



HMS Medusa, Christmas update.

As we come to the end of 2025, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters, both crew and the wider support group for all they have done to contribute to a successful year. The summer newsletter covered our activity up to the end of our long deployment, but we have been busy since then; here are some highlights.

This year we have developed our relationship with the Volunteer cadet corps (VCC). The VCC are located at Royal Navy and Royal Marines bases and locally we have Excellent, Sultan and Collingwood. We have set up weekends aboard Medusa where the cadets join on a Saturday when we teach them seamanship, navigation, engineering and deck work alongside all day. They then stay on board overnight in the junior and senior rates messes with their staff in the wardroom. They take great pride in conducting sunset and morning colours. Sunday is a sea day and a chance to put it all into practice. The cadets have enjoyed the weekends, and several have come back a second time. We have always been impressed by their turnout, politeness and willingness to learn.



HMS Excellent VCC .

Their final visit for the year was slightly different. A group from Excellent have been working with Legasea ([Legasee | Over 650 Video Interviews With Military Veterans](#)) to learn how to interview and collect stories from veterans. After a brief tour of Medusa, I was interviewed by them for an hour. I was impressed at their research and the searching questions they had put together to ask me.

Cadet activities are a really good use for Medusa and we will be expanding the activity with VCC next year.

We had our final away trip of the year to Bucklers Hard for a long weekend. We are always made very welcome there and it's a great place to be open to visitors. Next year we have two visits scheduled, one to coincide with a WW2 themed weekend.



Medusa at Bucklers Hard

This year our Trafalgar Night dinner returned to the Lightship at Haslar and it turned out to be a memorable evening. Apart from Trafalgar Night and Medusa's 82nd birthday, my 70th birthday fell on this day. Attempts to keep this quiet had failed and I was quite overwhelmed by the generosity of the Medusa team who presented me with a beautiful set of oak bookends inset with real aircraft instruments plus a visit in the Spring to Yeovilton and a flight in a historic aircraft. Our guest of honour for the evening was Brigadier Ged Salzano, Royal Marines, who delivered a brilliant after dinner speech then concluded it by promoting me to Lt Commander. It's not often I am lost for words but I was that evening!



A birthday surprise.

For Remembrance we move Medusa to Hornet and berth right in front of the Coastal Forces memorial. It's a real wriggle getting in there and can only be done at the top of the tide in light winds. Medusa makes a wonderful backdrop for the service.



Medusa at Hornet for Remembrance.

Running up to Christmas we have a lunch on board for the regular volunteers. This is an opportunity for the trustees to say thank you to the team that look after and operate Medusa though the year. This year we managed to squeeze 14 people in the forward mess. Lunch was chilli (thanks to Richrd Hobbs) or beef curry (me) and a superb apple cake to follow (thanks to John La Trobe Bateman).



Some of the regular volunteers. Brendan Chase, Stephen Farrington, Frank Fowler, Mark Fowler, Justin Newman, Ed Wyatt, Ian Harris, Nick Openshaw, John La Trobe Bateman and out of shot Henry Lawlor, Ed Dewar, Richard McDonald, Adam Sprott and me (in the galley)

Medusa is staying at Hornet over the Christmas period and has been dressed for the occasion.



Nighttime with the Christmas lights up.

We are finalising our plans for next year; our long deployment in May will be to the west country where we will take part in a Coastal forces themed event at Dartmouth in May to mark VE day and then go on to Falmouth.

In the past we have been able to insure Medusa as a private vessel and raise the cover to commercial on the days we operated commercially. Unfortunately, this is no longer available to us, so we have had to switch the insurance to fully commercial which has trebled the cost. A further uncertainty is that Haslar Marina has been taken over by Premier Marinas and, at present, we don't know if the special charity rate for berthing will be extended to us by the new owners. It will be a big financial impact if we have to pay full fee and we may have to look for a new home.

Again my thanks and those of the trustees to everyone who helps us keep going; as time passes Medusa becomes more important. To all, best wishes for a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Alan