

ASHORE & AFLOAT

Summer 2022


Aggies



Faithfully Alongside the Naval Family



Aggie's

Trustee Focus by Hugh Harris

"My work is, to say the least, varied" wrote Dame Agnes in her autobiography, *My Life Amongst the Blue Jackets*, published in 1909. 113 years later, I think many of us blue jackets (and green!) would recognise that feeling. The Royal Navy's work is now more than ever, to say the least varied. Ships and submarines are more deployed and sustaining overseas across the globe; some permanently with crew rotation cycles in place. Our Carrier Strike Group, with its associated staffs, air squadrons and Royal Fleet Auxiliaries, is well on the way to full operating capability and the Royal Marines continue to evolve into the commando force of the future. Across all branches, trades and specialisation of the Royal Navy, ashore and afloat, on, below and above the water, variety is in no short supply.

After almost 20 years in the RN, predominately at sea, part of my varied work which I thoroughly enjoy is acting as a Trustee of Aggie's. I joined the charity 2 years ago seeking a way to use my experiences of life and leadership at sea for the wider benefit of our people. I have witnessed first-hand the unique positives and challenges of Royal Navy 'variety' on both young and experienced personnel. Aggie's, driven by our Christian wish to 'do good works', is a crucial part of the tapestry that directly looks after our people; it is a privilege to be part of the journey that Dame Agnes began 146 years ago for the Glory of God and the good of the Service. It therefore gives me huge pleasure to welcome you to the latest edition of *Ashore and Afloat*.

Dame Agnes clearly loved the varied nature of her work. This shines through in her autobiography. Equally, the varied employment offered to and expected of our Royal Navy personnel today is a much quoted positive of our Service. I firmly believe this to be true and is one of the many reasons I enjoy life in the Royal Navy; it keeps things interesting. But varied work and variety (or change as it is often known) can also cause huge stress and strain to a service person and their families. We have all been there. Deployments short or long, separation, multiple assignments, trawls, missed family events and house moves, to name but a few, are all facets of Naval life. Most of us manage most of the time, but all of us have moments. This is where Aggie's today truly contributes to the effectiveness of our Service. I have called upon the skills of our wonderful pastoral workers and volunteers, whose varied work is not much different from that of Aggie herself, more times than I can remember in support of our people and their loved ones. Be it bacon butties, storybook waves, work in the community with our families or just an ear to listen, Aggie's supports us day in day out. From phase one training to the front line, from those with family in the UK and those without, Aggie's continues in a multitude of ways to support the varied work of the Royal Navy.



Pictured: HMS Prince of Wales on 21st April 2022 HM The Queen Celebrates her 96th Birthday. Ships in HM Naval Base Portsmouth, Hampshire carry out a dress ship routine, which involves hoisting flags along the length of the ship from the Ensign to the Jack.

Dame Agnes Weston's Royal Charity for the Naval Service

Generally known as Aggie's

Company No. 11114651 • Charity No. 1176596

Contact Us

Aggie Weston's
Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue,
Portsmouth PO2 8RN

T 023 9265 0505 E office@aggies.org.uk

www.aggies.org.uk

Aggie_Westons aggiewestons

Patrons

Her Majesty the Queen
Ministry of Defence

Chairman Of Trustees

Captain Paddy Allen RN

Chief Executive Officer

Chris New, OBE, FCIPO

Editor

Kathryn Hearn

Cover Photo

Aggie's Pastoral Workers Sam Davies and Jenny Rowe with their Submarine 'Oscars'

Reflection on Volunteering

by Nikki Burge, Aggie's Volunteer

Aggie Weston's – a friend for Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary personnel and their families. How true is this statement?

I am sure many of us can relate to how naval life can be lonely and isolating at times, being separated not only from our partners but also from family and friends as we move around and away from home towns. This is how I came to know about Aggie's and, as a naval wife, I am so appreciative of the events, the chats, the wonderful books and just the general level of support and understanding offered – not because it's their job, but because it is clear that, behind that as an organisation, they truly care about personnel and their families. This is what encouraged me to become a volunteer with Aggie's, as they're like extended family, who are there to listen, encourage, comfort and provide help.

I cannot tell you how much I love volunteering for Aggie's. I have two voluntary roles; Pastoral Worker and Storybook Waves Editor. As a voluntary pastoral worker I have helped at events, such as Rhyme Time and Get OWT, which are aimed at those with young families, and have spent time talking to families and supporting their welfare. It has been so much fun helping to plan some of the sessions and come up with engaging activities, as well as to meet other military families and make new friends along the way. It is so lovely that everyone is there to help each other. We especially had fun during lockdown, armed with hand gel and delivering craft packs to doorsteps, having conversations over fences and

hiding books around patches for people to find on their daily walk. Aggie's staff really involve you and make you feel part of the team.

If you have ever received a 'hug in the post' from Storybook Waves, you will know exactly what a volunteer editor does! Receiving a recorded story, adding music and sound effects and returning a finished piece, knowing a CD will be sent to the family with a copy of the book, a medal and other goodies, is absolutely heart-warming and truly puts the biggest smile on my face. Listening to some of the words said by loved ones deployed often brings a tear to my eye and I just love knowing that receiving this will make a huge difference to someone and bring so much enjoyment – as it has many times to my own family. Sometimes I am lucky enough to see pictures or videos of little ones receiving their story and again, I cannot say I didn't cry!

Thank you, Aggie's, for being so wonderful and a true friend. Volunteering has brought so much joy to my life.

If you feel you can give something back then please consider volunteering. Full training is given and you are made to feel so appreciated for any time you can give. Ring **023 9265 0505** or email **office@aggies.org.uk** for details.

Around the Country Update

It has been a busy few months for Aggie's Pastoral Workers around the country. Here is a selection of the events that they have been hosting, attending, making sure happened and in many cases cooking Aggie's Butties for...

Helensburgh – Sam and Jenny and the Submarine Awards

The Submarine 'Oscars' took place at the end of May in the Hilton Hotel, Glasgow. The Chaplaincy and Aggie's team from Helensburgh were invited to attend. Aggie's Pastoral Worker Sam Davies reports on the night.

At the end of May, the Chaplaincy and Aggie's team put on their glad rags to attend the Submarine Oscars. It was a lavish evening of dining and dancing to celebrate the efforts made by serving Submariners, their families, friends and linked organisations. Commodore Jim Perks, Flag Officer Submarines, presented the awards on the night. After an enforced break of 2 years due to Covid, he said: "It is fantastic that we are once again able to come together as a cadre and community to recognize the sterling contribution of the submarine family."

Jenny Rowe and Sam Davies, the Aggie's Pastoral workers for the Clyde area, were nominated for the Naval Families Federation award by Vicky Brindley, Devolved Policy Manager and Partner Employment lead, in recognition of their work serving the Naval families in the local community.

The Aggie's team were nominated as it had been noted that throughout the lockdown period they went the extra mile to support local families, from the contact made at the end of driveways, to initiating zoom chats, delivering sunflower seeds and pamper bags, and hosting a virtual book club.

Local families remarked:

"Jenny and Sam just made sure we weren't forgotten when my husband was on patrol, they checked in with me and made sure I was ok."

"The Aggie's ladies are just amazing -I always felt listened to and knew even though we couldn't meet up for a coffee in person, they brightened my day."

"Sam and Jenny are a lifeline, through lockdown and again since. They are both calming and go out of their way for all of us. They are so welcoming and inclusive. They have got me through some very dark times, just because they cared and checked in. Above and beyond their job."

Sam and Jenny gratefully received engraved gold Oscars statuettes to serve as reminders of their efforts.

Congratulations to Sam and Jenny on the award and recognition of their hard work.





RM Condor

Aggie's Pastoral Worker Seonid Cunningham from 45 Cdo RM, Arbroath recently asked families in her area for feedback on the service and events offered by Aggie's. The feedback highlighted that most of the events were specifically designed for families with young children. To remedy this, Seonid arranged an event for over 12s, ensuring that teenagers could join in the fun.

Seonid reached out to a talented local artist (who has supported the military community for several years) and asked if she would be interested in running a painting workshop. The 'Cow painting workshop' proved very popular, and sold out very quickly. A great mix of people attended on the night – people with no children, people who had arranged childcare for their young children, even a mother and daughter came along to enjoy the workshop together. Several of the attendees had never attended an Aggie's event before and it was lovely to welcome them to the group.

The evening had a lovely, relaxed atmosphere with lots of conversation that led to strengthened friendships and several new relationships between both those in attendance and the Aggie's team.

The feedback after the event was great with many people suggesting more ideas for kid free socials in the future.



RN Norton Manor

Aggie's Pastoral Worker Rachel O'Malley has been setting up new events for personnel and Families at RM Norton Manor in the last few months. Aggie's butties and Coffee Mornings are now regular fixtures for personnel and their families on base. Rachel and the chaplain went along to the recent families' day and served up Aggie's Smoothies! The local cadets enjoyed the different flavours on offer and, with so much positive feedback, smoothies will be on the menu again!



For the Families of 45 commando
Debbie Cunningham · 1 h · 📍
Thoroughly enjoyed the paint a cow tonight...i was fully expecting mine to be like a stick man 😂 actually like it lol! can you share yours if you were there I had to shoot off and didn't get to see them all but ones I did were great!



Worthy Down – Jubilee

Pastoral Worker Chloe Sheppard joined the Aggie's team in March 2022 and has made quite an impact on serving personnel based at Worthy Down. Chloe works two evenings a week and since starting has set up evening socials for personnel on site, attended the flight sports day barbeque and had an Aggie's stand at the Worthy Down Jubilee party for families.

Chloe has made quite an impression already with personnel telling Aggie's:

'Chloe has been a breath of fresh air to Worthy Down. Her attitude and energy is just what you need when you've had a long day at work'

'Aggie's being on base is an amazing thing, Chloe is a lovely woman and someone all the trainees feel comforted by and like talking to.'



Community Waves Plymouth

It has been a very busy start to the year for the Aggie's Community Waves Team in Plymouth. Jenn Collins left the team in January 2022 and Natasha Humphery, who had been working as a volunteer for Aggie's, joined in April 2022 as the new Co-ordinator.

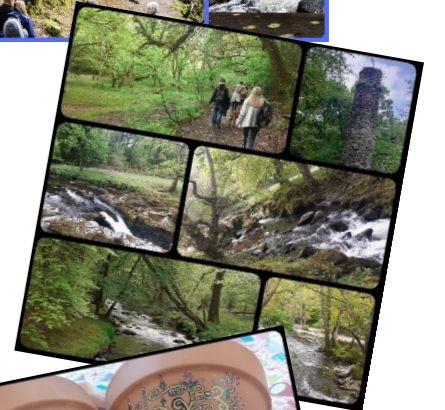
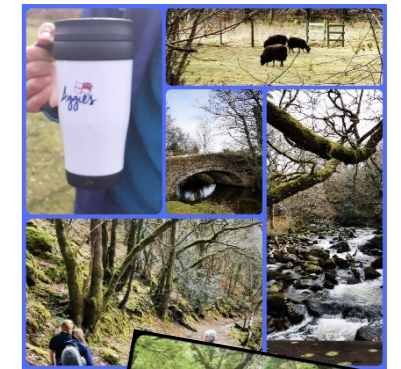
Since joining the team, Natasha has set up several new groups: Walk & Talk; Craft Coffee and Chat; and Sew Together. Whilst the new groups were being formed Aggie's Family Pastoral Worker Zoe has continued her work with Jack and Jill's nurseries across the area and has developed her links with Plymouth schools delivering both assemblies on Aggie Weston and her work and partaking in Military Kids Clubs in the city.

Walk and Talk is aimed at beneficiaries and their four legged, fun loving friends. Each week everyone meets up with Natasha at a different location to enjoy the fresh air, great company and fabulous countryside.

Craft Coffee and Chat is an adult only craft group that meets each week to create new craft projects, including dangle decorated pots, quilling alphabet cards, felt flower willow wreaths & bespoke glass engraving. (You might find one of these glasses at HQ on Andy Gordon's desk!)

The new **Sew Together** group encourages beneficiaries to bring their own sewing machines and projects to a shared space where they can share their experience, skills and the large cutting table. Many of those attending have started with the Aggie's Jubilee bunting that was handed out to service families at events and families days across Plymouth in May 2022.

The latest addition to the Plymouth Community Waves schedule is WAVY NAVY ('Wives And Very Young'), a stay & play group for the under 5's including Storybook Waves Book Club at the Crownhill Community Centre in the purpose-built kindergarten area. It is a fabulous facility which Zoe & I are proud to share in partnership with RNFPS who have been extremely helpful for all of the new Aggie's-ideas.



HMS Collingwood

The team at HMS Collingwood have been hosting lots of events for Phase 2 trainees and staff over the last few months. The Aggie's butties morning on a Tuesday has seen in excess of 100 personnel queuing for bacon and mugs of tea! CWD Re-Charged is the re-launched fellowship lunch and bible study hosted by Emma Boorn and The Alpha Course took place with eight trainees attending regularly. Two Games Nights now take place each week with Pete Wood hosting a termly pool tournament.



Exploring a tank at RM Chivenor

RMB Chivenor

The week at Chivenor kicks off with Mums and Tots in the Church hall. This group continues to grow and friendships between mums from a variety of backgrounds flourish.

Next on the timetable is the Aggie's butties!!! This is taking place every Tuesday after phys. Therefore, we are serving plenty of hungry personnel.

Food is always very popular at Chivenor; the recent Pancake Day has led to requests for more themed food days!

Damien has been working as part of the team for little hero's, which was a 6 week after school club to help bolster Community support, and resilience amongst the children of serving personnel. It was very well received by the children and both the CO of 24 Cdo Logs Rgt and Cdo Eng Rgt came down on the last day to hand out medals for the kid's and thank everyone who helped make it happen



Lighting of the beacon for the Jubilee celebrations



RNAS Culdrose

Aggie's Pastoral Worker Georgie House looks after personnel and their families at RNAS Culdrose. Over the last few months, Georgie has been busy planning and implementing a great range of ad hoc and regular events. Here Georgie tells us what she has been up to:

The chaplains and I delivered a cream tea to the medical bay to raise morale. Everyone was very happy to see us and had a great afternoon, so we certainly achieved what we intended that day.

It all seems to be about food as, after the success of the pizza night, I decided to hold a Chinese night and had 25-30 people come along to enjoy food provided by the local take-away, some lively games and of course the great company. Holding the event in the senior rates mess led to some encouraging conversations; wives expressing how they would love to see their husbands promoted to senior rate so they could use the space more; just shows that, if the partner is supported at home, they are encouraging and supportive to the service person who stays in longer and progresses their career – a win for the Navy!

More food came when we delivered pancakes in the Haven - which were delicious (if I do say so myself)!

Aggie's butties continues outside the Haven, in squadrons and in the community centre, all leading to a great impact in the community and with service personnel as we have great conversations during service.

Other events I have attend over the last few months include the Health and Wellbeing day, the Easter Egg hunt (let's not mention the melting eggs!), the Jubilee party (organised by RN FPS with funding from RNRMC) and the family fete day, all of which were a lot of fun.

There is lots more coming up in the warmer months, strawberry picking, beach days and of course a trip to Roskillys.

HMS Sultan

It has been a very fruitful few months at HMS Sultan, the most pleasing aspect for the team there is that they have been asked to be involved in a number of events taking place across the establishment.

Becky and Steve were invited to set up a stand at the Leading Hand's Jubilee party, where they had great conversations and got asked many questions about Aggie's and our work.

The Annual Field Gun races took place in June and Aggie's had a stall set up providing the practicing teams with nutty bars and cold drinks.

Coffee and doughnuts were provided at the Divisional Officers' course, which helped to raise the profile of Aggie's and demonstrated perfectly to the DOs what Pastoral Workers can do to support serving personnel.

Lots of friendships have been made over the last few months which have led to a number of pastoral conversations, so the team are supporting personnel and their families with conversation, coffee and doughnuts.

New Starters

HMS Nelson

The Haven at HMS Nelson is coming alive again! Personnel have been returning to normal work patterns over the last few months and it has been wonderful to welcome them back to the Haven with a cup of tea as they seek the support of Aggie's Pastoral Workers. There have been many conversations, times of reflection and gentle encouragement to help personnel fulfil their ambitions.

Since our last Ashore and Afloat the Portsmouth team have welcomed back the Portsmouth based ships who deployed as part of the Carrier Strike Group. They have also supported families day events for HMS King Alfred, HMS Lancaster, HMS Kent, HMS Defender, and HMS Brocklesby; occasions that have been sorely missed by personal and their families.

Paul and I have recently completed two days of Storybook Waves recordings on-board HMS Lancaster. Aggie's has also been invited to have a regular place in the program during the Pre- Deployment course, which is conducted from HMS Nelson. In addition to this, our team was approached by the Coxswains' Course, to have a morning with their attendees, to talk about Aggie's and how PWs can be an avenue of support for members of their ship's company as well as those in leadership positions.

Despite all this activity, we remain a place where people can come for pastoral conversations and signposting. As ever, we are the people who have the time to sit alongside others without expectations or judgement, supporting the service personnel of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

In June, People Support Group Portsmouth had a team-building day in London and visited the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development office. They very kindly invited pastoral worker, Tracey Harvey along to take part.



RFA

Working as the first and so far only Aggie's PW for the RFA offers many opportunities to try different ways of achieving my main goal, which is to let the seafarers know that they have a source of support. Targeting key people who have direct contact with folk who might appreciate a listening ear has been one way of getting known. Another is to target the various training establishments and arrange to meet groups attending courses. However, the most exciting has been spending 4 days at sea aboard RFA Mounts Bay, sailing from Marchwood, where she had just disembarked 300 Marines following an exercise, and sailing to Falmouth where she was due a mini refit. It was a terrific experience for someone who had not done any sailing other than an STA trip while I was at school. I met with nothing other than kindness and interest in what I do, and I feel I got a glimpse of what life on board is like.

The most striking aspect was how difficult it is to feel engaged with and part of 'normal' life ashore. It is its own world, and a busy one at that, and it was easy to imagine feeling that I was in a sort of suspended place of nowhere, with no responsibilities to my usual life, family or anything else that was usual day-to-day. It was also difficult to work out how to divide work from not work. With no change of surroundings, even when I had nothing scheduled, it felt lazy to retire to my cabin and read. No wonder it is easy to just go on working until you realise you haven't taken time to chat with colleagues, allow yourself time for a hobby, get to the gym or just sit and relax listening to music. The lack of

broadband and phone signal took me by surprise and was another reminder that the access most of us take for granted, both to social media and our friends and families, as well as to numerous Apps and on-line material, is very much not a given.

I have done a couple of one-day visits too, and I hope I will be able to arrange more. The deployment pattern in the RFA means that even if I go back to the same ship, there will be a big change in the crew with new people to meet.

My hope is to extend what I do beyond simply being present and getting known, to offering planned sessions that address work load management, time management, and some theories around how people behave towards one another. It has been great to talk to crew who are positive and who enjoy their job, but I have been referred plenty of people who are not in that place. It would be wonderful to be part of something that keeps people well in body, mind and spirit and that enables them and the organisation to thrive.



Natasha Humphery - Co-ordinator Community Waves Plymouth

Natasha is married to Duncan who is in the Royal Navy and has been a Navy spouse for over 20 years. Natasha and Duncan have two children and live with many pets who keep them busy at home in Plymouth.



Natasha has experienced much of what Navy-Wife life brings, though all the ups & downs of Military Life including all the mixed emotions along the way; be it long deployments with the goodbyes, the separation and the homecomings!

Having always been aware of Aggie Weston's, Natasha found the Community Waves team during lockdown through the online Sunflower competition, that led Natasha to join the weekly online art class and as soon as restrictions allowed she met with Jenn and soon became a volunteer for Aggie's helping out with craft sessions, the local walks and Storybook Waves on the Beach.

Natasha enjoys volunteering and fundraising for various associations and is now very pleased to be officially part of the Aggie's team.

Letty Jones - Pastoral Worker - RM Stonehouse

Letty is half-Caribbean but grew up in Kent. She worked as a freelance opera singer and singing teacher for 10 years before receiving a call to full-time Christian ministry in 2016. She worked as a music director and ministry apprentice before moving to Stoke-on-Trent to pioneer a new position as a chaplain in a high school. Letty moved to Plymouth 6 months ago with her husband, Mark as he took up a role as a children's and youth pastor.



Kate Thorn - Pastoral Worker - HMS Drake

Kate Thorn has a background in teaching both adults and children, community work and church leadership. She has also worked as an artist and started a not-for-profit community café.



Without a military background Kate is getting used to the many terms and phrases used in the Naval base, often with humorous consequences, and is enjoying meeting the beneficiaries and finding out how Aggie's can support them alongside Chaplaincy. With a heart for hospitality, Kate is looking forward to assisting in the continuing development of the Devonport Haven and is excited to see where this will lead. Building relationships and community is a real focus for Kate and she will always try and find the little things that matter to make someone feel valued and comfortable. Kate is married with two teenage sons, lives within Plymouth near the sea and can often be found in or on the water. She has attended Plymstock United Church, Plymouth for 40 years and assists in leading worship.

Damien Land - Pastoral Worker - RMB Chivenor

Damien recently joined Aggie's as a pastoral worker. He has only a small amount of experience working in the military, but has lived near the base for the majority of his life, so feels very excited and privileged to be part of the support team.



Damien has been married to his wife Emma for 12 years, and has four small children ranging from 10 down to three.

Damien is very into sport and regularly enjoys playing football in a local vets team, swimming, cycling, running, and combining all three when competing in triathlons.

Damien has always had a heart for working in and amongst his local community, helping with a wide variety of charities and projects. He is very excited about his new role and what he can bring to this unique and special environment.

**Chloe Shepard –
Pastoral Worker –
DSL Worthy Down**

As a commissioned Lay Worker in the Church of England, Chloe is experienced in working with pioneering projects and reaching out to communities and people in need.



Chloe has worked with children, young people and families in many different environments over the last 20 years.

Her experiences through work and her personal experience of supporting her sister and brother-in-law, both of whom served in the Royal Navy, ensures that Chloe has a wealth of experience to help support those serving at Worthy Down.

Outside of work Chloe has a passion for nature and photography. She is an active member at a Church in Winchester and attends weekly prayer and study groups and she sings in the worship team. Chloe enjoys a healthy lifestyle and is passionate about cooking.

**Katie White – co-ordinator
Community Waves
Portsmouth**

Katie has joined the Community Waves Portsmouth team as the new Co-ordinator. Recently appointed to the role Katie is looking forward to working with families across Portsmouth, Fareham and Gosport to deliver a great timetable of events for all ages.



Katie grew up in West Sussex in a Royal Navy Family before joining the Royal Navy herself - reaching the rate of Leading Hand. After 10 years Katie left the Navy to be with her family; husband Phil and her two children.

Katie volunteers with both the RNLI and the Royal Navy Family People Support Team as well as working as an LSA in Portsmouth Primary schools since 2019.

Her personal experience of the Navy, volunteering within the RNFPs and working in schools with a high proportion of service children ensures she understands the family life of those that she works with at Aggie's.

Always with a big smile on her face, Katie enjoys keeping fit, a good crime novel and a good laugh with friends.

Simon Reckless – PW Drake

Simon Reckless joined the Aggie's team in May 2022 having left a job as a groundsman for his brother in law's tree surgery company.



As a former Royal Marines Commando Si saw action in Afghanistan on Op Herrick 9. This experience enabled him to put training into action but following the tour, he developed PTSD. Working for Aggie's is an opportunity for Si to connect with beneficiaries and help them recognise the importance of self-awareness, willingness to accept one's struggles, where to seek help and be mindful of the pressures of armed forces life.

Si left the Royal Marines in 2012 and began a three-year degree in Theology at Spurgeons College in London. He graduated in 2015 not long before marrying Becky in Plymouth where they now live with their two young daughters Hannah and Phoebe. Si loves cooking, running, woodturning, splitting firewood, taking his girls to the beach, and is a member of Redeemer Church in Plymouth.

Home from Home – then and Now

Aggie referred to the Devonport and Portsmouth Royal Sailors Rests as a "Home from home" for the sailors of the Royal Navy. The original buildings, built in 1876 and 1881 respectively, were both destroyed by the Luftwaffe in 1941 so the pool of people who used them is now getting very small. The concept of a "Home from home" continues to this day, however, in the Havens which we run in many naval bases, air stations, training schools and Royal Marine units. These are very different establishments so how do they function, and do they bear any similarity to their legacy forbears?

The two early Rests started from humble beginnings but grew to be vast and impressive buildings which regularly accommodated over 1000 sailors per night. The Devonport Rest started in a rented corner shop in Fore Street, just four doors down from the main gate into what we now refer to as South Yard. Unfortunately, the three doors between the Rest and the main gate were pubs: Napier Inn; Dock Gates Inn; and the Royal Naval Rendezvous. The publicans developed a knack for spotting sailors heading towards the Rest and enticing them into their pubs with the offer of a free first pint (with the result that many sailors never made it to their intended destination). Aggie came up with an ingenious solution. She bought the three pubs, demolished them, and extended the Rest all the way to the dockyard wall so that hers was the first door the sailors passed.

The origins of the Portsmouth Sailors Rest were in a rented former music hall in Commercial Road. This had no accommodation but provided a venue for the sailors until completion of the purpose-built Sailors Rest which was opened in June 1881. Both the Devonport and Portsmouth Rests, once complete, had a large hall which could be used for evangelistic events as well as dining, entertainment and overflow accommodation with bunk beds set up in neat rows. The other part of each Rest was referred to as "The Institute". This included 700 single cabins per rest, billiard room, reading room, a mineral water plant in the basement, electrical generators, boilers, bath tubs with hot and cold running water, a bakery and kitchens which often produced over 2000 meals per day. Through the use of camp beds in the main hall each Rest regularly accommodated 1200 sailors per night at weekends (during the Spithead Review 10,000 men per night slept in Portsmouth Rest). Each Rest had around 100 staff, a mix of catering, maintenance, house-keeping staff and pastoral workers. Many of the cabins were sponsored by Royalty including: Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, Prince Henry of Prussia, Empress Frederick and the Crown Princess of Germany. Such cabins had plaques over the doors and a portrait of the sponsor on the wall.

The total cost of building the two Rests was £140,000 for Portsmouth and £120,000 for Devonport (£17,208,022 in today's money). The price of a cabin was 6 pence per night (£1.65 in today's money) and total number of beds occupied per year was typically 352,300 between the two Rests. Although large, elaborate and complex facilities, the concept of each Sailors Rest was simple. They provided a

safe space to rest, physical nourishment, pastoral support, a friendly welcome and, above all, a "Home from home" where the love of God is evident through those who work there.

The modern-day Aggie's Haven similarly provides a safe place where beneficiaries can relax with their friends in a welcoming environment. We offer free tea and coffee, light snacks, and a friendly welcome from Pastoral Workers and Chaplains. Facilities often include large TV screens or projectors for film nights, pool tables, computer games, small libraries, kitchen facilities, and comfortable seating. In other words, a "Home from home" where the love of God is evident through those who work there.

Havens have been established in: Naval Base accommodation centres (Portsmouth and Devonport); training schools (Collingwood and Sultan); Air Stations (Culdrose and Yeovilton); and Royal Marine units (CTCRM Lympstone, Hamworthy Barracks, Bickleigh, Stonehouse, Norton Manor, Chivenor and Arbroath). All are part of the establishment Chaplaincy Centre and serve principally, but not exclusively, the Serving Personnel.

Much of our work is, however, undertaken within the community either in, or adjacent to, naval community centres. We aim to provide an equally homely environment where Service families can engage with pastoral workers, build friendship networks in a safe space, and receive the love of God.

While the nature of our venues has changed, the principles remain unchanged. We seek to offer a homely and welcoming environment, a safe space where members of the naval community can engage with pastoral workers, build friendships with other members of the community, benefit from practical support and encounter the love of God.



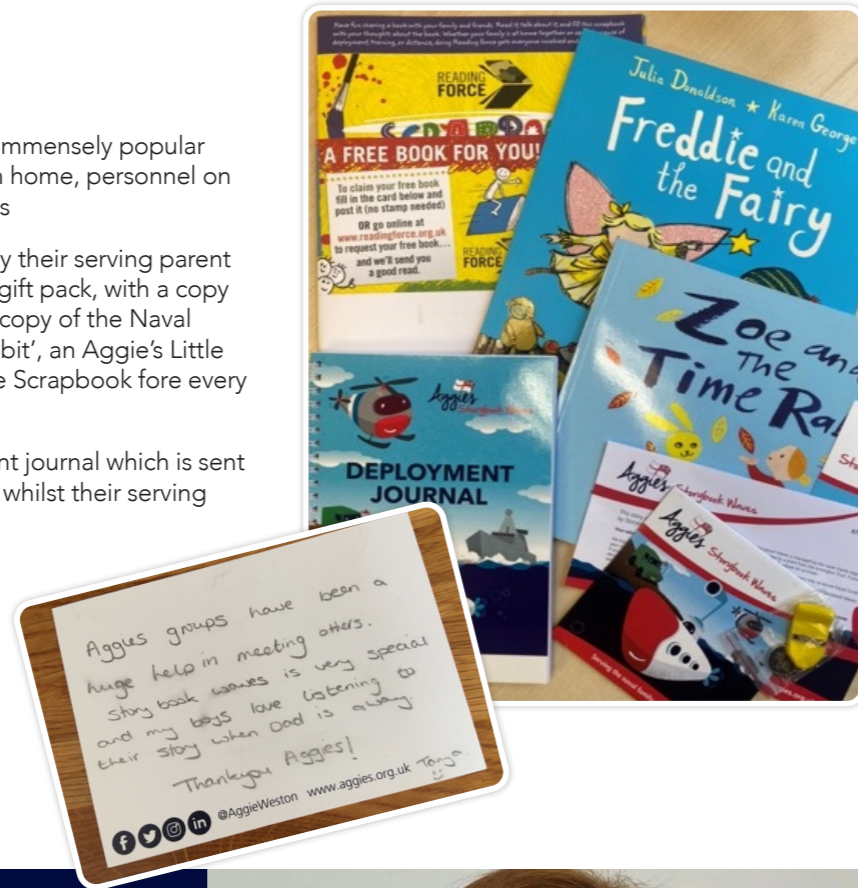
Storybook Waves

The Storybook Waves Project continues to be immensely popular with both serving personnel deploying far from home, personnel on non-operational deployments and their families

Children can enjoy a bedtime story recorded by their serving parent before they deploy. The family receives a free gift pack, with a copy of the book recorded for the family to share, a copy of the Naval Children's Charity book 'Zoe and the Time Rabbit', an Aggie's Little Hero medal for each child and a Reading Force Scrapbook for every child.

Aggie's has recently introduced the Deployment journal which is sent to child aged 8 and over for them to complete whilst their serving parent is away.

'Aggie's groups have been a huge help in meeting others. Story Book Waves is very special and my boys love listening to their story when Dad is away. Thank you Aggie's!'



Frank Allen obituary

Frank Allen went home to his Lord on the 21st February following a short illness. Frank, a former Royal Marine, met Carole in Aggie's in Singapore. They went on to serve with Aggie's at Portsmouth and then up to Faslane where they found Braeholm. Frank found many ways to use the Aggie's minibus up there and would take skiing expeditions to France, himself becoming a qualified skiing instructor. One of the things he will be remembered amongst colleagues for will be the late night tea/coffee gatherings in our rooms with both colleagues and trustees after realising he was locked in one night with no bedtime cup of tea.



Thanks to BAE's generous grant Aggie's has been able to employ an additional member to the Aggie's Community Waves Team. Jane Lamb will be joining the Aggie's Team during the summer to help with our community activities across the Portsmouth area. More details on Jane and her role in the next edition of Ashore & Afloat.

Our donors



Our supporters



Aggie's continues to be blessed by the continued financial support of the organisations that provide our grants and the generosity of our donors and supporters who have faithfully given us both money and prayer in support of our work.

Thank you!



Aggie's is a Christian charity that has been serving the Royal Navy since 1876. It bears the name of its founder, Dame Agnes Weston, who set up the charity to provide support and comfort to the Royal Navy through the provision of Royal Sailor's Rests in Dockyard areas. Although the Rests have now gone, our Pastoral Workers continue to abide by the principal established by Aggie, namely to demonstrate the Love of God to all members of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and their families by providing help and pastoral support without judgement or prejudice.



"For the Glory of God and the Good of the Service"

If you would like to learn, more about the work of Aggie Weston's and how you can support us, either by donating, volunteering or remembering us in your will please visit our website at aggies.org.uk or contact our central office on **023 9265 0505**.