

# HMS Warwick

**At the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of her sinking  
and loss of 66 of her crew, an account of  
how they were remembered**



## **HMS Warwick D25**

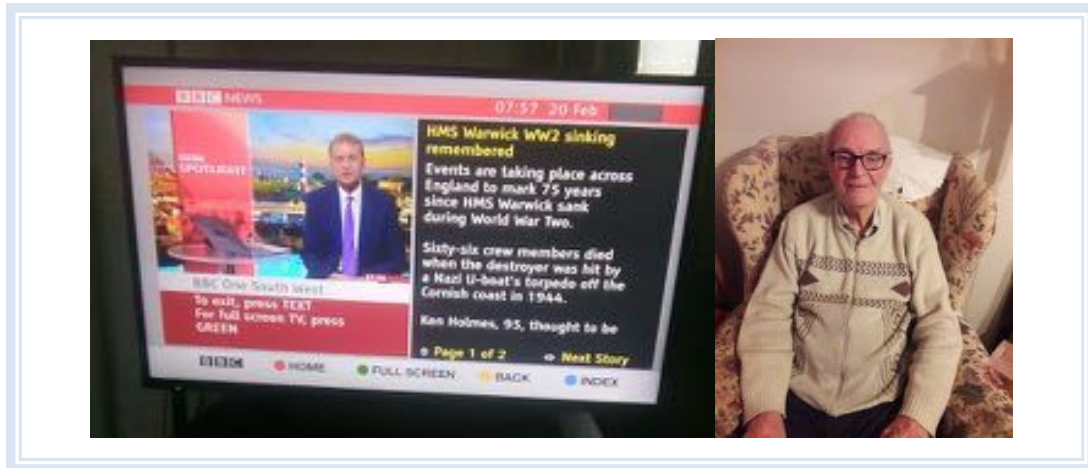
A 'W' class destroyer built for the First World War and re-commissioned for the Second World War. She was torpedoed and sunk by enemy action 'U413', on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February 1944, at position Latitude 50' 27' North, Longitude 5' 23' West, about 17 miles to the South West of Trevoze Head, off the north coast of Cornwall.

66 of the crew were killed, but many lives were saved. HMS Warwick, a Devonport based ship, had been tasked, together with HMS Saladin (H 54) and HMS Scimitar (H 21), to find and destroy an enemy U boat which was known to be off the northern coast of Cornwall.

To commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the loss of HMS Warwick and the loss of the 66 of her crew, I have put together this booklet to record the many events of Remembrance that were held in the UK on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019. This being at Naval War Memorials, War Graves, dedicated trees and Plaques. Also on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at St Merryn Church.

I would like to dedicate this record booklet to the memory of David Harries and Jean Holmes. The tireless research which they carried out has made sure this chapter of the Second World War will always be remembered.

John Puddicombe  
Plymouth  
2019  
HMS Warwick Family Association



BBC England gave national coverage news reports and above is a very recent picture of Ken Holmes, the last known survivor of the sinking of HMS Warwick. Now at 95. Below is the link to V&W website which has many references to HMS Warwick what happened and what has gone on subsequently

[http://vandwdestroyerassociation.org.uk/HMS\\_Warwick/loss.html](http://vandwdestroyerassociation.org.uk/HMS_Warwick/loss.html)

## HMS Warwick Roll of Honour

### War Graves of crew of HMS Warwick

Name	Rank	Service Number	Age	Cemetery	Plot
BELL, JOHN LOWTHIAN	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 580280	18	ST. MERRY CHURCHYARD	Grave 11.
CHAPPELL, CECIL G.	Able Seaman	D/JX 167582	24	ST. MERRY CHURCHYARD	Grave 15.
FORD, HORACE A. E.	Chief Petty Officer	D/J 24801	49	ST. MERRY CHURCHYARD	Grave 14.
MORGAN, WILLIAM K.	Stoker 2nd Class	D/KX 527790	18	ST. MERRY CHURCHYARD	Grave 12.
TOWER, JOHN C. R.	Supply Assistant	D/MX 617463	19	ST. MERRY CHURCHYARD	Grave 13.
YOUNG, FRANCIS S.	Able Seaman	D/JX 199780	24	ST. MERRY CHURCHYARD	Grave 10.
HALES, LESLIE J.	Able Seaman	D/JX 368912	20	OLD CHURCH CEMETERY, ISLES OF SCILLY	North square plot.
KILLEY, WILLIAM ERIC	Able Seaman	D/JX 306364	20	OLD CHURCH CEMETERY, ISLES OF SCILLY	North square plot.
PEACOCK, ROBERT	Stoker 2nd Class	D/KX 161772	20	OLD CHURCH CEMETERY, ISLES OF SCILLY	North square plot.
NEALE, RONALD NORMAN	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 419683	20	PENZANCE CEMETERY	Sec. F. Row B. Grave 6.

## Plymouth Naval War Memorial

Name	Rank	Service Number	Age	Panel	Column
Thomas Alley	Assistant Cook	D/MX 107820	19	91	2
Charles Ball	Engine Room Artificer	D/MX 75939	25	89	1
Sydney Baty	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 558604	18	87	3
Robert Cairns	Able Seaman	D/JX 346967	N/K	86	1
David Clegg	Petty Officer Stoker	D/KX 81559	38	89	2
Donald Clegg	Able Seaman	D/JX 366861	21	86	2
Sidney Coates	Able Seaman	D/JX305237	18	86	1
John Crook	Able Seaman	D/JX 302974	N/K	86	1
Winston Davies	Ordinance Artificer	D/MX 64084	25	90	3
Edward Devaney	Able Seaman	D/JX238853	N/K	86	1
Albert Duffy	Leading Seaman	D/SSX 22620	24	85	2
James Farrow	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 422902	20	88	1
Matthew Forrest	Petty Officer	D/J 86820	40	85	2
James Giles	Leading Seaman	D/X 20369A	23	92	2
Kenneth Hancock	Chief Engine Room Artificer	D/MX 49764	34	89	1
Levi Harrison	Steward	D/LX 27277	36	91	2
Jeffery Hartley	Electrical Artificer	D/MX 86642	22	90	3
Alan Henson	Able Seaman	D/JX 406905	19	86	2
John Hill	Able Seaman	D/JX 230315	23	86	2
William Hudson	Ordinary Telegraphist	D/JX 359338	20	88	3
James Jennings	Stoker 1st Class	D/KX 137551	46	90	1
Thomas Johnson	Petty Officer	D/K 61807	N/K	89	2
Leslie King	Ordinary Coder	D/JX 509003	42	89	1
Thomas Linford	Petty Officer Stoker	D/KX 80562	32	89	2
Francis Lyons	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 558495	18	88	1
William McCoy	Able Seaman	D/JX 215636	28	87	1
John McShane	Able Seaman	D/MD/X3115	N/K	93	1
Frederick Maeers	Able Seaman	D/JX 419237	19	87	1

William Martin	Able Seaman	D/JX 367965	20	87	1
William Moores	Able Seaman	D/SSX 35994	N/K	87	1
Samuel Morrow	Able Seaman	D/MD/X 1951	35	93	1
John Moulton	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 404681	19	88	1
George Nicholl	Leading Seaman	D/JX 159832	N/K	85	3
Edward Nicholson	Leading Steward	D/LX 24760	26	91	2
James Norburn	Able Seaman	D/JX 366864	21	87	1
Thomas Nugent	Able Seaman	D/JX 419669	N/K	87	1
Frank Palmer	Able Seaman	D/J 41748	N/K	87	1
John Parkinson	Able Seaman	D/JX 171581	27	87	1
Eric Parsons	Lieutenant	N/K	32	92	3
Vernon Phillips	Able Seaman	D/KX 14660	23	87	1
William Porter	Petty Officer Telegraphist	D/JX 146518	24	88	3
Francis Poxon	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 570036	N/K	88	2
John Rees	Engine Room Artificer	D/MX 102570	N/K	89	1
David Roberts	Stoker 1st Class	D/KX 155776	N/K	90	1
Sydney Robins	Leading Steward	D/LX 28188	36	91	2
Denis Sandes	Surgeon Lieutenant	N/K	28	93	1
Norman Slapper	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 422146	19	87	2
George Sleator	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 420406	19	87	2
Robert Smith	Able Seaman	D/JX 416594	N/K	87	2
Arnold Swift	Able Seaman	D/JX 303973	20	87	3
Gilbert Tanner	Petty Officer Steward	D/LX 20801	34	91	2
Jack Valentine	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 407098	18	87	3
William Walter	Stoker 2nd Class	D/KX 580880	18	90	3
Edward Peter Whinney	Sub-Lieutenant	N/K	20	85	1
Arthur Williams	Ordinary Seaman	D/JX 421139	18	88	2

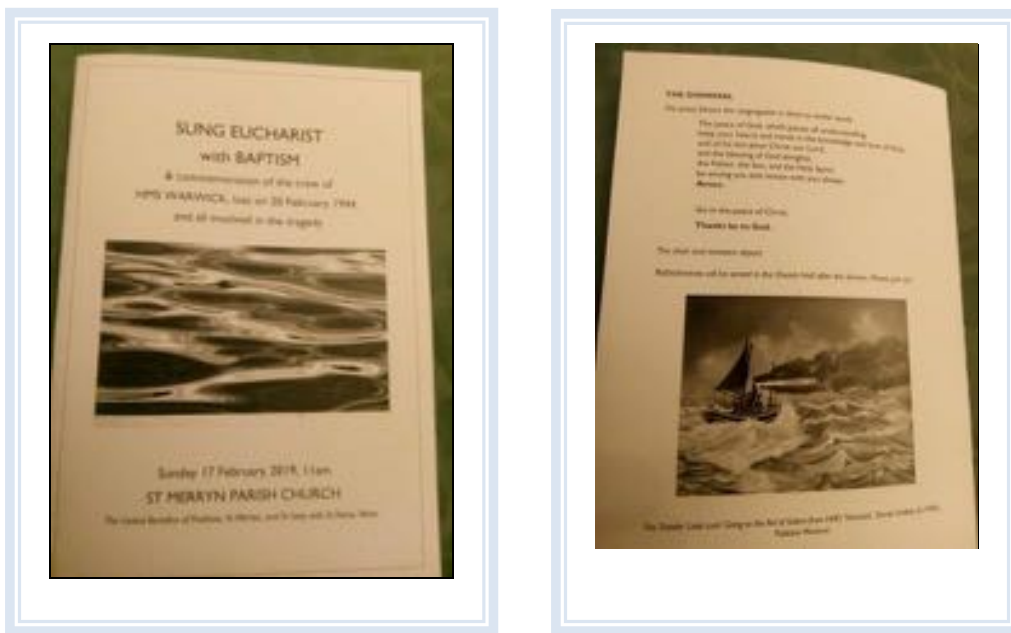
### Chatham Naval War Memorial

Name	Rank	Service Number	Age	Panel	Column
Sidney Reid	Canteen Manager	C/NX 703577	25	80	1

## St Merryn Parish Church Cornwall

A Remembrance Service for the 66 crew of HMS Warwick and the crew of the Wellington Bomber HF168 took place at 11.00 on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The service was part of the Sunday Morning worship, which included 4 baptisms and the receiving of Holy Communion.

The Service was led by the Revd Diane Powell, Padre to the Padstow Sea Cadets. Moria Gill Churchwarden dressed the HMS Warwick window in the church, with memorial pieces associated with the ship and her crew.



The Padstow Royal British Legion Standard (Ross Ford Standard bearer) and HMS Warwick Poppy wreath (John Puddicombe) were placed at the altar at the start of the service. In attendance were members of the HMS Warwick Family Association, which include relatives of both those who survived and those who were killed. Members of the Padstow Royal British Legion and the Royal Naval Association Warwick, represented their branches.

The HMS Warwick crest  
and engraved plaque  
at the rear of the church



During the Service I gave an overview of what had happened to HMS Warwick and the terrible loss of life. I recalled the bravery of the crews of the 3 trawlers who risked their lives to save so many of the survivors, from drowning or exposure. I also explained the link with the Wellington bomber which was lost in the same operation, with 6 aircrew being killed.

The names of the 66 HMS Warwick crew who died and the Wellington bomber crew who died were read out by:

**HMS Warwick** - Syd Robins, John Puddicombe, Jo lines, Dennis Cardew, Alan Veck, Jonathon Searle.

**Wellington Bomber HF168** - Keith Freeman (Ex RAF, he is a member of the Padstow RBL and also Padstow Town Councillor)

After the Service a gathering at the 6 HMS Warwick War graves took place, Prayers were said by the Reverend Diane Powell, a floral tribute was placed on the graves by Warwick RNA Vice Chairman Dave Butler, and I placed the Poppy Wreath on my Grandads War Grave, CPO Horace Ford. Members of the Padstow Royal British Legion were also in attendance (Trevor Jones Chairman, Alan Veck Vice Chairman, Standard Bearer Ross Ford, Trevor and Sue Whitehouse.) The standard was laid by the graves and a 2 minute silence was observed. The graveside respects were witnessed by many, including HMS Warwick Family Association members.

On completion, members of the congregation served refreshments in the Church Hall, giving all concerned a chance to relax, socialise and exchange information.









## Chatham Naval War Memorial

The memorial commemorates more than 8,500 Royal Navy personnel of the First World War and over 10,000 of the Second World War.

Sidney Reid was the only Chatham based crew member of HMS Warwick who was killed, he went down with the ship, his name is commemorated on Chatham Naval War Memorial.



At 11.00am Wednesday 20th February 2019, members of the Chatham RNA met at the Chatham Naval War Memorial. Standing in front of Panel 80, with Sidney Reids name in column 1. A two minutes silence was observed for Sidney Reid and the other 65 of his shipmates, who were killed 75 years ago on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February 1944.



From left to right. Rhoderick "Spike" Hughes - Tim Stopford - Chairman RNA Chatham & Roger Ide - Treasurer RNA Chatham. Picture taken by Shipmate Christine Sandmann,

A press cutting about Sidney as reported 75 years ago



**National Destroyer Memorial 1939-45 (front), Chatham Dockyard Kent**

HMS Cavalier is now preserved at Chatham as a memorial to the 142 Royal Navy destroyers sunk during the Second World War with the loss of over 11000 men. This bronze monument stands in front of the Cavalier, marking the very special contribution made by these ships and the men who served in them. It was created by sculptor Kenneth Potts and was unveiled on 14



## Penzance Cemetery Cornwall

Penzance cemetery has 35 scattered burials of the First World War and 71 burials of the Second World War. Seaman Ronald Neale, who was 20, is buried in the War Graves plot.



The reason he is buried so far away from where HMS Warwick was sunk is that it is believed, his body was picked up by a fishing boat and Penzance was the first port of call, to disembark him, to lay him to rest.

Joe Locke wrote:

At 11.00 on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019, members of the Helston Branch Royal Naval Association carried out a Remembrance service at his graveside. In attendance were Chairman George Scott, Vice Chairwoman Josie Locke, Alec Willet, Peter Brooke and Joe Locke.

The service was conducted by Joe Locke, with words penned by his brother Keith in Skegness. Alec Willet our standard bearer dipped the colours after Peter Brooke piped the still, two minutes silence was observed for the loss of Ronald Neale and the other 65 of his shipmates. A wooden cross was placed in front of the headstone to commemorate the 66 crew that were killed. After the service Joe, Peter and Alec shared a tot with Ronald as his tot of rum was gently poured near the headstone. On completion Josie Locke took the photographs.



As you look at the picture George is on the far left, then Alec with the standard, then Peter and finally Joe. The rain held off for us, it was an honour to do our small part on this sad but full of pride day.



Joe Locke's report of the Helston RNA Remembrance of Ronald Neale made the March 19 National newsletter of the RNA



## The Semaphore Circular

No 687

The Beating Heart of the RNA

March 2019

## **Isles of Scilly Old Church Cemetery**

In the Old Church Cemetery there are 6 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-18 war. There are a further 18 of the 1939-45 war, 2 of which are unidentified sailors of the Royal Navy

Members of the Isles of Scilly Royal British Legion, Chair and Vice Chair of the Council, The Chairman agreed to lay poppies on the 3 HMS Warwick graves and place the cross on the grave of the unknown sailor, thought to one of the crew of HMS Warwick.

11.00am Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019

A service of Remembrance was held by the graves of the 3 HMS Warwick sailors Leslie Hales, William Killey and Robert Peacock with unknown Sailor alongside.

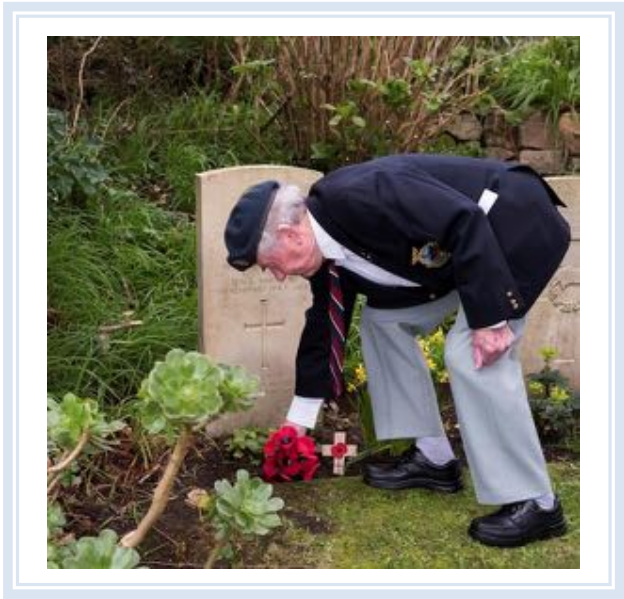
There were 12 in attendance, including the RBL Standard Bearer and Padre. The format of the service was as the Remembrance Sunday Service. Sprays of Poppies were laid on the 4 War Graves, the words of remembrance were said, the last post and reveille recordings were played, 2 minutes silence was observed by all there. The Kohima Epitaph was recited, prayers were said and on completion all retired and were dismissed.

### **The Kohima Epitaph**

**When You Go Home, Tell Them Of Us And Say,  
For Your Tomorrow, We Gave Our Today.**











## Plymouth Naval Memorial

An Admiralty committee recommended that the three main ports in Great Britain - Chatham, Plymouth and Portsmouth - should each have an identical memorial of unmistakable naval form, an obelisk, which would serve as a leading mark for shipping. With its central position on the Hoe overlooking Plymouth Sound in Devon, the Plymouth Naval Memorial is a well-known local landmark.



The memorial commemorates more than 7,200 naval personnel of the First World War and nearly 16,000 of the Second World War who were lost or buried at sea. All three memorials were designed by Sir Robert Lorimer with sculpture by Henry Poole. Each design is the same with an obelisk of Portland stone surmounted by a copper sphere. They commemorate those members of the Royal Navy who had no known grave, the majority of deaths having occurred at sea where no permanent memorial could be provided.

55 names of the crew of HMS Warwick who were killed are inscribed on 9 Bronze panels (85 to 93).



On Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 11.00, two of the relatives of those who were killed held vigil by the panels, said a prayer, placed a floral tribute and held a 2 minutes silence to those from HMS Warwick who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

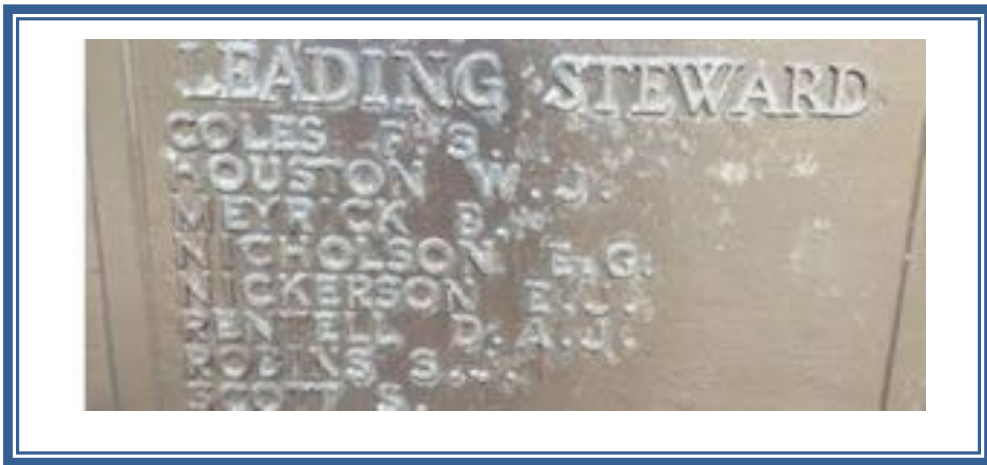


Julie Long, her Uncle William Walter who was 18, name appears on panel 90 column 3, also there was Jo Lines (my daughter) whose Great Grandad CPO Horace Ford who was 49, is buried in the War Graves plot of St Merryn church Cornwall. It was the first time the two had met; they talked, exchanged experiences before and after the Remembrance event.

Jo Lines & Julie Long

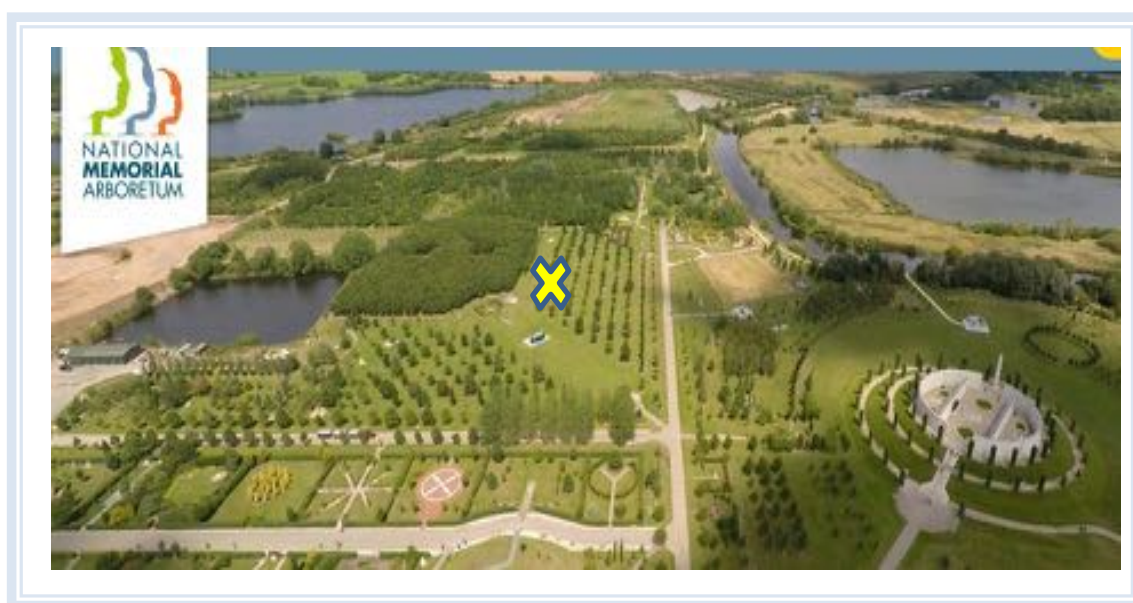


Below a few of the names from the 9 Panels of those who were remembered.



## National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) Alrewas, Staffordshire

The National Memorial Arboretum is the UK's year-round centre of Remembrance; a spiritually uplifting place which honours the fallen, recognises service and sacrifice, and fosters pride in our country. It is a living and lasting memorial. Covering 150 acres, the 30,000 trees and the more than 300 dedicated memorials on our site make the Arboretum a living tribute that will forever acknowledge the personal sacrifices made by the Armed Forces and civil services of this country.



The Arboretum was the brainchild of Commander David Childs CBE who wished to see established a national focus for Remembrance. The National Lottery granted some forty per cent of the funds needed and this was matched by thousands of donations, from around the country. The Arboretum was officially opened to the public in May 2001.

Warwick Town Council and the Warwick Royal Naval Association dedicated a memorial tree to HMS Warwick at the NMA on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2008. The Warwick Badge is incorporated into a plaque beside the tree. The yellow & blue cross on the picture, gives the position of the dedicated tree.

At 11.00 on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019 my Cousins John & Sue Warn and friends Mike & Vanda Burke attended the HMS Warwick Memorial tree, at the National Memorial Arboretum. A 2 minutes silence was observed, Psalm 23 was recited and prayers were said for the 66 crew members who were killed 75 years ago on that day and their families. The HMS Warwick Roll of Honour list of names was attached to the tree.

Many other people were seen remembering, those who had given the ultimate sacrifice, at the memorials across the NMA site. John said "The knowledge



that remembrance was happening in so many places was very evident and must surely never be forgotten. Those that gave everything for us.”



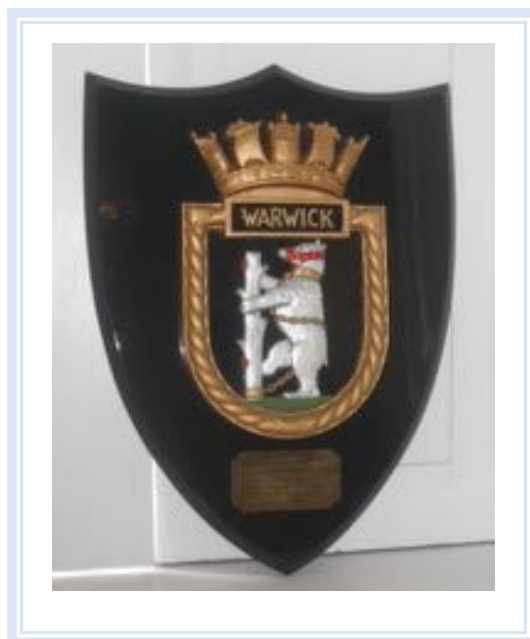
Before lunch in the restaurant, they entered CPO HAE Ford's name into the day's Roll of Honour book and lit a candle in his and the crews memory.

## Warwick Town & Warwick Castle

The history of Warwick castle reaches back almost 11 centuries. Attacked in 1264, besieged in 1642 and damaged by fire in 1871, the Castle has nevertheless survived the ever-changing fortunes of history. Warwick Castle remained as a private home until 1978. Merlin Entertainments Group has it in its guardianship today.



The town of Warwick lies adjacent to the castle and has very strong links with HMS Warwick, this through the organisations within the town: Warwick Town Council, Warwick Royal Naval Association, St Mary's Church and Warwick Castle. In the Town Council chamber and church there are artefacts associated with the links with HMS Warwick. In the council chamber these include mementos of visits by the ships company starting back in the 1930's. A picture of HMS Warwick presented to the town council, HMS Warwick ships bell, a hand carved wooden plaque commemorating the adoption of HMS Warwick by Warwick town, during the National Warship week of February 1942.



Warwick Town Council and Warwick Royal Naval Association planted an English Oak on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2008, inside the grounds of the Castle. The tree commemorates HMS Warwick and SS Warwick Castle, both ships being sunk during WWII. A brass plaque marks the occasion and the tree the plaque reads:

**Quercus robur (English Oak)**  
**Dedicated to the memory of SS Warwick Castle (14<sup>th</sup> Nov 1942) and HMS Warwick (20<sup>th</sup> Feb 1944) and those who lost their lives when both Ships Were torpedoed 15 months apart by U boat U413 during WWII**  
**Planted 11<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

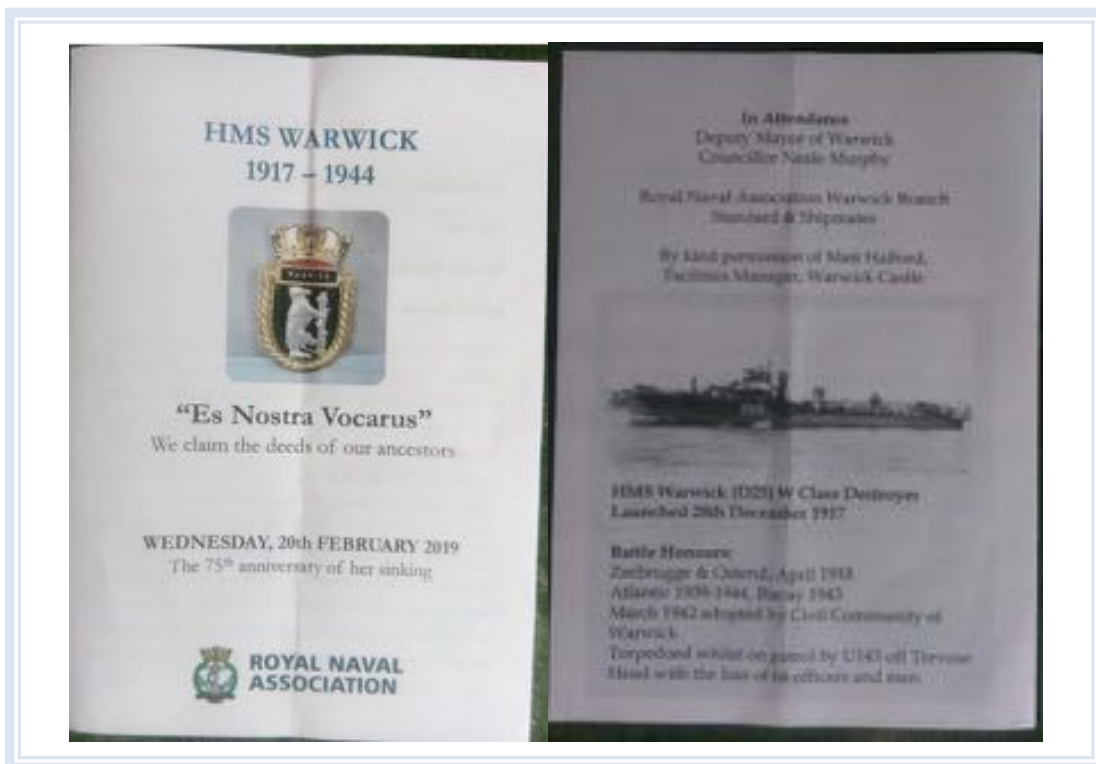
At 11.00am on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019, Deputy Mayor of Warwick Councillor Neale Murphy was accompanied by Royal Naval Association Warwick Branch Standard and shipmates and a member of Warwick Sea Cadets at the "Warwick" tree in the grounds of Warwick Castle.



There was a wreath laid by the tree, the dedication was read by the Chairman, the Still was sounded by A/C Erin Thomas, a 2 minute silence was observed for the 66 crew who were killed and the Naval Prayer was recited by all. The Deputy Mayor gave the address and the Mariners prayer was recited by all. An order of Service was produced for the occasion.





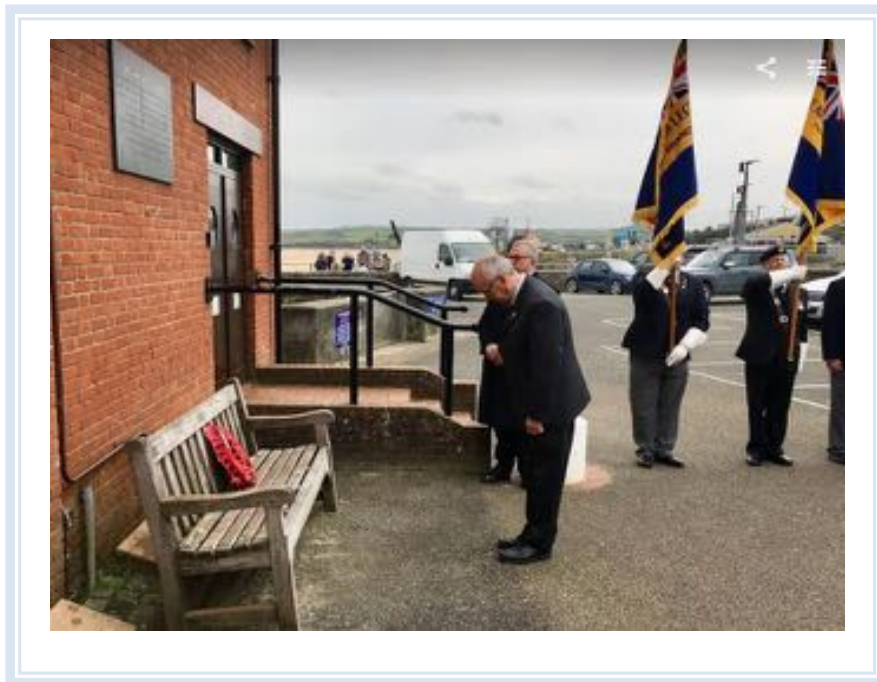


Warwick Castle has posted a short video on their Facebook page, of the service and paid tribute to those who were killed 75 years ago.

## Padstow Cornwall Red Brick Building on the harbour

At 11.00 on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019 a Service of Remembrance was held at Padstow Harbour by the HMS Warwick Plaque on the Red Brick building, This being close to where the 3 Trawlers Lady Luck, Christophel Columbus & Blauwvoet landed the survivors, injured and dead and on this day 75 years ago. Relatives of those who were killed and survivors relatives joined with members of organisations of Padstow, to say the Royal Navy prayer and witness the dedication, to lay a RBL poppy wreath, observe a 2 minute silence while the standards were dipped, to remember the 66 who had died 75 years ago.





We also remembered the bravery of the crews of the 3 Trawlers who risked their own lives in saving so many of the crew of HMS Warwick, who would have certainly perished in the unforgiving February seas off the North Cornwall coast.





Trevor Jones Padstow RBL Chairman wrote:

Will most certainly pass on your thanks to all concerned. It was a privilege and an honour to do it. Below is a list of names that attended I think I have covered most, there were a few spectators there as well.

The Royal British Legion - David Taylor President and his wife Yvonne, Trevor Jones Chairman, Alan Veck Vice Chairman, Rector Stephen Holmes Legion Padre, Trevor and Sue Whitehouse, John Luscombe, Ellen Lobb, Standard

Bearers, Bill Shaw Padstow Branch & R Ponton-Brown Chairman Wadebridge Branch

Town Mayor Richard Higman and Councillor Richard Buscombe, Museum Curator and local historian John Buckingham and his wife. Sea Cadets Becky Green PO Instructor and Alex Green Cadet Piper and John Hinchliffe who was one of the main driving forces to have the plaque erected when he was Harbour Commissioner.

## **Padstow Museum**

After the service and speaking with the people there, I visited the brand new Padstow Museum now located at the Old Station House in the Council South Quay Car Park and saw the display of the HMS Warwick artefacts and signed the visitor's book. They really have great display of Cornish life over the centuries.



## St Merryn Church & Towan Green Cornwall

The origins of this Church are shrouded in mystery. It is first mentioned in 1259 as being dedicated to St Marina of Antioch. Pottery found in the local area prove that North Cornwall was closely linked by trade with the Eastern Mediterranean brought to this place by merchants and sailors. The first resident vicar was, John de Withiel in 1259. The south aisle has an beautiful arcade of seven pillars and Gothic arches of Cataclews stone, quarried on Trevose Head in 1422. The six bells in the Tower, dated 1796 - 97, are used every Sunday. The Rector appointed in 2018 is The Revd. Dr Stephen Holmes. There are a number of Commonwealth Graves in the churchyard which are maintained to a high standard by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the church. Six of the War graves are those who were killed from HMS Warwick.



In World War II, the Royal Navy had an Air Station at St Merryn, which became HMS Vulture. As this was the nearest Military establishment to where the survivors, injured and dead of HMS Warwick were landed, they were transferred and cared for there. For the 6 dead St Merryn church was the nearest burial site.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019 after the Service in Padstow Harbour I attended the 6 War Graves at St Merryn Church, I held a 2 minutes silence in honour of the 6 crew buried there













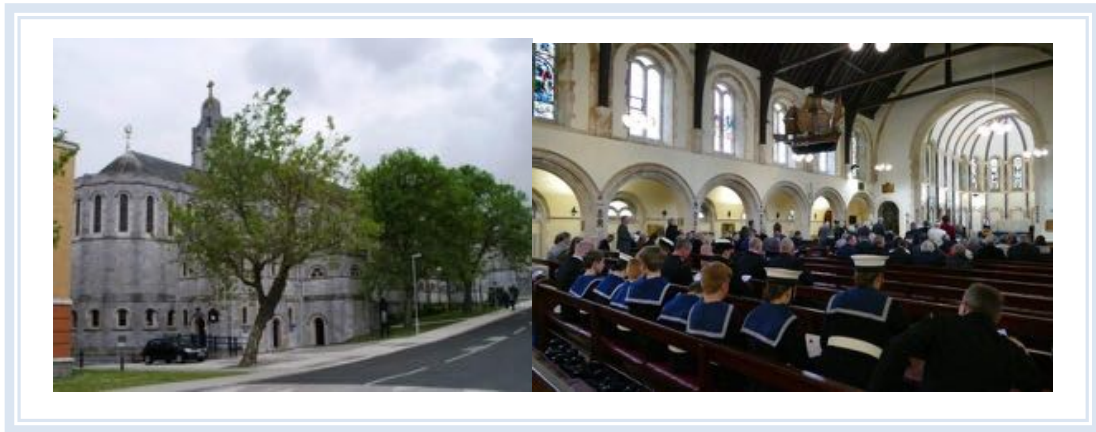
## Towan Green

After visiting the War Graves, I went down to Towan Green on the other side of St Merryn towards Constantine Bay, to visit the HMS Warwick trees that were planted there in 1984 on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the sinking of HMS Warwick. They are dedicated to the 6 crew buried at the church. One of the 6 trees died and was subsequently replaced. More trees were added at a later date, to protect the 6 from the exposed layout of the site.



## St Nicholas Church and Naval Chaplaincy HMS Drake Devonport

HMS Drake is situated within Her Majesty's Naval Base, Devonport, located in the west of the city of Plymouth and is the largest naval base in Western Europe. It is one of three operating bases in the United Kingdom for the Royal Navy.



St Nicholas Church situated within HMS Drake was dedicated by the Bishop of Exeter in 1907. In the church a glass cabinet, displays a Memorial book to all sailors who were killed 1939 -1945 on Devonport based ships. Each of the names of the 66 crew who were killed on HMS Warwick are inscribed in this Memorial book.



The Naval Chaplaincy is a community of clergy and associates from a variety of denominations, dedicated to giving pastoral care and spiritual and moral leadership to the men and women of the Naval Service and their dependants.

They are based in Fisher Block with 'The Haven' within HMS Drake along with other pastoral support staff.

The Revd James A McWhirter NCS, Chaplain of the Devonport Chaplaincy Team writes: We said prayers for HMS Warwick on Wednesday morning between the Chaplains. Our prayer intentions were for the ships' company, those who perished and those who survived, for the families and the many services that took place that day. With kind regards James.

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I would like to thank everyone involved with taking the time to remember the 66 crew of HMS Warwick who were killed 75 years ago.

The collective acts that took place marked a very significant event in the continuing history of this tragedy. To all the co-ordinators, contributors and attendees, I would like to thank you for dedication and effort in remembering the sacrifice that these men gave. We have and continue to enjoy the freedom they paid this very high price for.

I wrote this documentary account to record our continuing remembrance and the importance of keeping the tragedy that happened in the public consciousness.

John Puddicombe

20<sup>th</sup> March 2019