

SILVER SEA URCHIN –  
THE “EMBLEM” OF THE RNR OFFICERS’ CLUB, LIVERPOOL  
(THE SEA URCHINS)



A number of these were made in Sheffield in the 1930s and presented to various Presidents and to other guests, usually the current Admiral Commanding Coastguard and Reserves until 1923 and Admiral Commanding Reserves from 1924. These dates might seem incongruous, but there appears to have been another Emblem presented in the 1920s and then in 1927, there is a report of a silver Urchin being presented, so there may well have been an earlier batch.

When researching the book "Hold Fast", several recipients were identified and the whereabouts of their Emblem, however it was a part of the research that was not fully investigated at the time.

This is now a record of the recipients that have been identified, mainly from articles in the Liverpool press in the 1930s. It is quite likely not complete. Names in Red would appear not to have received an emblem.

### **Presidents**

1921 - 1922	Captain S S Richardson, OBE, RD
1923	Captain J W Harris
1924	Commodore C A Bartlett, CB, CBE, RD
1925	<b>Captain H J Temperley Grey, RD</b>
1926	<b>Commander E C Roden, RD</b>
1927	<b>Commodore Sir Bertram Hayes, KCMG, DSO, RD</b>
1928	Lieutenant-Commander J Dobson
1929	Captain F E Storey, RD
1930	<b>Commander M G Douglas, RD</b>
1931	<b>Commander G Davey, RD</b>
1932	<b>Captain C Edwards, DSO, RD</b>
1933	<b>Captain S S Fulford, RD</b>
1934	<b>Captain J W Williams, DSO, RD</b>
1935	<b>Commander M Creswell, DSO, RD</b>
1936	Captain S S Richardson, OBE, RD
1937	<b>Lieutenant-Commander J W Binks, RD</b>
1938	<b>Commander J L May</b>
1939	<b>Lieutenant-Commander C Douglas Lane</b>

### **Admiral Commanding Coastguard and Reserves**

Vice-Admiral Sir Morgan Singer: July 1921–July 1923

### **Admiral Commanding Reserves**

Admiral Sir Hugh H. D. Tothill: July 1923–July 1925

Admiral Sir Lewis Clinton-Baker: July 1925–August 1927

Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur A. M. Duff: August 1927–August 1929

Admiral Sir John D. Kelly: August 1929–August 1931

**Vice-Admiral Henry W. Parker: August 1931–October 1933**

Admiral Sir George K. Chetwode: October 1933–January 1936

**Vice-Admiral Sir H. J. Studholme Brownrigg: January 1936–November 1938**

We were fortunate in being able to contact nearly all the families of the past presidents, however contact with the families of the other recipients (ACRs) has been difficult as in some cases there are no direct descendants and only two identified but without a response from them.

The very first contact was with Jon Richardson, the grandson of the first President, **Captain S S Richardson**. Jon lives locally and invited us into his home and talked about his grandfather and showed us his Sea Urchin which was presented in 1932.

**THE 11th annual meeting of the members of the Royal Naval Reserve Officers' Club was held on Thursday at the Liverpool Constitutional Club, and was presided over by the president, Commander G. Davey, R.D., R.N.R., who announced that a letter had been received from the Admiralty thanking the president and members of the club for their expression of sympathy in the loss of submarine M 2 with all her crew. A cablegram was also received by the president from Commodore Bartlett at Cape Town, conveying his greetings to the members of the club, while Commander S. S. Richardson, O.B.E., R.D., R.N.R., the first president, was presented with the club's emblem of a "sea urchin."**

(Liverpool Journal of Commerce and Shipping)

We also had many email conversations with Lindsay Faith, the granddaughter of **Captain J W Harris**, another recipient of the Emblem, which Lindsay has at home. This was presented in 1934.

#### **SEA URCHIN EMBLEM**

At the annual meeting, to-day, in Liverpool, of the R.N.R. Club, Captain J. W. Williams, D.S.O., chief marine superintendent of the White Star Line, was elected president, in succession to Commander S. S. Fulford (Leyland Line).

Captain J. W. Harris (chief marine superintendent of the L.M.S. fleet) was presented with the emblem, in silver, of the club (a "Sea Urchin"), in recognition of services rendered to the club in its early years, as one of the founders, and as the second president.

(Liverpool Echo)

**Commodore Bartlett** was the third President in 1924 and his grandson, Alasdair Fairburn has his Emblem and his sword safe at home. Alasdair used his sword when he was serving in the RN. The Emblem was presented in 1930.



A notable incident followed, when the President, on behalf of all brother members, invited Commodore C. A. Bartlett, C.B., C.B.E., R.D., a past president, to accept as a token of deep and respectful regard an elegant mounted miniature of the club insignia, a sea urchin's shell mutely proclaiming the club motto "Hold Fast." It was a unique circumstance, said the President, that they had chosen such an emblem, yet it was perfectly appropriate at all times. Certainly their honoured friend, Commodore Bartlett, had held fast to the club, and never failed to take a keen interest in its welfare and aims, both socially and traditionally. (Applause.)

(Liverpool Journal of Commerce and Shipping)

**Lt Cdr J Dobson** was presented with the emblem in 1936/7, and it was returned to the Club by the family. It is laid on the table at every lunch and dinner and is held in high esteem by all the members. The photo on the cover is his emblem.



**"SEA URCHINS" TRIBUTE**  
At a gathering yesterday in Liverpool of the Royal Naval Reserve Officers' Club ("Sea Urchins"), Captain John Dobson (marine superintendent of the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company) was presented with the emblem of the club in silver in recognition of his services to the club, of which he was president in 1928.

Liverpool Daily Post

## ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE OFFICERS' CLUB.

### ELECTIONS FOR 1937.

Steady progress of the Royal Naval Reserve Officers' Club (Sea Urchins) was reported at the 16th annual meeting held in the Constitutional Club, Liverpool, yesterday, when Captain Binks presided in the unavoidable absence of Captain S. S. Richardson.

The secretary, Commander Cresswell, submitted the report which stated that the year 1936 had been one of progress and the activities of the club had been slightly extended. He regretted, however, to report the loss of six of the senior members through death, including Commander Sir Edgar Britten and Admiral Sir John D. Kelly.

Two awards of the Sea Urchin Emblem, in silver, were made during 1936, namely, to Honorary Captain A. B. Cauty, R.N.R., and Lieut.-Commander J. Dobson, R.N.R. (past president, 1928), these presentations being in consideration of their work and interest in the affairs of the club and in the Royal Naval Reserve generally, particularly regarding the encouragement of rifle shooting in the case of Captain Cauty.

On May 21 a special luncheon was held at the Constitutional Club at which the guest of honour was Vice-Admiral H. J. S. Brownrigg, C.B., D.S.O., Admiral Commanding Reserves. It is noteworthy that in his talk he mentioned the probability of the entry of R.N.R. officers into the Royal Navy in the near future, his remarks having come to fruition with the recent Admiralty announcement.

#### THE NEW PRESIDENT.

Liverpool Journal of Commerce and Shipping

**Captain F E Storey** was awarded the emblem in 1933.

The President said he had a most pleasant duty to perform in the presentation of their club emblem to Captain F. E. Storey. That was the highest honour their club could bestow upon any individual, be he either a member or non-member.

The emblem had never been presented to an individual who was more worthy of the honour than Captain Storey. Ever since he became a member of the club he had been a most loyal and staunch supporter, and the emblem was a token of their appreciation for the great work he had done, not only for the club, but for the Royal Naval Reserve generally.

#### FAITH IN THE R.N.R.

Captain Storey, in responding, said that when he looked at the list of those to whom the emblem had been voted in the past, he was at once impressed with the fact that he had something to live up to.

Liverpool Journal of Commerce and Shipping

**Admiral Sir Morgan Singer** was awarded an Emblem in 1923, but interestingly in the newspaper article it is described as a "Green Rock with a Sea Urchin and the words Hold Fast", so it could be that the Silver ones were not awarded until the 1930s.

**Admiral Sir Hugh Tothill** was awarded it in 1925 and most likely received a similar one to Admiral Singer above.

come look back with pride on the Royal Naval Reserve and have the satisfaction of realising that his labours were not in vain. (Applause.)

Before asking you to rise and join with me in drinking our admiral's health, I have a pleasing duty to perform. At our annual general meeting held in February last, it was unanimously decided that Sir Hugh, whose work in connection with the Royal Naval Reserve has been of such an outstanding character, should be presented with the emblem of the "Sea Urchins." (Applause.) I therefore ask you, Sir Hugh, to accept our emblem as a token of the high esteem in which you are held, and may it serve as a link in the chain of memory and so remind you of an association which we trust will be lasting. (Applause.)

Admiral Sir Lewis Clinton-Baker was presented with the Emblem at the Annual Dinner in 1927, and this might be the first time the Emblem as we know it, was presented.

**“URCHIN” PRESENTED  
TO ADMIRAL.**

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**INCIDENT AT R.N.R. DINNER  
IN LIVERPOOL.**

Admiral Sir Lewis Clinton-Baker was the chief guest at the annual dinner of the Royal Naval Reserve Officers’ (“Sea Urchins”) Club in the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, last evening, and during the proceedings was presented with the emblem of the club (a sea-urchin shell) to mark appreciation of the services he has rendered to the members of the R.N.R. during his period of Command, which ends on August 1st next.

Lieut-Commander J. Dobson, vice-president, was in the chair in the absence of the President, Commodore Sir Bertram Hayes, who is in the Royal Infirmary recovering from an operation.

**The “Good” Old Days.**

In proposing “Our Guest, Sir Clinton-Baker,” the chairman said the Admiral had always taken the keenest interest in the R.N.R., and that was a source of strength to the Reserves. The opportunities for young men to go into the Navy to train for the R.N.R. were now such as were never dreamt of years ago. In the old days he was afraid there was not the same good understanding between officers of the Royal Navy and officers of the Mercantile Marine. That was because they did not understand each other’s difficulties. All that had now been altered, and there was a complete understanding and mutual respect.

The chairman then presented the club’s emblem in silver to Sir Lewis Clinton-Baker.

Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur A. M. Duff received a Silver Emblem in 1929.

## SEA URCHIN SOUVENIR FOR ADMIRAL.

Each year the Royal Naval Reserve Officers' Club (Sea Urchins) presents to the Admiral Commanding Reserves an emblem (the shell of the sea urchin) as a souvenir of his year of office. Last year the admiral was Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur A. M. Duff, but when he paid his annual visit to Liverpool in May last the Sea Urchins' Club were unable to present him with the emblem, owing to the fact that the General Election was in progress. Since then Vice-Admiral Duff has relinquished the position of Admiral Commanding Reserves. This notwithstanding, the club proposes to present him with the emblem modelled in silver. Captain F. E. Storey, chairman of the club, will be vice-president of the Royal Naval Reserve Officers' banquet to be held in London on Friday evening, October 18th, when the First Sea Lord of the Admiralty will be the chief guest. On that occasion, Captain Storey will present the emblem to Vice-Admiral Duff on behalf of the club.

Liverpool Daily Post

Admiral Sir John D. Kelly received his emblem in 1931.

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### From A.C.R. to C.-in-C.

The Merchant Navy has a particular interest in the appointment of Admiral Sir John D. Kelly, K.C.B., to succeed Admiral Sir Michael H. Hodges, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., as Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet, for he has but recently relinquished the office of Admiral Commanding Reserves. In June last Sir John Kelly was the guest of the Royal Naval Reserve Officers' Club (the Sea Urchins) at their annual banquet, when, as a mark of the club's appreciation of his work for the Reserve, he was presented with the club's emblem. Sir John said, on that occasion, that he would sever his connection with the R.N.R. with sorrow, for he had enjoyed every minute of the association, and his duties had been of absorbing interest.

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Liverpool Journal of Commerce and Shipping

There were awards to others as well:

**Honorary Captain Arthur Belcher Cauty RNR.** He was a Club member and donated a splendid Cup in 1926 which was used as an award for shooting competitions of which he was very keen. He was awarded his Emblem in 1937.

## **ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE OFFICERS' CLUB.**

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**THE NEW PRESIDENT.**



MR. ARTHUR BELCHER CAUTY was born in Liverpool in 1870, and is the son of Dr. Henry E. Cauty. He was educated at Cambridge House School, Seaforth, and served his apprenticeship with Messrs. Richardson, Spence and Co., who were the managing agents in Liverpool of the Inman Line of steamers, which were subsequently acquired by American interests and became the American Line. Mr. Cauty joined the White Star Line in 1899, and is at present the general manager and director of the company, a director of the International Navigation Co., a member of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, succeeding his co-director, the late Colonel H. Concanon, and is a past-chairman of the Liverpool Steam Ship Owners' Association, having occupied that position in the year 1924-1925. He is Hon. Commander of the Royal Naval Reserve, and is one of the honorary members of the Liverpool R.N.R. Officers (Sea Urchins) Club. He resides at Hill Crest, Bidston, Cheshire, is a member of the Exchange and Racquet Clubs, Liverpool, and of the Junior Constitutional Club, London, while his recreation is golf. He is a member of the Wallasey Golf Club.

Liverpool Journal of Commerce and Shipping

Honorary Paymaster Commander J Blake Harrold OBE RNR, Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen received his award in 1924, so it was probably not a silver Urchin.

## "TWO MORE, SIR!"

Paymaster-Commander J. Blake Harrold O.B.E., R.N.R., the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen, has during the past week been paying a flying visit to Liverpool, for the purpose of receiving the R.N.R. Officers' (Sea Urchins) Club emblem, as an honorary member of the club. In the course of his speech of thanks at the luncheon given in his honour on Tuesday he told a story which will make its appeal to the members of the seafaring community. He related how on one occasion, a candidate for a Board of Trade certificate was being put through his examination, and in the course of the questions the examiner put the hypothetical query, "What would do if you were on the bridge, and the master suddenly collapsed on the deck?" The ready reply of the candidate was, "I would bring him to, sir" "Yes, but supposing he did not come to, what would you do then?" To which the officer, who apparently was good at repartee, replied without hesitation, "I would bring him two more, sir." A large number of shipmasters and officers who were sitting round the table greatly enjoyed the Registrar-General's story.

Liverpool Journal of Commerce and Shipping

And now we have one unusual Urchin.

**Lt Cdr Reg Wilcox RNR** was our President in 1967 and whilst researching our book, "Hold Fast", we got in touch with his daughter Shelagh and her husband Chris Kay who mentioned that they had a silver Urchin at home!

It turns out that the Urchin was identical to ours but that the inscription was nothing to do with the Sea Urchins. The engraving plate is identical to ours also. See photo.

Reg served as Commodore and eventually Honorary Commodore of the Royal Mersey Yacht Club. He was also a member of The Royal Dee Yacht Club. Sailing has played a significant role in the family and Chris still sails in Mersey Milne 'Meridian'.

Chris says - "I think Jimmy Thornton, a fellow member of the Royal Mersey YC, gave it to Reg after the 1959 Menai Strait Regattas. When Reg's boat Meridian had very good results. Jimmy was a bit of a wild one, how he got it is a mystery."

The silver plate on the wooden base reads –

MERIDIAN 1959 MENAI STRAITS

5 Firsts. 2 Seconds. 3 Thirds.

