



Welcome to the eighth edition of this journal in which we hope to report on the activities of the Federation and of the member Associations. The intention is to give you reports on events that have happened since the last Federation meeting and news of events coming up in the future and we also intend to include news of interest to member Associations. For this to work we need you to send us news and photographs of events that you think would be of interest to other Associations and also any future events that you would like to be included.

The journal is not only for the officers of Associations but also Association members so we ask you to give it as wide a distribution as possible to members and anyone else you think might be interested.

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## PAST EVENTS

There have been no events to report on this month.

## FUTURE EVENTS

Below is the programme that has been produced by Charles Crichton and Richard Bendell for events in Plymouth this year.

## PLYMOUTH DIARY DATES 2013 CEREMONIES AND ANNIVERSARIES (final edition)

**May**

**Plymouth History Festival See website**  
[www.Plymouth.gov.uk/whatson](http://www.Plymouth.gov.uk/whatson)

<b>8-27 May</b>	<b>Battle of the Atlantic 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events (BOA70)–London, Londonderry and Liverpool. See web site <a href="http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/Battle-of-the-Atlantic">www.royalnavy.mod.uk/Battle-of-the-Atlantic</a></b>
<b>18-24 May</b>	<b>St Andrew’s Heritage Week-Minster Church of St Andrew</b>
<b>Fri 17 May</b>	<b>10.30 am City of Plymouth-Lord Mayor’s Choosing-Guildhall</b>
<b>Sat 18 May</b>	<b>1-2 pm City of Plymouth-Lord Mayor’s Day Procession.</b>
<b>Sun 19 May</b>	<b>10.30 am Lord Mayor’s Service-Minster Church of St Andrew Plymouth</b>
<b>Fri 31 May</b>	<b>12.00am US Naval Memorial-Tamar Bridge</b>
<b>Mon 3-Thur 6 June</b>	<b>Visit to Plymouth by the Society of United States Daughters of 1812</b>
<b>Tue 4 June.</b>	<b>10.00am Remembrance Service for US Prisoners of War 1812 at St Michael’s Church Princetown &amp; the American Memorial HMP Dartmoor.</b>
<b>Wed 5 June</b>	<b>11.00am Door of Unity Service-Minster Church of St Andrew Plymouth Attended by the Daughters of 1812. Unveil new memorial plaque.</b>
<b>Thur 6 June</b>	<b>11.30 am Normandy Veterans wreath laying-Hoe Belvedere Gardens</b>
<b>Mon 24 June</b>	<b>10.00am Raising of the Armed Forces Day Flag-Guildhall flagpole</b>
<b>Sat 29 June</b>	<b>Plymouth Armed Forces Day RAF and Allied Air Forces Monument Service-Plymouth Hoe</b>
<b>Sun 30 June</b>	<b>11.15 am Sea Sunday-Minster Church of St Andrew Plymouth. Service will include Atlantic Day and a commemoration of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.</b>
<b>Sat 15 Aug</b>	<b>11.00 am Burma Star VJ Day Commemoration-Plymouth Hoe</b>
<b>Sun 1 Sept</b>	<b>10.00am Merchant Navy Day-Barbican Mayflower Steps</b>
<b>Thur 12-Sun 15 Sep</b>	<b>Heritage Open Days</b>
<b>Sun 15 Sept</b>	<b>11.15am Battle of Britain Memorial Day-Minster Church of St Andrew</b>
<b>Thur 24 Oct</b>	<b>7.30pm Torpoint Poppy Appeal Concert, St James Church, Elliot Square, Torpoint. Tickets £5</b>
<b>Sat 26 Oct</b>	<b>11.00am Captain Henry VC Commemoration-Ford Park Cemetery</b>
<b>Sat 26 Oct</b>	<b>Royal British Legion Saltash Remembrance Festival. Details from David Newman <a href="mailto:davidandpauline@blueyonder.co.uk">davidandpauline@blueyonder.co.uk</a> 01752 211118</b>
<b>Thur 7 Nov</b>	<b>11.00am Burma Star-Commemoration-Crownhill Fort</b>
<b>Thur 7 Nov</b>	<b>Plympton Royal British Legion Annual Band Concert</b>

<b>Fri 8 Nov</b>	<b>7.00pm for 7.30pm Federation Remembrance Festival-Plymouth Pavilions</b>
<b>Sun 10 Nov</b>	<b>11.00am Remembrance Day-Plymouth Hoe</b>
<b>28 Nov-1 Dec</b>	<b>Barbican Thanksgiving and Christmas Weekend- promoting the links between Plymouth and the USA, marking specifically the sailing of the Mayflower, leading into a Christmas weekend celebration.</b>
<b>Sun 1 Dec</b>	<b>11.00am Devonport North Corner Commemoration</b>
<b>Fri 20 Dec</b>	<b>7.30am The Lord Mayor's Carol Service-Minster Church of St Andrew</b>
<b>Thur 31 Dec</b>	<b>11.00am Hinkley VC Commemoration Ford Park Cemetery</b>

This list of Anniversaries and Ceremonies for 2013 is compiled from best available information by commander Charles Crichton. Event organizers are invited to send additional information, updates and corrections to Charles by email: [charles\\_delia@talktalk.net](mailto:charles_delia@talktalk.net)

## VISIT TO AFGHANISTAN

At the last meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> April Rebecca Ricks the Defence Correspondent of the Plymouth Evening Herald came and gave us a talk about her recent trip in January to Afghanistan to visit the some of the local troops to see what they are doing out there.

She Visited 40 Commando who are due home shortly, 243 Field Hospital, who were manning the Hospital at Camp Bastion and the Royal Dragoon Guards who were mentoring the Afghan Police. She spent time first at the hospital which is considered the best trauma facility in the world. She found the hospital team to be terrific people who were so enthusiastic about their job of saving people's lives. She was lucky to followed one patient, an Afghan national who had stood on a mine, who was brought in by a helicopter, who work in pairs in a system called Pedro, and brought to the hospital by the camp fire service. The first procedure is to strip all patients to remove any ammunition or hazardous materials they have on them and then are taken through to the Resus where there is a team of about 9 nurses and surgeons waiting to treat the patient with whatever procedure they require. One of the Staff is Major Rose Chapman who lives in Stoke and she headed up a ward at the hospital and the Herald has done a feature on her work.

Rebecca then went to Main Operation base Price where 40 Commando have been since August to September last year where they were working with the Danish as an integrated force. She spoke to the Commanding officer Col Matt Jackson who thought the Afghans would be able to carry on after they left but there did need to be a political solution to the conflict. She experienced many Afghan Forces and realised that they have a totally different culture but that we need to try and give them the right structure to improve their forces.

On her first patrol she went to visit check point Hasrat and this was the day after Sapper Richard Walker had been killed in a Green on Blue attack so the mood amongst the Marines was not great. This check point which is a locally built mud structure called a OBEs, the idea being that the Afghans can easily maintain it once foreign forces have left the country but many local troops don't want them as they prefer the comfort of the present bases. It is on Highway 1, which when the troops first arrived years ago could not be used as it was mined and they would get shot at. Now it is a constant traffic jam, like the A30 after a crash, so this is a sign of progress. The local troops challenged the Marines to a game of Volley Ball but they were at first reluctant to take off their body armour and take part but eventually they did and it was a very positive sign. She thought most of the Afghans are good guys and they do want to make a difference and improve their country. She also visited a completed structure which could accommodate over 100 troops.

Her second patrol was to go and check some work being done in Gereshk and she was very pleased to meet Lt Hogg RM, who had gone to Plymouth University and whom she had followed previously during his training as a young RM officer so it was very nice to meet the finished product and to go out with him on his very first patrol. They went to view the contract work that had been done on the Gereshk canal over the last year. This was a dangerous patrol as it had already been put back a day but all went smoothly. The locals seemed friendly and aired their complaints to the patrol one of which was that the contractors had banked up the soft mud they had cleared from the canal on the sides of the canal and that this was an ideal place for the Taliban to hide IEDs to use against the population and the troops and that the local people would get the blame. After this visit they drove round the back of Gereshk over some very difficult terrain where there were many abandoned compounds with various flags flying from them showing the allegiance of various groups both friendly and hostile. She had a photograph of Sgt Nigel Quarman, from A company, surrounded by children, who related how five years ago he had been standing on the same spot with 42 Commando from Bickleigh and had been in a fire fight which he thought would never end so it was so nice to see the locals out and the children playing.

Her final period was spent with the Royal Dragoon Guards who were in the Nahr-e Saraj district as advisors to the local police. She met two guys who were about two miles down the road from the Royal Marines in a very small compound within the Local Police HQ so these guys were very vulnerable to attack by local forces. The two were Lt James Heath from Crownhill and Major Hugh Pearce-Gold from Launceston all that separated them from the locals was an Iron gate and some barbed wire guarded by one soldier. In this small compound there were eight crosses of soldiers who had been killed previously so this was very sobering and they said the fear of a green on blue attack never left them whilst they were there. She really enjoyed the trip as she had never been anywhere which was quite so wild but she came away feeling very positive which she supposed was the message that the

MOD wanted her to get. She had been looking back on some of the trips her predecessor had had but she would go back again like a shot. One of the Delegates thought that she was a very brave lady.

The Chairman thanked Becky for her presentation and was pleased that she was so sympathetic to our troops.

## VETERANS ACCOMMODATION PROJECT IN PLYMOUTH

At the Federation meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> April John Pentreath came and talked to the meeting about the University's proposal to bring about combined dedicated sheltered accommodation for Veterans in Plymouth, and medical students.

Firstly he thanked Rebecca Ricks for her excellent talk about her visit to Afghanistan. John had spent 30 years in the Regular Army and 10 years working for the RBL managing Devon County, which is why he was asked to take on this project in Plymouth. The project is the inspiration of Terence Lewis, who was Senior Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon SW at Derriford Hospital from 1997-2008, and Medical Director of Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust from 2000-2008. He is the man after whom the new wing at Derriford is named if you are familiar with the hospital.

Terence had previously worked at the Royal London Hospital and had witnessed the establishment of the Griffin Project in Poplar, which consists of sheltered accommodation for pensioners, adjoined by accommodation for Medical Students. The Medical Students interact with the pensioners on a befriending basis, with weekly visits, and with organising monthly trips and activities as well. This inter-generational exchange brings much benefit to pensioners and students alike.

When he retired Terence became a Governor of Plymouth University, and suggested that they should organise a similar project to Griffin with the medical students from the new Medical School, and Veteran pensioners from the Plymouth area (where there are obviously plenty of Veterans). This ties in with the Armed Forces Covenant *(it should not be confused with the Nelson Project which is going to be a block of flats in the Stonehouse area, where 12 homeless veterans are going to be taken on as part of the workforce; after the flats are built the Veterans will each get one of them. They will learn a skill, and also end up with accommodation at the end of it).*

The University's Veterans Accommodation Project plans to either adapt an existing building, or produce a new building with two entities, one for the Veterans and one for the students. The location will be in the City Centre as surveys of both Students and Veterans indicate that they want to be close to all the amenities in the City Centre. The Veterans accommodation will consist of sheltered flats with all the facilities required for older people so that they can live at home for as long as possible. It is intended that there will be a living in 'warden' from a military background. There are 57 sheltered accommodation units at present in Plymouth, and the university is looking to create another one with this special mix.

The South West has the largest proportion of Armed Forces 'family' (serving and Ex Service) in the country so there should not be a problem finding Veterans to fill this housing. Our present Armed Forces have reduced in size over the years but there are many Veterans from when the Armed Forces were much larger than they are at present. Statistics show that 30 % of Veteran pensioners live alone and these are the people the project is aimed at. The project will be based upon 40 Veterans, and 40 medical students. Veterans come from a common background, and so can be expected to get on well, understand each other, and foster friendships among the Veterans as well as the Students. Veterans at Chelsea Hospital have been consulted, and also the residents of Greenwich Place in Saltash. They have all provided much support and useful feedback. The Project has designed a generic model of the ideal building that could be applied to any suitable site. The building would hopefully have a café / bistro facility, for use by residents and other Veterans at lunch time, as well as communal facilities. Depending upon location, there might also be some retail outlets to provide financial income to the 'business'. The student accommodation is aimed at Year 2 students and above who would commute to the Campus in Year 2, and to Derriford in Years 3-5. .

The Project is in its very early stages, and is likely to cost about £8 million. Funding will need to be raised through grants, donations and loans. A site has not yet been obtained, but some promising possibilities within the city centre area are being explored at this time.

This Project promises to be not only unique, but good for Plymouth, good for its Veterans, and good for its new Medical School. Whilst feasibility work is 'very much in progress', it will probably take at least two years, or longer, to bring to fruition.

**END PIECE** Some members of The Devonport Division of the HMS Ganges Association recently attended the Annual Re-union that included a nostalgic visit to the site of their old establishment that is now in the hands of developers, years ago boys from the age of 15 spent between twelve and eighteen months in training in readiness for going to sea, one of the deeply remembered features of the place was the 145ft mast at the end of the parade ground that was climbed many times, how sad it was to see this once proud feature now rapidly deteriorating, but she still holds a special place in the minds of those that climbed her and will always do so.

