



28 Monks Way
Hill Head
Fareham
Hants Po14 3LU
01329 662137
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AUTUMN 2018 NEWSLETTER

Congratulations to Archie Ross who celebrated his 100th birthday on 18 March. He was a Stoker 1st Class at the time of the sinking and lives in Haliburton, Canada. He regularly thanks me for the newsletters. He says he can still get around and plays cards twice a week.

Sadly our last two UK survivors died this year. I have therefore decided that this year the 77th anniversary of the loss of HMS Barham will be the last time that I will ask the Dean, the Very Reverend John Hall, for us to hold our Remembrance service in Westminster Abbey.

Jack Nealon who died on 15th January aged 95 lived in East Preston, Sussex and was a Marine at the time of the sinking. George Knott who died on 8th August aged 94 lived in Hythe, Kent. He was a Boy 2nd Class at the time of the sinking and did 23 years service rising to Chief Petty Officer.

Jack's funeral was held at the Worthing Crematorium on 31st January. His widow Barbara attended and his Grandson gave a wonderful eulogy which was very well received. The HMS Barham Association sent a wreath of gold and blue flowers and was represented by Ray and Diana Oliver. George's funeral is to be held at Barham, Kent on 8th September. An Association wreath will be sent.

The Dean has very kindly given permission for us to hold our last Remembrance Service at the abbey at 1115 on Saturday 24th November. The change of timing is due other events happening in the Abbey that day. Members and guests are advised to enter the abbey by the Great West Door after the 1100 pause for prayers and proceed to the nave seating as directed by the abbey staff.

Our service is in memory of all those who died in HMS BARHAM and we remember all those survivors who have passed away during the year. The service includes the laying of our wreath which Pat Picket has again volunteered to make. If any member or members of the Association wish to lay the wreath please let me know. After the service the book of remembrance will be open for inspection.

Last year our service was held on the 25th November and was conducted by the Reverend Canon David Stanton. Our survivors Jack Nealon and George Knott attended as usual. I laid the wreath for the 76th anniversary of the sinking of HMS BARHAM. As ever our beautiful wreath was made and donated by Patricia Picket assisted by her husband Alan who brought it to the Abbey. Many thanks yet again. I read the Tennyson poem "Crossing the bar". About 38 people attended the service and yet again some were there for the first time.

Some members may plan to meet at the Methodist Central Hall restaurant for a light lunch and get together after the abbey services. An alternative is the Cellarium cafe just off the abbey cloisters (cellariumcafe.com).

The guestbook on our website has a steady stream of entries from members of families of those who served in HMS Barham but for whom the Association had never before had any contacts. We would welcome any of them and any others who wish to come to the Remembrance service.

I shall only be sending a hard copy of this newsletter to Archie Ross. If you know of anyone without access to the internet who wishes to keep in touch about our activities please tell them about this year's service and the change of timing.

Michael K Stratton-Brown, Chairman