, encompassing a wide variety of positions including peripatetic work teaching the clarinet in Enfield, North London, teaching music in a secondary boys school near Watford and at 3 different primary schools in Oldham, including Acting Head and retiring as a Deputy Head in December 2014. I had responsibility for the 'social' work of the school, specialising in Child Protection and Special Educational Needs. I thoroughly enjoyed my work throughout my career and feel it has certainly supported this role as the Welfare Officer. I have been married to Alan for nearly 6 years and I have 3 children and he has a son, from our previous marriages and we have 5 grandchildren. I sing in the Oldham Parish Church choir!

I feel enormously privileged to be let into the lives of those shipmates and friends I speak to throughout the year and thank everyone of them for finding the time to have a chat with me! I have learned so much more about the 'incident' from many different points of view and people have shared treasured memories, as well as their highs and lows and personal experiences connected with the ship and after. I feel this role has brought me closer to my dad and it has helped me piece together further information about the events in 1949. It has certainly become much more 'real' in my life and so much easier to understand just how courageous every single service man and woman has to be simply carrying out their chosen career path. We are indebted to them all.

Sally Johnson (Welfare Officer)



2018 Reunion

WHEN **Friday 14th — Sunday 16th September 2018.**

WHERE **Premier Inn Bristol Cribbs Causeway**, Catbrain Ln, Patchway, Bristol BS10 7TQ

RATE Two nights Dinner Bed & Breakfast: Single £196, Double £246. Parking is £3 per 24 hrs. These rates are special to us as a group and therefore Trudy will need names and payment by the last week of August to 1 Warton Lane, Austrey, Atherstone CV9 3EJ. 01827 830334 & email TrudyS@euroteck.co.uk
We will have a meal arranged for the Friday and our Gala meal on the Saturday. This year will be slightly different in that we will not be able to do speeches through dinner as a private dining room is not available. Trudy is looking for a small meeting room to congregate in after dinner.

HMS London Reunion 2018

Thinking of the future, we have discussed with Ian Noakes, chair of HMS London Association, the possibility of combining HMS London and HMS Amethyst Association reunions. This year Stewart Hett and Gillian will attend the HMS London Gala Dinner and their memorial service at the NMA. The reunion is at the Lea Marston Hotel on the 20th, 21st & 22nd of April, and HMS Amethyst members are invited to join them at all future reunions (always held at the same hotel in April).

Cenotaph 2018

Ian Noakes is co-ordinating The Four Ships Yangtze Incident contingent's application for tickets to this year's Cenotaph Parade. Those wishing to apply for tickets to represent The Four Ships please contact Gilly O'Reilly.

Crossed the Bar

Roy Frederic Harris sadly passed away peacefully on 25th December 2017. He was buried at St Margaret's Church, Pendine and afterwards his life was celebrated at 'The Springwell Inn'. Trudie and Stewart, Gillian and Keith attended. He will be sadly missed at our reunions.

The HMS London President, John Parker RM, sadly passed away just prior to Christmas. A celebration of his life was conducted in Portchester which was attended by large congregation of family, friends, The Royal Marines, The Royal British Legion, HMS London members, Stewart Hett, Gillian and Keith. A truly memorable service.

I am sure you will join me in my thoughts for John's and Roy's family and friends.

Membership

Membership £7.00; Widows £4.00. Subs due in January.

Committee

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