

## THE VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

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



### Greetings from Autumn in Virginia.

Wow! What a year of anniversaries this is turning out to be! This year we celebrate not only our Club's 35th, but also the 250th anniversary of the US Navy, the 220th of Trafalgar and the 350th of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the historic home of British astronomy, Greenwich meantime, and the Prime Meridian of the world.

I feel I must interrupt the greeting by reminding ourselves that The 1805 Club started out as a British creation, and has since become international, with members in 23 countries at the last count. With me as Chairman, and with so many North American members, there is a tendency for me to comment on the things that happen here and to me and my nearby friends. This must not distract from the fact that all members are equally important, and that we want to hear your voices, too, from wherever you are in the world.

Having said that, writing my latest to you in this Autumn addition of *The Kedge Anchor* seems appropriate, as it's the first day of Autumn here in Northern Virginia. I can definitely feel the pending change in the season after spending three days in Annapolis, Maryland last week.

In Annapolis I joined a dozen Club members and over 400 attendees at the United States Naval Academy's bi-annual McMullen Naval History Symposium. This was the sixth time The 1805 Club has sponsored papers on a range of subjects centering on the Georgian sailing era. This year the Club sponsored two panels. We are indebted again to Professor Evan Wilson of the US Navy's War College for organising the two panels. Pete Stark's article on the Club's participation in the McMullen can be seen in this edition.

There were many other papers that covered aspects of the Club's Georgian sailing era. I was fascinated by several scholars who presented papers on such topics of privateers from the newly independent country of Colombia, crossing the expanse of the Atlantic to conduct raiding, smuggling and counter-revolutionary operations against its former Spanish imperial overlord after the Napoleonic wars; the infant Chilean Navy conducting combined operations with the revolutionary Chilean Army against the last vestiges of Spanish rule in Chile, and the Trans-Pacific mission by the Spanish Navy's Brigantine *Legazpi*, which conducted intelligence gathering operations against the newly independent countries of Mexico, Peru, Ecuador and Chile.

These papers and others from Spanish, Portuguese and South American naval historians, cast a different light on the role of navies and privateers, beside those of Britain, France, Spain and US, during those revolutionary years of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. I for one, am looking forward to the next McMullen in 2027.

But, before that, I am looking forward to our own New Series Conferences Inaugural Event at the Princess Royal Gallery in HM Naval Base, Portsmouth, the day before this year's Trafalgar Night Dinner.

The Club had previously established a good international reputation for organising and promoting a series of successful naval historical conferences, during the chairmanship of the late Peter Warwick. Because of the sad demise of Peter, and then Covid, the conferences fell into abeyance. But now we are back in business.

We have an exciting line-up, as you will have seen from the invitation to attend sent out on 15 September. I do not want to leave anyone out, so here are all the names of the speakers, in alphabetical order: Natacha Abriat; Michael Barritt; David Gibbins; Nick Hewitt; Andrew Lambert; Brian Lavery; Seth Lejacq and N A M Rodger. If you are not familiar with any of them, read the invitation.

The focus of this first conference is 'Naval matters of the Georgian era (1714-1837) and their influence since then', and, with these speakers, it promises to be fascinating. All members will be very welcome to accept the invitation, even if you are unable to attend the TND next day.

Well, as you will see, this edition of *KA* includes a recap of this year's AGM; preserving HMS *Unicorn*; a brief biography on the ship's designer; battles and poetry, and biographical sketches to include a section recognizing our new members. I find it gratifying that The 1805 Club is attracting such accomplished people. At the same time, I am grateful for the recognition of the passing of two of our most loyal and supportive members, Angela Plowden-Wardlaw and Tim Voelcker. Both lived with such enthusiasm and passion, and as you will see in their respective tributes, they devoted some of their enthusiasm and passion to the Club. We shall miss them.

I wish to thank the Editor for the cover art of this edition of *The Kedge Anchor*. With the US Navy's 250th anniversary of its establishment on 13 October on my mind, I thought this beautiful rendition, of a frigate sailing before the wind was one of the US Navy's first six frigates. Ah, but I was too quick off the mark! It is a detail from the original watercolour painted by fellow Club member Captain Christer Hägg, RSwN Retired, as you will see in the note on page 28. Thank you Christer for again allowing one of your beautiful paintings to be used by the Club. Many of you will recall, that Christer has provided several of his works to the Club's *Trafalgar Chronicle*, especially to the cover of the annuals New Series 8.

Another event that I will unfortunately miss, being over here, will have happened on 27 September. The Commemoration of Private Richard Masters, RM, at St Tudy, Cornwall, UK. Born and brought up in St Tudy, Cornwall, Private Richard Masters of the Royal Marines was only 21 when he was killed in action at the Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805. His body was disposed of overboard and he has 'no grave but the sea'. But almost exactly 220 years later church bells in St Tudy will ring out with a new piece of music composed by Captain of the Tower John Mardon and named 'Masters of Loskeyle', Loskeyle being Richard Masters' birthplace.

In a ceremony in St Tudy churchyard led by Revd Robin Thwaites, the young private will be remembered when a silver-grey Cornish granite plaque is jointly unveiled by Commodore Jamie Miller CBE DL RN, representing the King, and Brigadier Mike Tanner OBE ADC RM, commander of Devonport Naval Base. For more details, see the BBC News article reproduced on page 23.

I would just like to say a big thank you to Stephen Howarth, who has done a sterling job organising the conference and this ceremony in St Tudy.

Going back to the US Navy's 250<sup>th</sup> year, I will be in Philadelphia attending some of the momentous commemoration ceremonies. I know several US members

of the Club will be there as well, and I am confident that all Club members will join us in this celebration.

Finally, I leave you with the following from the US Navy's History and Heritage Command proclaiming the establishment of the Navy.

*A 13 October 1775 resolution of the Continental Congress established what is now the United States Navy with ... a swift sailing vessel, to carry ten carriage guns, and a proportionable number of swivels, with eighty men, be fitted, with all possible despatch, for a cruise of three months ... After the American War of Independence, the U.S. Constitution empowered the new Congress ... to provide and maintain a navy." Acting on this authority, Congress established the Department of the Navy on 30 April 1798.*

Wishing you all my very best.

Yours aye,

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

Stephen Howarth

MA (with Distinction), FRHistS, FRGS, Cert. Ed. (Oxon)

Hon. Secretary, The 1805 Club

### Your Club Needs YOU!

... to consider standing as a Trustee – and if you feel qualified, even to put your name forward for one of our principal offices of admin and leadership: Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer. Currently we lack a Treasurer, so if you're good at figures and can spare a couple of hours a week, plus about three hours for one Zoom call every quarter, we'd love to hear from YOU! Immediate start with friendly supporting back-up!

If we get an overwhelming rush of volunteers of the right calibre and willingness to contribute actively (surely not impossible?), we could even reinstate the post of Vice Chair. And it's essential to give this reminder: that **under our new Constitutional rules as a CIO, the current chairman Captain John Rodgaard USN (Ret) and the current Secretary MUST stand down as Trustees at next year's AGM, on Saturday 9 May 2026.**

This is already only seven months away, and we all know how time slips by... so PLEASE GIVE THIS YOUR URGENT CONSIDERATION.

### EVENTS

For the Club's AGM in May 2025, we were welcomed back to the Army and Navy Club, nicknamed the Rag, in central London. Presentations from the chairman and other officers of the Club combined to give a detailed review of the Club's activities in the preceding twelve months. As well as this, members attending enjoyed not only each other's company – for many years, one of the Club's notable features – but also a fascinating and informative expert talk by Club member Captain Michael Barritt RN, former Hydrographer to the Navy, on "Nelson's Pathfinders": the development of the truly vital services of the hydrographic office.

Events since then have included the annual commemoration in Nottinghamshire of the Glorious First of June – which rather remarkably involved not only the county's Lord Lieutenant, Veronica Pickering, representing the King, but also another Lord Lieutenant, from Buckinghamshire: the Countess Howe.

August brought the annual Nile Luncheon in Virginia, and a visit by our chairman to the wonderful Frigate *Unicorn* in Dundee secured the promise that they will display our handsome banner and provide visitors with our forthcoming new recruitment leaflet. Imminent at the time of writing is the Unveiling in Cornwall of our plaque, done in partnership with the St Tudy Historical Society, commemorating Private Richard Masters of the Royal Marines, killed at Trafalgar.

Members are warmly encouraged to propose and organise events in their region. These could be, for example, visits to places of special interest to our period, talks (especially those involving outreach to other groups),

Continued on page 5

## EDITORIAL

**I**t is probably because I enjoy writing that I have hitherto avoided the blandishments of an AI assistant. I simply do not want to find its help attractive, fearing that my own voice may be lost. Before you judge my closed mind, listen to this true story: a friend asked

ChatBot how AI would take over control of the World. The reply was, "AI does not need to do anything. Humankind always takes the path of least resistance, and so, before too long, humans will choose to hand over control to AI." This may be a good thing, rescuing mankind from a worse fate – until such times that AI decides that the rescue of the Earth FROM mankind has a higher priority. So, dear readers, please continue writing your own words, and send human articles to *KA* for publication. In this way we will perhaps be **saving mankind**, by delaying AI's progress a little.

We have a lively collection of articles for you this time – a small piece about the Boston Tea Party and Pine Tree Riots; a discovered plaque about Billy Ruffian; something about nails in HMS *Ajax*; the activities of our French Curator; HMS *Unicorn*; HMS *Java* versus USS *Constitution*; one of the First Fleeters; an armada of admirals; Seppings and more.

The sharp-eyed reader may notice that there are a couple of 'fillers' this time. The solution to reducing the need for fillers is to send copy! Many Club members have ideas for things they would like to have published. Please do not hesitate, even if you have never written before – it may come as a surprise that, before I had ever written, I, too, had never written before, but was encouraged to 'have a go'. The satisfaction of first publication is immense! Help is available, without judgement.

Nothing to do with editing, but the eagle-eyed reader may notice, on page 39, that my home village has changed to Eyke, Suffolk, UK. In the UK, the Office for National Statistics defines a village, as having 0-4,999 residents – Eyke has less than 400. Not much more than a hamlet, really. In keeping with the smallness of my village, my home is a very tiny, but very comfortable, cottage, dating from the turn of the nineteenth century. In it I am very relieved to have survived a difficult couple of years and come out of it stronger and happier than ever, and thank The 1805 Club for helping me get through with the support of friendship.

The next edition will be issued in Spring 2026.

The deadline for copy will be  
**1 March 2026.**

Please submit your ideas to the Editor as soon as you can, and actual contributions **before** the copy deadline whenever possible.

Front cover picture:

"Frigate from the early 19th century presses on under full sail",

Watercolour by member Christer Hägg, 1992

(See also page 28)

Back cover pictures:

HMS *Unicorn* – See page 17



**THE 1805 CLUB AGM 2025**



*This is a repeat of the entry in the June edition of The 1805 Dispatches, for any readers of KA that do not read our digital newsletter.*

**The Annual General Meeting of The 1805 Club** was held on 17 May at The Army and Navy Club, 36 Pall Mall, London. The formal minutes are available to all members – here is a summary of key points:

1. Approximately 40 members attended, representing 10% of the membership (see note 5).
2. Geraint Day was accepted as Chair of the AGM.
3. Last year's AGM minutes, together with the Annual Report and General Accounts were noted/accepted as appropriate, without exception.
4. The Secretary's Report gave details of the current Trustee requirements of a CIO (which highlighted that John Rodgaard and Stephen Howarth will this year be serving their last permitted spells as Trustees), followed by information of events during 2024 and conservation projects completed and in hand.
5. The Membership Report showed that the Club has 409 members in 23 countries. An urgent reminder was given that **Members must renew their subscriptions via Stripe on The 1805 Club website.**
6. The Communications Report advised that email communications to members receive an 80% engagement rate.
7. The Treasurer's Report gave a balance at the end of 2024 of £99,093.00, which is about 12% down from 2023, indicating that the Club is actually doing charitable works requiring expenditure, as it should.
8. Subscription has increased from £45 to £50, and the agreed increase (refer to last year's AGM) to £60 has been deferred until 2027.
9. A report was given on the current state of, and plans for, the Club's website.
10. The US Secretary's Report was given, with details of events and the forthcoming HMS *DeBraak* Project.
11. Reports were given on *The Trafalgar Chronicle*, *The Kedge Anchor* and *The 1805 Dispatches* – all healthy and continuing without major changes. A brief reminder was given that the *Readers' Dictionary of Sailing Ship Terminology* is now accessible on the Club's website.
12. Member Shirin Camenisch was introduced as administrator

of the Club's Facebook and Instagram pages.

13. Trafalgar Way's website and social media was reported.
14. The 1805 Trading Company is providing a small but growing income stream.
15. The Flagship Fund (see next page) is providing income for projects.
16. The Way Ahead was reported as including: Virtual Museum – Natacha Abriat will be Curator; *DeBraak* Bell – Jack Slatterfield will manage; Forbes Memorial – Stephen Howarth is managing; Richard Masters Plaque – Stephen Howarth is managing.
17. Future Events include: McMullen Symposium; The 1805 Club Conference, new Series, 2025; Trafalgar Night Dinner.
18. Future Publications includes A History of The 1805 Club, to mark 35 years since its creation.
19. Governance reminded members that replacement Trustees are needed next year for John Rodgaard and Stephen Howarth. Three new Trustees were introduced, so that the current Council of Trustees, after the vote, is alphabetically: Natacha Abriat, Mark Billings, Jo Birtwhistle, Stephen Howarth, Kate Jamieson, John Rodgaard, Pete Stark, Russ Strick, Peter Turner and Mark West. Jude Wilson was introduced as the Club's Clerk. Co-opted to Council are: Kathy Brown, Sue Carr and Lynda Sebbage.
20. The next AGM is Saturday 9 May, 2026 at The Army and Navy Club.
21. The Members' Forum raised valid points which will be acted upon by the Council of Trustees.

After lunch the AGM concluded with a fine speech given by Captain Michael Barritt, RN (right) who spoke on his recently published book, *Nelson's Pathfinders*, about oceanic charts in the age of sail.



Secretary's Report Continued

or social get-togethers to share knowledge and enjoy like-minded company. The Club's administrators will help to arrange contacts.

**EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT**

We are both proud and happy to be continuing our awards on both sides of the Atlantic. In the USA, as described in *The View From The Bridge*, we have again sponsored two panels of speakers at the world-leading McMullen Symposium, and at Admiral Lord Nelson School in Portsmouth, we look forward to presenting our

annual Special Award for Personal Endeavour in Overcoming Adversity.

**PUBLICATIONS**

Our stable of publications remains strong with its usual five members and, planned for next year, one special addition. The usual five are our twice-yearly magazine *The Kedge Anchor*, the bimonthly newsletter *The 1805 Dispatches*, our excellent annual journal *The Trafalgar Chronicle*, and our two websites [www.1805club.org](http://www.1805club.org) and [www.thetrafalgarway.org](http://www.thetrafalgarway.org). The special addition, which will be sent to all members, will be a history of The 1805 Club from its inception in 1990 to its 35th anniversary this year.

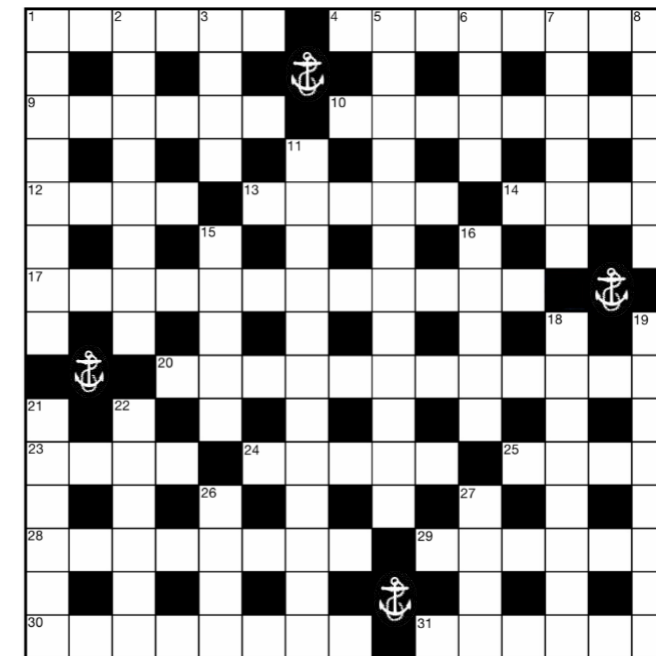
**LATE PAYERS**

In fairness to all, membership subscriptions must be paid on time, i.e. at the beginning of the year. When the spring edition of *The Kedge Anchor* is issued it is impossible to know whether late-payers are just that, and deserving of their copy, or are ex-members. In future it has been decided that copies will not be sent where subscriptions have not been paid.

*The Events Diary appears on page 6. Please do not miss it!*

**Kedge Anchor Crossword No. 25.02**

This crossword is partly cryptic and partly based on knowledge, and some of it is relevant to things nautical and to our readers' interests; or in other words, quite wet. Answers on Page 39



Across		Down	
1	HMS ... (74) launched 1812 Rotherhithe. (6)	1	Richard ... (1831-1916) German mathematician who contributed to number theory. (8)
4	HMS ... (74) launched 1759 Deptford. (8)	2	Mid 20 <sup>th</sup> C social movement, originally subscribing to an anti-materialistic lifestyle. (8)
9	HMS ... (74) launched 1789 Rotherhithe. (6)	3	Person or thing widely admired for having influence. (4)
10	HMS ... (74) launched 1807 Chatham. (8)	5	Ancient Greek mathematician and polymath (c276BC - c195BC). (12)
12	HMS ... (74) launched 1798 Blackwall. (4)	6	Barrel-shaped container for liquid. (4)
13	HMS ... (74) launched 1758 Chatham. (5)	7	Pertaining to the laity. (6)
14	HMS ... (74) launched 1794 Deptford. (4)	8	(Slang) Surprise or amazement. (6)
17	Condition in which one is open and honest about ones feelings. (5,7)	11	(Archaic) A trial in Westphalia under the jurisdiction of the Holy Roman Emperor. (8,4)
20	HMS ... (74) launched 1810 Northam. (12)	15	Ancient Greek 'singing place', or European cinema chain. (5)
23	HMS ... (74) launched 1798 Rotherhithe. (4)	16	Watercraft that can be borne aboard ships, but cannot bear ships. (5)
24	HMS ... (18) captured 1777 St Lucia. (5)	18	Close to or near something. (8)
25	HMS ... (74) launched 1759 Deptford. (4)	19	<i>Shizaphis graminum</i> , originally from the Palearctic region. (5,3)
28	USS ... (5) launched 1863 (acquired for the Union Army). (8)	21	Elongated edible leathery berry, a good source of potassium. (6)
29	HMS ... (74) launched 1798 Northfleet. (6)	22	A short form of Japanese poetry, using three phrases with seventeen syllables. (6)
30	Hydroxilated aluminium potassium sulfate minerals, with the chemical formula KAl <sub>3</sub> (SO <sub>4</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> (OH) <sub>6</sub> . (8)	26	<i>Choloepus didactylus</i> , a Central American two-toed sloth. (4)
31	(Slang) Untidy, disorganised, tattered. (6)	27	Saltwater warm-blooded fish of the family <i>Scombridae</i> . (4)