



Editors: Jane Montellier, UMT Secretary & Padre Roger Grey, Chaplain

Tewkesbury Sea Cadets Newsletter - Spring 2018

Chief Petty Officer Paul Mercer...in conversation with Padre Roger Grey

When did you become involve with the Sea Cadet Corps?

I joined the Gloucester Unit in 2003 as an adult helper. A son was already a Cadet there and another son became a Junior Cadet at the same time Sharon, my wife, also became involved as a member of the Unit Management Team. My daughter was also a Cadet, but in the Air Training Corps.

As TS Otter's Boats Officer you have a key role to play. Tell us what this involves.

I am responsible to the Commanding Officer for the maintenance and upkeep of all the boats used by the Tewkesbury Unit. It helps that I have a background in mechanics, starting as an apprentice and ending up as a Senior Operations Manager for Total. The proper storage and transporting of boats are also part of my duties. I also instruct in power boating and rowing. I am especially proud of helping to train the Unit's rowing team that reached the National Rowing Finals on four recent occasions.

Last year you were promoted to the Senior Rate of Chief Petty Officer. What did that involve?

Well, you have to serve a minimum of five years as a Petty Officer before you can become a Chief. The process also involves a week long course of continuous assessment which I did at the Sea Cadet Training Centre at HMS Caledonia in Scotland.

You are an unpaid adult volunteer. Why do you give your time to the Sea Cadets instead of relaxing at home watching the television?

I have a particular concern for kids that are struggling to make something of their lives and get a 'buzz' when they grow in confidence and achieve. Some of them find boating quite a challenge at first and if I can help them over-come their fears, that's very satisfying. I also value the comradeship amongst the adult volunteers at Tewkesbury Unit.

What do you think the Sea Cadet Corps can offer young people?

A place where they can make friends and try a wide range of activities - boating, sailing, kayaking, wind-surfing, adventure



*Chief Petty Officer (SCC)
P Mercer*

training, catering, seamanship, first-aid, mechanical engineering - to mention just a few. they can go away on courses at reasonable cost. We also offer enough of a disciplined structure in which many kids thrive. My own three children also gained a huge amount from their year as a Lord Lieutenant's Cadet.

Chief Petty Officer Mercer, thank you.

Forthcoming Events 2018

Armour at The Abbey Tea (Tewkesbury)	6 th May
Half Marathon fund raising (Tewkesbury)	13 th May
Tewkesbury Big Weekend Boat Racing	20 th May
District Regatta (Tewkesbury)	9 th -10 th June
Tewkesbury & Malvern Boating Weekend (Weymouth)	15 th -17 th June
Armed Forces Day	30 th June
Medieval Festival Car Parking duties	14 th & 15 th July
Offshore Sailing on TS Jack Petchey (Plymouth-Penzance)	14 th -20 th July
Area Summer Camp (HMS Raleigh)	27 th July-3 rd Aug

Please note that, as always, dates will be updated on our Facebook page if there any changes. More dates will follow in due course and will be in the next Newsletter. For further information about any of the above courses/events please see Debbie Bailey in Admin or our Training Officer PO Rob Ashmeade.

Note for parents

In keeping with Sea Cadet safe guarding policy, cadet surnames are omitted from the text of all newsletters

TS Otter News

Congratulations to the our cadets

The following awards and badges were handed out at recent divisions:

Promotion to Cadet First Class

Cadet Nathaniel

2 Year's Good Conduct

Cadet First Class Amber

1 Year's Good Conduct

Cadet First Class Lewis

Basic Catering

Cadet First Class Lewis

Intermediate Catering

Cadet First Class Josh
Cadet First Class Amber
Cadet First Class Ella

Basic Seamanship

Cadet First Class Marnie

Basic First Aid

Cadet Ellie
Cadet Jacob
Cadet Angelique

Intermediate First Aid

Cadet First Class Courtney
Cadet First Class Lewis
Cadet First Class Matthew

Basic Piping

Cadet First Class Marnie

Supervised Coxswain

Cadet First Class James L

Basic Campcraft

Cadet Ellie

Basic Climbing

Cadet Ellie

Basic Mountain Biking

Cadet Ellie



New Entry

Congratulations to Junior Cadet Jack on his enrolment to Senior Cadet Level

Commodore's Broad Pennant

Leading Junior Cadet Nyah
Junior Cadet Thomas

Module Badges

Yellow - Junior Cadet First Class Jack

Outstanding Service

She got drawn in as a Mum of a cadet (Harry); her twins (Thea and Jack) were also cadets and husband Stuart was always on hand when there were jobs to be done at the Unit. In due course, she became Secretary of the Unit Management Team, then Treasurer and finally Chair-person. She received a prestigious award from a High Sheriff of Gloucestershire for her service to the community.

She is, of course, Mrs Sarah Griffiths - until recently TS Otter's Unit Management Team Chair-person. She had intended to retire at the next Annual General Meeting, but for well understood family reasons, has had to bring this forward.



In every capacity, outlined above, Sarah Griffiths has given outstanding service to Tewkesbury Sea Cadets - well above the call of duty. She has been very much a 'hands on' Chair-person. As a Unit, we have benefitted greatly from the close working relationship she and our Commanding Officer, Sub Lt Tristan Cooper, have forged over the years. Together, they have raised the profile of the unit to a high level both within the local community and further afield. Sarah has organised and personally led countless fund raising activities, and followed up every Unit achievement with a warm word of congratulation. She has encouraged the use of our building by other organisations as a source of revenue and given generously of her time behind the scenes. She is highly regarded by other Unit Chair-persons in the Severn District.

We thank Sarah warmly for her devoted service to TS Otter over the years. It has been in the very best traditions of the Sea Cadet Corps and she is an inspiration to us all

Padre Roger Grey, Chaplain, TS Otter

Drill Team make TS Otter history

The unit has in recent years held a strong reputation for drill and ceremonial and winning the district level of the Annual Drill and Piping Competition has been a norm for the team for well over a decade. But this year the unit has made history, as it is the first time ever that they have not only won the district level competition, but also won the area level competition, beating all other Sea Cadet units from across the South West Area.

In light of this win, the team qualified for the National Final in April, which puts the best team from each of the 6 areas of the UK against each other, which really is the highlight of many Sea Cadet's careers. The team were taken down to the Weston unit on the Friday for a final drill training session, slept over there and then on the Saturday morning were swiftly driven to HMS Raleigh for the big showdown. The team performed their absolute best and all members of the unit (especially me!) were immensely proud, albeit a little choked up, at watching the climax of their 4 months of hard work and dedication.

We are delighted to announce that the team managed to come away with a well-deserved 4th place and so for the next 12 months the team can safely say they are, out of over 400 units across the UK, the 4th best unarmed drill team; what a fantastic achievement!!!

I can't thank enough all the staff, parents and helpers for supporting the team over the 4 months of training. There is no doubt that the drill competition is one of the longest and most time consuming to train for, so the fantastic historical achievement this year has made it well worth it!

Commanding Officer Sub Lt (SCC) T Cooper

*TS Otter's Drill Team at the National Final at
HMS Raleigh*



*The Drill Team and Severn DO, Lt Cdr (SCC) Martyn Barber
pose with their 1st Place cup at the area competition*



Warm welcome to Charlotte

In the last month, Sub Lt (SCC) Charlotte Warren RNR, has joined Tewkesbury unit as an Instructor. Charlotte comes with 15 years of experience in the Corps, having joined as a Junior (with Sub Lt Cooper!) and then made her way up to PO Cadet, Midshipman and now Sub Lt. Charlotte has previously been Officer in Charge at Cheltenham Unit, Training Officer and 1st Lt at various other units and times throughout her Sea Cadet Career so far.

Charlotte is an instructor in Mechanical Engineering, Rowing and First Aid as well as teaching Peer Educator, the 'teaching' element of the Senior Cadet progression. She looks forward to putting all of this previous experience into Tewkesbury unit, developing the young cadets and supporting Senior Cadet progression as required. Charlotte is also an avid Game of Thrones fan, lives at home with her husband Rob and Carrot the cat and works as a Training Consultant for a Defence Support company in Cheltenham.

She will be a fantastic addition to the unit and we are thrilled to welcome her aboard.



Canon Roger Grey turns 80!

Our Padre is a man who seems to know everything that is going on, so it was with some trepidation that TS Otter decided to arrange a surprise party to celebrate his 80th birthday. A very canny ruse was arranged to have him elsewhere one Wednesday in March; the unit was decked out in balloons, a projector was set up rolling through a raft of photos of the Padre at large and 80 plus guests squeezed in, keeping as quiet as can be to not give the game away! It all went to plan with a massively surprised Padre walking in to a huge cheer from his friends with staff and cadets from the unit. Then the party got into full swing! Our Treasurer, Geraldine, had been busy during the day (and many beforehand) working with her son, Joe, to create an amazing spread of food that was very ably served by cadets Amber, Ellie, Nathaniel & Courtney, displaying great stewarding skills. The cadets had created their own special messages for him mounted in a frame and the juniors made their own mementos of the occasion. The evening culminated in the customary singing of 'Happy Birthday' and three cheers after a very warm speech from our CO. Padre blew out the candles on Geraldine's magnificent birthday cake before it was whisked away to be served up to all.

A wonderful evening - the well attended party was a tribute to how many people wanted to be there to wish Roger many happy returns.



Padre had just managed to pick his jaw up from the floor



Padre shows off his signed picture frame



Our President, Anne Cadbury, with Lt Col Andrew Tabor, High Sheriff of Gloucestershire



Padre with 3 of the cadet stewards for the evening - Ellie, Nathaniel & Courtney



Our Treasurer, Geraldine and her son, Joe busy in the kitchen



Left: Padre's birthday cake

Below left: Padre thanks the assembled for his birthday party

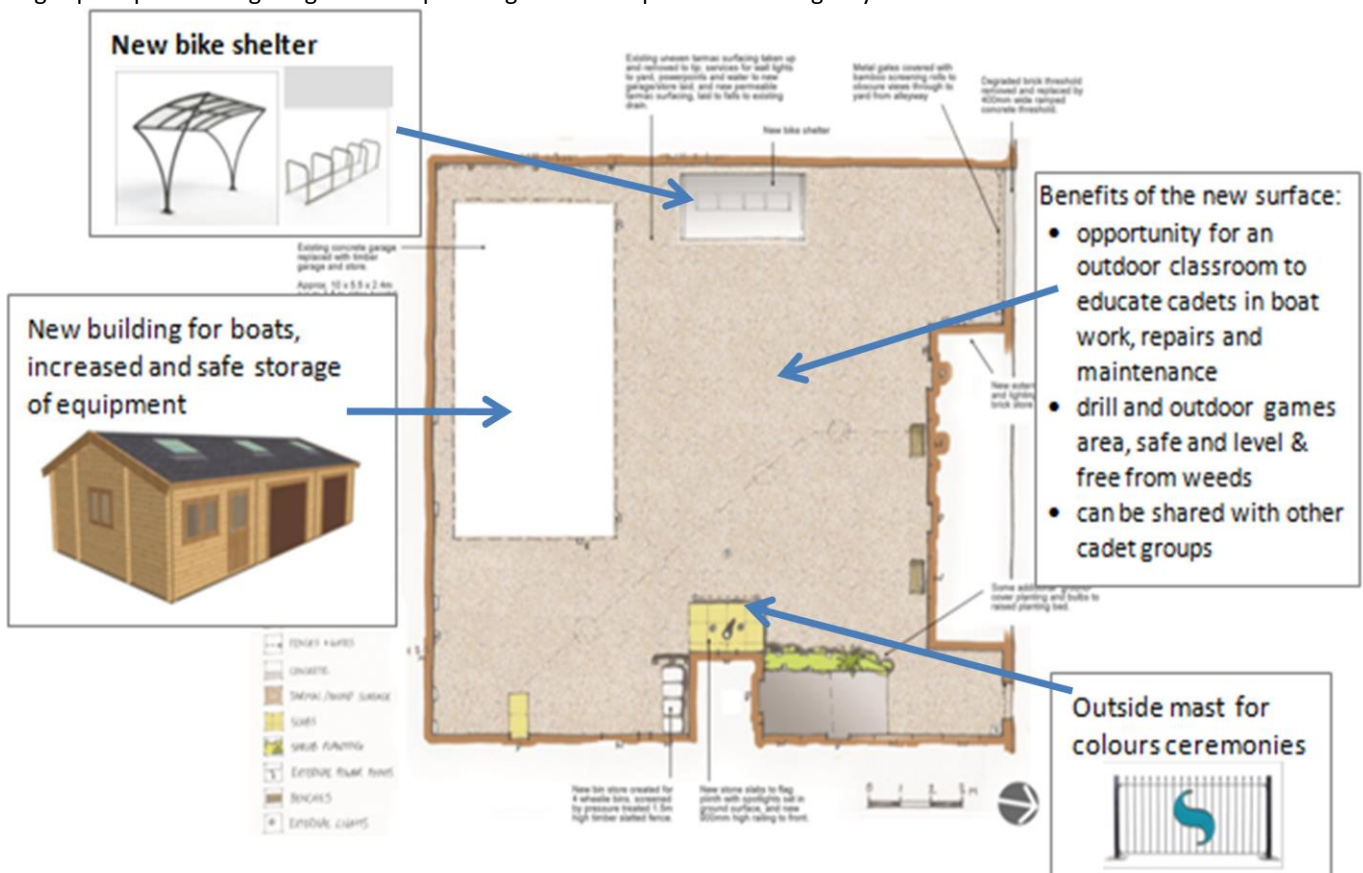
Below right: the Juniors having their photo-call with Padre



Thank you to Jo-Ann Marsh who gave permission for a number of these photos to be reproduced

Update on our Outside Space Project

Now that we have received approval from Tewkesbury Borough Council for our application to improve our outside space, we need to work hard on raising approx £60,000 to fund this project. We will be taking this work forward in two phases: Phase One will dig up and lay down a permeable tarmac surface that will provide us with a safe level area for drill, games and other activities, a new bike shelter and a bin store; Phase Two will involve the construction of a new building that will house boats and storage space plus new lighting onto the parade ground. The plan below will give you an idea of what it will look like.



A big 'thank you' for our grants

Once again, we are hugely grateful to a number organisations and charitable trusts for their very generous grants towards projects and items for Tewkesbury Sea Cadets:

- £1,000 from [Persimmon Homes Community Champions](#) for the Outside Space Project
- £2,000 from the [Honourable Company of Gloucestershire](#) for the Outside Space Project
- £2,500 from the [High Sheriff of Gloucestershire's fund](#) for the bike shelter as part of the Outside Space Project
- £1,500 from the [Rank Foundation](#) for the Outside Space Project
- £250 from [Tewkesbury Town Council](#) for the Outside Space Project
- £2,100 From the [Hedley Foundation](#) for a Zest yacht
- £1,880 from the [Rowlands Trust](#) for a triple boat trailer

Thank you!

And finally, a big thank you to our **Vice President, Mike Bennett**, who has very generously purchased a printer for our new IT room.

Visit much appreciated

We were honoured to have a visit from the current High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, Lt Col Andrew Tabor on February 21st. The High Sheriff thoroughly enjoyed his visit and took a keen interest in all that the cadets are doing. When visiting the Junior Cadets, the High Sheriff was asked "what do you enjoy most about being High Sheriff?" In his reply, he included "You get to visit places that other people don't" - a reference to the Government Communications Headquarters in Cheltenham and the response from one of the Junior Cadets was "Been there. Done that!"

At evening colours, the High Sheriff gave out the following awards to cadets: 1st place for the Junior Rowing Team in the South West Area Competition, 3rd place for the Junior Rowing Team in the National Competition and 3rd place for the Unit Power Boating Team in the South West Area Competition. We are fortunate as a unit to have the support and interest of those who serve the county in high office.



The High Sheriff demonstrates the potential use of the ceremonial sword to a mixed response!

Cadets Tommy, Matthew and Nathaniel were presented with their rowing medals



Cadets Fred, Nathaniel & Ryan M were presented with their 3rd place Area Power Boating medals

Cadets Josh, Tommy, Matthew, James L and James I were presented with their 1st place Area Rowing medals



Overcome with gratitude

On the occasion of my 80th birthday, the kindness shown to me by the CO and ship's company of TS Otter has quite overwhelmed me. Thank you so much for the surprise party which I knew absolutely nothing about beforehand, as well as the cards and gifts. I consider myself so greatly blessed to be Padre of Tewkesbury Sea Cadets.

Padre Roger Grey, Chaplain, TS Otter



...STOP PRESS...

We welcome the newly elected Chairman to the Unit, Mrs Eve Buchanan.

A detailed profile will follow in the next newsletter.

Just Juniors



The bad side of cooking...washing up!

January saw the Juniors looking at the Sea Cadet promise, galley dangers and hygiene and making a set of junior class room ground rules as well as a treasure trail around the unit finding various rooms and staff.

We then moved on to parts of a boat and constructing our own craft (yet to be tested!), making rain gauges and, of course, pancakes for the whole unit which went down very well and quickly!

We have also taken part in the visit from the Fire Brigade and Fire Cadets in April as well as getting ready for going on the water with the juniors having a swimming evening and all successfully completing their SCC swim tests.

We again had a group venture with Hereford and Malvern units with the visit to the big pit which you can hear about from Junior Cadet Cerys.

OiC, Juniors, PO Campbell-Reeves

My First Trip With Sea Cadets

On Friday the 6th of April, I went to Malvern Sea Cadets hut and met up with the other two of us from Tewkesbury to get on the bus. When we arrived in Hereford, we joined with Hereford's cadets and unpacked. After a while, it was time for tea ... it was pizza! At the dinner table, we all got to know each other a bit more. Once we'd all cleared up, it was free time. I went to do some of the crafts that were in one of the rooms but got caught up in a competitive game. After that, it was time to start winding down for bed.

The next morning, we all had a go at colours before breakfast. At the table, we were told we were going to Big Pit and then the Iron Village which made everyone get a bit excited so we packed our day rucksacks and were off.

It was about an hour's journey to Big Pit and me and my friend played countless games of top trumps, eye spy and hangman. When we got there, we queued for about 45 minutes before we had bags taken off us, helmets tightened and lights clipped onto the helmets. In the elevator shaft, we travelled at 2 metres per second (I think) down the 300ft deep shaft. We walked through the tunnels and learnt all about the coal mines and how the miners dug out the coal. After coming back up to the surface, we went to the baths and realised what a difference they made to the miners lives. Then we went to a room where we could sit down and eat our lunch. We then packed up all our rubbish to put in the bin, went to the gift shop and then left.

After that, we went to the Iron Village and found out there were people dressed up to look like the people who would have lived there we also visited each room which showed how a household evolved and a large tower with three large semi-circle shapes cut out. When we got back to the sea cadet hut, we had tea. It was amazing- spaghetti and meatballs with garlic bread and a chocolate cake for pudding!!! Then we had free time again and we went outside I also learnt how to fold napkins into flowers and other shapes and to tie very strong knots. Then we all went to bed. On the last morning, we packed up, practised colours again, got dressed and had breakfast. Once again, we grabbed our stuff and this time, we went to the weeping window at Hereford Cathedral to see all of the poppies and then to see the town hall's exhibition on the war as well. We visited a sweet shop on the way back and when we got back, we all finished packing and said our goodbyes and thank yous to the Hereford cadets and left. Also a BIG thank you to all the adults who helped out!!!

Cerys, Junior Sea Cadet



GDPR

Many of you will already be aware of the new piece of legislation that comes into effect on the 25th May reinforcing the rules on information handling. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) affects both how personal information is stored and how it is used. Clearly there will be nationwide procedures for cadet units to follow, but it will also need us to seek your consent to continue receiving this newsletter by email.

We will be in contact with you as soon as we have received the official guidance from MSSC (Marine Society & Sea Cadets), but in the meantime, we will do our best to make the newsletter interesting enough that you'll want to continue receiving it!



The sight of Chief Mercer trying to put away an ironing board was a big surprise for Mrs Mercer

Other things we've been up to...

A trio of Birthday Boys being serenaded by the Unit Corps



Oh dear...what have CO and our new Chairman been up to?! More on this in the next issue

Divisions are held the last Wednesday of each month which is when No1 uniform is worn and inspected, promotions and badges are issued. Cadets and juniors are asked to please make sure their uniform is ready for inspection.

Please note that summer time Divisions are subject to alteration to maximise boating opportunities.

Forthcoming dates for divisions:

30th May 2018

27th June 2018

25th July 2018

29th August 2018

Our details: TS Otter Headquarters: 01684 298991

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www: sea-cadets.org/tewkesbury

Useful Contacts

Role

Contact No

email

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PO (SCC) Rob Ashmeade Reverend Roger Grey	Training Officer TS Otter Chaplain	01684 275381	rob.ashmeade@uwclub.net grey263@btinternet.com
PO (SCC) Stuart McGhee Jane Montellier	Stores, uniform queries etc Secretary (inc newsletter & website)		secretary.tsotter@gmail.com

IMPORTANT:

IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE **ABSENT** PLEASE LET THE UNIT KNOW BY POSTING ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE OR BY PHONING THE UNIT ON: 01684 298991

