



## Peter Fowler

I was born in Battersea, London in **1929**. I lived in various places in South London until just after the start of the war in **1939** when I was evacuated to Haslemere, Surrey. During my schooling in Haslemere I passed a scholarship for Godalming County Grammar School and when I went back to London in **1944** I went to Mitcham Grammar School and got my School Certificate. On leaving school I became a trainee draughtsman with a structural engineering firm. However sitting at a drawing board did not suit me so in **1948** I joined the Navy as a Stoker Mechanic.

**1948 HMS Royal Arthur** for basic training, then HMS Raleigh for Stoker mechanic training.

**1949 HMS Newfoundland**. Moored at Devonport with steam raised for advanced Stoker Mechanic training.

**1949 HMS Implacable**. Sea time for the first time, pleasant visits to Oslo, Bergen and Trondheim. Obtained my Auxiliary Watchkeeping Certificate.

**1950-1951 HMS Reclaim**. Diving training ship. Loch Fyne and Malta for diving. A laid back ship with crazy hard hat divers! Rated Leading Stoker Mechanic June 1950.

**1951-1952 HMS Liverpool**. Flagship to C in C Mediterranean. Typical Med Fleet cruises to Italy, Greece, France and Turkey. Visited Split, Yugoslavia and ship inspected by President Tito. Rated Petty Officer Stoker Mechanic January 1952.

**1952-1954** Mechanician's course at Portsmouth during which time I had the pleasure of meeting Audrey. Had a double celebration July 1954, we married and I got rated Mechanician 3<sup>rd</sup> Class.

**1956-1957 HMS Bulwark**. First commission from builders Harland and Wolf, Belfast. Standing by ships trials for three months and rated Mechanician 2<sup>nd</sup> Class December 1954. Visits to Oslo, Stockholm and Copenhagen then Malta, France and Italy. Rated Mechanician 1<sup>st</sup> Class December 1955. Ship operational for Suez Campaign 1956.

**1957 HMS Pembroke**. Diesel Specialist Course.

**1958-1959 HMS Ceylon**. Canada and West Indies cruise then to Mediterranean and Suez Canal for the Persian Gulf, Jordan and Mombasa. Docking period in Singapore where the Captain arranged for our weeks' station leave to be taken with the army in Malaysia at Yang Pen! Then Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, India, Pakistan and home. Passed my Charge Certificate and rated Chief Mechanician September 1960.

**1960-1961 HMS Loch Killisport**. Refit in Rosyth and Work Up. Sat exam for Engineer Sub Lieutenant and passed. Commissioned Engineer Sub Lieutenant November 1961.

**1961-1962 HMS Thunderer**. Engineering course.



**1062-1964 HMS Centaur.** Docking period Gibraltar. Visited Athens then Liverpool. On return had a boiler room steam pipe joint blow out and one Engineer Officer, a Chief Stoker and three stokers killed. Repairs at Portsmouth and sailed 21 December 1963! Attended liner SS Lakonia on fire in the Atlantic, unfortunately she sank. Through Suez Canal to be operational at Aden and Dar es Salam. Then Singapore, Hong Kong, Philippines and operational for the Indonesia campaign. Portsmouth for refit.

**1964-1967 HMS Lochinvar.**

Minesweeper base, enjoyable time looking after minesweepers. Promoted Engineer Lieutenant 1966.

**1967-1968**

**HMS Caprice.**

You all know the story! This photo was taken on board in Sydney.



**1969-1971**

**HMS Caprice & HMS Cavalier.**

Refits in Gibraltar. Married accompanied.

Audrey and children enjoyed it with a tour of Morocco and MFV trips to M'diq. I climbed Mount Toubkal with an army and navy team.

**1971-1972 HMS Cleopatra.** Visited U.S, West Indies and then down to St Helena and South Africa. Onto Singapore for Royal Yacht escort to Malaysia and Bangkok, Hong Kong then home.

**1973 HMS Sultan.** Boiler Section Officer. Promoted Lt. Commander April 1973.

**1973-1975** Clyde Marine Services, Greenock. Marine Services Engineer in charge of civilian engineering crews and workshop staff for RMAS tugs, mooring vessels etc.

**1975-1976 HMS Sultan.** Training Resources and Projects Officer.

**1976-1977** Fleet Maintenance Group, Portsmouth. Senior Marine Engineer Officer. Promoted Commander April 1977.

**1977-1978** Naval Assistant to Port Admiral, Portsmouth. Assisting with Port matters and advising on ship refits.

**1978-1980** Minesweeper Base, Rosyth. Staff Flotilla Engineer Officer for Minesweeper and Fishery Protection Flotillas.

**1980-1982** Quality Assurance Officer on staff of Chief Executive Dockyards. Conducting Q.A. investigations into failures of equipment of ships in HM Dockyards.

**1982 Retired from Royal Navy.**

**1982-1987 Sultan of Oman's Navy.**

Employed on contract to the Sultan of Oman as Commander Fleet Maintenance at Muscat Naval Base. Awarded Sultan's Commendation Medal for support of the Oman Navy.

I married Audrey in July 1954 and we celebrated our Golden Wedding Anniversary in 2004. We have three children Marion, Rosalind and David and they have given us nine delightful grandchildren, seven girls and two boys. Farren, Rosalind's eldest daughter has recently presented us with a lovely first great granddaughter called Freya.

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Since retirement we have plenty to occupy ourselves with our family and I have done an Art Course through the Open University at the local Art College, which has led to watercolour painting as a hobby.

For exercise I enjoy a regular walk along Southsea seafront spotting the grey funnel line and other ships passing!

**Likes** – good food, good company and a good book.

**Dislikes** – Anyone with a lack of humour, young women under the influence of drink and discourteous drivers. Condenseritis was a particular dislike in the past!



**Our Golden Wedding Anniversary - 2004.**