



On 20 April 1949, **HMS Amethyst** was on passage to assume duties as guard ship for the British Embassy in Nanking. As she approached Kiangyin she came under sustained fire from a Chinese PLA battery. At the close of the action 22 men had been killed and 28 wounded. **Amethyst** received over 50 hits.

Lieutenant Commander John Kerans, joined the ship on 22 April and assumed command of the ship that day.

Amethyst remained under guard by the PLA for ten weeks. Vital supplies were withheld whilst **Lt Cdr Kerans** refused to admit that the British had wrongly invaded Chinese waters.

On 30 July 1949 **Amethyst** slipped her chain and began a 104-mile dash for freedom down the Yangtze running the gauntlet of guns on both banks of the river.

At 0525 she met the destroyer Concord, at which point **Amethyst** sent the famous signal "Have rejoined the fleet south of Woosung. No damage. No casualties. God save the King".

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**Commander John Kerans, DSO RN
&
H.M.S. Amethyst 1949**

**Commemoration
by
Reigate Branch Royal Naval Association**

St Peter's Churchyard, Tandridge

Sunday 21 July 2019





Commander **John Simon Kerans** DSO RN MP (30 June 1915 – 12 September 1985) was a Royal Navy officer and later a Conservative Party politician. He also wrote *The World's Greatest Sea Adventures*.

He was Assistant British Naval Attaché in Nanking, China in 1949, and commanded HMS Amethyst during her daring escape down the Yangtze River.

For his part in the action, Cdr Kerans was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

2019 sees the 70th anniversary of this historic chapter in the history of the Royal Navy. An event which the Reigate Branch of the Royal Naval Association is proud to remember today coupled with the names of Cdr Kerans, the crews of HMS Amethyst and of HM Ships Black Swan, Consort and London.

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Programme

Commemoration, HMS Amethyst & Cdr John Kerans DSO RN

Parade Fall In

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Address

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Prayers

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Bugle - 'Last Post'

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One minute's silence

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Bugle - 'Reveille'

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Wreath laying

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Close

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Dismiss

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