

Surgeon Commodore Baskerville CBE, LMSSA, RN(Rtd), 'Bask'

Surgeon Commodore Baskerville CBE, LMSSA, RN (Rtd), popularly known to all in Port Isaac and Port Gaverne as 'Bask', retired to Port Gaverne in 1966 following an eminent career in the Royal Navy where he had taken a lead in the development of Royal Naval Immersion Suits, G Suits, a debunking of salt water drinking and the development of the first solar still and rations for sea and land survival. His work in this area culminated in comparative trials of all the then known commercially available liferafts, with 60 or so brave volunteers being cast adrift from HMS Carron in mid-Atlantic in Force 8 weather conditions whilst having their bodily functions monitored and telemetered by pioneering MRC Heinz Wolff equipment. Recognition of this ground breaking work resulted in 'Bask' receiving the award of a CBE.

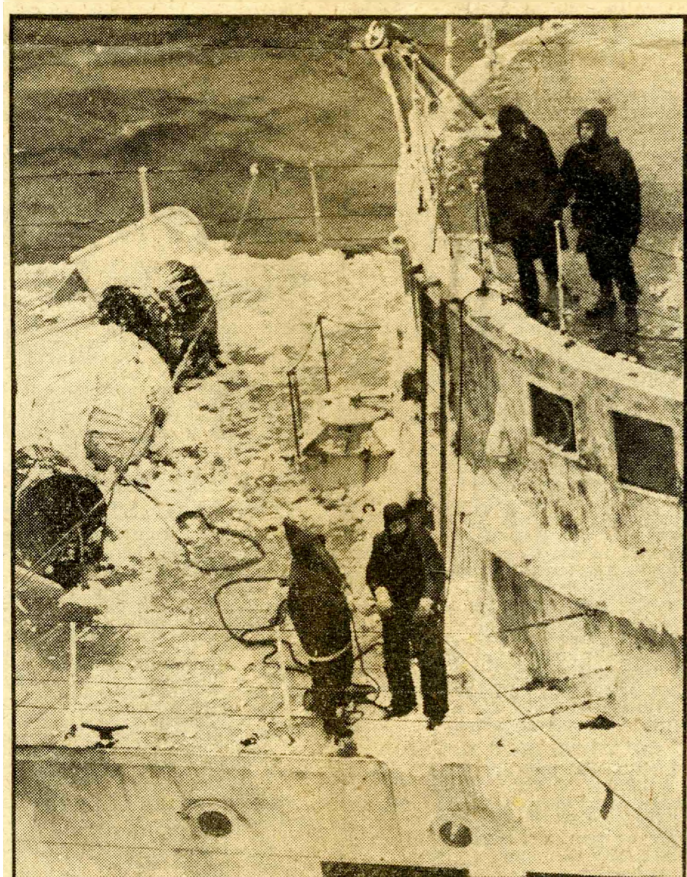
The photograph on the right, 'The Big Sweep' was published, as with the other newspaper photographs on display below, by *The Daily Mail* on December 2nd 1952, copy reads:

"Twenty degrees of Frost. An icy sea crisped with white caps. Biting winds and a Flight Deck iced with snow. On the deck in those conditions the men of the aircraft-carrier *Eagle* are busy with steam hose and shovels. Each man in the snow clearing party wears the latest-type of Arctic clothing. It was to test the clothing that the *Eagle* sailed to the Arctic. Photographs by *Daily Mail* camera man Herbert Mason.

The photographs were taken from the decks of the Royal Naval Aircraft Carrier *HMS Eagle* operating in the Arctic during December 1952. It was here that Surgeon Captain Baskerville was in control of sea going medical research where he became the very lynch pin of research and medical understanding in the all important sphere of Survival at Sea. It is through experience gained at this time by 'Bask' and his team that significant advances were made in the forward design and implementation of protective and survival clothing together with advanced medical understanding of the human ability to survive extremes of temperature and hostile sea going conditions. This work led to improved survival equipment and methods adopted by the Royal Navy, Fleet Air Arm and Royal Air Force resulting in a greatly improved chance of survival if Flyers or Sailors were ditched into the sea - many owe their lives to the work originated and brought into service by 'Bask'.



HOME FLEETS ARCTIC CRUISE. An endurance test carried out by air crews of the aircraft-carrier *Eagle* off the east coast of Greenland recently. The men jump from a dinghy into the water, practising for a forced landing in the sea. Left: Passing food from the *Eagle* to the destroyer *Virago*, in which no cooking could be done because of rough seas and heavy icing. Ships returned yesterday to their home ports after the cruise.



Cutting from *The Daily Telegraph*, December 2, 1952



In retirement 'Bask' centered his whole life on the North coast of his much loved Cornwall at Port Gaverne, devotedly nursing his wife Betty, now sadly a chair-bound invalid. He continued to apply his tremendous energy and drive to varied projects such as becoming an expert in the art of smoking mackerel (supplying a keen local demand), the origination of his own recipe for Rum Fudge and giving freely of his time and experience to help RNLI HQ as Chairman of the Medical and Survival Committee. At the same time he became a keen member of the Port Isaac Station RNLI Committee of Management as Chairman and finally as elected Vice President, heading up the committee that raised many thousands of pounds for the *Royal National Lifeboat Institution*.

Photographs, cuttings and information supplied by Sarah Holmes



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ROUGH SEAS POOL ATLANTIC SURVIVAL TESTS.

Two groups of Naval volunteers had a really rough time on the Atlantic over the week-end, when the Ocean turned its vicious worst on five-day survival tests being carried out from the destroyer *Carron*. The first group entered the water on Saturday, aboard a round raft, which was made unseaworthy within ninety minutes of commencing the battle against gale-lashed, racing seas. The sixteen men on board were then picked up by the *Carron*. The following day, Sunday, things went somewhat better, but although the oval canopied, Admiralty-type raft continued to ride the wave crests as seventy-miles-per-hour gales roared around it, the *Carron's* captain decided to take the men off, for he could only see the raft for two seconds in twenty-five minutes when their safety could not be guaranteed all the time. The thirty-two men and a representative of the *America* Navy who took part in the unsuccessful tests, left Portsmouth on Thursday last, looking for the severest conditions possible, short of seriously endangering lives, to spend five-days aboard the rafts living on the absolute minimum of food and water. Both aboard the rafts and the *Carron*, medical officers and scientists were to study their reactions to cold, heat, boredom, fatigue and short rations. Special equipment was also to be tested. The spot chosen was some two hundred miles west of Ireland, which proved too rough for the tests to be carried out with any safety.

PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS: During the trials, the Admiralty-type raft is launched from the destroyer *Carron*.
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