

# THE VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

By Bill White,  
Chairman, The 1805 Club



First, I can report that work of the Governance Committee set up by our late Chairman, Peter Warwick, is coming to fruition, in that good progress is being made in the revision of the Constitution of Club. We will be converting the Club from a standard charity to be a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (or CIO), a form of Charity that has only recently been developed by the Charity Commission. It is more suited for charities that need to handle significant funds, as we have been doing after the receipt of the LIBOR grant. We will be following, very largely, a Constitutional format developed by the Charity Commission. This will avoid the need for complex negotiations, but might require a few changes to our administrative procedures.

At the same time, we are drafting revised objectives for the Club. The present objectives date from foundation of the Club in 1990, and do not properly match our current activities.

Both the new Constitution and the revised objectives will be put, as separate items, on the Agenda for the AGM for formal approval by the membership. The intention is then first to settle the new Constitution with the Charity Commission with the existing objectives. This should be achievable with little delay. We will then negotiate with them the proposed changes to the new Objectives.

The new Constitution will then be issued and will include the new objectives as approved by the Charity Commission. I have to thank Geraint Day (as Chairman of the Governance Subcommittee), Mark West, Nick Ridge and Paul Kloss for their considerable efforts that should bring this matter to a conclusion during the present year.

I would now like to revert to a matter I raised in my Observations in the last issue of The Kedge Anchor. In the years preceding the bicentenary of Trafalgar in 2005 the Club was involved with many other groups in developing events to commemorate the bicentenary of the battle. At that time, I was Vice Chairman of the Club and also Chairman of the New

Trafalgar Dispatch project which set up the Trafalgar Way. There was at that time great concern on the issue of “sea blindness” in respect of the achievements of both the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy and the significance of their functions in regard to national security and prosperity.

However, it now seems that, although the events of 2005 raised the Navy’s profile at the time, sea blindness was not adequately countered in the long term, and the position is little different today compared with that in 2005. But, for some 400 years, our national prosperity has been rooted in Britain’s success as a trading nation. As we are also an island nation, this has necessitated the development of a merchant fleet to facilitate our international trade. But this could have not succeeded without the evolution of the Royal Navy as a military force having as part of its function to secure the sea lanes and act in a protective role for the merchant service.

I would like to see the National Curriculum, in respect of history, cover the evolution of our Parliamentary system, the evolution of our national legal system, the foundation of modern science by Isaac Newton and his associates, and the Industrial Revolution that flowed from the application of Newtonian science. Together, these developments facilitated a massive increase in our international trade. And they were not only of national significance. The political, legal and scientific principles they embodied provided models for many other countries and remain today of international importance. It is only against an understanding of the broad historical background that the significant role of the Royal Navy, expounded by naval historians, can be properly understood.

The year since the sad loss of our former Chairman, Peter Warwick, has been one of complex activity, which is indeed still progressing. The Constitutional changes referred to above have been only one of several administrative matters we have had to address. These have also had the effect of reducing the time and resource available to organise events during the year.

I would mention just two. The weekend in July to commemorate Admiral Cornwallis at Milford on Sea was a great success and was attended by both Earl Howe, whose ancestor the first Earl Howe was the Admiral who defeated the French Fleet at the battle of the Glorious First of June. And the visit to the Isle of Man organised by “Our Man in Man” Frank Cowin was also very rewarding. The island has strong naval links and include Captain Quilliam, the First Lieutenant in HMS Victory at Trafalgar and Captain Bligh of the Bounty, both of whom came from the island. You will have seen Mark West’s article about the trip in the last Kedge Anchor.

Another *Immortal Memory* lunch was held in early January at the former Admiral President's House on the Old Royal Naval College at Greenwich. And of course, our North American members have held their own lunches, organised by John Rodgaard on the East Coast and Steve Walwyn in the West.

This year a number of events are planned. Thus, you will have received in January the notice of another Club visit to Menorca from 12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> May [*Since cancelled. Ed.*]. On this occasion, the principle event [*would have been*] the rededication on 17<sup>th</sup> May of the newly rebuilt Chapel Hall of the Anglican chapel in the Old Royal Naval Hospital on the Isla del Rey in Mahon harbour. The 1805 Club was able to obtain LIBOR funding for a substantial proportion of the rebuilding cost. The ceremony [*would have been*] conducted by the Reverend Paul Strudwick, the vicar of the Anglican church in Es Castell, assisted by the Club Chaplain, The Reverend Lynda Sebbage.

For another LIBOR project, you will have received notice a visit to the Borthwick Institute in the University of York. The Parish Register from the island of Nevis containing Lord Nelson's marriage certificate is undergoing conservation there with a view to its being returned to Nevis in 2021. Those on the visit will be able to see the conservation process. And looking ahead, it is anticipated that the Register will be returned to Nevis by the Royal Navy in the first half of 2021. Celebrations will be held on the island and we would intend that members wishing to travel to Nevis could take part.

Following on from the successful Cornwallis event referred to above, we are also in contact with the Dean at Portsmouth Cathedral concerning the possibility of erecting a commemorative plaque to the Admiral in the Cathedral. If this comes to fruition we will organise an unveiling event.

We are also in contact with the National Museum of the Royal Navy and The Nelson Society about a possible visit to Greece during the year to view the Laskiridis Collection in Athens, which includes a substantial collection of Nelson Memorabilia. Details will be circulated when we have more information.

Also in this issue, you will, find an article *Postcards from The Trafalgar Way* by the Director Kathy Brown. This sets out some of her plans for this year – and see also the Trafalgar Way website at <https://www.thetrafalgarway.org/>. The principal prize in the Art & Photography Competition will be in memory of Peter Warwick.

We are also considering another visit to the Nile Clumps near Stonehenge at about the time of the anniversary of the battle on August 1st, probably followed by lunch at a local hostelry.

It is in the nature of things that we cannot succeed in every endeavour, but I am confident that the Club will continue to make a positive contribution to the naval history field.



## EDITORIAL

Here is the first edition of *Kedge Anchor* under my editorship, which I hope will allay a few fears and will not disappoint anyone - not too many or too much, anyway. I will appear as myself here, in the Editorial column, but elsewhere in *KA* I will sometimes need to insert an introduction, or a bit of added information, or even just a comment, when, in accordance with tradition, I will appear as 'Ed.', abbreviation of 'Editor'. In this way I can avoid personalising things, and, maybe, avoid some of the blame when I get it wrong (which I hope not to do, but I am merely human)(some might say 'nearly').



I must explain right away that I could not have got this far without the help and encouragement of my predecessor, Ken Flemming, from whom I have learned a lot already. Though I fear he has set a very high bar for me to aspire to clearing.

Some of you will notice a few minor changes, but only in style and appearance. The essence of *Kedge Anchor* has not changed, and will probably not do so in the immediate future. I say 'probably' because there is a ground-swell of opinion that two copies of a newsletter render it more of a magazine than a *NEWS*letter and it has been mooted that more editions should be the aim. Unfortunately, this is not possible within the existing, relatively thrifty, budget, unless *Kedge Anchor* moves with the times and becomes virtual; i.e. online only. This was suggested a couple of years ago and was unpopular, with many of us - perhaps things have moved on. Decisions will be made, where possible with your knowledge and consent and in accordance with your preferences.

In this edition, if you read on, you will find articles on a wide range of topics, for which I thank all the contributors - without you this newsletter simply could not exist. One or two of the 'regular' items are absent, partly through 'events' and partly through my failing to chase the right people. It'll come.

Finally, I have checked and edited whatever I have been sent, so any errors lay entirely at my door, because I should have found them, even if I didn't actually create them. I hope you don't find them!

**Peter Turner, Editor**

Cover Photo:

Ivan Konstantinovich Aivazovsky (1817-1900)

An extract from: *Among The Waves 1898*

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4e/Ivan\\_Konstantinovich\\_Aivazovsky\\_-\\_Among\\_the\\_Waves%2C\\_1898.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4e/Ivan_Konstantinovich_Aivazovsky_-_Among_the_Waves%2C_1898.jpg)

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An example of the almost uncanny ability of Aivazovsky to render the waves as translucent.

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Your Editor will be pleased to receive your ideas and contributions at an early date.