

HMS LANCASTER



QUARTERLY NEWS LETTER

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CAPTAIN'S WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of HMS LANCASTER's newsletter – designed to keep our wider family up to date on progress as we work hard to bring the Ship from refit, through trials and training, back to front line operations. It has been a challenging journey thus far – equipment defects, terrible weather and now the coronavirus crisis have played havoc with our trials schedule – but we are nearly there and hope to have completed the trials programme by mid-June. My name is Will Blackett – as the Captain I consider my primary responsibility to be for the health, wellbeing and morale of everyone onboard; as part of that responsibility I consider it vitally important that families and friends of the Ship feel connected, involved and able to reach out for information as and when needed. This means you! Coronavirus lockdown aside, you are welcome onboard whenever we are alongside – a visit can be arranged very easily. We will plan a more involved programme of families & affiliates sea days once the social distancing rules have been relaxed and I very much look forward to the opportunity to meet you all in person. In the meantime, you can follow our Twitter feed for pictures and videos of our activity, and please feel free to get in touch at any time via the email address below.



LOGISTICS DEPARTMENT

2020 has proven a busy and exciting time for the Loggies of LANCASTER, with all the sub-departments having plenty to keep them occupied! Continuing to smash out morale three times (or more!) a day, the Catering Services team has impressed with a flippin' great Pancake Day, a meat-tastic Pizza Night, and mouth-watering chocolate brownies.

During an impromptu stop in Portland, the Supply Chain team had a taste of the often-unforeseen nature of an operational ship and handily managed to ensure the swift delivery of the stores to get LANCASTER back home. Keeping the ship's company safe during the COVID-19 situation, the medics have risen to the challenge and performed wonderfully in keeping us all informed of the facts about the virus. Ever the duty heroes, the LMA and his team even managed the time to impress the FOST staff with their professionalism and leadership during the last Crash On Deck Exercise.

WEAPONS ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Since beginning LANCASTER's regeneration in earnest, the WE Department have been the central focus of the ongoing Post Upkeep Sea Trials period. This intense testing programme has seen the Ships communications, weapons and sensors equipment utilised in full operational conditions ensuring that all equipment is able to perform on future tasking.

With an upgraded Combat and Missile Defence System installed during her refit, LANCASTER has been combining modern warfare with the more traditional aspects including naval gunnery and magazine torpedo launch system. Her dedicated team of Weapon Engineers maintain these systems constantly to ensure that when called on – even for trialing – they deliver.



Nec Aspera Terrent - Difficulties be Damned
"The Queens Frigate"

MARINE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Since moving on board the Ship the ME Department has been responsible for a vast amount of machinery and equipment, from the main propulsion right down to the less glamorous (but highly essential) sewage treatment plant. To ensure that Operational Capability is maintained, as well as keeping up morale in the form of a warm shower each day, every member of the ME Team has worked extremely hard and with unfaltering dedication to deliver the ME aspect of the Ship's regeneration programme. Despite multiple significant and catastrophic defects, all Harbour and Sea Acceptance Trials have been successfully completed; no mean feat with the Ship being alongside for nearly 4 years previously! As well as this core business, the team has dedicated a large portion of time to training, with regular drills being conducted to progress our people both professionally and personally - BZ to all who have qualified thus far.



WARFARE DEPARTMENT

With the Warfare Department almost fully manned, 2020 has seen every member of the team give their all during LANCASTER's extensive programme this year, to ensure she is ready to become operationally capable after an intense regeneration period alongside. Every assignment thrown at the Warfare Department has been successfully completed, including aviation serials organized by FOST and bringing the ship alongside a buoy in Plymouth-no small feat indeed and even more impressive as 80% of the Seaman Specialist branch had ever undertaken such a task. In addition, the team have also conducted a large number of training serials to better develop the already high level of professionalism within the Department, and allowing a large number of sailors to qualify in various roles.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

As LANCASTER began to regenerate her Ship's Company, from a dormant state back in May 2019, the Executive Department has been a crucial link in Operational Training and the delivery of fundamental routines. As the majority of the Ship's Company are relatively junior in their role, it is a privilege to witness the coming together and progress of such a talented group of sailors. This has brought great pride to the Command. We as the Executive are also grateful for the enthusiasm members of the Ship's Company have taken towards re-affiliating her to our native City of Lancaster, taking part in Remembrance Day and raising money for local charities.



FUTURE EVENTS

HMS LANCASTER has been alongside Portsmouth and will start a supported maintenance period from the start of May. Additional trials, weapon and aviation training are planned during the summer as the Ship starts the work up process towards Basic Operational Sea Training in the Autumn term.

The Ship is currently looking at rebooking port visits that were postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we will let you know the dates once these are confirmed.



Contact email: HMSLANC-PRO@mod.uk

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