



SUPPLEMENT TO

# The London Gazette

of Monday, 6th August 1973

**Published by Authority**

---

*Registered as a Newspaper*

---

TUESDAY, 7TH AUGUST 1973

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

## CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.  
7th August 1973.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to give orders for the following appointment to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:

To be an Additional Member of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order, for Gallantry:

Lieutenant John Francis O'DRISCOLL, Royal Navy.

Lieutenant O'Driscoll was the Officer-in-Charge of the Fleet Clearance Diving Team which was engaged in clearing a large number of unexploded bombs from the wreck of the *SS Talbot* in Grand Harbour, Malta. The *SS Talbot* had been bombed and set on fire on 26th March 1942 and because of her dangerous cargo was scuttled. From 16th October to 11th December 1972 the Fleet Clearance Diving Team recovered 73 bombs with a combined weight of 19,500 lbs. All the bombs were fused and heavy corrosion had made them stick together. Many of the bombs were buried in the mud and had to be cleared by water jetting which meant that the divers had to work entirely by touch, visibility being nil. Each bomb had to be broken out individually using a winch and wire strop and up to two tons tension had to be applied to break each bomb out. Once the bombs were brought to the surface they had to be continually hosed down to prevent crystallising and becoming extremely dangerous.

The successful completion of this lengthy and highly dangerous operation was due largely to the coolness and courage of Lieutenant O'Driscoll. His determination and leadership were of the very highest order and in the best traditions of the Service.

## CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.  
7th August 1973.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the British Empire Medal for Gallantry (Military Division) to the undermentioned:

Chief Petty Officer Clearance Diver First Class Bernard Edward BRAY P/J898304P.

Petty Officer Clearance Diver First Class Victor John HUMPHREY P/J905626P.

Chief Petty Officer Bray and Petty Officer Humphrey were the Seconds-in-Command of the two shifts who were working under Lieutenant O'Driscoll during the period 16th October to 11th December 1972. Their coolness both whilst diving themselves and directing the operations of others was instrumental in the success of the highly dangerous operation of removing the bombs from the wreck of the *SS Talbot*.

The leadership and courage shown by Chief Petty Officer Bray and Petty Officer Humphrey were of the highest order and in the best traditions of the Service.

## NAVY DEPARTMENT

7th August 1973.

### ROYAL NAVY

Rear Admiral P. G. LA NIECE, C.B., C.B.E., placed on Retired List. 6th Aug. 1973.

Lt.-Cdr. (Ret'd) A. S. McDONALD, O.B.E., reverts to Retired List. 12th Aug. 1973 (Granted rank of Cdr. (Hon.)).

Lt.-Cdr. R. W. PENSON, placed on Retired List. 5th Aug. 1973.

Lt.-Cdr. W. S. F. SILVERTHORNE, to be placed on Retired List. 10th Aug. 1973.

Lt.-Cdr. G. N. METCALFE, placed on Retired List (own request). 31st Jul. 1973.

Lt.-Cdr. W. W. BUCKINGHAM, placed on Retired List. 3rd Aug. 1973, and re-apptd.

Actg. Lt.-Cdr. J. D. BASS, B.Sc.(Eng.), promoted Lt.-Cdr. 1st Aug. 1973, with seny. 1st Aug. 1973.

Lt.-Cdr. (Supplementary List) C. W. ABEL, placed on Retired List on completion of 16-year Pensionable Commission. 7th Aug. 1973.

Lt.-Cdr. (Supplementary List) R. M. SCOTT, placed on Retired List (own request). 2nd Aug. 1973.

Instr. Lt.-Cdr. G. H. BAILEY, B.Sc., to be placed on Retired List on completion of 16-year Pensionable Commission. 9th Aug. 1973.

Lts. placed on Retired List (own request) on dates stated:

D. M. DALE. 2nd Aug. 1973.

G. CUSSONS. 4th Aug. 1973.