

**HMS NORTHUMBERLAND
AFFILIATES NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN/WINTER 2015**

It's once again a pleasure to write to you with an update on the Ship's activities over recent months.

After a busy and highly productive summer period, HMS Northumberland returned to her base port in Devonport. The Ship took the opportunity of a period alongside to complete maintenance and husbandry after a busy time running at sea. We have also begun to place an increased emphasis on training, providing a platform to enable the rapid development of embarked classes of junior Engineering Technicians.

October 27th saw the Captain and the Officers of the Wardroom celebrate the anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar. An evening of food and good company in order to remember the Royal Navy's victory over the combined French and Spanish Navies in 1802, led by Admiral Lord Nelson. The guest of honour Dr Stephen Prince from the Royal Naval Historical Branch provided a thoroughly entertaining perspective on this momentous event in his after-dinner speech.

Shortly following this, the Ship celebrated her birthday, 21 years after being accepted into Royal Naval Service in 1994. As many of you are aware she was built by Swan Hunter in 1992 on the Tyne at Wallsend. She was launched by her sponsor Lady Kerr, wife of Admiral Sir John Kerr GCB DL, the former Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command, in April 1992. The Ship's Company marked the occasion with tea and cake, with the latter having been baked especially by the Chefs of HMS Raleigh.



Cdr Kohn cuts the birthday cake with the youngest member of the Ship's Company, ET Farrell



21st Birthday Party

However the last few months haven't all been a period of celebration, with the Ship's Company training hard in preparation for our return to sea. The Bridge team have been honing their navigational skills in the Bridge simulator at HMS Collingwood, which displays a fidelity that can easily convince an observer that they are physically afloat. The Ship's Standing Sea Emergency Party, who are the Ship's immediate response to an incident such as a fire or flood at sea, have been practicing in the Damage Repair Instructional Unit (DRIU) at HMS Raleigh. This is a representation of part of ship that has the capability to be flooded and rocked to provide a realistic environment within which to practice damage control.

Moving in to the month of November many of the ships Warfare Officers took the opportunity to share their expertise and experience with their counterparts onboard HMS Kent, who is currently conducting exercises around the UK.

On the 11th November the Ship held her own Remembrance service alongside in Devonport attended by the entire ships company. As one we remembered those that serve their country past and present and to those that paid the ultimate sacrifice. During the service a number of prayers and war poems were recited by the junior members of the company as well Binyons Lines and two minutes of silence.



Remembrance Service

In early December, the Ship set the stage for filming of an episode of the BBC2 series Master Chef. Within a matter of days the Ship's flight deck was completely transformed into an industrial-standard kitchen fit to feed the entire ships company. Over the three days of filming HMS Northumberland conducted a number of fire exercises on camera as well as tours of the ship and interviews of personnel. This all culminated in a dining experience in the hanger with food provided by the contestants of the series. As a whole it was a very successful and enjoyable experience.

In the such a short period between now and Christmas there is still much to do. We are continuing to train and work hard in order to keep the ship running at a high level in order to alleviate some of the pressure after the Christmas break. Into the New Year we look forward to returning to sea and regenerating ourselves ahead of further tasking around the UK.

HMS Northumberland and her Ship's Company hope you have a great Christmas and wish you the very best for 2016.