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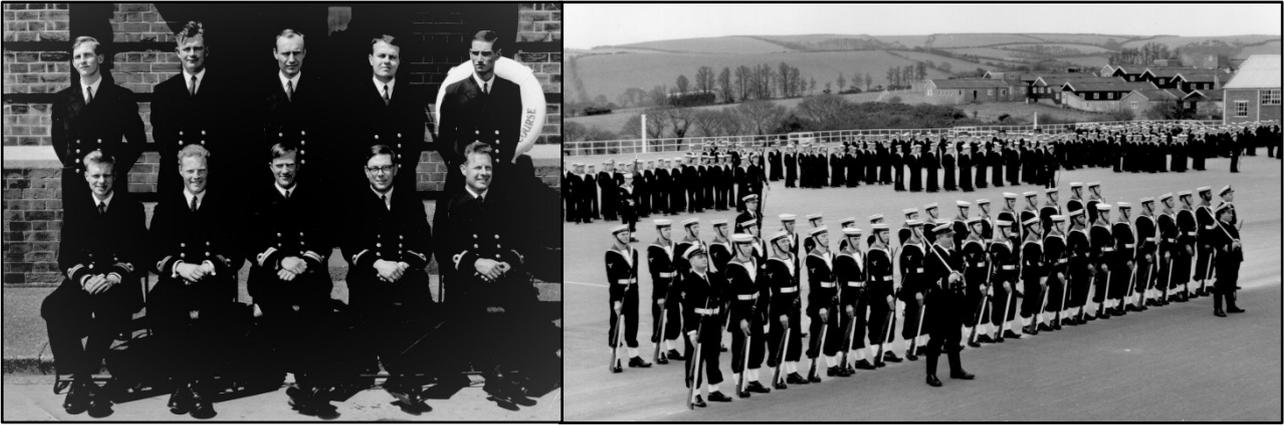
Service Story of Lt Cdr Tony Mann RN

I belong to a small band of fellow Schoolies who came up through the ranks and my career in the Royal Navy, as a whole, lasted for thirty years from 1950 to 1982. I signed on the 'dotted line' straight from school in 1950 at the age of 16 as an artificer apprentice, and as I showed a great interest in aircraft and fast moving objects I joined HMS *Condor* (Arbroath) following sixteen months initial training at HMS *Fisgard*. My specialisation was Aircraft Artificer (AA) and my training/service included time in HMS *Albion* (a Buccaneer aircraft can be seen performing a simulated landing on the flight deck, 1954, below), HMS *Falcon* in Malta, and RNAS *Culdrose* with 750 Squadron (Sea Princes aircraft).



In 1957 I met my future wife, who was a Wren (Meteorology). I worked my way up the artificer ranks to reach AA1 (Chief Petty Officer; above front right at remembrance day parade, Glasgow, 1958) and immensely enjoyed the technical work I did and the general 'fun and games' that the Navy had to offer. To advance my technical qualifications, I attended Paisley Technical College, and later Dundee Technical College, over a period of several years and eventually gained a Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Mechanical Engineering. In 1962, I was considering leaving the Navy to join industry because it was apparent to me that the end of fixed wing flying was nigh, and (unfortunately) how right that turned out to be.

However, and luckily for me, I had dealings with the Schoolies who were teaching at Arbroath as we shared a joint interest in mountain climbing, and during one expedition it was suggested to me that I apply to become 'one of them.' At around the same time, an Admiralty Fleet Order (AFO) introduced a new scheme for the likes of me to join the Instructor Officer branch. So I duly applied for, and was awarded, sponsorship by the Navy to attend Teacher Training College in 1963 at Wolverhampton, for one year to gain a Certificate in Education (Cert. Ed.). After graduating with my teaching qualification, I attended the four week 'knife, fork and spoon' course at HMS *Victory* in 1964 (see photo below – I am second from left, standing with classmates - doctors, dentists and direct-entry Sub Lieutenants). So there I was - an Instructor Sub Lieutenant Royal Navy despatched to HMS *Raleigh* (below - guard commander, left hand side) for my first appointment to teach new entry sailors the basics of the Naval Arithmetic and English Test (NAMET). In May 1967, I moved to HMS *Caledonia*, Rosyth, to teach Weapon Mechanics mathematics and science. I was also awarded the 'privilege' of being the wardroom wine caterer with another Instructor Officer, which was a task we certainly enjoyed!



In 1969 our Senior Instructor Officer (SIO) said to me, "You're going on a married accompanied," so with bags packed, including my tropical uniform, I embarked on a journey via Singapore to join HMAS *Cerberus* at the Flinders Naval Depot in Victoria, Australia. My students there were Midshipmen (would-be) pilots, Special Duties (SD) Engineers, and new entry sailors. Topping it off was the joining of the staff of the Instructional Technique section – it was all great fun and I loved it! The picture below (1970) was taken at HMAS *Cerberus* - all are Schoolies, including two rating instructors, with our Instructor Captain, Ernie Hokin (centre front).



On returning to the UK, now as a Lieutenant, I spent three years at RNEC Manadon teaching officers who, like me, had come up through the ranks. While there, I also compiled DVDs that were used as introductions for laboratory projects, and did my best to keep out of the way of the Head of Thermodynamics! In 1971, I was promoted to Instructor Lieutenant Commander. Shortly after this, I started an Open University course to study for a Bachelor of Arts degree. One of my fellow students was a retired admiral, so I was in good company! I completed this in 1976, and although not a 'high flyer,' I graduated. I returned to my 'roots' at HMS *Fisgard* in 1976, spending two years in the Mechanical Engineering Science section and then head of Engineering Drawing and Liberal Studies (teaching a leading apprentice in the photo below, left). In 1978, I went north again to Faslane and HMS *Neptune* as Base Instructor Officer and stayed until 1981. For my final 18 months, I was at HMS *Cochrane*, Rosyth, but these last two weren't really 'me' and I retired in the summer of 1982.



My Staff IO's department was at HMS *Cochrane* where my colleagues were fellow officers and a civilian resettlement officer (photo above right). My two 'educational jobs' were 'happy work places' but I felt more comfortable in the engineering environment. However, I couldn't praise the Wren (Education) personnel highly enough (see photo above, right) as they were bright, intelligent, and I sometimes found they could almost make me redundant!

In 1988, having studied theology (it was something that I had been thinking about for many years), I gained a Certificate in Religious Education, which has led to my ordination into the priesthood, and since then I have been a 'man of the cloth.' Ending on a slightly philosophical note, I have to say that, given the conditions that existed in Royal Navy in the 1950s, I would happily do it all again - but perhaps not today. The branch I belonged to consisted of a large number of interesting men and women from a variety of backgrounds. Being one of them was a very good move! I pass on my best wishes and blessings to former colleagues and look forward to hearing from any who served with me. Sincerely – Rev'd Tony Mann BA.

