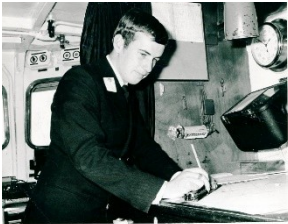


LIFE AFTER TANFIELD

ALLAN PEARSON

Pupil from 1962 to 1969

In September 1969, I joined Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, as a General List Cadet Officer; I believe the first person to do so from Stanley Grammar School. I retired from the Royal Navy on January 30, 1993 with the rank of Lieutenant Commander.



As a Midshipman onboard HMS Aurora, Far East Fleet, I was loaned to HMS Triumph to assist with Bhola cyclone flood relief work in East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh) in November '70. Served in Northern Ireland '74-'75. First met my future wife onboard HMS Bristol off Fishguard, Wales in '76 and then re-met her in Norfolk, VA in '77 while I was on HMS Hermes. Cathy was a serving United States Naval Officer. Seconded to the Sultan of Oman's Navy from March '78 through October '79, I commanded the fast patrol boat SNV Al Jabbar (B7) primarily operating in the Straits of Hormuz. Married Cathy in October '79 in her home town of Houston Tx. Served onboard HMS Exeter, as a Principal Warfare Officer, during the Falkland's Campaign of '82. Qualified as a Navigation Specialist in '83. Met my son in Baltimore MD harbour, August '84 when he was 3 months old, he was born while I was in the South Atlantic with HMS Andromeda. Completed the Advanced Navigation Sea Check November '84. I was present at my daughter's birth in January '87 but then sailed for a 3-month deployment, on HMS Bristol, 3 days later; I have never had problem with children not sleeping through the night! Worked in Swan Hunters shipbuilding yard from March '89, as the Executive Officer of HMS Chatham, during the final months of her build and was with her through all the sea trials and Commissioning Ceremony and left just before her basic operational sea training in January '91. Commanded HMS Dumbarton Castle from March '91 - March '92, brought her out of refit in Rosyth Dockyard, completed trials and operational sea training and then sailed south to the Falkland Islands, this included my 9th and final sea crossing of the Equator and paying homage to King Neptune. I remained with the ship for 7 months in the South Atlantic before I flew home not having seen my family for over 9 months. My final position in the Navy was as the course officer for the Principal Warfare Officer Navigation Course; I spent the final two months of my service life on leave in Centreville, Virginia, USA with my wife and two children who had moved back to the States three years previously.



From November '94 through April '13, I was the Volunteer Training Coordinator for Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, Virginia. I was responsible for the overall administration, recruiting and assigning highly qualified instructors, overall budgeting and supervision of more than 30 fire and emergency service programs annually to ensure all new operational volunteers were trained to the same certification standards required of the career recruit firefighters. While my children were growing up, I assisted with their youth sports in various capacities, football (American), baseball and softball which were not taught at SGS. We now enjoy watching our 3 grandchildren play those same sports.

After my second retirement I qualified as a Volunteer Master Gardener for Prince William County and worked part-time in the garden center of a major home improvement store for 8 years. Unfortunately, Cathy suffered a major stroke in 2002 which left her with left side hemiplegia and forced her to retire from teaching. I have been her care provider and chauffeur ever since and it is only the last few years that we have employed home help to look after her to allow me to work on our garden and keep my Master Gardener certification.

We now live in Haymarket Virginia, our son and his family live in Round Hill Virginia and our daughter lives in Brooklyn NY. After nearly 30 years in America, I am still a resident alien and have only recently applied for American Citizenship.

I can be contacted through the Tanfield Association.