

# HMS Amethyst Association Newsletter



## President's Letter

First of all let me wish you all a very happy 2016.

It is thanks to Eric and Trudy that the Association remains in good health. Once more they organised an excellent Reunion in Swindon, which is described later on in this News Letter. Number were down slightly but this is not surprising considering the Yangtze Incident occurred nearly 67 years ago.

Once more I was able to join a small contingent of Veterans at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday, an event covered elsewhere in this News Letter.

I am due to watch TS AMETHYST, our Sea Cadets at their annual Inspection in May and to attend their AGM in June; I will be able to update you all on the state of the unit next Reunion.

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Ray Kitto, our hardworking Welfare Officer and acting Sin Bosun. I have written to his wife, Pat, and sent her and her Family our condolences on her great loss.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our next Reunion

Good Luck and Best Wishes to you all

*Stewart Hett*

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## 2016 Reunion

We are pleased to announce that the 2016 reunion will be held on Friday 16th — Sunday 18th September 2016 at The Novotel, (Nottingham Derby) Long Eaton (M1 Junction 25) NG10 4EP. We will have a meal arranged for the Friday and our Gala meal on the Saturday. Dinner bed and breakfast rate is £168 for two nights single and £228 for double.

Rooms can be booked by emailing Trudy  
TrudyS@euroteck.co.uk

Trudy is sending information by letter to members on her list.

All welcome!

## Simon Ships Out

A recently published Simon's story in a version for children age approximately 8 to 11. It is an abridged version of the original, with content amended appropriately for children of that age.

[www.amazon.com/dp/B01AYTZ54C](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B01AYTZ54C)



## Remembrance Sunday at The Cenotaph 2015



The Four Ships Contingent paid tribute at the Cenotaph to the Men who lost their live on the Yangtze in April 1949, on Sunday 8 November 2015. There were 18 of us on parade and including three 1949 Veterans, John Dibden, Dennis Knibbs and Stewart Hett. Mick Goddard

complete with a full set of beard took charge of then parade. Apart from a light spatter of rain at 0930, the weather was mild and dry. Sadly the BBC did not focus on our contingent, though our name was mentioned by the Commentator.

## Sea Cadet Unit TS AMETHYST

Last October 4 Cadets from TS AMETHYST were able to join TS ROYALIST in October 2015 using the donation which we gave to the unit. Terry Atkins, CPO (SCC), Commanding Officer of the Welwyn And Hatfield unit wrote:

"Everyone of them thought it a truly outstanding experience,, and I would like to thank you personally for your donation to help these young cadets have the time of their lives living afloat for the week. I intend to send another 5 cadets this October ".



## AMETHYST Association 2015 Reunion

18 to 20 September, Mercure Swindon South Marston Hotel

Once again Trudy and Eric have organised a fine weekend for the Association. Numbers were a bit down this year but the Yangtze Veterans were well supported by family and friends.

We assembled in the bar on Friday for a drink and a chat before an enjoyable Carvery Supper was served in the Restaurant. We had a quick committee meeting before supper to sort out the details of the weekend. After supper we held the AGM (We could not follow the normal practice of a Saturday AGM because there was a wedding party staying in the hotel and a room could not be made available on Saturday)

We started the AGM with a minutes silence for those who had died since our last meeting. The meeting then followed the usual lines, the Minutes of the last meeting were agreed; the financial report with cash in hand of £4,380 was also agreed. Stewart briefly summarised his various points of contact over the past year and it was agreed that the

next Reunion would be 16 to 18 Sep 2016 at Torquay if Trudy can find us a suitable hotel there.

We all assembled in the evening for our formal dinner. Jim Bryson, a local man arrived with his family and boosted our numbers to 24 for dinner. Trudy had organised an excellent meal. The Standard tot of rum was served for our Loyal Toast, Stewart said a few words and presented Trudy with an Amethyst Orchid as a thank you for all her hard work. Then there was the raffle. Many of the diners managed to get a prize and the Association made a profit. After dinner we sat around the table or moved into the bar and mixed in with the wedding party for drinks and a good chinwag.

On Sunday morning we held our traditional Service. Our Sin Bosun was unable to join us. Ray Kitto our acting Sin Bosun, prepared an excellent Order of Service. Sally Johnston very kindly played the piano so we could sing with gusto. Eric read the Roll of Honour followed by two minutes Silence. The secret that it was Stewart's birthday was leaked and as a finale Sally played "Happy Birthday to Stewart" which brought our weekend Reunion to a close. Stewart then rushed back home for a family Birthday Lunch.

## Yangtze Incident Field of Remembrance Badge

We have displayed a four Ships Badge in the Westminster Garden of Remembrance for several years and our standing Order has now expired. The Garden of Remembrance is open for a few days on either side of Remembrance Sunday in November each year.

The contract has been renewed for a further 5 years, so the badge will be displayed in the Garden until November 2021. Let us hope someone will be around to renew the contract in 2021.

## Committee and Officers

President	Stewart Hett
Chairman	Eric Mustoe
Secretary/Treasurer	Trudy Sampson
Sin Bosun	Raymond James
Welfare Officer	
Newsletter	Gilly O'Reilly
Other members	Andy Maynard, John Roberts

## Membership

The subscription fee for membership is £7.00 (widows £4.00), although many members send more than this as the membership fees are our major source of funds. Subs are due in January. Please send to Trudy at Trudy Sampson, 1 Warton Lane, Austrey, Atherstone CV9 3EJ. 01827 830334 tryudysam@btinternet.com

## Maritimequest Website

Database of naval ships and history  
[www.maritimequest.com](http://www.maritimequest.com)

## Crossed the Bar

Sadly we have some shipmates who have crossed the bar

**Victoria Critchley Dec 2015**

**William James 2 Apr 2016**

Sadly, Taff James died on 2 April. Stewart, Gillian, Trudy and Colin all attended Taff's cremation. The Chapel was full and the Welsh voices flooded the room with glorious sounds as the congregation joined in the hymns. After the Cremation, we had a lovely drive through the Valleys to Taff's home village where we were entertained at for his local



Rugby Club. Taff was a regular at our Reunions and we will always remember his cheerful presence and magnificent singing voice.

**Ramon George Kitto 7 April 1934 to 15 March 2016**

Sadly, Ray Kitto our Welfare Officer has died. Stewart, Gillian, Trudy and Colin attended a moving funeral service for



Ray on 4 April. It was a very full church and Ray's coffin was led by a server carrying his Policeman's helmet, covered with the police flag and bore a single red rose and his Long Service police medal. Ray was a devout Churchman and led a life dedicated to helping us all, particularly children and old aged pensioners. In his youth he served for a brief time in Chatham Dockyards and was there when HMS LONDON returned in 1949 after the Yangtze Incident. He joined the RAF and served in the RAF Ceremonial Drill squad which performed all over the UK including at the Cenotaph. After completing National Service with the RAF, Ray joined the police and served his full 22 years. Ray served with the scouts, helped at Darby and Joan Clubs, driving for disabled children and many other social support organisations. As the AMETHYST Association Welfare Officer he did a wonderful job telephoning widows and those in ill health to keep them in touch with the Association

With Pat, Ray had two children, a disabled son who died young and a daughter who predeceased him. He leaves Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren.