

HMS REPULSE & HMS PRINCE OF WALES

70TH ANNIVERSARY MEMORIAL SERVICE



ON A SAILOR'S GRAVE, NO ROSES GROW,
NO GRASS, NO STONE TO SHOW,
THE RESTING PLACE THAT WILL ALWAYS BE,
HIS BILLET IN THE SEA.

10TH DECEMBER 1941

.....
10TH DECEMBER 2011





CLARENCE HOUSE

I am delighted that a permanent monument is being established at the National Memorial Arboretum to honour the ships' companies of H.M.S. Prince of Wales and H.M.S. Repulse, who fought with such undaunted courage seventy years ago to safeguard British interests during the Second World War. I know that the Survivors' Association committee and many others have worked tirelessly to make this project a reality.

The sinking of these two capital ships assigned to the Force Z task force, which set sail from Singapore in 1941 to deter Japanese moves against British possessions, represented one of the largest losses of life ever suffered by the Royal Navy in a single action, with over 800 men lost. Worse was to come as most of the rescued were taken back to Singapore, which then fell to the Japanese land forces two days later and many of our men who survived the sea battle died in the Prisoner of War camps over the next four years.

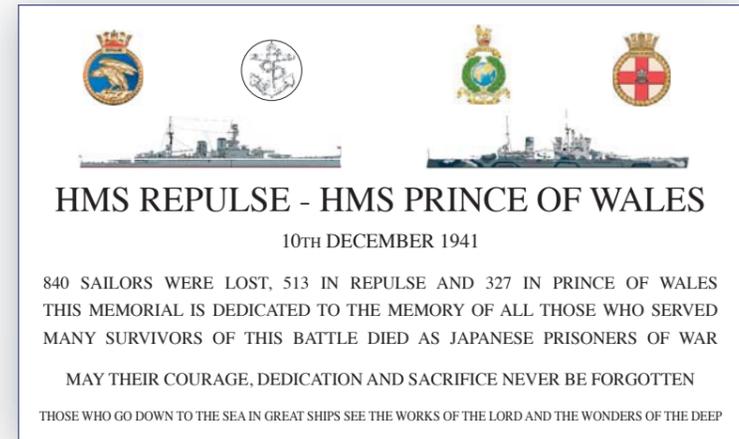
This was a tragic event in our Nation's history and these courageous men who served in both ships have earned a special place in our hearts. This new monument will provide a lasting tribute to their bravery and sacrifice for very many generations to come.

My wife and I send our warmest wishes to all the Association members and their relatives on this very special anniversary.



Charles

MONUMENT TO COMMEMORATE THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY



On this 70th anniversary of the sinking of our ships the HMS Repulse and HMS Prince of Wales, I offer this prayer on behalf of all of us:

I will extol Thee O Lord, for Thou hast drawn me up and has not let my foes rejoice over me.

Maurice Pink

Chairman, HMS Prince of Wales & HMS Repulse Survivors Association

Seventy years ago the Royal Navy lost two of its greatest warships. My thoughts today are with the relatives and loved ones of the 840 officers and men that were lost in the battle, and also with survivors of the action, both past and present. They are all heroes. Their individual sacrifices allowed future generations to enjoy a world of peace and freedom.

Alan Matthews

Son of Ted Matthews DSM, (HMS Repulse)

In April 2005 I took over as secretary of the Association after my father, Kenneth Byrne, HMS Prince of Wales, passed away. I had been attending the reunions for a few years and had got to know many of the survivors and their families. It was a great honour to be asked to take over the role and with the fantastic help of the survivors and the families the association has continued to carry on and hold the annual reunions. Without their help and support I don't think I would have managed and it is they that should take the credit for the continuation of the association.

70 years after the tragic events of 1941 we honour the courage of those young men who answered the call and stood up against tyranny. We remember the sacrifice that you made and pay tribute to those who did not come home.

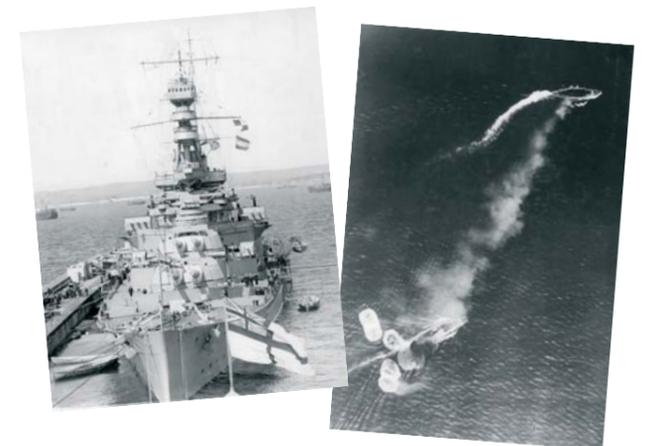
Michael W. Pocock (Dallas, Texas, USA)

www.maritimequest.com

I am very grateful to everyone for the help and support the Association has received this last year in raising the funding for the memorial. This memorial does not just commemorate the 70th anniversary of the loss of HMS Prince of Wales & HMS Repulse, it commemorates the lives of all the men who served onboard whose courage should be commemorated every day.

Hannah Rickard

Secretary, HMS Prince of Wales & HMS Repulse Survivors Association



ORDER OF SERVICE

Service led by Pastor Paul Owen

Service in memory of the men who lost their lives whilst serving their King and Country, aboard HMS Repulse and HMS Prince of Wales, 10th December 1941.

Hymn: Brightly beams our Father's Mercy

*Brightly beams our Father's mercy from His lighthouse evermore,
But to us He gives the keeping of the lights along the shore.
Let the lower lights be burning! Send a gleam across the wave!
For to us He gives the keeping of the lights along the shore.*

*Dark the night of sin has settled, loud the angry billows roar;
Eager eyes are watching, longing, for the lights, along the shore.
Let the lower lights be burning! Send a gleam across the wave!
Eager eyes are watching, longing, for the lights, along the shore.*

*Trim your feeble lamp, my brother, some poor sailor tempest tossed,
Trying now to make the harbour, in the darkness may be lost.
Let the lower lights be burning! Send a gleam across the wave!
Trying now to make the harbour, some poor sailor may be lost.*

Pastor: Almighty God, you have created us in your image and have called us to live in peace and mutual love. Forgive our sins and our failure to live according to your will; and give us grace to serve you, and our brothers and sisters for your sake. We make our prayer through him who died to reconcile the world to you, Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.

All: *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

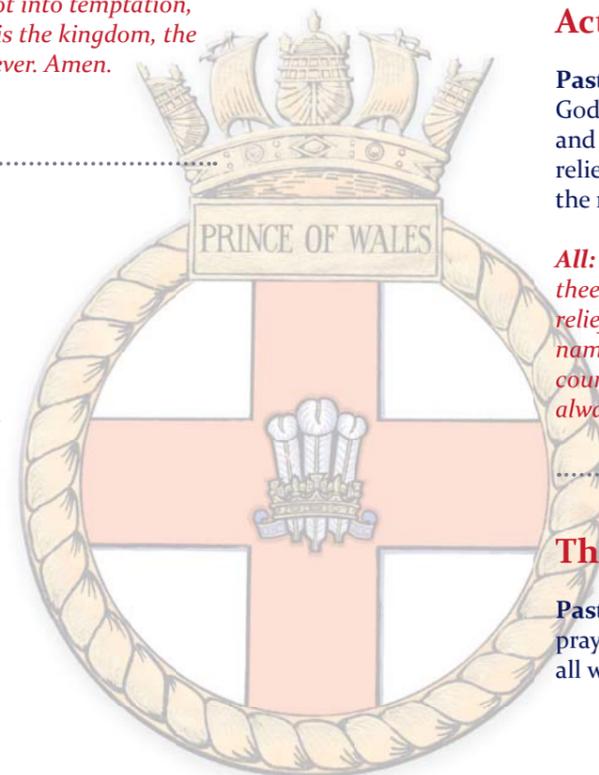
The Naval Hymn

*Eternal Father, strong to save, whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep Its own appointed limits keep:
O hear us when we cry to thee For those in peril on the sea.*

*O Christ, whose voice the waters heard And hushed their raging at thy word,
Who walkedst on the foaming deep, And calm amid the storm didst sleep;
O hear us when we cry to thee For those in peril on the sea.*

*Most Holy Spirit, who didst brood Upon the chaos dark and rude,
And bid its angry tumult cease, And give, for wild confusion, peace:
O hear us when we cry to thee For those in peril on the sea.*

*O Trinity of love and power, Our brethren shield in danger's hour;
From rock and tempest, fire and foe, Protect them wheresoe'er they go;
Thus evermore shall rise to thee Glad hymns of praise from land and sea.*



ORDER OF SERVICE

The Naval Prayer

Pastor: O eternal Lord God, who alone spreadest out of the heavens, and rulest the raging of the sea; who has compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end; be pleased to receive into thy almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us thy servants and the fleet in which we serve. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea, and from the violence of the enemy; that we may be a safeguard unto our most gracious sovereign lady, Queen Elizabeth and her dominions, and security for such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasion; that the inhabitants of our commonwealth may in peace and quietness serve thee our God; and that we may return in safety to enjoy the blessings of the land, with the fruits of our labours, and with a thankful remembrance of thy mercies to praise and glorify thy holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Royal Marines Prayer

Pastor: O Eternal Lord God, who through many generations hast united and inspired the Members of our Corps, grant Thy blessing we beseech Thee, on Royal Marines serving all around the globe. Bestow Thy crown of righteousness upon all our efforts and endeavours, and may our laurels be those of gallantry and honour, loyalty and courage. We ask these in the name of Him whose courage never failed, Our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

May the peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost be upon you and remain with you always.

UPON THE UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT

Act of Commitment

Pastor: Let us pledge ourselves anew to the service of God and our fellow men: that we may help, encourage and comfort others and support those working for the relief of the needy and for the peace and welfare of the nations.

All: *Lord God our Father we pledge ourselves to serve thee and all mankind in the cause of peace, for the relief of want and suffering and for the praise of thy name. Guide us by thy Spirit: give us wisdom, give us courage, Give us hope and keep us faithful now and always. Amen.*

Act of Remembrance

Pastor: Let us remember before God and commend to his sure keeping those who have died for their country in war; those we knew and whose memory we treasure; and all who have lived and died in the service of mankind.

They shall not grow 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.

All: *We will remember them.*

The Last Post - The Silence - Reveille - Laying of wreaths

Pastor: Almighty and eternal God from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted either by death or life: hear our prayers and thanksgivings for all whom we remember this day; fulfil in them the purpose of thy love, and bring us all with them to Thine eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WE WERE THERE ... AND WE CAME BACK

Charles (Shiner) Wright

HMS Prince of Wales

I joined the Royal Navy at Devonport in November 1935. In December 1940 I was sent to Birkenhead in the advance party and joined HMS Prince of Wales which was still with the builders, Cammell Laird. I was in charge of the starboard aft 5.25-inch gun turrets. At 1730 hours on the 8th December 1941 we sailed from Singapore with the Repulse accompanied by the destroyers Express, Electra, Vampire and Tenedos. Lack of protection from the air was very worrying but we just had to pray that our luck held out.

We were heading for Singora on the east coast of Thailand towards the Malayan border to arrive there on 10th December. On 9th December rain and low-lying cloud meant we would be hard to spot from the air, but during the evening the weather cleared, providing good visibility for enemy aircraft and we were sighted. We had lost the element of surprise and as soon as it was dark, we turned and made for Singapore once more. At midnight, the ship received a signal that the Japanese were landing at Kuantan, 150 miles down the east coast of Malaya. The captain changed course and we made for Kuantan to support the army in Malaya. At about 1845 hours however the Repulse reported a reconnaissance plane and we went to action stations. When we reached Kuantan, there was no sign of any Japanese landing. A false alarm or misinformation perhaps. We steamed east again before turning south towards Singapore.



At about 1100 hours, nine of the 86-strong Japanese high-level and torpedo bomber 22nd Air Flotilla arrived overhead and attacked the Repulse. The crew of the Repulse and our men fired together. A bomb hit the Repulse and damaged her, causing a large number of casualties and starting a blaze on the catapult deck. Another wave of nine bombers attacked and this time it was our turn. A torpedo hit gun turrets P3 and P4. Gun magazines were flooded and the ship listed to port. We lost half our speed and our steering gear was so badly damaged that it could not steer the ship, which was out of control. Nearly all the 5.25-inch guns were out of action and the loss of the dynamos meant that many of the ship's pumps were not working.

Whilst we were in action there was no time to dwell on our fears; discipline held, morale was high and we stuck to our jobs. The full story of the bravery of individuals and work teams may never be told. At 1220 hours there was the first of two more torpedo bomber attacks on both ships. This time the Repulse was fatally wounded and sank within 10 minutes with a heavy loss of life.

On our ship, the rudder and three of the four propellers were out of action and power; hydraulics were gone. Amazingly she still managed to stay afloat and even to make between five and eight knots - but not for much longer. The only high-level bombing strike hit the ship soon after near the S3 turret, causing many casualties, although failing to pierce our armoured deck. When the order was given to go up on deck, we only had to look at the utterly exhausted stokers and other crew members who were emerging from below in the engine rooms to grasp the true nature of things. The ship was listing worse than ever and the port side of the quarter deck was virtually under water.

We prepared to abandon ship...



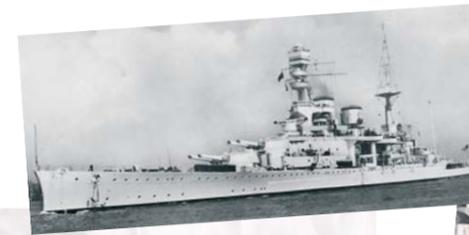
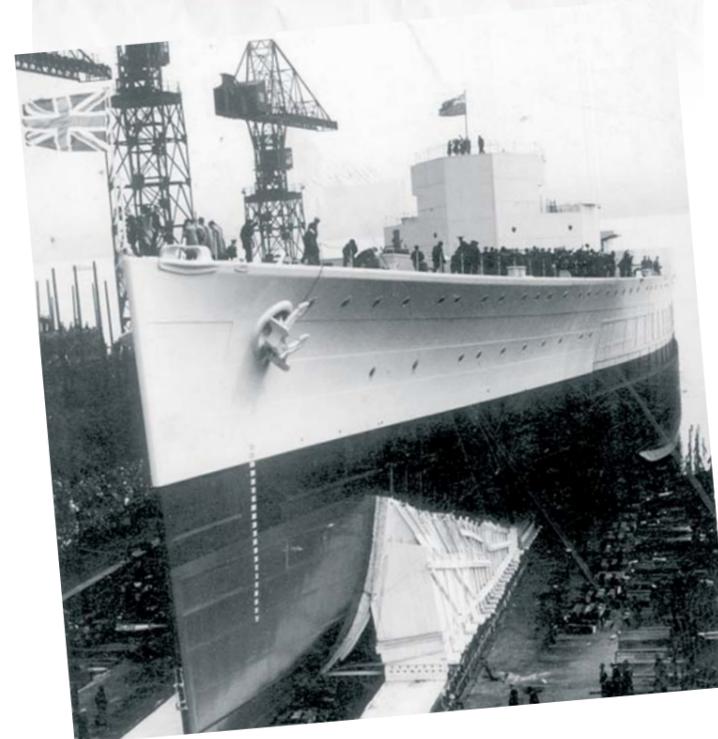
Kenneth Byrne

HMS Prince of Wales

Kenneth Byrne joined the Royal Navy in 1940, training at St. Georges and then joining HMS Drake where he met Tommy Green, Eric Noel and Alan McIvor. Ken was posted to HMS Prince of Wales in February 1941 as a loader on P3 gun.

When the call came to abandon ship his gun was still firing and continued to do so. The officer in charge told him to go and he went to the side where HMS Express was but was afraid of walking over the boards to the Express because the ships kept separating and men were falling between them and being crushed. He eventually went to the other side, jumped in and swam for his life and was later picked up by HMS Express. On returning to Singapore he was assigned various jobs until being evacuated in February 1942 on the USS Westpoint.

Ken stayed in the Royal Navy until 1962 retiring as a Petty Officer. In 1991 when the Survivors' Association was formed he was appointed Secretary and served in this role until he passed away in March 2005, when his daughter Hannah took over as Secretary.



Ron Gartside

HMS Repulse

I joined HMS Repulse as a boy seaman in late 1940. My action station was in the aloft 15 inch director up in the fighting top of the foremast. On 10th December 1941 I was asleep in the shade of "A" Turret when the alarm sounded 'repel aircraft'.

I looked up and saw very high up nine aircraft in three-three formation. I dived into "A" Turret just in case and there was a terrific noise as a stick of bombs fell all around us with one direct hit somewhere amidships.

Then came the torpedo bombers from all directions, the guns were all in action with terrific noise and the ship was steaming flat out and zigzagging, but eventually we were hit by five torpedoes one after the other and the ship began to list rapidly. I made my way forward but lost my footing and slid down into the sea wave which was breaking onto the upper deck and I was washed clear. I swam well clear then turned and watched Repulse first roll over keel up then rear her bows high in the air before she plunged to the bottom of the South China Sea.

I swam for about half an hour until I was picked up the destroyer HMS Electra and taken to Singapore where I was put in hospital for a foot injury. After a few weeks in the naval base where we were bombed daily I was taken off in the American transport ship USS Westpoint to Sri Lanka where I joined the cruiser HMS Dorsetshire. Six or Seven weeks later on the 5th April 1942 she was dive-bombed and sunk in the Indian Ocean, those who survived floated around for two days till we were found, but that's another story!



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A huge

THANK YOU

to everyone who helped in the preparation of this commemorative brochure, including:

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www.maritimequest.com

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Jack Ingle for the underwater photos

All the amazing survivors of 10 December 1941 for their stories and photos

Tudur Richards and Peter Morgan of Accent ADC

Brochure sponsored by Stephen & Sharon Pink and Clive & Helen Pink
Brochure prepared by Sharon Pink

HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse Survivors' Association

For detailed information about the ships, the crews and all related events,
together with a discussion forum, visit www.forcez-survivors.org.uk

Contact email: secretary@forcez-survivors.org.uk

Peter Morgan (Accent ADC)

Son of Glyn Derwyn Morgan

It is a privilege to contribute to the production of this memorial brochure. My father Glyn Derwyn Morgan (1922-2001), AB Gunnery and Signals, served for five years aboard HMS Illustrious during WW2, receiving the Atlantic, Italy, Africa and Burma Stars (Burma with Pacific clasp). He survived the war including six months bombardment aboard ship in Valetta harbour, Malta. His ship's severe damage by German and Italian aircraft in the Mediterranean required total refit in the USA leaving him and the crew in South Africa until Illustrious' return to active service.