

Master's tour to the Royal Navy Submarine Museum, Gosport.

(September 2016)



HMS Alliance at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum

The Livery Committee's September event was the Master's tour of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum at Gosport. The visit began with an illustrated talk given by the Master on Royal Navy submarine operations in the First World War, revealing absorbing tales of derring-do, some with a distinctly Boys Own Paper feel to them, including:

- Lieutenant Norman Holbrook VC, who in December 1914 took his old and primitive submarine B11 from the Aegean Sea, up the Dardanelles, through a minefield, sank a Turkish battleship and, despite damage from shore guns, evaded defending forces, made his way back through the minefield and with his crew, lived to tell the tale.
- Commander Max Horton whose exploits in command of HMS E9 operating from a Russian port in the Baltic Sea in 1914 and 1915 caused so much disruption to the German war effort that they mounted an assassination attempt involving a beautiful agent; Horton charmed her into revealing details of the plot and then assisted her own escape to England.
- Lieutenant Guy D'Oyle Hughes, who swam ashore at night from the submarine E11 in the Sea of Marmara pushing a small raft laden with explosives and blew up a railway line carrying Turkish reinforcements to the Gallipoli campaign, then swam back to his submarine under fire from Turkish guards as dawn broke.



- Lieutenant Commander Gilbert Kellett who, when the engines of his submarine broke down while in the heavily defended waters off Heligoland, near the German coast in the North Sea, captured a German trawler and took his submarine in tow back to Harwich.

But submarine operations came at a terrible price as a look at the Area of Remembrance showed – loss of life in submarines was proportionately greater than on the Western front.

A guided tour of the Museum included the Royal Navy's first submarine, *Holland 1*, which sank under tow to the breaker's yard in 1911, was raised in 1982 and is now restored and preserved; X24, a midget submarine that twice entered Bergen harbour in 1944 and sank a floating dock used for repairing U-Boats and large enough to take the mighty battleship *Tirpitz*; the gold cigarette case encrusted with the Czar's cipher in diamonds, given to Max Horton by the Czar; the Victoria Cross awarded to Lieutenant Commander Edward Boyle for his skill, daring and gallantry in command of the submarine E14 in the Dardanelles and Sea of Marmara in 1915; and much more besides, telling the story of the Royal Navy's submarine service in both World Wars and the years between and since, including the Cold War and the Falklands conflict.



Control Room, HMS Alliance

The highlight was, perhaps, a walk through the World War II era submarine *HMS Alliance*, which brought home some of the reality of life onboard a submarine, surrounded by pipes, valves, gauges and hand levers, and that special bond that comes from close quarters living, shared discomfort and knowing the necessity of being able to rely on every crew member to take the right actions in an emergency.

The Master, Rear Admiral Paul Hoddinott CB OBE, spent most of his naval career in submarines, commanded *HMS Andrew* (same class as *HMS Alliance*) and *HMS Revenge* (a Polaris submarine); served as Chief of Staff Submarines in the closing years of the Cold War and was a trustee of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum and Chairman of the Museum's Friends