

## THE CHAIRMAN'S DISPATCH! -THE HERO OF THE TYNE

The sons of Tyne, in seas of blood, Trafalgar's fight did join,  
When led by dauntless Collingwood, The hero of the Tyne.

*Taken from the song 'Coaly Tyne'*

"Now, gentlemen, let us do something today which the world may talk of hereafter." This strap line, chosen for the *Collingwood 2010 Festival*, is taken from Collingwood's own words. What a fine mission statement it is. The spirit of its meaning inspired The 1805 Club, the Royal Navy and those in Northumberland to create a magnificent weekend of events between 5 and 7 March. They now represent the keelson of the *Collingwood 2010 Festival* which runs until the 24 October.

The 1805 Club may have initiated events in the North East but appropriately for a local hero, as opposed to a national hero like Nelson, it has been the Northumbrians who have come together so splendidly to celebrate one of their own.

As the initiative grew, the Club passed the chairmanship of the organising committee to Captain Stephen Healy, the Deputy Master of Trinity House Newcastle. He has since worked tirelessly to co-ordinate the involvement of Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, The Cathedral Church of St Nicholas Newcastle upon Tyne, Morpeth Town Council and the North East Regional Office of the Royal Navy. He has also secured sponsorship from various local sources, notably Port of Tyne.

The 1805 Club has remained intimately involved throughout and has also sourced significant sponsorship for the Festival from both Trinity House London and The Drapers' Company. Collingwood was made member of the Drapers' in 1806.

Many other organisations, bodies and museums have become involved along the way and the Festival Committee established a number of important sub-committees for the naval, civic, educational and media activities which continue to manage the rest of the Festival Programme. You can see the details at [www.collingwood2010.co.uk](http://www.collingwood2010.co.uk).

The 1805 Club is proud to be a member of 'such a fine sett of fellows' and applauds the wonderful atmosphere between everyone involved. This sits well with the sentiments Nelson expressed to Collingwood thirteen days before Trafalgar: "I send you my Plan of Attack... But, my dear friend it is to place you perfectly at ease respecting my intentions, and to give full scope to your judgement for carrying them into effect. We can, my dear Coll., have no little jealousies."



*Left to right:* Ian Whitehead, curator of the Discovery Museum's special Collingwood exhibition, Mark Thorburn and Peter Warwick.

I should like to mention in dispatches two Club members who have also played key roles: Mark Thorburn for being such a marvellous frigate captain by being the 'eyes' and voice of the Club during the two-year build-up, and for being such a brilliant guide on Saturday, 6 March; and Lynda Sebbage, who designed the Order of Service for the bicentenary commemoration of Collingwood's death at The Cathedral Church of St Nicholas held on Sunday, 7 March.

In his Address at this service Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope KCB OBE, First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff, felt that if Lord Nelson had been present he would have been the first to pay

tribute to Lord Collingwood. Let us imagine he had been. What would Nelson have said?

We get some idea from his written words. One telling sentence that marries Collingwood's professional and personal attributes praises "The brave and good Collingwood".

Given Nelson's undoubted respect for Collingwood as a professional seaman and naval officer, it is probably no surprise that when asked by Prime Minister William Pitt in September 1805 who best could lead the British fleet against the Combined Fleets of France, Nelson replied, "You cannot have a better man than the present one – Collingwood."

As we know Pitt said, “That won’t do, you must take command”. Yet on joining Collingwood off Cadiz Nelson wrote to reassure his old friend that, “No man has more confidence in another man than I have in you: and no man will render your services more justice than your very old friend.”

And they *were* very old friends. They had kept closely in touch with each other for over thirty years. There was a special relationship, at once more personal and intimate than any Nelson had with his Band of Brother captains. Collingwood’s qualities and strengths, particularly his self control – what biographer Max Adams describes as ‘The Collingwood Touch’, were admired, possibly even envied by Nelson.

Nothing epitomises the closeness of their friendship more than Nelson’s last message to Collingwood given as he lay dying in the gloomy cockpit of *Victory* with the battle raging all around him: He sent Collingwood his “love”. This irresistible affection emphasises an equally profound belief expressed in a letter where Nelson writes, “My dear Coll., we are as one and I hope it ever shall be.” Two hundred years later in the Cathedral Church of St Nicholas it was thus.

Inevitably this Dispatch, indeed this issue of *The Kedge Anchor*, is dominated by the Collingwood bicentenary. However, I would not wish it to overshadow the success of the third Nelson Funeral Walk on Saturday, 9 January, organised by Richard Venn who heads the South East Group, with support from members Susan Amos and Louis Roeder. This is a splendid way to start the year and I very much hope that it will be an annual event!

Memorable events, particularly those like *Collingwood 2010* raise the profile of the Club. They enhance our ability to raise funds for future conservation projects, since research has established that reputation is the key factor in successful fundraising. Next year it will be a major pillar of our activities as we embark on the Nile and Copenhagen Captains’ conservations.

However, there has already been some fundraising progress. In particular I would like to highlight the number of donations from members whilst renewing their annual subscriptions. So far this year they have amounted to £895.00. We are incredibly grateful for this support and I am still in the process of writing to each donor individually to say ‘thank you’.

The improvements to *The Kedge Anchor* over the years have also burnished the Club’s profile. This issue is the last to be worked on by our UK editors, Paul and Penny Dalton, a superb team in place for seven years which stands down at the AGM in May. They have done an absolutely fantastic job and we shall miss their skill, dedication and enthusiasm. Let this be the first of the many huzzas they deserve.

Many of you will know that this year also celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Club and we are planning a number of special events in recognition of this. The true anniversary comes in October and it will be celebrated at our Trafalgar Dinner on Saturday, 16 October at Newhouse.

Moreover, after the Members’ Day on Saturday, 15 May we are arranging a special dinner in HMS *Victory* which will pay tribute to those ‘gone but not forgotten’. For in our twentieth year we do not wish to lose sight of the wonderful contributions made by the late Dame Lily Lambert McCarthy CBE, Tom Pocock, Dr Colin White and Lieutenant Commander David Harris MBE Royal Navy.

While the dinner will be in their honour, we shall not reflect on the past only. We shall also look to the future which we are building on the foundations they laid. That future will be represented by our two new Vice Presidents in waiting, Rear Admiral Joe Callo USN RD and Dr Agustín Guimerá – and one other.

It now gives me enormous pleasure to confirm that the Club has in waiting a new President: Admiral Sir Jonathon Band GCB, former First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff. Jonathon’s acceptance is a singular honour for The 1805 Club and he will be a brilliant friend and asset as we go forward into its next twenty years.

What a marvellous way to end a Chairman’s Dispatch!

With very best wishes to you all,

*Peter Warwick*



Left to right: Lynda and Peter Sebbage, the Very Revd Christopher Dalliston and Peter Warwick. Lynda spent two years preparing the Bicentenary Commemoration Service but this was her first meeting with the Dean of St Nicholas, Cathedral Church of Newcastle upon Tyne.