

OXFORD URNU ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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Maritime Capability Trials and Assessments (MCTA) Engineering Acquaint Week - Words by Mid Nick Chrumka



On 15 Jan 18 Mid Nick Chrumka started a week long engineering acquaint with MCTA. He was integrated into Team 2, headed up by Lt Cdr David Joyce MBE, who looks after T45 Destroyers, the new Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carrier as well as other large capital ships to ensure their readiness for sea. The week gave Mid Chrumka a fantastic insight into how the team conduct engineering assessments with day one being a crash course on the power generation on board HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH. This included the large Rolls Royce gas turbines through to the large diesel backup generator and the 13 high voltage transformers on board delivering 440V to the

Ship's vast array of dependant equipment. The second day started with a look at the Ship's propulsion system and the 4 large electric motors that drive the 2 huge propellers capable driving the Ship at up to 25 knots. Later that day HMS DAUNTLESS, a T45 Destroyer, 'docked down' preparing for refit. Mid Chrumka was also given an in depth tour of the hull underneath the Ship whilst tagging along with Marine Engineer Young Officers from HMS Sultan. Midweek he was given a tour of the Maritime Autonomous Systems Trials Team (MASTT) by Lt Cdr Honeybell. The following day was Weapon Engineering focused looking into the weapon and control systems on board HMS DAUNTLESS. Mid Chrumka said: "The week saw a packed programme of acquaints fit for a budding engineer which was far outside the usual remit of the URNU training programme". 2018 is the Year of Engineering in the RN. Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).



Flying visit with 845 Naval Air Squadron - Words by SLt Cate Moore



845 Naval Air Squadron is one of 3 squadrons that form the Commando Helicopter Force (CHF), a specialist amphibious Unit operating the Merlin HC3/HC3A helicopter that provides troop transport and load lifting support to the Royal Marines. The Officer Cadets (OCdts) were given a presentation by the Ops Officer Lt Olly Everett RN detailing the role of the Squadron, the CHF, recent

operations and the future role of the Unit. During the presentation the OCdts asked many questions about the Fleet Air Arm and the opportunities available as aircrew in the RN. After lunch in the Wardroom and a slight delay imposed by the Met Office the OCdts donned helmets and visors to experience a flight in one of the Merlin HC3 helicopters with Lt Everett RN, Lt Howie RN, PO Holden and Sgt Thomson of 845 Naval Air Squadron. Each OCdt had the opportunity to venture onto the open rear loading ramp mid-flight secured to a dispatcher strap – not something you would normally be able to experience in the civilian world! Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).



Prime Minister's Questions - Words by CPO Gary Maskell



When the Coxswain of the Oxford University Royal Naval Unit first spoke to OCdt Ben Fernando about his studies, he did not expect him to talk about Parliament and future aspirations of becoming a Minister. He was then offered the chance to go to Prime Minister's Questions at the House of Commons by OCdt Fernando. On a very chilly, windy and white morning (it happened to be the worst day of the snow in London!), CPO Maskell ventured up to London to meet OCdt Fernando at the House of Commons. They took the long walk through the main hall passing ministers and tourists alike. Once at the doors to the House of Commons they

were led upstairs to the viewing gallery above the politicians and were led to their seats. Within minutes the Prime Minister came out and was presented with ministerial statements and varying questions from representatives of varying boroughs. CPO Maskell said, "This is a unique experience that is well worth attending at least once. It gave me a new perspective of the environment of the politicians. I did get some strange looks as I walked through the main hall in my No1 uniform though!". Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).

WE Branch Managers and Mine Clearance Divers visit the Unit



On 8 Feb 18 the Weapon Engineering General Service and Submarine Service Branch Managers, Lt Cdr Paul Maddison and Lt Cdr Ivor Mcquaid, visited the Unit to brief the Officer Cadets on the great opportunities available to the potential WE graduate officers among them. The comprehensive presentation covered the role of Weapon Engineer Officers and an in depth explanation of the 2 and a half year training pipeline. The brief also showcased the many benefits afforded

to graduates leaving university to join the Weapon Engineering Branch including City & Guilds awards, Chartered Engineer status, MSc opportunities and the joining bonus. After the presentation was concluded the Branch Managers opened the floor to many questions from the Officer Cadets. For the second period of evening training RN Mine Clearance Diving Officers from Southern Diving Unit briefed the Unit on their role. OIC Team 2, Lt Cdr Jonny Campbell, and OIC Team 1, Lt James Oxley RN, briefed the Unit on Military Diver training, Explosive Ordnance Disposal and recent operations. They also demonstrated some of the world class equipment they use which afforded the opportunity for some of the Officer Cadets to dress in 'the bomb suit' and diver helmet. Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).



New Entry Sea Weekend – Words by OCdt Billy Ward



On the 19 Jan 18, the New Entry Officer Cadets of the Oxford URNU arrived at HMNB Portsmouth where they would embark on their first sea weekend. After some preparatory chart work they got their heads down on board HMS SMITER for an early start the next day. With call the hands at 0630 each member was able to take part in the Colours Ceremony before HMS SMITER departed. Officer Cadet Nikhil Daas' "Carry On" pipe attempt was certainly something to remember! The Unit enjoyed some fair weather for the first day, learning how to navigate effectively whilst at sea, taking bearings from landmarks and plotting fixes on charts. They took part in some of the daily operations performed by the Ship's Company, including learning to tie knots

and secure the ropes on board the Ship. Each member also had a turn at being the Helmsman with help from the Officer of the Watch. The weather on the final day was not as kind as the first and despite early determination to proceed on with the plan of the day the Ship had to unfortunately had to head back early due to the turbulent weather. A final clean down of the Ship completed the New Entry Sea Weekend with the group heading back to the Oxford URNU shortly afterward. Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).

OCdt Sea Time with HMS OCEAN - Words by OCdt Luke Harris



On 17 Jan 18 Midshipman Emily O'Donovan, OCdt Emily Herbert and OCdt Luke Harris went to sea in HMS OCEAN for a week to observe the aviation training and to spend time with each department on board. After observing the leaving harbour brief the first day on board for the OCdts was with the Weapon Engineering Department which saw them accompany the Deputy Weapon Engineer Officer who conducted magazine rounds. It was remarkable for them to see the vast spaces within the Ship that can hold enough ammunition to sustain a company of Royal Marines ashore for a month! Next, the focus turned towards the Ship's main role as a LPH with

an in depth look at the helicopters on board. The OCdts observed operations from the Flyco as 27 Squadron RAF embarked along with their Chinooks. The next few days saw the OCdts undertake a whirlwind programme packing in everything from watching a Standard Manoeuvre from the Bridge to learning how to play Uckers in the Wardroom to a Task Book session in the Met Shack with the SMETO who happened to be an ex Oxford URNU OCdt. They were also given the unique opportunity to tour the Flight Deck with the Air Operations Officer which included Chinooks and Merlins landing and taking off just feet away! As potential warfare officers, Mid O'Donovan and OCdt Harris had several opportunities to con the huge Warship. OCdt Emily Herbert said: "My dad served on board as a Royal Marine when the Ship was newly built and given the family connection to the Ship I am extremely pleased that I had the opportunity to also experience time at sea with HMS OCEAN before she leaves the Royal Navy". The URNU visitors also had the opportunity to attend HMS OCEAN's last ever church service at sea. Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).



OCdt sea time in HMS MONTROSE - Words by OCdt John Hawke



MONTROSE had just left refit, meaning that she was undergoing a series of sea trials as part of her preparations for deployment. This was a great opportunity to see many of the Ship's systems put through their paces, primarily the propulsion and steering systems, machinery breakdown drills, and other exercises. The Ship also undertook some work on the 4.5" Gun, Magnetic Signature Ranging, gunnery serials, man overboard drills and fire fighting. OCdts Tom Davis and Luke Harris have also since had the opportunity to spend time at sea with MONTROSE. Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).

Damage Repair Instruction Unit (DRIU) training – Words by OCdt Tom Murphy



The Unit undertook training at the HMS Excellent's DRIU (pronounced 'drew') where they would be subject to a simulation of a damaged ship. The forenoon was spent learning about primary damage control equipment; everything from hammering wooden wedges into place to stem leaks through to moving an aqua prop between decks safely to secure a hole in the deck. The group took post and listened to a simulated missile strike over the main broadcast. They discovered a flooded

compartment and were greeted at the bottom of the ladder by 4ft and rising water. The group dealt with a variety of water ingress points and after initially stemming holes in the bulkhead, a hole in the deck requiring one OCdt to dive under the water held down by another to get a wedge in place and securing a leaking hatch a piped was made - "BRACE BRACE BRACE"... a second missile strike! Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).



Easter Deployment - Words by OCdt John Hawke



The deployment took HMS SMITER across much of the North-Western European coast including Boulogne, Zeebrugge and Scheveningen with harbour days in Antwerp and Amsterdam. It was a great opportunity to build upon seamanship training conducted at drill nights with OCdts taking part in all aspects of running the Ship, be it as Officer of the Watch, Helmsman, carrying out chart work or line work with the Navigator's Yeoman. There were even some impromptu serials when HM Coastguard used the Ship as a platform for winch training!



Type 23 Frigate Engineering Visit to HMS ARGYLL and HMS RICHMOND in HMNB Devonport



Lt Steve Jones RN from T23 COM hosted the Unit for the visit and shortly after arriving on board HMS ARGYLL the group were taken on a tour of the engine spaces by the AMEO who gave an in depth explanation of how the Ship's propulsion systems function. Seeing HMS ARGYLL as a fully functioning warship perfectly set the context for the next stage of the visit as the group saw HMS RICHMOND in refit at the Frigate Support Centre. HMS RICHMOND was approximately 18 months behind HMS ARGYLL in the Ship's life cycle and the difference in material state was remarkable. The group were taken on a fascinating dock bottom tour prior to walking them through the many compartments on board the Ship. After some dockyard 'Oggys' the group then headed to HMS Courageous for a tour led by Mr Jim McDonald, a former Oxford URNU Coxswain. HMS Courageous is a decommissioned Nuclear Attack Submarine which was part of the Fleet from 1971-1992 and is the only museum of its kind in the UK. Full RN Website article at the following [Link](#).



CO's Address: It's been another busy term for the Unit with many diverse visits and training opportunities taking place. I look forward to a packed Summer Term programme with many more broadening opportunities planned for the Officer Cadets leading up to an exciting Summer Deployment.

Lieutenant Will Jones Royal Navy
Commanding Officer Oxford URNU



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