

## Success to The 1805 Club!

**“First Gain the victory and then make the best use of it you can.” Horatio Nelson 1798**

I wrote in my last Dispatch,

This is an exciting time for The 1805 Club because after 25 years of activity, which has consolidated its credibility and reputation, the Club, like the country [*post Brexit*], is at a threshold. Your Council has been working to respond to the challenges and opportunities this presents and in addition to the changes to the *Trafalgar Chronicle* it is investing in a revamp of the website, led by Jo Birtwhistle, which will



allow for the long-awaited Memorials Log to be published on line. We have also commissioned a feasibility study from Commander Garry Spalton RN rtd on a future strategy for The Trafalgar Way. The 1805 Club is now the official custodian of the Trafalgar Way and we are thrilled that Ride the Trafalgar Way is taking place in October. We shall be presenting The New Trafalgar Dispatch to the winning cyclist of each leg. We are also looking at ways to help support this splendid event in future years together with many other organisations along the Way who we are approaching to help us raise its profile. Bill White is masterminding this.

Hitherto we have fulfilled our charitable objectives in a variety of *ad hoc* ways but there is now a call for a sustained approach that will build on these achievements and integrate the various co-related elements. The underpinning themes remain conservation and recording, education and the promotion of naval heritage.

These aspirational words are worth repeating in full because Council also recognized that integrating these elements would release synergy and elevate the Club's performance, productivity and profile. However, it could only meet this challenge with a significant boost to its resources, otherwise it would always be struggling to realise its true potential.

I am now exceedingly pleased to announce that an application for funds to the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been extraordinarily successful! The 1805 Club has been awarded the incredible sum of £455,000.

The Libor Fund was created from the criminal fines imposed on banks for a series of fraudulent actions connected to their manipulation of the London Interbank Offered Rate, the average interest rate calculated through submissions of interest rates by major banks across the world. The fines amounted to hundreds of millions of pounds and in 2012 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the proceeds from Libor fines should be used to support those that represent the best of values, in particular military and emergency services charities and other related good causes.

At approximately this time last year the Club made its initial overtures, was deemed to qualify, and at the request of the Chancellor prepared its business case. There was no guarantee that the application would be successful.

I hope you can imagine the surprise and elation felt by

Council when it received the news on 27 November 2016 that the submission had been approved!

This grant of funds represents a huge step forward for your Club and how it now pursues its aims and activities. It is the most significant development since we became a charity and it is a fantastic way to open the chapter on the Club's next twenty-five years. It is also a genuine recognition of our status as a member of the naval heritage family and significantly raises our game and profile in this community and beyond.

We could not announce anything until we had received and agreed the Terms and Conditions and ratified acceptance, which Council did at its last meeting on 18 February. However, we wanted our members to be the first to hear of the good news and that is why it appears in *The Kedge Anchor* before anywhere else.

We are indebted to Vice Chairman Bill White, who receives a huge vote of thanks from us all for masterminding the application and we congratulate him on its successful outcome. I have worked with Bill in the past on applications similar to this and I know how much work is involved, often to be unrequited – but not this time! It has been a fantastic effort by him and the successful outcome could not be sweeter. Now, for the first time he has written a Vice Chairman's Dispatch for the KA, which reveals his motivations for his pursuit of Libor and his dedication to the Club generally. I shall use Nelson's words, "Could anything from my pen add to the character of the Captains [in this case Bill], I would write it with pleasure, but that is impossible."

The application relates primarily to The Trafalgar Way, our educational ambitions, a memorials log and associated naval historical data sets, and a number of international conservation projects. More specifically the grant will be used:

- To facilitate the provision of naval history lectures by leading naval historians for Royal Navy personnel.
- To secure from their compiler two unique and at risk naval historical databases relating to naval personnel who served in the British fleet in the Napoleonic Wars and to host them on the Club website. Also, to expand and enhance the Club database relating to naval monuments and artefacts to be hosted on the Club website
- To conserve the rapidly deteriorating Marriage Register on the island of Nevis that contains Lord Nelson's marriage certificate; also to provide a humidity controlled display case for the conserved Register and a digital copy of the Register for wider use.
- To restore the partly ruined chapel and associated hall. At the Old Royal Naval Hospital on the Isla del Rey in the harbour of Mahon, Menorca.
- To establish an organisation under the aegis of the Club to promote and develop The Trafalgar Way with activities, including lectures, films, cycle challenges, events for horse drawn vehicles (a post chaise was used in 1805 to bring the original Trafalgar Dispatch to London), events involving schools, notably Wooden World Workshops, and possibly to provide a

platform to facilitate Royal Navy recruitment. The aim will be to appoint a Director whose brief will be to ensure that the organisation becomes financially self-sufficient in three years.

To provide 25 Wooden World Workshops to state schools for students at Key Stages 2 and 3.

With this evolution comes a greater responsibility and during recent months your Council has also been working on all aspects of corporate governance. This will be highlighted at the AGM and Members' day on **Saturday 13 May** alongside the details of the business plan behind this fantastic development.

We are meeting once again at The East India Club, St James's Square and I thank Stephen Howarth for looking after the administrative arrangements with the Club. I am also delighted that this year's Cecil Isaacson memorial Lecture is being given by Gareth Glover. It is entitled, *The War in the Mediterranean 1793-1815 & the birth of Modern Combined Operations*.

Notwithstanding the momentous news about the Libor grant the timing of its announcement is tinged with sadness by the death of June Jeffries late last year and the more recent and sudden deaths of Dr Nick Slope and Martyn Heighton.

June was well known to all those who had the pleasure of attending the Club's memorable Trafalgar Dinners at Newhouse. A wonderful host, warm-hearted and generous, she treated us like family and welcomed us into her home allowing us to do whatever we wished. A slight and diminutive woman, she had a big presence. It is no surprise that over 200 attended her funeral.

Nick Slope was a former chairman of The Nelson Society and a distinguished and much respected archaeologist and naval historian who worked happily alongside The 1805 Club an especially as part of the Official Nelson Commemorations Committee preparing for the Trafalgar bicentenary in 2005.

Martyn Heighton was arguably the leading light of the maritime heritage community and chairman of National Historic Ships (NHS), the organisation established by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to encourage the awareness and preservation of historic vessels in Britain. Martyn transformed a tiny organisation - the NHS - into a successful catalyst for ship preservation through successive grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and by establishing a comprehensive Historic Ships' Register.

Martyn set a fine example for what The 1805 Club has to do now: make the best use of our victory.

This leads me nicely to highlight the letter in this issue from the Club's new Chaplain, Lynda Sebbage. She is keen to extend pastoral care to the membership and this underlines one of the most important features of The 1805 Club, which the Libor grant will not change - our warm and friendly atmosphere and the pleasure we know this brings to our members.

With all good wishes, Yours aye,

