

THE VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Captain John Rodgaard, USN (Ret)
Chairman, The 1805 Club

Greetings to all fellow members of The 1805 Club!

We are experiencing a significant increase in activity now that we are in the throes of Spring Break here in Florida; college students crowding Cocoa Beach and immediate environs; visiting teenagers in our neighbourhood are fishing in the surrounding lakes and canals (I am sure they are aware of the signs along the shoreline warning of gators and snakes); the same teenagers are blithely cruising around the neighbourhood driving their grandparents' golf carts. While the two bald eaglets sitting in their nest across the street can sense the change as they screech away and test their wings. They will soon leave the nest. No, I am not being an old codger, as I am looking forward to hosting my teenage grandson on his Spring Break in April.

I echo the Club's esteemed editor of *The Kedge Anchor*, whose opinion is that some members have said that sometimes there is too much mention of Nelson in this publication. But, it is unavoidable in this edition'.

As I mentioned in the latest edition of *The 1805 Dispatches*, two major Nelson-oriented projects that The Club has been working for a decade came to fruition in March — the return of the conserved St John's Figtree Church Parish Register (1729-1825), which has the names of Captain Horatio Nelson and Frances Nisbet, confirming their marriage on 11 March 1787. The second is the presentation to the Nevis Maritime Museum of a historically accurate replica of Nelson's captain's uniform and tricorne hat.

In February, beside The House of Lord's Tea honouring our former Chairman Bill White, (see the previous 1805 Dispatches and pages 16-19 in this publication), the Club conducted/participated in two perennial events — The Battle of Cape St Vincent Luncheon in Alexandria, Virginia and The Midshipman Dale Commemorative ceremony in Bermuda. From these events, two further opportunities for the Club were discussed.

The first of these was that during the St Vincent Luncheon, Cdr Alex McMahon, USN gave the gathering a run down on the Navy's plans to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the USN throughout 2025, and the US Navy's organising a massive naval review in New York Harbour on 4 July 2026. This week-long celebration will include two dozen or so tall ships from around the world. Cdr McMahon encouraged our membership to participate. Specifics to follow.

The second was after the Dale ceremony, when I and fellow members Cdr Nathan Bein and Dr Judy Pearson introduced ourselves to Bermuda's recently appointed Governor General, His Excellency Andrew Murdoch. The GC is a retired Commander, Royal Navy, and we had been informed that he would like to see a Trafalgar Dinner during his time in office. We discussed the possibility of a Pickle Night type event; an event that would showcase the two Bermuda-built *Pickles* as the embodiment of Bermuda's rich maritime heritage. It can be a potential fundraising avenue. We also mentioned the idea to the Friends of St Peter's Church and the St George's Historical Society (SGHS). Additionally, we discussed with the SGHS erecting an information board that would highlight the action between HMS



Endymion and *USS President*. It would tell visitors about the action and Midshipman Dale. Further discussions to follow.

These events were quickly followed by the two events on Nevis during the weekend of 8/9 March. This edition of *The Kedge Anchor* has more information (see pages 7-15). I personally feel the events exceeded expectations, despite last minute adjustments that required flexibility from all concerned. However, I am over the moon to report the conserved St John's Figtree Parish Register

was returned and Nelson's captain's uniform is now inside the environmental cabinet in the soon-to-be-opened Nevis Maritime Museum.

As a follow-up to Nevis, Judy Pearson and I were invited aboard HMS *Medway* on Saturday 15 March. *Medway* is presently undergoing an engineering overhaul in Tampa, Florida. Cdr Tibbitts invited us for lunch and a walk about the ship. He apologised for not having the ship present at Nevis. We thanked him on behalf of the Club and all Nevisians for *Medway* sending an honour guard contingent to Nevis in lieu of the ship having to alter her plans.

A change in the membership of the Club's trustees has occurred. Our treasurer, Nicholas Ridge has resigned and has headed off on a different course. We thank him for his service as one of our stalwart volunteers. He has done much to place us on our present course. We wish him fair winds and following seas. That said, we are looking for a treasurer.

On another note, I am happy to report that one of our members, Ms Natacha Abriat has agreed to become the Club's virtual museum and library curator, full details of this very exciting role will be announced in due course. Living in the south of France, Natacha brings considerable experience as a museum curator. We are looking forward to seeing her at our upcoming AGM in May.

Also, one of our newest members to the Trustees, Mr Russ Strict, has created an 1805 Club Members' only facebook page. Do check it out.

During the period, fellow Club member, Dr Evan Wilson, US Naval War College, submitted to the US Naval Academy's McMullen Naval History Symposium Committee an 1805 Club sponsored proposal for a three person panel to present their papers during this year's McMullen (September). The theme is ... From the Sea: British Expeditionary and Combined Operations, 1775-1815.

Also, Evan has started a blog titled Re-Reading Patrick O'Brien's Aubrey and Maturin series. He is doing this with his father. I think it is worth your time. evanmwilson@substack.com

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Finally, fellow member Dr John 'Jack' Satterfield, University of Delaware is the Club's lead in investigating the possibility of conserving HMS *DeBraak's* ship's bell. (see page 36). Jack feels that it would be a very worthwhile project for The Club can undertake.

As you can see much has happened since the last edition of *The Kedge Anchor*. I encourage you to look at the enclosed Events Diary as there is more to come, especially now that The Club is celebrating its 35th year.

I hope to see many of you at this year's AGM.

Yours aye,



TRIBUTE TO JEREMY EDDON

By Jo Birtwhistle

As I write this tribute to Jeremy Eddon I am filled with a great sadness knowing that there is now a void in my life, but an even bigger one in the life of his twin sister Jude and his family and friends. Jeremy died after a very long illness on the 28th September 2024. He was a self-effacing gentleman and people would not know of his many talents. He was a loyal, active and early member of The 1805 Club since it was formed in the early 1990s; his membership number was 103.

I shall miss Jeremy as a diligent and dedicated researcher and contributor to The 1805 Club, and most importantly as a kind caring gentleman with a fine sense of humour, and also as my 1805 Club colleague and especially as my friend.

I first met Jeremy at the AGM in 2015. He introduced himself to me during the lunch break telling me about his 20 years researching those men of all ranks who were actually on board all the Royal Navy ships at the *Battle of Trafalgar* on the 21st October 1805, not just those who were in the muster books. He was interested in all the men who had fought, not just the officer classes. This was the distinction between his research and other Rolls which list men in the muster books but not on board on the 21st October 1805. He researched each individual to find as much information as possible of their place of birth, place of death, place of burial and service history which he thought would help other naval researchers.

His data at that time was in spreadsheets but he was very keen to give his research to The 1805 Club, and have it freely available to all researchers visiting our website. Fortunately, at that time I was in the process of redesigning our website to incorporate databases, and Bill White was progressing with the Libor funding to make this possible. John Curtis had also been researching all memorials since the mid 1990s and had created *Memlog* which was also in spreadsheets and we wanted to make this data freely available, hence the need for web databases.

Jeremy was delighted with his database and was very eager to learn how to use it to its full potential and to make entries, amend data and improve the facilities for researchers. We worked with Simon (an 1805 Club member) and Sandra, both of AMA, in establishing the format to enable Jeremy to input his data and his continued research. I visited him many times; stopping off on my journey to stay with my father in North Yorkshire, to show him how to input new data and amend existing data. We also had numerous emails and telephone calls over the years either relating to his database, or naval history. His database attracted attention both from club members and visitors to our website. It was during this period that two researchers contacted him and helped him in verifying data. They also sent him data which they had come across during their own research which they thought Jeremy would like to add to his data. a) Emma Cooper – General research of Trafalgar musters and logs with more specific research of the men serving on board HMS *Temeraire*. b)

Elaine Galloway – Volunteer at the Old Royal Naval College Greenwich, also researching the Trafalgar Veterans who entered Greenwich Hospital.

During his long illness Jeremy continued to research and work on his database *Men of Trafalgar*. The 1805 Club is most fortunate that Jeremy generously bequeathed his opus to the club so that it can continue to be freely available to all who are interested in Georgian Naval history, for this we are very grateful.

AMA and I with the continued assistance from Emma and Elaine, who also became his friends, will take over the responsibility of updating Jeremy's database when we receive, and have verified, any additional data.

Jeremy was our first point of contact when we received questions relating to 18th century naval history from members and non-members. He was always so willing to help them in their research. We shall miss his diligence and dedicated research.

His brother's eulogy says that "Jeremy's great love for Admiral Lord Nelson came from their father, Head of History at Daventry Grammar School, who suggested that if they wanted to know more regarding naval campaigns of the period, they should buy a book on the Battle of Trafalgar, which Jeremy did! "This was the impetus for his research resulting in a study of over 18,500 who fought in Nelson's Royal Navy at *Trafalgar*, becoming his database *Men at Trafalgar*. Over the decades Jeremy added to his vast collection of books, pamphlets, pictures and other Trafalgar related material. He was absolutely modest about his monumental 1805 database. Elaine wrote of him "from the beginning Jeremy was so friendly and lively as well as being a fount of all Nelson Navy knowledge". "Jeremy certainly 'did his duty' by Nelson. He was much loved by many and so much loved by us. He was a dearly loved brother and most special to his twin, Jude. We will miss him more than we can say!"

Jeremy was a teacher by profession and for many decades taught in a large school in Daventry, and was involved in the after-school activities. A former colleague wrote in his eulogy that:

"On one occasion a form pupil asked him if he would supervise her while she practised her gymnastic sequence. He told her he couldn't as he wouldn't be insured. A year later he became a qualified club coach and a year after that a qualified club judge. He coached at the Phoenix Club in Daventry, Northamptonshire, and for many years he judged competitions further afield. He then judged at a Special Olympics competition in Milton Keynes before going on to judge at such events regularly in Poole and Jersey. He joined the national committee of judges who devised a point system for judging special Olympic gymnastics. He was then selected as one of only 5 UK judges to go to the special Olympic World Summer Games in Dublin. Jeremy was very proud to be invited to such a prestigious event, the first time it was held outside America. The opening ceremony was attended by Nelson Mandela and Muhammad Ali and

