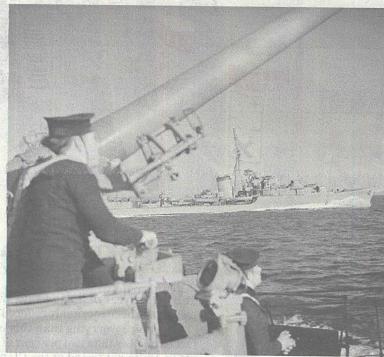
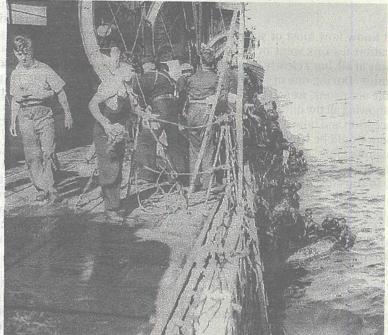
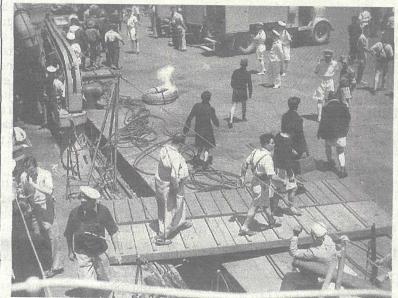
The Maltese rating who lost his life on HMS Kipling



John Dodd manning the forward guns on board HMS Kipling. This was also one of the most exposed gun positions on these ships.



HMS Kipling crew members helping men from HMS Kelly and HMS Kashmir on board after their ships were sunk by enemy fire.



Men rescued from HMS Kelly and HMS Kashmir coming ashore in Alexandria in whatever attire they could find.



The naval connection between the Maltese and the Royal Navy can be seen and felt around the Maltese islands. The effect that the British forces had on our history and family life is also evident when in conversation, as it seems that every household had at some time in the past had a family member in the British forces, whether it be Army, Navy or Air Force. In my role as chairman of the

Glarac Association, I come across many stories concerning the navy and families that are still searching for answers to their many questions. Unfortunately, when the British forces left Malta in 1979, information regarding Maltese members was taken back to the UK. This makes it hard for researchers to look up any information regarding family members and specific events involving Maltese ratings. I found this out when I started to look for information regarding a Maltese rating who died while serving on HMS Kinling.

I came across HMS Kipling through a chance e-mail sent to me by Robert Dodd from Hampshire in the UK. In his e-mail, Dodd told me that he was the archivist of the HMS Kipling Society, which holds annual remembrance services for all the men who lost their lives while serving on the Kipling. His father, John R. Dodd, served on HMS Kipling and was a survivor from its sinking.

Like myself, Robert finds it hard to see blank spaces next to a person's name. With no photographs, and sometimes no family information, it is as if the person never existed or belonged to anyone. He asked me if I could help to trace one particular Maltese

life on HMS Kipling.

The Maltese sailor in question is recorded as: Carmelo Sciberras, son of Carmelo and Josephine Sciberras, born on July 6, 1918, died on May 11, 1942. He was a NAAFI canteen assistant and his name is recorded on the Royal Navy memorial at Chatham but regrettably, NAAFI central records in the UK do not appear to hold any further details about him.

I had previously found a photo information regarding another crew member of HMS

Kipling, Lt Peter Fyers Turner, a highly decorated naval officer, who had lost his life on the Kipling and had held a Maltese passport. HMS Kipling was a 'K Class'

vessel launched on January 19, 1939, by Elsie Bambridge, daughter of the author Rudyard NAAFI rating who had lost his Kipling, whose own son had been killed in World War I. HMS Kipling saw service in a number of theatres, including in the Southwest Approaches, assisting in mine-laying off Brest in order to restrict the key German ships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, in Norway, and subsequently to the Mediterranean, where its first arrival in Malta is recorded as being on April 28, 1941, to be part of a flotilla attacking Axis supply routes to North Africa. On May 9, 1941, it was deployed as cover for Operation Tiger; it was then involved in bombarding Benghazi

and subsequently the defence of Crete.

Apart from the visits to Malta, generally as an escort vessel but also on offensive missions, HMS Kipling was one of a number of fast destroyers engaged in the supply of the Tobruk garrison, undertaking risky night-time runs to help land forces and evacuate casualties. In November 1941, Kipling took General Wladyslaw Sikorski, Commander of the Free Polish Army to Tobruk, to inspect the Polish troops fighting alongside the British and Australian forces.

In one of the most famous and commemorated naval incidents of World War II, HMS Kipling sailed from Malta with HMS Kelly and HMS Kashmir on May 22, 1941, to intercept German invasion craft, and after extensive dive bombing of all three vessels, HMS Kelly and HMS Kashmir were sunk, leaving HMS Kipling to rescue 279 survivors, including Lord Louis Mountbatten. Three-and-a-half hours after

the sinking of HMS Kashmir and HMS Kelly, HMS Kipling appeared from below the horizon at full speed coming to the rescue. As Kipling approached, it unfortunately grazed the sharp bow of the Kelly under the water and was holed (luckily in the reserve feed tank, which meant that no water actually got into the ship). Though repeatedly bombed by twin-engine bombers, which made the rescue task difficult, Kipling managed to pick up from the water 279 officers and men, and although under repeated attack from Ju-88s, managed to eventually reach Alexandria.

The damage to the Kipling prevented it from travelling at more than half speed with the upper decks crowded with survivors. many of whom were wounded and in poor shape. Lord Mountbatten went around with a note book to record which of the men wanted messages sent to their families. With more air attacks developing, some of the fitter survivors assisted the Kipling's gun crews to fight off the bombers, who eventually gave up as the gallant Kipling sailed into the night. Fifty miles short of Alexandria, Kipling ran out of fuel and had to be refuelled by HMS Protector, which had been sent out to meet them. In Alexandria, those crewmen who were

"Regrettably NAAFI central records in the UK do not appear to hold any further details about him"

not wounded were quickly

drafted to other ships.

Robert said his father John Dodd recalled with great affection the friendly rivalry that existed between ships during the few moments of relief when they would organise tournaments for the navy men. These were times when men needed some stress relief from the ravages of war, and football and athletics would prove to be the ideal antidote.

John Dodd remembered a particular meeting when he was in

direct competition with none other than one of the greatest goalkeepers of Maltese football. Wenzu Cabaretta, Dodd and Cabaretta went head to head competing in high jump and shot put. Cabaretta won the high jump with Dodd coming second, and the latter winning the shot put and Cabaretta coming third.

On January 5, 1942, HMS Kipling was deployed with HM cruisers Dido, Euryalus, Naiad, and HM destroyers Foxhound, Gurkha, Kingston and Sisk as Force B for escort of HMS Glengyle supply ship travelling to Malta. Subsequently, on April 22-23, 1941, Kipling also took part in guarding a convoy bound for Malta that included HMS Breconshire and two other merchant vessels.

On May 11, 1942, Kipling, along with Jervis, Jackal and Lively, were deployed to the eastern Mediterranean to try and intercept an Italian convoy en route to Benghazi but came under severe attack from German Ju-88s. During the bombing, Lively was the first to be sunk, with Jackal and Kipling sinking soon afterwards. During the intensive attack by the JU-88s. HMS Jervis had become detached. Later on during the night, it returned to pick up the survivors from the sunken ships. Jervis tried to tow the fire-ridden Jackal but had to abort this attempt and scuttled it with torpedoes. HMS Jervis returned to Alexandria with more than 630 men rescued from the three ships.

The HMS Kipling Society. which meets annually in the UK



Carmelo Sciberras commemorated on Chatham Memorial panel 67.

and is now made up of descen-

dants of the crew, of which only

one survivor still alive. Len

Chivers. It has been trying to

ensure that all those lost at the

society asks the public for help

in tracing Carmelo Sciberras so

that he too can be fittingly re-

membered along with the rest

of his shipmates. Any family

information, and if possible,

a photo, would be much

appreciated by the HMS Kipling

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank

Robert Dodd, brothers Gary and

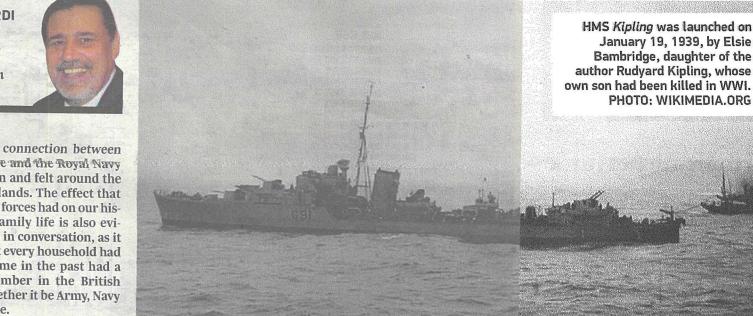
Graham Morris, and the Imperial

War Museum for photos and in-

formation related to this feature.

Society.

time of the sinking on May 11, 1942, are properly remembered and has been researching their A newspaper cutting reporting background and seeking to obthe athletics event in which tain some background details John Dodd and Wenzu and, where possible, a photo. Cabaretta took part. It is with this in mind that the





Tobruk to inspect the Polish troops fighting alongside the British and Australian forces. Here he is seen talking to the captain on board the Kipling on their way to Tobruk.

Four Fairburn Victories At Navy Sports

rds in 2 mins 22 sees, carmenetts, a local box, was firs, the high jump at five feet to

hade cut Dood by one Inch.
186 Vards Flat.—1. Sg. Fairburn
Wile 2 LAM Ewbanks (Grebe):
P.O. Cook (H.M. Ship). Time

1 Mile - 1, S Lt. Lloyd (Grebe

Storey (Grebe) 17 ft 3 ins. 3. Mars. Worley (N.D.Q.) 16 ft. 11 3/4

High Jump — 1, O. Sid. Gabe-tia (Grebe) 5 ft. 6 ins.: 2 A.B. and (Nie) 4 ft. 11 ms.; 3 Coder left (Nie) 4 ft. 8 ins. Shirt Pur — 1, A.B. Dodd (Nile) 7 4 ins. 2 P/O Okuma 1982 St. 10 ft. 6 2 4 ins. 3, O. 8 Geberretta (Grebe) 28 ft. 6 ins. See Gatereria (Grobe) 28 ft Class
Relay (110 x 220 x 110 x 220
Metress = 1, Grebe (P.O. Davies,
LAM Fabrics, Coder Collins, A.M.
Morrey 1 2, Naval Detontion
Graffer (A.B.A. Foggatty, Sgt. Faircar, Howset, Mne Budby); 3,
Communications H.M.S. Nie (Goder Collett, Tel. Davies, Plo. Tel.
Morrimer, Oxden); 4, Mine SpotMorrimer, Oxden); 4, Mine Spot-

HMS Glorious

Readers who had family members serving on board HMS Glorious are invited to contact GLARAC Association chairman Saviour Azzopardi on e-mail salvuazz@hotmail.com with the aim of helping the association gain more knowledge on the men who lost their lives on HMS Glorious.



HMS Jervis in Grand Harbour with the half-sunken Ohio in the background. HMS Jervis saved over 600 officers and men from HMS Kipling, HMS Jackal and HMS Lively.