

**THE BUZZ**

...  
TROUBLE-FREE LEAD UP TO  
CHRISTMAS



ELF  
ON THE  
SHELF

R.H.

**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020**



**Dear Buzz Readers,**

Christmas appears to be just around the corner!

We are not sure at this moment in time how it will be for any of us.

If you or you know of someone in our community who may find it especially difficult at this time to get items, please let me know. Bridgerule has a great community and I'm sure are willing to give a helping hand if it is needed. This was shown at the beginning of the pandemic and is still there nine months on!

My Very Best Wishes go to Everyone

*Stay Safe,*

***Sheila Cholwill Editor***

***email: [sheilacholwill@btinternet.com](mailto:sheilacholwill@btinternet.com)***

***Telephone: 01288 381350***

### **Shop Questionnaire**

Firstly a big thank you to those who responded to the questionnaire regarding the provision of a village shop. The number of responses we received far surpassed our expectation and the fact that over 85% said that the importance of having a village shop was high or very high, shows us that we should move forward.

We now plan to bring these responses to the Parish Council and discuss our next proposed steps.

Also thank you to those who offered their services. Initially we shall contact those who kindly offered to be part of a steering group so that we can begin to move things forward in earnest.

**Alan Quilter on behalf Bridgerule Village Hall Committee.**



### BRIDGERULE POST OFFICE OUTREACH SERVICE

The Post Office Service operating out of our Village Hall **SHOULD** now be open operating from 9.30AM—1.30pm. each Monday.

Unfortunately this has not happened due now to a line fault. **ENGINEERS HAVE BEEN CALLED** prior to the Buzz going to print!!

*We also know this was the most wanted thing on your shop questionnaires. So believe me we are trying to sort it!*



**BRIDGERULES BUZZING COMMUNITY = facebook page**

*'If you wish to promote an event in our village... want something ...or maybe have something for sale'*

*Then just let Stacey Hillier Cholwill know and she will upload it on to our face book page'.*

**Stacey is on 01288 381843 or email her on [shillier357@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:shillier357@yahoo.co.uk)**



### POPPY APPEAL 2020

Sadly there will be no house to house collection this year enabling you to donate to the 2020 Poppy Appeal.

**BUT** your donations are very much wanted and **Luke Francis, the Postmaster at the main Post Office in Bude** says that your donations can be taken there.

For children a poppy to colour can be downloaded from the official site and placed in your windows to show we want to **REMEMBER THEM!**

**BRIDGERULE VILLAGE HALL**

**THE HALL HAS RE-OPENED  
FOR SOME CLASSES**

**Please check with your Class Leaders**

**FRIENDS OF BRIDGERULE SCHOOL**

**Christmas Raffle**

Lots of great prizes to be won!  
£1 a ticket

Draw to take place online on Thursday 17th December

Tickets available from Stacey on 01288 381843

**AVAILABLE  
for  
Work**

**Looking for Work**

**LADY CLEANER/ CARER  
SEEKS POSITION**

**.. Looking for one to one Personal Care  
Or  
Domestic Clean**

**Tel 01288381698**

### **SHEILA'S MENTIONS:**

Our warm wishes go to John McDougall who has recently undergone an operation at Derriford Hospital. He is now home and convalescing . Sadly John's elderly mum passed away whilst he was in hospital. Our thoughts are with the family.

Our thoughts are with George Dunkin and his family on the sudden loss of daughter, Sophie.

### **BIRTHDAY WISHES:**

Lyndsey Beadle for the 3rd November  
 Pauline Latham for the 14th November  
 Winnie Westlake for the 24th November  
 Sally Webb for the 25th November  
 Ben Tole for the 29th November.  
 Barry Lucas for the 8th December  
 Colin Cholwill for the 10th December  
 Kelvin Davey for the 10th December  
 Mary Bryant for the 10th December  
 Ray Wallace for the 19th December  
 Sylvia McDougall for the 20th December  
 Katherine Davey for the 24th December  
 Chris Hitchings for the 24th December



### **Remembering the late Pat Hodges**

We would like to thank everyone for their sympathy, kindness, cards, flowers and donations on the loss of Pat, a Dear Wife, Mum and Nan.

It has been very much appreciated.

With love from Phil, Paul, Alison,  
 Alex & Julia.



### WHAT A WHOPPA!!

Sam Beer of Tatson Farm is shown holding his very large home grown cucumber originally to be entered in our annual Revel Show this year.

Sadly that didn't take place but Sam continued to grow his cucumber just to see how big it would get.

Here it is weighing 4lbs , 20 inches long and 3" wide.



### REMEMBERING DEREK FIELD



**Marie and Melissa Field** wish to thank all the kind folk with their words of sympathy, prayers, cards and flowers given on the peacefully passing away in his sleep of Derek at Halwill Manor Nursing Home at the beginning of September. This was following an illness borne with quiet courage.

Derek lived at home until the Last month of his life due to the combined caring of family and kind practical assistance from neighbours and friends.

Thanks to the all the Medical Staff for their kindness to Derek.

Derek loved the friendliness of the village in Church, Chapel and Hall and the many activities and outings offered in Bridgerule

Thank you for your love and friendship. May God Bless you all.

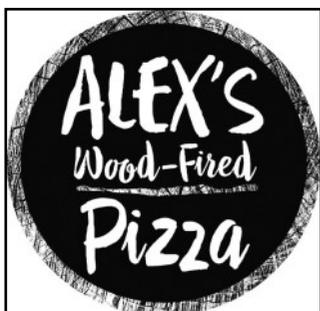
## ENGLISH TUITION and WRITING SERVICE

Experienced tutor based in Bridgerule currently has spaces available for private tuition.

- English Language and Literature up to A Level
- French to GCSE Level
- English as a Foreign/Second Language
- 11+/Entrance exams (including Maths/Verbal and Non-Verbal reasoning)
- Proofreading/editing essays or theses
- Help with written work/forms/CVs/letters etc

**Bespoke classes in your home. £25/hour, free initial consultation**

**Please contact Katie 07976 599275 or [katie\\_beat@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:katie_beat@yahoo.co.uk)**



Dear Bridgerule - many thanks for the warm welcome we've received since we began to visit **BACK IN SPRING 2020!**

We are very grateful for your support, and we look forward to continuing to bake for you. YOU'LL find us in the village hall car park on the **fourth friday of every month.**

FIND OUR REGULAR MENU AND OUR MONTHLY SPECIALS ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND OUR WEBSITE - OR POP DOWN AND PICK UP A FLYER! text us your orders on [07967 000396](tel:07967000396) - OR COME DOWN AND LET US KNOW WHEN YOU'D LIKE TO COLLECT.

**ELECTRONIC PAYMENT PREFERRED (BACS/PAYPAL) -  
WE ARE ALSO GLAD TO ACCEPT CASH.**

**[alexswoodfiredpizza.co.uk](http://alexswoodfiredpizza.co.uk)**

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## A Scammer attempts to extort money from Villagers

Phishing emails are sent to unsuspecting victims all over the world. Some are so outlandish, they are obvious frauds, others can be more convincing.

One such email was recently received by dozens of villagers and friends of a well-known lady, asking to help purchase Amazon gift cards to be sent as a Birthday present to a family member. The recipients email address was false and if you receive such an email, DELETE IT!



Some readers of the Buzz will know exactly who I refer to and will already have received such an email, the lady concerned is completely innocent but the implications surrounding this scam has wider concerns and anyone who has a BT Emails address should be aware.

The scammer has accessed the profile of the victims' email account by hacking the password and subsequently activated an auto forward key. Then entered a false email address in the auto forward box, which forwards copies of all emails hitting the inbox to the scammers false account.

The false account has all the outward appearance of being genuine, yet it has been created in the name of the victim and harvests all new and old emails in both the inbox and sent box. So how has this happened, as yet we don't know! What we do know is that this has happened twice to the same account even after changing passwords the first time. Which may, or may not, implicate a BT worker.



To help avoid such an occurrence to your own BT email address, my advice is to open your BT online account, (<https://home.bt.com/login>) enter your normal login details and go to email. Click on your account name in the top right-hand corner of the screen and click on settings when the drop-box appears.

On the left side of the screen you will see mail, click on this and then click auto forward and open the page. You will see a box named "Enable auto forward" which should be clear, with NO tick in it, unless you have previously activated auto forwarding for your own purposes. If there is a tick in the small box there is likely to be an alien and unknown email address registered in the box below.

If this is the case, you too have had your email account compromised and your emails are being copied by a scammer and sent to another email address! Untick the box, delete the offending email address and click save.

Click on your account name and click "Account info" when the box drops down. The third item down displays password, clicking and entering this page will allow you to change your password. Then inform BT security of the hack.

The lesson here is always double check your security and don't think it will never happen to you.

**For help and advice telephone Brian Meadows on 01288 381061,  
Nofix-Nofee Computer Repair Services**

### **Beauty by Gemma Furse**

They say beauty's only skin deep but that's not true at all,  
Fat and small would never be chosen over being skinny and tall.  
Of course, being called a stunner is preferable over cute and cuddly,  
As it's not always a compliment being known as funny or bubbly.  
See society as we know it has created an issue,  
Where people rely on their looks.  
It's on every poster, tv channel and phone  
and written about in so many books.  
But being healthy is what counts most, not just in body but mind.

Surrounding yourself with what's good and pure,  
And to ourselves always being kind.  
Because yes, too much weight may cause issues, with your general health,  
But you can still be bigger than someone else.  
As it's just your individual self your built to just be you.  
No two are the same not even an identical twin.  
Each single person has been made unique and being yourself is not  
something to lose or win.  
In a perfect world we would all be kind and not care about others looks,

But instead focus on what's in our hearts  
Because beauty will fade and our bodies decay  
When from this world we depart.  
No one will remember how gorgeous you are;  
No one remember your size,  
No one will remember your wrinkles were few,  
Or you had a massive gap between your thighs.

They'll remember your laugh, your smile, your hugs,  
The times when they knew you were there.  
When you spoke kind words, and helped and supported;  
not if you had nice nails or hair.  
No one remembers how pretty you are, they remember your kindness and  
grace.  
Because unless your beautiful inside, It will never be shown on your face.

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A SCHOOL GOVERNOR?

**Holsworthy Academy Committee (AC)** are looking for some new Governors and now is the exactly the right time to be involved as Education seems to be a headline topic every week! At Holsworthy AC, we are responsible for Holsworthy Community College and the 3 Primary Schools at Bridgerule, Bradford and Black Torrington. We are part of the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust which comprises 16 schools and over 5000 pupils ! The work of a Governor is very rewarding and enjoyable but difficult to explain in a few lines....so please contact the Co Chairs of Holsworthy AC as follows to get some more information :

**Kate Scrivener** [Kscrivener@hcc.devon.sch.uk](mailto:Kscrivener@hcc.devon.sch.uk)

**Ken Watson** [Kwatson@hcc.devon.sch.uk](mailto:Kwatson@hcc.devon.sch.uk)



**ARE YOU LISTENING? ...  
THEN I'LL BEGIN.....again**

**Dog mess is the most unacceptable and offensive type of litter on our streets. Our research tells us that dog fouling is the issue the public are most concerned about.**

Dog fouling is not only deeply unpleasant, it is dangerous. Whilst rare, contact with dog excrement can cause toxocariasis – a nasty infection that can lead to dizziness, nausea, asthma and even blindness or seizures.

While most dog owners are caring, responsible individuals, there are still some people who do not clean up after their pets and some of them very disappointingly **LIVE IN OUR VILLAGE.**

**The Editor has been told that the problem is very disturbing. So much so that some residents have now said that they are prepared to Name and Shame those who do not clean up after their dogs to the area Dog Warden.**

**SO PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR DOG... YOU ARE BEING WATCHED!**

Rose Hitchings writes.....

*Lets record our many months of coronavirus experiences ..... **as another record for future BRIDGERULE generations to read.***

She suggests just a paragraph .... or several pages - including photos if you can - **of how life has changed for you ?- your experiences through these difficult times.**

It will be put into a folder and kept safely for future times .....

It could include ....

**how the lock-down has affected you and your family** - any nice moments (did people help you ?) - **did your children have parties ?** - home schooling and was it a struggle ? **your various frustrations ?** - what you thought of our politicians etc. during this time and how they handled it ? -

**GRIEF** - did you attend any funerals ? - **our wonderful N.H.S.— doctors, nurses and support workers in the Health Service** - trying to get doctor's appointments - **did you get to see a dentist ?** - people who delivered food supplies - **people who got the elderly their medicine** - people you would LIKE TO THANK - **those who continued to take our rubbish away** - did you attend a wedding ? - **how was Halloween different ?** - what is it like living or working in a Residential Home ? - **were you able to work throughout ?** - working from home - **bus trips** - train trips - **shopping** - **MISSING FAMILY** - **not seeing Grandparents** - missing Church - Chapel - missing Village **events** - how did your children cope ? - has it changed them ? - **DIY** - **CHRISTMAS** - **what were the most difficult times for you ?????** etc. etc.

PLEASE - you could send your experiences by email to me - or post them into our letter box - **'The Hitching Post'** ..... any time you feel like writing about your experiences - could be ongoing for a few months yet - **SOMETHING TO FILL YOUR TIME !!!!!**

Kept in a folder it could make really interesting reading in the future. Do hope you will take part. **PHOTOS** too please.

Rose - with thanks

**Email at [chrisandrose@mail.co.uk](mailto:chrisandrose@mail.co.uk)**

## **Farewell to Bridgerule.**

### **Pat and Alex Johnston**

When we moved to Southfields it was always our intention to participate in village activities, either intentionally or by accident! When the Covid 19 pandemic shattered so many lives and changed others forever, it made us reassess, rethink and focus on our priorities, so, here we are, reflecting on our 13 years in Bridgerule, as we move on again.

We "inherited" the Southfields Neighbourhood Watch with No 31 and in liaison with John McDougal Alec became a Police Volunteer, initially undertaking "Speed Watch" sessions with PCSO Beverley Bray and later with PCSO's Mark James and Emma Tomkies. Alec particularly enjoyed the Saturday lunchtime "gossip club" at the Bridge Inn, with Pam and Gary, now sadly depleted with the loss of Terry Brock and Ron Cameron. He will also miss the Monday evening Jammin Sessions. Having been involved for over 20 years, back in Cheshire, with a "Joint Ecumenical Project" we felt equally at home amongst the Methodist Chapel and Parish Church congregations and soon joined the rotas for cleaning, flowers and reading and the very successful Parish lunches. It was due to some "arm twisting" by Fr. Chris Davison that Pat became involved with school, initially as the Foundation Governor (3 months soon turned into 3 years!!) and when she stood down she continued as a volunteer, listening to pupils read, helping out on school trips and on occasions, taking a "Collective Worship" (in our days it was called Assembly!!).

Designing and establishing the Church Trail for St Bridget's Parish Church will be our lasting legacy. With much assistance from Canon Tim Newcombe and approved by NADFAS (National Association of Fine and Decorative Arts-now (thankfully!) renamed) this has helped maintain and reinforce important links between the Church and the school. The involvement with Bridgerule C of E (VC) Primary School has been a roller coaster ride, with only 20 or so pupils, when we first arrived in the

village, under threat of closure and with a "Notice to improve".

The school joined varying Federations but is now part of a Multi Academy Trust, settling well into a recently refurbished and redesigned building which now incorporates the Pre School pupils it is now a thriving community school to be proud of. Shortly after Cathy and John Nettles moved to the area, Pat approached them, with a view to seeking some small involvement with the school and since then John has been a wonderful sponsor and supporter, funding Residential experiences for the older pupils and Drama workshops for all (plus a lot else!!!). Many thanks also, to Cathy, Pat's loved her Aromatherapy sessions over the last few years!! Sadly no "Open Gardens" this year, again this was something that we enjoyed, opening our small garden on a couple of occasions as well as viewing all others. We were delighted to persuade Rick Stein's management team to donate a signed Cook Book, on one occasion, the open auction raised some considerable funds towards our wonderful Air Ambulances.

Finally, we must mention "Matron", it has been great to help Sheila out at the monthly table top sales and it is brilliant to see how the fortnightly Coffee Mornings (which we took over from Gwynneth and Ron Cameron (on an interim basis), are now thriving, drawing the community (and beyond) together for a chat and a catch up, over a cuppa and Audrey's (now infamous!!!) cheese scones.

Thanks for the memories, we will miss you all.

**We wish Alex and Pat Johnston all the very best on their recent move from Southfields to Devizes. They will of course now be living near to their families.**

**We thank them most sincerely for all their help whilst living in our village in so many ways.**

*The Editor has just heard from Pat and they are doing fine. Alex was out at the time for light refreshment!!*

## OUR BUZZ

By Marie Field

How comforting small things can be,  
When faced with world calamity.  
When life long habits are taken away,  
And domestic routine gone astray.  
This was the fate that became our lot,  
When the virus struck like a thunderbolt.  
But folks clung on as best they could,  
Their routines known since childhood.

For now life could not be the same,  
For the virus was playing a dangerous game.  
But wise steadfast Sheila and her valuable crew,  
Supplied our Buzz as if to prove,  
Friendship and love would still survive,  
In spite of the isolation in our lives.  
The familiar life for which we longed,  
In which we so now needed to belong.

For even the honey bees in order to thrive,  
Need the close companionship in their hive.  
For friendship is love without its wings,  
Essential as food to all folks well being.  
For our little magazine pushed through our door,  
Means not just fun, but so much more,  
Our little Buzz with its cheery note,  
Bringing warmth to the hearts of lonely Lockdown folk

Bringing a sense of constancy and care,  
In this strangely uncertain world we all now share.

## Holsworthy Walk and Talk

We have enjoyed lovely autumnal weather conditions for some of our walks this month plus an exceedingly wet walk!

Our programme of Level 2 and Level 3 walks each month is working well. Level 2 walks are approximately 2.5 miles at a steady pace on mostly level terrain. We avoid stiles and these walks are suitable for those whose knees and/or hips aren't what they once were. Level 3 walks are approximately 3 miles in length at a more vigorous pace over more challenging terrain which can include some stiles. All walks take approximately 1.5 hours which is the official classification for the length of time for a health walk.

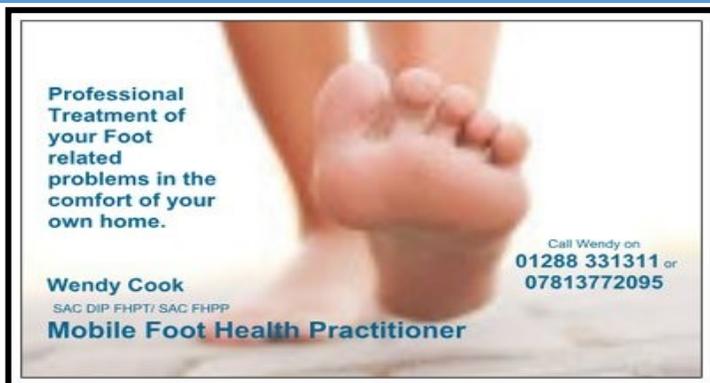
We re-started the Monday Walk in the Park on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020 again, in line with Government Guidelines, but we are unable to offer refreshments at this time.

Ramblers continue to keep us up to date with the ever-changing Government Guidelines which we adhere to. The physical and psychological benefits of walking are well-known and the Government seem to be committed to encouraging regular exercise. Our current walk programme is available on the Walking for Health website at [www.walkingforhealth.org.uk](http://www.walkingforhealth.org.uk) or from

[holsworthywalkandtalk@gmail.com](mailto:holsworthywalkandtalk@gmail.com)

Michael Jackson 01409 26119

or



**Professional Treatment of your Foot related problems in the comfort of your own home.**

**Wendy Cook**  
SAC DIP FHPT/ SAC FHPP

**Mobile Foot Health Practitioner**

Call Wendy on  
**01288 331311** or  
**07813772095**



**The Parish of St. Bridget, Bridgerule**  
**GIFT WEEK**  
**15th-21st November 2020**

**S**t Bridget's has not been able to hold the usual gift day this year, yet the costs of keeping St Bridget Church continues. The Parochial Church Council and Rector seek your support and would deeply appreciate any offering of financial help.

There are several ways of giving;

**Bacs**

Lloyds PLC  
 Sort Code: 30-94-91  
 Account Number: 00465205  
 Reference: Gift

**Cash or Cheque by hand**

In the porch at Highlands, Bridgerule, EX22 7EA  
 Cheques payable to: PCC Bridgerule

**Cheque by post**

Cheques payable to: PCC Bridgerule  
 Post to: Mrs C. Harris, P.C.C Treasurer, Highlands, Bridgerule, EX22 7EA

If you are able to gift aid your donation, please send the attached form to Mrs C. Harris, P.C.C Treasurer, Highlands, Bridgerule, EX22 7EA and include the amount if donated by Bacs.

**In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:**

I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to:

THE PCC OF BRIDGERULE PARISH CHURCH

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax then the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My Details: Name:

Full Address:

Postcode:

Signature:

Date:

Please notify the charity if you: want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address, no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

## ST BRIDGET'S CHURCH

At present St Bridget's Church remains closed but all are welcome to join worship online at the times below using the zoom address:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82633460276?>

Sunday 10.30am Morning Worship  
Tuesday 7.00pm Contemplative Prayer  
Wednesday 3.00pm Home Group  
Friday 12 Noon Prayers

Morning Service at St Pauls Holsworthy 11.00am Each Sunday  
More information available  
On 01409255490 Rev. E. Burke

### A THEN AND NOW OF OUR ONCE VILLAGE SHOP AND FORGE



## Neighbourhood Watch Notes

How will we ever have a Happy Christmas with all these virus problems around us in every way ?

It can't be gone by New Year, can it ?

If you are staying in more, how often do you get targeted by scammers ? Our phone goes several times and it's routinely scammers, despite putting their earlier phone numbers into The Junk Voice Mail.

More scams are coming as if from friends or family by email. You may think that the email is from them, but does it sound right ? Do they suddenly want a favour or money, or something completely out of their normal behaviour?

So, forget the story, it's not who they pretend to be. Disconnect. Contact them a different way, phone or by any personal method.

Neighbourhood watch is looking out for each other - not spying - possibly just recognising patterns of behaviour, understanding that individuals live their own lives and only noticing if something happens entirely strange or wrong. Letting strangers into the house when no one is expected. Seeing people move about in an unoccupied house. Having callers offering you something that you don't want whilst another person goes to the back of the house. Unknown vehicles parked overnight or for several days. Empty property being looked over without an agent.

So, who would like to be the new coordinator for Southfield ? If you feel that you would like to continue with the position recently vacated by Alec Johnston please let me know.

Otherwise stay safe from the virus, any virus, and look out for each other.

Remember 999 if it's happening now, or 101 if not.

**John McDougall Bridgerule coordinator 01288 381237**



**Only six allowed at  
Christmas but 30 for a  
funeral. I will be  
holding a funeral for  
my pet turkey that  
sadly passed on 25th  
december**

## SPOTLIGHT ON KEVIN BOWDITCH

I was born December 1954 in Gosport Hampshire. In May 1971 I took and passed the Navy Artificer entrance exam and joined 10th September 1971 at H.M.S. Fisgard in Torpoint.

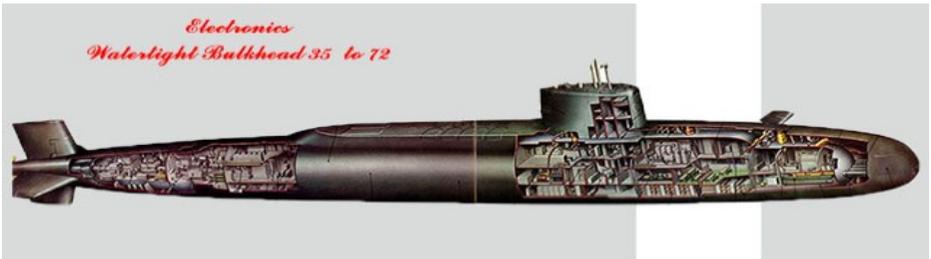


Three months of basic training then started. Up at six in the morning with endless “character building” tasks through the day to keep us busy and not allowed to leave the base. As apprentices Saturday morning was spent in the workshops chiselling a round bar into a square. You soon learnt not to hit your hands. 15 minutes to change afterwards into your best suit (Number ones, all the different uniforms had a number) and off to divisions. A parade around the square which involved inspections a march past and lots of being shouted at! For the rest of the 9 months there life settled into a routine of various lessons & life skills. Often sent for days and nights up onto the moors to walk miles using a map and compass. Saturday afternoons and Sundays were free to explore the local area but with a Naval haircut, no transport and still only 16 /17 not a lot to do. Still the weather was kind from memory that year it only rained twice, once for 5 months and once for seven.

After passing out from Fisgard I was selected to be a Control Electrical Apprentice and so my training would continue at H.M.S. Collingwood. A year there learning the basics of electricity / electronics and general training in some naval equipment (guns, missile systems navigation systems etc). During that year I met my first wife, Marion, a long distance relationship as she lived in Leeds but moved to Gosport just in time for me to join H.M.S. Fife for a year at sea. The first 3 months were around the UK but January '74 we sailed for 9 months to Australia & New Zealand via the Far East and many other places.

Returned home in August 1974 and a year later got married and completed my apprenticeship. I was then selected for submarines! What a life changer. After some more general and specialist courses (including submarine escape, free ascent up a 100 feet of water with only a life jacket and nose clip) I joined H.M.S. Repulse November 1976.

1977 I undertook my first patrol on H.M.S. Revenge. My first dive on a submarine was for 8 weeks, nothing can prepare you for that. As I was a trainee I had no bunk. So, I spent 8 weeks sleeping in a hammock between the missile tubes and all my kit in a holdall. During the patrol I completed the last part of submarine training and was awarded my “dolphins” the badge of the submarine service.



The technical stuff, she was 425 feet long and 33 feet in diameter displaced 7,500 tons on the surface and 8,400 submerged. Speed about 20 knots on the surface & 25 submerged powered by a Pressurised Water Reactor which needed refuelling about every 10 years. She was armed with 16 Polaris nuclear missiles each more powerful than all the bombs dropped in WW II & 12 torpedoes. Patrol crew was 143 men (no women on submarines then and don't get me started on that)! There was a long list of things not allowed including all aerosols, shoe polish & talcum powder. On completion of refit (and a move to Helensburgh) sea trials and getting the submarine ready for patrol I was sent on a six month course to learn more about the nuclear reactor while the submarine went to Florida for missile firing.

At the end of the course I re-joined Repulse in time for her first patrol. Seemed like I'd never been away. When in commission the submarine had 2 crews Port and Starboard; an on and off crew and my life was very different in both. On crew lasted for about 4 & a half months & started with a 17 day maintenance period. During this time I would work 8.-10 hours a day. Working three days on different shifts and the fourth a day off. This would be the format for the next four months. The work up consisted of fire flood & famine! We carried out various drills fire, air burst, hydraulic bursts equipment failures, practice torpedo attacks on any passing ferries or on one occasion HMY Britannia to ensure that we could deal with anything as a team. Meal times were flexible and sleep patterns even worse.

Was the food good, well nobody died from it but certainly not great. After the first week the fresh stuff ran out then was all tins and frozen. We normally stored for 90 days and the longest patrol was 180 days. Food was our limiting factor everything else we made.

Back to Coulport for missile outload and hopefully a few last hours at home, an awful time as we all knew what was coming. Finally time to go, for me this could be 2 days before we sailed! When we left Faslane a transit out to deeper water and then dive a quick dip down to a hundred feet or so and then back up to periscope depth for the transit around the top of Ireland (normally, although occasionally went south down the Irish Sea). Finally deep water (considered to be 600 feet) and we could get the submarine where she belonged. Time to settle into the patrol routine, the first week was awful as all missing home, someone had always bought a cold so we all got that and nothing had settled down. Week 2 was better, the first family gram would arrive 40 words from home and censored to ensure we received no bad news and we all settled down into our routines.

During the day when not on watch or repairing anything that had broken that you were responsible the time was passed watching films 14:00, 20:30 & 00:30, playing cards, chess, uckers (a naval form of ludo with very strange rules). We did have alcohol junior rates 3 cans a day, Senior Rates 2 pints a day and 3 measures of spirit, averaged over 14 days. Only officers were allowed wine. I know who had the best parties!!

Once a week we would receive an exercise firing signal (two person verification + Captains order to fire) which meant 15 minutes to prove we were ready to launch. Up to launch depth maximum roll course and hover on depth in winter a 20 degree roll was not abnormal. After 20 minutes back down to patrol depth.

Every so often you would take a stroll to a different section (sound room, control room, radio shack etc just for a change of scenery) and a different group of people to talk to. Only 3 areas were off limits on patrol, the navigation centre, Missile control centre & Missile control. First two as position was visible & latter as you could jettison a missile from there.



We made our own Oxygen and could remove Carbon dioxide (breathing) & monoxide (smoking, cooking etc.) so the air was relatively normal. We made our own water so usage was reasonably relaxed remembering a shower doesn't need to be longer than 60 seconds!

Finally we get around to the last week but still very busy getting everything ready for handover and patrol reports to be written about everything that has happened and signals prepared for parts for any defects that couldn't be fixed. Finally another boat would be on patrol and we could leave our patrol area and up revs and head for home. Occasionally though a Russian blockade still to get through! Finally time to surface and get that horrible sea smell, it stunk!!! I Always tried to get up on the bridge for sunrise; if in sight of land the colour green, seems a very strange thing to miss but as Joni Mitchell said you don't know what you've got till its gone!

Finally at about 14:00 we would arrive back in Coulport! Still plenty of work to do. Of the 4 men in my position 3 could go home once the reactor was shutdown (about 16:00) leaving one to cooldown the reactor (normally my job). This took about 8 – 10 hours. Be relieved of my duty about 8 and finally off home by 9. Back at work the next day for crew handover home by 14:00 & 5 well earned days off!! Back to work supporting the other crew through their maintenance period and wave them off to sea. Life now very relaxed with planning taking place for the next on crew. Finally she would sail on patrol & we would all have 3 weeks leave. I loved my job, some great times and some very bad times but none of it would have been enjoyable if it wasn't for the wives we left behind taking full responsibility for running the household and never knowing when we would reappear or in the worst case if. HMS Repulse is now one of many submarines in Rosyth awaiting the time when all remaining radioactive material is removed and she gets recycled by normal shipbreaking routines. She was the second of the Polaris submarines into service and the last to complete a patrol in 1994. There is currently a Vanguard Class submarine on patrol carrying the deterrent.

**Thank you Kevin for your really interesting story.**

**Kevin and wife Leslie, along with Lucy their dog live at Littlebridge Meadows and Kevin has now become the newly elected Chairman of our Village Hall.**



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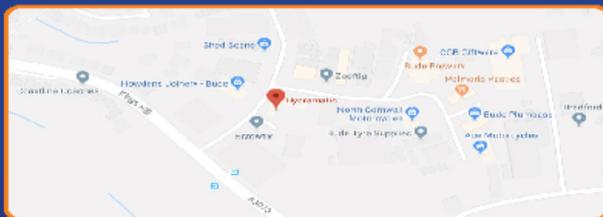
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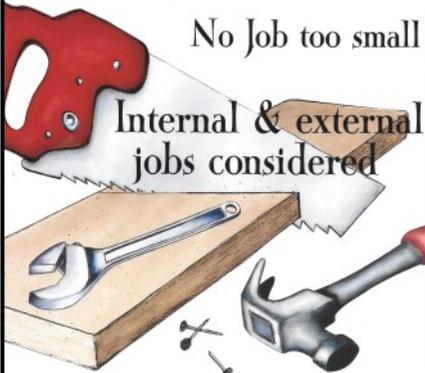
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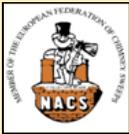
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