



The Richmond Herald



All the latest news and updates from your Affiliated warship

June 2022

Foreword from the Commanding Officer

Dear Friends and Families,

Since returning from COLD RESPONSE 22, I have been hugely impressed by the hard work, dedication, and professionalism that my Ship's Company has shown in keeping HMS RICHMOND operating at a high standard, whilst also making her an enjoyable place for us all to live and work. I still proudly believe that HMS RICHMOND is the Fleet's premier Type 23 Frigate.

This is only possible because of your unwavering support as our Affiliates, friends and families – for this you have my everlasting thanks. As the ship now looks towards WESTLANT 22 later in the year, we are assured with confidence that you are all, and will continue to support us as the Royal Navy demonstrates its capability and resolve to defend UK and NATO interests on the world stage. In thanks for your support, I hope you will find this newsletter informative of our recent activities and achievements since returning from the Arctic Circle in April.

For more current and regularly updated news, please follow us on Twitter, @HMS_Richmond. For our families, a secure area has been established at www.forum.royalnavy.mod.uk, where you can find official information about the ship and our programme.

Yours aye,

Commander Chris A L'Amie RN



Above/Below: A proud moment following the securing of RICHMOND to a buoy in Loch Goil, Scotland.



HMS RICHMOND alongside in Belfast

Work hard, play hard

Returning from a well-earned Easter leave break, HMS RICHMOND immediately returned to sea and was pleased to welcome Captain Patrick Allen RN and the rest of his team from the Surface Flotilla Staff for an Operational Assurance Visit to put the Ship's Company and systems to the test.

This busy but enjoyable couple of weeks included firing the 4.5" main naval gun, 30mm small calibre guns, and a test firing of a stingray torpedo; eagerly watched from the upper deck by many of the crew. With the entire Ship's Company put through their paces, RICHMOND was pleased to demonstrate our skill and capability and are rightly proud of their performance throughout this high intensity period.

Saying our farewells to the assurance team, RICHMOND sailed with much excitement into Belfast, where we were booked in for a long weekend of rest, recuperation, and a good run-ashore. With the sun shining over blue skies, open microphone karaoke wasn't the only activity on offer. Walks through the Cathedral Quarter or on Giant's Causeway were popular, so too was a day out playing golf with shipmates. Whilst berthed in Belfast, the ship welcomed on board a large group of university cadets who enjoyed the opportunity to visit the RN's premier Type 23 frigate—we hope to see them again in the fleet in the years to come and wish them all the best with their exams in the meantime.

With stomachs full of good food and morale high from good company, RICHMOND waved goodbye to Belfast to travel further northward.

@HMS_Richmond - Twitter highlights



Follow @HMS_Richmond on Twitter for daily updates from the ship

A welcome return—Stavanger OCCC

A welcome site for sure, RICHMOND once again returned to the tranquil and picturesque port of Stavanger, Norway. RICHMOND has frequently visited this unique part of the world since 2020, and again for a short 24 hours earlier this year during COLD RESPONSE 22. This time however, the Ship's Company would get a long weekend of leave to explore the city and everything it had to offer. LPT Caddy led an expedition each day to enable Ship's Company to experience the stunning views from Pulpit Rock, whilst others watched the Tour of Norway cycling race as it passed through town.

The main purpose of this visit was to make use of the NATO test-range facility nearby. After embarking military and civilian specialists, RICHMOND sailed each morning through the Norwegian fjords in order to test and calibrate her various sensors and systems.

To those unaware of the tests, RICHMOND's actions would have looked rather odd, spending hours slowly turning on the spot while being circled by various range craft. However, these carefully managed manoeuvres are vital to ensuring the platform's capabilities and effectiveness remain at the highest levels.



HMS RICHMOND alongside Stavanger, Norway



Members of the Ship's Company admire the view from Pulpit Rock

This was a demanding week for all. Sailing each morning at 0800 required the ME department to provide a full watch 4 hours earlier at 0400, whilst the other departments worked tirelessly throughout the day to ensure all the tests ran smoothly and could be completed within our limited time on the range.

At the end of each long day's hard work, the ship's company could enjoy a few hours ashore to relax before doing it all again the following morning.

Despite the busy week, we look back on Stavanger fondly.

A platinum day at sea

Hip-Hip and three cheers for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth III! Celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, RICHMOND brought a little part of the UK's street parties on board by hosting a 'village fete' on the Flight Deck on a beautiful summer's day at sea. As the sun came out and winds died down, bunting and signal flags coloured the upper deck in preparation for a day at sea unlike most. The afternoon of festivities started with a 'clear lower deck' of the ship's company, to enable the Commanding Officer to present those with more than 5 years of service their Jubilee medals. Thereafter, the fete was declared officially open, allowing those who had spent the ceremony eagerly watching the trays of scones, muffins, and chocolate éclairs to finally dig in.



Relaxing in the Jubilee sun



SLt Dodd tries his hand at the PO's darts stall

Each mess had been hard at work in the days prior to the Fete building stalls of fun and games to raise money for the ship's welfare fund. The result was an array of entertainments, with the Petty Officer's darts stall being a clear favourite. Strong competition was provided by the other messes, who challenged us to 'whack a rat' and tin can bowling. After the fun and games had finished, the Ship's Company relaxed on the sunny Flight Deck with a cool drink from the Chief's bar and tasty take-away burger with chips courtesy of our chefs.

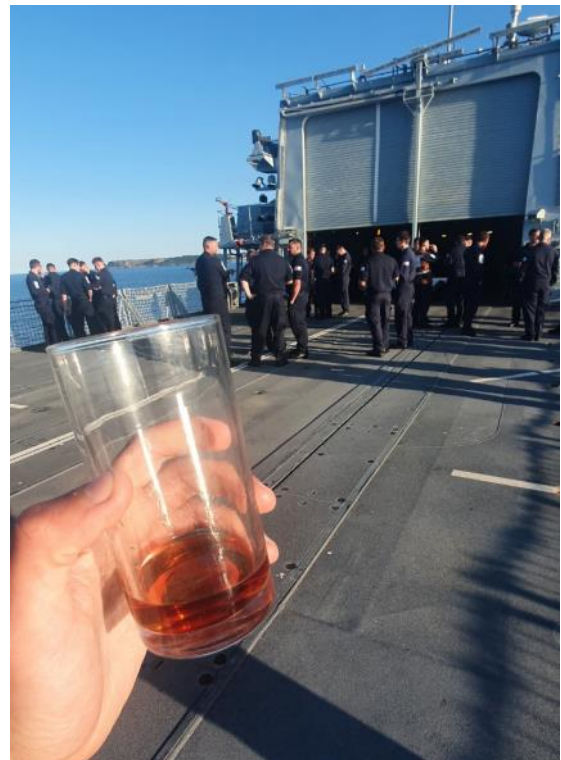
It was clear the day was a popular success, with over £450 being raised for the welfare fund and smiles on everyone's faces.

The Queen, God Bless Her!

To coincide with the national festivities throughout the UK, the Queen ordered the Fleet to 'Splice the Mainbrace' to mark her 70th year on the throne. This tradition originated from the age of sail when experienced Able Seamen would be given the difficult and sometimes dangerous task of 'splicing' (a method of joining together) the hemp fibers of the longest line of rigging on board to repair battle damage and thus return control of the ship's sails.

On the completion of this job it became tradition to endow all sailors involved in the repair a tot of rum additional to their usual daily ration in recognition of their hard work. Over time, the order had become distanced from the actual repair work and came to be a general order for extra rum for the entire crew. In modern usage, 'Splice the Mainbrace' is the last vestige of the Royal Navy's traditional rum-ration, and may only be ordered by a member of the Royal Family or Admiralty Board.

This order is only given on rare special occasions and so, on a warm and sunny day at sea, the Ship's Company needed no encouragement to muster on the flight deck for their 62.5ml share of the celebrations.



Ship's Company enjoy their tot of rum on the Flight Deck

Departmental Reports

Warfare

A strong week to finish off a busy period at sea for the Warfare Department. Live gunnery was conducted off the Devon-coast, where RICHMOND's bridge and Force Protection teams were put to the test. A simulated threat was directed at the ship, whereby the team was required to both manoeuvre the ship and sustain small-arms fire against an exercise target. Overall, this was a high-intensity drill which was safely and professionally conducted. This now gives RICHMOND the confidence going forward that we can rapidly and efficiently defend ourselves against fast-moving surface contacts.

Marine Engineering

The ME department deserve full-recognition for their biggest achievement of the year so-far, after managing to complete key maintenance just hours before RICHMOND was due to sail. While returning from Norway, Engineering Technicians began to diagnose a potential defect with the Ship. After confirming the propulsion systems were all in good order, it was assessed that the issue lay with a defective Eddie plate – a part of the ship's hull that helps direct the flow of water around the stern of the ship. This was subsequently confirmed by diving teams in Plymouth. The ME department worked closely with engineering divers through the week and weekend to replace the plate, with the final welds being completed late into Sunday night, prior to sailing at 1200 the following day. This was all conducted following a busy period of noise-ranging in the Scottish Lochs, which required constant noise monitoring from the ME department.

Logistics

The galley team has worked tirelessly to provide all 180 members of the ships company with 3 meals a day, 7 days a week, at sea and alongside. However, during a recent 'State 1 day' exercise, the chefs proved their abilities in successfully executing an action messing serial.

Farewell

As HMS RICHMOND now enters a period of scheduled maintenance alongside before summer leave, we look forward to WESTLANT 22 and updating you on what will be another full and exciting deployment.

This required the team to fall out of their action stations around the ship as first aiders and BA controllers to deliver meals around the ship to all other action stations, without missing a single person. Not only was this achieved quickly and effectively, the hot pizza was commended by all.

Weapons Engineering

To prove the capabilities of the ship and discover any unknown defects, the WE department regularly conduct weapon 'shoots'. During a planned firing of the 4.5 inch naval gun, a defect was discovered with the gun's ejection system, which meant rapid firing of the gun was impacted. However, after a thorough investigation by PO Godwin, LET Edwards and the rest of the department, the issue was identified and quickly rectified, bringing back one of the ships most overt and lethal capabilities. Test firings such as this are import to keep up the regular maintenance of the ship's weapons systems, and this work has helped safeguard the ship's future deployment for WESTLANT 22.



Above: RICHMOND moored to a buoy in Loch Goil, Scotland.

Below: RICHMOND conducts a sail-past of KENT during a boat transfer in Plymouth Sound.

