# This is a copy of Dad’s 1942 diary, it was written in faint pencil and not easy to read in places, hence the ? where I can’t read it clearly.

**The content is in the main a record of his Naval service for the year 1942 before, during and after the Arctic Convoy PQ 17 to Russia.**

# RPD

Mar 2017.

R. J. DAVIES DIARY 1942.

# Personal Memoranda

**Telephone no: Bpl 4040 – 51464**

**Identity Card no: Adv 8221.**

**Another No: Ro 4035. Another No: N/JD/Davies 02121/42.**

**Memoranda**

**AG AH 2.**

**AI**

**Sub Lieut J McDonald RNVR.7 Parkway, Southgate, London N14.**

 **Palmers Green 4209**

**Friday 16th January**

**7.45am C B**

**1.40 London C St H**

**Friday 20th March**

**Left Portsmouth for RAF Speke. Hell of a journey via Bristol with Joe Caldwell and Bill Ashby.**

**Saturday 21st March**

**Arrived Liverpool. Told course would start Sunday.**

**Sunday 22nd March**

**Started (Sunday mind you) course. Went home at night.**

**Friday 27th March**

**Weekend leave.**

**Monday 30th March**

**Went to Southport, joined Peg at Pats.**

**Tuesday 31st March**

**Days shopping with P & P. Saw Arthur Renshaw in Lord Street.**

**Wednesday 1st April**

**Returned to Liverpool. Drafted “ Empire Stanley”, Joe to “Lawrence”. Bill to “Clive”. Started work on ships.**

**Friday 17th April**

**Drafted from Liverpool to Cardiff. Given weekend leave.**

**Monday 20th April**

**Left for Cardiff arrived 16.00**

**Tuesday 21st April**

**Sent to Newport and joined “ Empire Tide”**

**Wednesday 29th April**

**Six days leave started**

**Wednesday 6th May**

**Returned from leave.**

**Friday 8th May**

**Re signed Empire Tide**

**Saturday 9th May**

**Saw Newport v Cross Keys**

**Wednesday 13th May**

**Went on 3 days leave. Paid £4.10**

**Sunday 17th May**

**Returned from leave.**

**Monday 18th May**

**Left for Barry, stayed night**

**Tuesday 19th May**

**Left for M Haven, arrived same day.**

**Wednesday 20th May**

**Left for Belfast**

**Saturday 23rd May**

**Went into Irish sea for tests, OK**

**Sunday 24th May**

**Set examined, doubts about mod**

**Tuesday 26th May**

**Left Bangor set conked see faults log**

**Wednesday 27th May.**

**Arrived Loch Ewe. Army blokes came aboard.**

**Thursday 28th May**

**NV4. Left Loch Ewe still no joy.**

**Friday 29th May**

**Attempting all kinds of tests, OK for a few instruments ?**

**Saturday 30th May**

**Decided fault must be in AC supply.**

**Monday 1st June**

**Arrived Iceland**

**Wednesday 3rd June**

**R.D.F. Officer aboard**

**Thursday 4th June**

**Moved to fleet anchorage**

**Friday 5th June**

**Fault found in AC supply**

**Sunday 7th June**

**Fitted DF switch**

**Monday 8th June**

**Aboard Renown for cinema “She knew all the answers “**

**Thursday 11th June**

**RDF guard ship**

**Friday 12th June**

**Meeting to organise Cam Club**

**Saturday 13th June**

**Started Cam Club, elected secretary**

**Monday 15th June**

**Quoits on grain quay. beer & whiskey provided by pilots & us**

**Tuesday 16th June**

**Sent telegram to Peggy**

**Wednesday 17th June**

**Talk by Ft Lt TG & general knowledge bee**

**Friday 19th June**

**Started David’s destroyer. Pegs birthday, hope she got telegram I sent on Tuesday.**

**Saturday 20th June**

**Charades**

**Saturday 27th June**

**Quite a day. To RDF until further notice. Lt Douglas Fairbanks US Navy aboard. Sailed about 15.30. Destroyer with us broadcast “Who’s afraid of the big bad wolf “. Final edition of “TT” until further notice. Played 2 games of Monopoly.**

**Sunday 28th June**

**Bored. Decided to halve look outs with Tom. Hugged coast all day. Finished “Murder must Advertise” (D.Sayers) Very good Wimsey yarn. There goes the Queen G.U.Ellis V.G.**

**Monday 29th June**

**Did 4 – 8 watch. In Arctic circle, dammed cold, we struck pack ice and lost fog buoy. Very bad visibility. Watch 18.30 – 20.30.**

**Tuesday 30th June**

**Did 6 - 8 watch. Colder than yesterday, thought of HG, no warm wife to go home to though. Cleared forward mast house of 2 buckets of water. 16.00 to 18.30 watch. New escorts arrive. “Careless talk” card.**

**Wednesday 1st July**

**4 – 6am. Nice start for July x hailstorm and bitterly cold. Bit of a flap! Started operating. Watches 13.00 – 16.00, 17.00 – 18.00, 24.00 – 04.00.**

**Thursday 2nd July**

**First spot of action. Sighted Blohm & Voss seaplanes, later joined by Heinkel 115. Terrific barrage, Chief St and Junior engineer stories. Beautiful fog at night.**

**Friday 3rd July**

**Icebergs sighted. Cruisers “Walrus” sticking around. B&Vx shadow still with us. Nearly a fight with B&V.**

**Saturday 4th July**

**4am Heinkel 115 torpedoed yank. Saw cruisers on horizon. Still shadowed. Attacked in afternoon by Heinkel 111. Four ships hit, 3 sunk. Convoy scattered. Tich got hit. Two planes down. Russian came up. “Scatter” order.**

**Sunday 5th July**

**On our own. JU88 around. Several ships attacked all around us. Busy day plotting. Fog our God send.**

**Monday 6th July**

**Sighted NZ. (Novaya Zemlya island) Saw several other ships\* (see memo after July 12)**

 **Ran aground at Folety? Island**

**Tuesday 7th July**

**Off again 01.00 and out to sea again. Saw sinking ship and 8 ? on surface. Turned about and put into M.K.S. ( Matochkin Shar on NZ island)**

**Wednesday 8th July**

**Local Russians came aboard with much ceremony.**

**Thursday 9th July**

**Another Tide Times report re Turpitz action**

**Friday 10th July**

**Doc came from ashore to see Titch.**

**Saturday 11th July**

**Skippers talk. Cargo ship came in. Two Catalinas came in, one piloted by crack Soviet pilot of N.P. fame. Titch taken off.**

**Sunday 12 July**

**Tobacco issue 100 players. Good grub.**

**Memo**

**From 6th July \***

**These ships sheltered for a few days but were later reported sunk in White Sea battle. We changed our mind about joining them after turning inshore.**

**Monday 13th July**

**Great comings and goings at MK**

**Tuesday 14th July**

**Survivors (31) from 2 yank ships arrived. Halving of rations**

**Wednesday 15th July**

**Grub shows improvement. Had 500 cigs, 1lb tobacco, 2 doz matches at this date.**

**Thursday 16th July**

**More survivors aboard 200 now. We took in V.S gunner, RM Cpl + B’sh AB**

**Friday 17th July**

**Spotted twice. First action station. Some survivors went ashore including our RM Cpl and AB. Took in AA Cpl.**

**Saturday 18th July**

**Sticking breaker caused trouble. AE jammed in pedestal.**

**Sunday 19th July**

**3 corvettes arrived. Promised to return for us.**

**Memo - No Eskimo**

**Monday 20th July**

**Shore parties returned. AE trouble again. Hope I have settled it. Escort arrived soon after 10.**

**Tuesday 21 July**

**Off again. Heavy weather, rain until midnight. First rain since trip started**

**Wednesday 22 July**

**Fog from midnight. No transmission 0400 to 1200.**

**Thursday 23rd July**

**Reached White Sea. Intermittent fog banks. Lovely fog all night. Escort in a fix twice.**

**Friday 24th July**

**Reached White Sea proper. Breathed sigh of relief – cut short by action stations. Went through miles of timber docks, eventually docked around midnight. 28 days at sea.**

**Saturday 25th July**

**Good fun watching unloading operations**

**12 – 4 S watch. 4 – 8 S watch.**

**Sunday 26th July**

**8 – 12 S watch. Visit to Archangel. A dump. Inter club not so hot. Caviare but no vodka. Dance in evening unattended. Heard of JC as survivor. Had letter from Peg & Ma. Grand**

**memo – this visit to Archangel was my first trip ashore, boat bound for 70 days.**

**Monday 27th July**

**12 – 4 & 4 – 8 S watch. Received reports.**

**Tuesday 28th July**

**8 – 12 Archangel. Met Joe C had talk, long walk.**

**Wednesday 29th July**

**12 – 4. 4 – 8.**

**Thursday 30th July**

**Working on TV5. Unable to go to Archangel. 8 – 12.**

**Friday 31st July & Saturday 1st August**

**Fri - 12 – 4. 4 – 8. Sat 8 – 12.**

**Sunday 2nd August**

**12 – 4.**

**memo**

**Mrs Fielding, 144 Hadfield St, ???**

**Mrs W Bridge, 280 Alton St, Crewe**

**Monday 3rd August**

**8 – 12. Went to Archangel. Most shops shut. Long walk back. Some bank holiday.**

**Tuesday 4th August**

**12 – 4. Changed watches 4 – 8. Telephone trouble must require circuit.**

**Wednesday 5th August**

**8 – 12. Rain all day.**

**Thursday 6th August**

**12 – 4. Received answer to telegram all well at home.**

**Friday 7th August**

**Went to Archangel. Saw “ Second Fiddle “ Sonja Henie. Shopping no good, rain even worse. I missed Les W who called at ship he’s on minesweeper.**

**Saturday 8th August**

**4 – 8 watch. More monopoly. Told we shall be here a long time probably a month.**

**Sunday 9th August**

**Church at Bakaritja. Talk with Cpl Fielding of Fwd see addresses on previous page**

**Wednesday 12th August**

**Bother about tally. See DEMS pamphlet to question of pay. Received NAAFI issue. 8 – 12.**

**Friday 14th August**

**Moved to MS base. Met Les W. Given life-saving tobacco supplies.**

**Saturday 15th August**

**Played Bramble hockey lost 7 – 4 good game.**

**Sunday 16th August**

**Watched division on quayside. More games in afternoon, monopoly on Leda at night. Our soccer team lost 2 – 1 to Hazard. Mosquito plague.**

**Monday 17th August**

**Played Leda hockey won 5 – 2. Got two. Second game in three hours. Stinking cold.**

**Tuesday 18th August**

**False action station. Cricket team beat Leda by 5 wickets. Umpired. Mosquito bitten.**

**Wednesday 19th August**

**News of Dieppe raid. Lost to Pozarica 7 – 2 at hockey. We were all lousy.**

**Thursday 20th August**

**More Dieppe news, everyone disappointed it was not real thing. Les went out.**

**Friday 21st August**

**RDF trials. Everything OK. Oiled AE motors.**

**Saturday 22nd August**

**Started work on D’s boat again. Year ago was going to Guildford.**

**Sunday 23rd August**

**Still thinking of Guildford. Lost to Vodkermans? Had two good games of deck tennis. Les returned. Game of cricket. Cheerio to Les.**

**Memo**

**While Rome Burns – Alexander Woolcott.**

**Monday 24th August**

**Left for Molotovsk. Place of smells and mosquitoes. Action stations until after midnight. We fiddled about as Archangel burned.**

**Tuesday 25th August**

**Night watches started.**

**Thursday 27th August**

**Work on destroyer**

**Friday 28th August**

**Named ship “Laxative” ! purgative class. More gun-fire over Archangel. Heard that Titch was on Palomares**

**Saturday 29th August**

**Still at work on ship.**

**Sunday 30th August**

**Floatability trials in Officers front bath. OK after long struggle. Pilots aboard set up unfounded unfortunate rumour.**

**Memo**

**Great Contemporaries by W.S.C. Macmillan.**

**Monday 31st August**

**More raids on A. Great AA fire. Finished doping of Laxative.**

**Tuesday 1st September**

**Monopoly. Saw Northern Lights. Quite spectacular. Started Peg’s serviette ring.**

**Wednesday 2nd September**

**Finished ring apart from polishing**

**Thursday 3rd September**

**RDF trials more AE gain. No planes came. Cloudy. Carried on with rings.**

**Friday 4th September**

**Still ring making**

**Saturday 5th September**

**Finished all four rings. “?shine” from ht stores. Sent telegram to Pete. Heard of letter writing possibilities.**

**Sunday 6th September**

**Wrote to Peg & Mother.**

**Monday 7th September**

**Had a go at making ash tray. Very bored.**

**Tuesday 8th September**

**Finished ash tray. Catalina rumour exploded. Went to cinema “100 men & a girl “. Very good. Got case from prisoner.**

**Wednesday 9th September**

**Polished up case**

**Thursday 10th September**

**Finished cigarette case. Did inventory of all my stores. Buzz re departure. All passes taken.**

**Friday 11th September**

**More buzzes. 22 British survivors aboard. Skipper Mac & Sparks away, made list of stores. Russian destroyer alongside. Tested TV5.**

**Saturday 12th September**

**Put 7 gallons borrowed oil in x former. Miserable day.**

**Sunday 13th September**

**Should have left am. High winds and sea kept us back. Left soon after 4. Still rough with gale force wind.**

**Monday 14th September**

**High seas and gale. Fighter escort. Played frog rummy and newmarket. What memories. 26 hr day.**

**Tuesday 15th September**

**Good going 438. Seas not so heavy.**

**Wednesday 16th September**

**Several a/c sighted, some friendly some otherwise. No op even when at “A/S”. Snow all afternoon with fog. Old friend.**

**Thursday 17th September**

**Joined by carrier Avenger with its private fleet. Snow & ice everywhere. What an escort 32 navy ships. More snow & ice.**

**Friday 18th September**

**Lots of planes about. Catalina or B & V ? Heavy snow. Lovely snow.**

**Saturday 19th September**

**Must be near B.I. now. (Bear Island?)**

**Sunday 20th September**

**What a Sunday. MS blew up and sank early am. SS ? around 17.00, Destroyer around 18.00. Nerve wracking sort of a day. Mended bell? / Had talk with Mac.**

**Monday 21st September**

**Lots of depth charge all morning but nothing worse. “Great Catalina Mystery“.**

**Tuesday 22nd September**

**Action at 6.15. 3 ships gone. More dropping of depth charges. Off Jan Mayen**

**Wednesday 23rd September**

**Heavy weather. Mess one big slide. Escort planes around. Loch Ewe buzz.**

**Thursday 24th September**

**Terrific seas & gales of wind blowing us home.**

**Friday 25th September**

**Going hard for Scotland**

**Saturday 26th September**

**Coast sighted early am. News of convoy. Arrived loch Ewe about 15.00. Seems years since we were last here, Actually 4 months ago.**

**Sunday 27th September**

**Left for East coast. Disappointed it was not West.**

**Monday 28th September**

**Kept R/T watch. Slowly going down East coast, seems no end to it.**

**Tuesday 29th September**

**Arrived ? Nice to see streets of houses. Read newspaper stories of convoys.**

**Wednesday 30th September**

**Heard of awards to skipper & chief.**

**Thursday 1st October**

**Paid £2.12 ? money.**

**Friday 2nd October**

**Left for Hull. Some good operating. 98 miles was our best of trip.**

**Saturday 3rd October**

**Arrived Hull. Told to strip set. Sent some stuff by naval van.**

**Sunday 4th October**

**Left for Liverpool by train. Sent rest of stores by RAF tender. Left W195 X former.**

**Monday 5th October**

**Went on 13 days leave. ?Letter to go forward.**

**Tuesday 6th October**

**Saw Opera House show. Lousy**

**Wednesday 7th October**

**Out with Peg & Blackie**

**Thursday 8th October**

**David arrived home. Delighted with “Laxative”. Saw “First of the Few” excellent.**

**Friday 9th October**

**Grand Theater. B.K.Barnes , Diana Churchill. Fair.**

**Saturday 10th October**

**Tom & S in Lake District. Saw Blackpool v Bolton**

**Sunday 11th October**

**Church at St Stephens.**

**Monday 12th October**

**Left for St Helens. Arrived soon after noon. Letters from Ray & Chris.**

**Tuesday 13th October**

**In park.**

**Wednesday 14th October**

**Called in newspaper office. Went to Savoy.**

**Thursday 15th October**

**Went Liverpool with P & D. Met Bolty?**

**Friday 16th October**

**Met Jim at Raven.**

**Saturday 17th October**

**With Jack at Fleece Inn. Went to O.C. v Warrington**

**Sunday 18th October**

**Put Peg & David on train at Wigan. Chin-wagged with Horace**

**Monday 19th October**

**Back to the grind. No news from Pompey**

**Tuesday 20th October**

**Boys went to Pompey. Job for Malcolm.**

**Friday 23rd October**

**Robshaw Dubberley ?**

**Friday 6th November**

**W.E Leave**

**Monday 9th November**

**Returned from leave pm**

**Tuesday 10th November**

**Dems few to Eaglet**

**Wednesday 11th November**

**To Pompey. Ref 263/3/H/J. 15 October. Capt Supt Signal School. Capt Gratton? Staff Capt DEMS.**

**Thursday 12 November**

**Met Jim & Tom. Ashore at Savoy.**

**Friday 13th November**

**Birthday. Began duty weekend.**

**Saturday 14th November**

**Duty**

**Sunday 15th November**

**Duty. “Brains Trust” in barracks.**

**Monday 16th November**

**Transferred CW Division “Vernon”. Ashore again at Savoy.**

**Tuesday 17th November**

**Played for Welsh XV v English won 5 – 3.**

**Wednesday 18th November**

**Ashore. Ray P re weekend**

**Thursday 19th November**

**Big duty night**

**Friday 20th November**

**Went on week end 16.00 to 17.00 Monday**

**Monday 7th December**

**Put in charge**

**Tuesday 8th December**

**Wrote Lieut Hunt. First squad drill exams.**

**Monday 21st December**

**Saw Capt S at Leydene**

**Monday 28th December**

**From here there are several pages of names, addresses,technical jargon and miscellaneous information, looks like it could be training course notes, some in shorthand and even some contributions from a very young David.**

Want to insert a picture from your files or add a shape or text box? No problem! In the Insert tab of the ribbon, simply tap the option you need.