



## **HMS ST ALBANS**

Press Release

LONDON & ST ALBANS: 15 TO 20 JULY 04

*(Issued 1000 on Tuesday 29 June 2004)*

### VISIT TO LONDON AND THE CITY OF ST ALBANS 15-20 JULY 2004

1. HMS ST ALBANS will visit the City of London in July 2004. This visit will be the first opportunity the ship has had to cement our strong relationships with our affiliations outside Portsmouth since the ship was launched in 2000.
2. HMS ST ALBANS will be berthed at Thames Quay in the West India Docks near Canary Wharf in London. Throughout the period we will be hosting several formal functions and events onboard, three of which will be attended by The First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Alan West. We will be visited by invited guests from the City of St Albans and on Sunday 18 July, we will transport the ship's company to St Albans for a march through the streets where the ship will accept the Freedom of the City from the Mayor.
3. We will have a 'Ship Open to Visitors' for members of the public on Saturday 17 July and there will be organised tours for our affiliations and guests most other days.
4. This promises to be a busy but most enjoyable and rewarding visit for the ship and our affiliations. We are all very much looking forward to this period in London and especially the opportunity to visit the City from which we take our name.
5. The Commanding Officer, Commander Mark Knibbs Royal Navy said:

"It will be the first time the vast majority of sailors onboard have visited St Albans and the first time the people of the City will have seen this ship marching through their streets on such an auspicious occasion. This promises to be a great opportunity for us to fortify our strong links with our many affiliations and friends in St Albans and we are all very much looking forward to the visit"

### RECENT TASKING

From November 2003 to May 2004, HMS ST ALBANS deployed from her base in Portsmouth to counter the smuggling of weaponry, contraband, oil, goods and people around the Gulf area. These illegal actions support terrorism either directly (weapons) or indirectly (money from contraband). Part of the UK led Task Force 150, St Albans joined French, Spanish, German, Italian and US Naval forces to contribute to Operation Enduring Freedom. One of our key responsibilities was to check or board ships transiting through

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our assigned areas. Boarding teams consist of members of the ship's company and Royal Marines, either embarking vessels from our helicopter or using sea boats with enhanced communications packages. Merchant shipping from large container ships to small Dhows have been either stopped or boarded to inspect cargoes, manifests and registration. The common goal for coalition partners is the denial of the sea to terrorist organisations.

In addition to supporting the primary roles of TF150, HMS ST ALBANS, as the UK contribution to this coalition, was also tasked to provide Force Protection to high value units and transiting merchant vessels, to protect sea lanes of communication and to carry out interdiction duties as required by TF150.

With six warships, oil and stores replenishment vessels, organic helicopters and coalition Maritime Patrol Aircraft, TF150 provides a credible and real threat to the ability of International Terrorists to conduct illicit business in international waters.

Since returning to Portsmouth in May, the ship has undergone an extensive period of maintenance and upper deck preservation, with many systems being overhauled after almost 7 months away.

## BACKGROUND TO HMS ST ALBANS

6. HMS St ALBANS is the 16<sup>th</sup> and last of the Royal Navy's Type 23 Frigates. Launched on 6 May 2000, she was built by BAE SYSTEMS at Scotstoun and was delivered to the Royal Navy in November 2001. The Ship's Company comprises between 17 to 22 Officers, 57 Senior Ratings and 111 Junior Ratings, each one of whom has a vital role to play.

7. Extensive automation and the use of modern technology means that St Albans, like all the Type 23 Frigates, carries fewer men and women than similar, previous classes of warship. Computers now feature in almost every aspect of ship life, from the weapon, sensors, electrical distribution and propulsion systems, through to stores, catering, pay and day-to-day administration.

8. The ship's offensive weapons include the main 4.5" Gun and smaller calibre guns, the Harpoon Anti-Ship Missile System and anti-submarine torpedoes. The main gun is primarily used for support of the Army in land operations, bombarding positions ashore as required. The ship also carries a helicopter which is a potent weapons platform in itself. HMS St ALBANS's primary weapon is the Vertical Launch Sea Wolf missile system, which can engage aircraft and missile targets. Other self-defence systems include a number of decoys and close range guns.

9. The ship's propulsion comprises 2 sets of a GEC Electric Motor and a Rolls Royce Spey Gas Turbine. Each set drives one of the ship's 2 shafts with fixed pitch propellers. Quiet, low-speed running is achieved by using the Electric Motors alone, which are supplied with power from any combination of four Paxman Diesel Generating sets. Sprint speeds in excess of 28 knots are obtained by clutching in the Gas Turbines through large Gearboxes. This Combined Diesel Electric and Gas (CODLAG) arrangement is unique to the Type 23 Frigate and it allows the propulsion machinery to operate efficiently at all levels.

10. An equally important function of the Marine Engineering Department is providing the services without which the ship could not go to Sea. Four generators supply electrical power for the entire ship and this is enough to power a small town – something the ship is able to do if engaged in disaster relief operations. All fresh water is derived from sea water by the Reverse Osmosis method, producing the water needed for drinking, cleaning, and cooking as well as other domestic requirements such as showering. Fuel, oil, water, ventilation and air all form separate systems which, in combination with the propulsion system, result in a fast, effective and efficient ship capable of operating worldwide.

### FACTS AND FIGURES

#### a. Dimensions and Compliment

Length overall	133m
Beam	16m
Draught	7m
Displacement	4000 tonnes
Compliment	180

#### b. Propulsion

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4 Diesel Generators driving 2 Electric Motors  
2 Gas Turbines  
Two shafts with Fixed Pitch propellers.  
Maximum Speed 28 knots

c. Weapons

Vertical Launch Seawolf Anti-Air and Anti-Missile Missile system.  
Harpoon Anti Ship Missiles.  
4.5" Mk 8 Gun.  
Small Calibre Guns (30 mm cannons and 7.62mm Machine Guns).  
Stingray Lightweight Torpedoes, fired from the ship's Air Weapons Magazine.  
Decoys.

d. Sensors and Communications

Surveillance Radar (Type 996) with Identification Friend or Foe (IFF).  
Navigation Radars (Type 1007 and 1008).  
Active / Passive bow-mounted sonar (Type 2050)  
Minor Sonars (Echo Sounder and Underwater Telephone)  
Electronic Support Measures Equipment  
Electro-optical Director.  
Integrated Low Frequency to Ultra High Frequency Communications.  
SCOT5 Military Satellite Communication System

e. Aircraft

Lynx Mk 8 or Merlin helicopter.  
(capable of carrying Stingray torpedoes, Sea Skua anti-ship missiles and Depth Charges).

## HISTORY

11. This HMS St ALBANS is the sixth ship of the Royal Navy to bear the name. The first was a 50-gun fourth rate ship of the line built in 1687. She was with the fleet that rallied to William of Orange in 1688 as well as the victory off Barfleur 3 years later. Whilst operating in the Western Channel in December 1693, she became the victim of a gale and was wrecked whilst trying to shelter in Kinsale harbour. The next St ALBANS was also a Fourth Rate "50", built in 1706. She commissioned in 1739 for the war with Spain, serving on blockade duties as well as convoying Army reinforcements to Jamaica. Remaining there to protect British Trade, she met a similar fate to her predecessor in 1744, being wrecked with three other warships in Kingston harbour during a hurricane. Three years later a new St ALBANS – a 60-gun Fourth Rate – was completed. Part of a squadron sent out in 1751 to discourage a French naval expedition from establishing a colony in West Africa, she also blockaded first Brest and then Toulon in 1756, when the two countries were again at war. She took part in the battle of Lagos in 1759, off Cape St Vincent, before being paid off before the end of the war. However, before being disposed of, the fourth St ALBANS had been launched. Armed with 64 guns, she saw service in the American War of Independence, joining Howe's fleet off New York in late 1777, and she

subsequently took part in the successful capture of St Lucia. She was also engaged in the British victories off St Kitts and The Saints, before her last action of the war in 1783.

12. The fifth St ALBANS had an interesting and unusual career, being originally launched on 4 July 1918 as the USS Thomas. Her time with the Royal Navy began in September 1940 under the Destroyers for Bases agreement. Engaged in several convoy and mine laying duties, she was later transferred to the Royal Norwegian Navy for a brief period, before returning to the Royal Navy in the 7<sup>th</sup> Destroyer group operating from Liverpool. On 3 August 1941, whilst homeward bound from Sierra Leone, she joined other destroyers in the sinking of a German U-boat and made a score of other attacks. She continued escort duties until early 1944 when, in July, she was transferred to the Russian Navy to become the DOSTOINYI, meaning “Worthy”. She returned to England in 1949 when, in April, she was scrapped, a veteran of four different navies.

### BATTLE HONOURS

Barfleur	1692
Lagos	1759
St Lucia	1778
St Kitts	1782
The Saints	1782
Atlantic	1941-3
English Channel	1924
Arctic	1942
North Sea	1943

### AFFILIATIONS

Being a Duke Class Frigate, HMS St ALBANS is principally affiliated to the current Duke of St ALBANS. The ship is also affiliated to the city of St Albans as well as a number of schools in the area, and the local branches of the Royal Navy Association and the Sea Cadets. Along with many Royal Navy warships, St ALBANS enjoys an affiliation with a Worshipful Company – in our case The Haberdashers. The ship is proud to be affiliated with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Royal Anglian Regiment, The Royal Yeomanry, 9 Squadron RAF Marham and we have a special relationship with Lady Susie Essenhigh, the ship’s sponsor.