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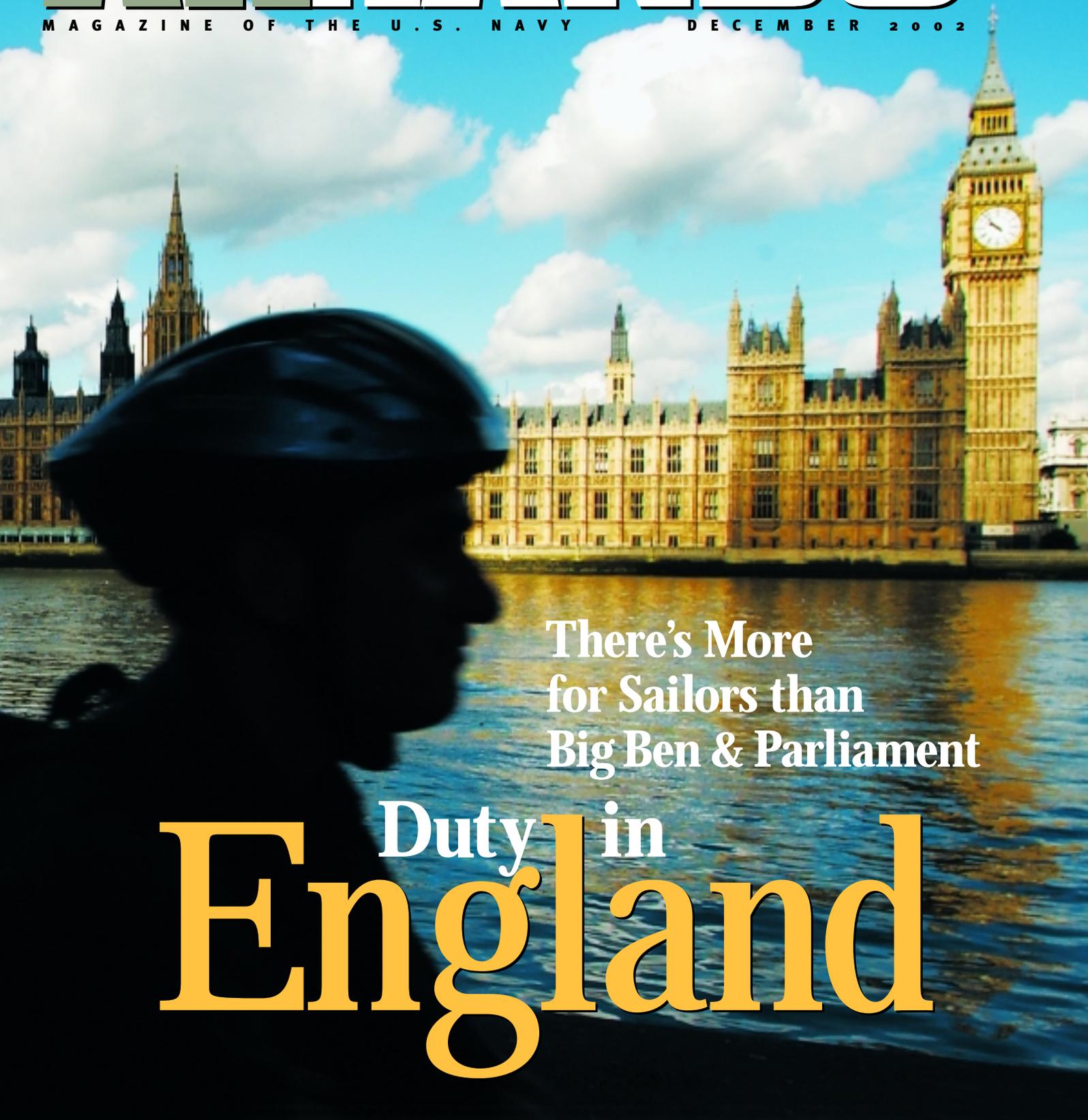


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# ALL HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

DECEMBER 2002



There's More  
for Sailors than  
Big Ben & Parliament

Duty in  
**England**

# GAINING Strength Abroad

Being stationed overseas offers more than just a permanent ticket to tourist attractions.

**J**OIN THE NAVY, SEE THE WORLD... a stalwart recruiting bumper sticker that still attracts many new Sailors. Although most Sailors have the opportunity to do just that, either through port visits, or by taking advantage of exotic vacation opportunities, many only view these countries through "tourists' eyes. The ships often pull into a liberty port for a very short stay, limiting the level of cultural interaction the crew is able to experience.

▲ There's more to do and see than the tourist attractions when you are stationed in a foreign country. For **SK1 David Pelow**, who has been assigned to Naval Forces Europe for the last two years, London is more about the relationships he has developed than the places he has seen.

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But for those who accept PCS orders overseas, there is an opportunity to actually live in and experience a foreign culture in a way few Americans can.

For Sailors whose jobs take them anywhere in England, they will grow as only a resident of that country can. Whether it's in the heart of a big city like London, or in the countryside hills of St. Mawgan, in the south, the Navy enables Sailors to live life large.

◀ “I enjoy being able to talk to people of so many cultures and get to know their opinions about the world,” said Pelow. Dinner parties and nights out allow him to actually sit down and learn how other people feel about the world from the average citizen's perspective.



## City Life: London



▲ The streets around Pelow's residence feel like a movie set at times. As a matter of fact, many movies have been made within blocks of his home.

◀ Living in a city like London is truly a study in cultural diversity. When Pelow isn't exploring the city or over at a friend's house, he enjoys sitting back and reading to expand his mind a little more.

“By living in England, I can be a tourist pretty much every day,” said Storekeeper 1st Class David Pelow. “But what's different now is that I get to learn from a group of people who have an interest in their country and a willingness

to share their knowledge with me.”

To the locals, England is much more than “Big Ben” and Parliament, castles and foxhunts, or fish and chips and a pint of ale for lunch at the corner pub. While these are all enjoyable elements of English heritage, they only scratch the surface of this rich culture.

That's the benefit of being stationed in this country. These Sailors have the opportunity to see what's below the

surface. They've been dealt a winning hand, and now it's just a matter of playing it.

“Hopefully, people who have chosen to be stationed in England have achieved their first goal by doing what was necessary to get orders,” said Pelow. “Then it's just as important to take that second step and get out into the culture.”

And what a vast and varied environment they'll find. London and the

“London has so much to offer,” said local Englishman Andrew Ellis, who has lived in London since 1987, and is a friend of Pelow. “To experience it the right way, you really need to have the locals show you around.”

surrounding area offers its residents an extremely wide variety of things to do, from the many theatres to the multitude of restaurants. Like most large cities in the world, it is jammed packed with museums, parks, monuments and virtually every tourist attraction a person could hope for. If they're not careful though, Sailors can find themselves stuck on the tourist trail, following only the postcard sites that millions of visitors



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► People are constantly attached to their “electronic leashes” when living in the city. The time spent on the tube traveling to and from work, allows Pelow to type out a quick message to his friends to set up plans for the evening.

▼ Contrary to popular belief around the fleet, military uniforms are worn in London, but Sailors must change at work.



frequent every year.

“London has so much to offer,” said local Englishman Andrew Ellis, who has lived in London since 1987, and friend of

▲ Pelow joins the locals out in the nearby park to relax during lunch. In the summer months, everyone takes advantage of the nice weather to get out and enjoy the fresh air and the relaxing atmosphere.

Pelow. “To experience it the right way, you really need to have the locals show you around.”

Living in the city and having friends in the area also has another distinct advantage.

“The biggest benefit is that you get to spend time doing things that don’t really need to be planned,” said Ellis. “When you ring someone and there’s nothing going on, you just come over and sit in

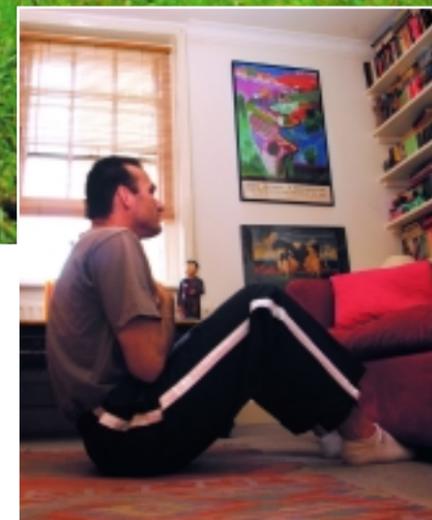
the garden and talk. Now, that’s not an earth-shattering event, but it’s a great opportunity to get to know someone.”

According to Ellis, to really learn about the culture, you need to be involved in conversations on various subjects; from the news, to sports, to whatever.

“In a way, because my friends are from here, I don’t feel like a foreigner,” Pelow added. “I feel more relaxed and involved.”

That word, “involved,” is extremely

▲ And what a vast and varied environment they’ll find. London and the surrounding area offers its residents an extremely wide variety of things to do, from the many theatres to the multitude of restaurants.



▲ Space is tight when you live in the city, so in the mornings Pelow uses his living room as a makeshift gym to stay in shape.

important. Without getting involved in some form or fashion, Sailors are doomed to an unfulfilling tour, and to be honest, a nightmare experience.

Your activities don’t always have to be in the heart of the city to enjoy the time away from the United States. For many Sailors and their families around the globe, duty at the small remote bases can be, and much of the time is, just as rewarding.

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▲ **Living in a 300-year-old cottage** in the country creates a different lifestyle for Sailors, especially if they have been in the city most of their careers like the Pageaus.

▼ **Life in St. Mawgan is good duty** for the single Sailor, but it's great for the families. Because things are kicked back a little, Kasey and her sister are able to spend a lot of time with dad.

**C**hief Sonar Technician Scott Pageau and his family found themselves accepting orders to St. Mawgan, a small country station in Cornwall in the southwestern tip of England.

There, they don't battle the double-decker buses in traffic, like their

## Country Life: St. Mawgan

counterparts in the city. Instead, tractors hauling bales of hay through the narrow roads cause the delays. Instead of millions of commuters bumping and squeezing their way to work on the "tube" (London subway), the Sailors of the Joint Maritime Force at St. Mawgan, are faced with



► **Windmills silently collect** energy from the winds above St. Mawgan's government housing complex.



**“W**e even extended a year because we don't want to leave,” said Laura Pageau. That is ironic, considering she felt like this was going to be a very bad tour after her first few months in country.

the periodic “traffic jams” of sheep and livestock herds.

It's quite unique, and an experience the Pageaus wouldn't pass up for the world.

“We even extended a year because we don't want to leave,” said Laura Pageau. That is ironic, considering she felt like this was going to be a very bad tour after her first few months in country.

“I just remember going to that red

phone box and calling my family; just crying because it was so bad,” said Laura. “I look back at all of the things that I appreciate now, but at the time, I just wanted to go home and would have done anything to make it happen. It was total culture shock, which was unexpected.”

The Pageaus had a career path that was somewhat common to many Sailors of the modern era. They had been in the Navy for 14 years and a vast majority of

their career, 12 years to be exact, was spent bouncing around San Diego. They'd never been to a foreign country, let alone stationed in one.

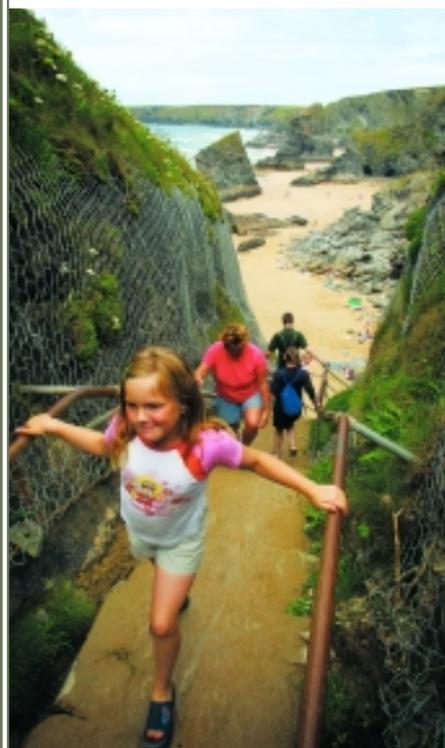
When they first arrived, they moved into government quarters and began to fall into the rut they so strongly avoid today.

“I think there are too many people who just stay in housing and don't venture out,” said Pageau. “They usually

end up building a wall, rather than getting out and being adventurous. They would rather stay at home than get out and test the waters.”

You could say the Pageaus saw the light and welcomed a totally new experience when they decided to live off base. Because they left their safety net, they were pretty much forced to adapt to a foreign way of living. “You can't run down to the local 7-11 and gas up at

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any time of the night," said the chief. "You have to plan and prioritize things around here."

They ended up moving into a home that was more than 300 years old and part of an estate that, like many of the residences in the area, has a history. The cottage they now call home was used to house German prisoners-of-war during World War II, a fact that fascinates the Pageaus.

"If this home were in the states," said

◀ **They may not be in London,** but there are still plenty of historic tourist sites around Cornwall that will entertain every member of the family.

▼ **John Shapland** has taken on the role of grandfather while the Pageaus are living in England. Just like families in the states, Kasey and Laura enjoy viewing photo albums about a recent hunt the Shaplands had been on.



▶ **An American BBQ** at the neighbors house is a time to share stories and learn about people from the local area.

**O**ne thing that the local families in St. Mawgan really enjoy is sharing American activities, such as the good old American BBQ or even a game of baseball with all of the family members.

Laura, "it would have a fence around it and they would be charging admission."

For the Shaplands, the owners of the property and fellow occupants of the land, it is a valuable experience for Americans to live outside of their comfort zone if they want to grow.

"We feel the ones who get out and get their own accommodations have gained a tremendous lot from the interplay between the Cornish people and the

American way of life," said Jean Shapland. "I think there is a tendency for the families who live in [quarters] not to integrate themselves like the Pageaus do. They can't, because they don't come into our way of life ... they don't do the things that we do and join in with the things we do."

In their mind, it doesn't matter where in the world you live, it is important to venture out and test yourself – to stretch

your norm and try to expand the way you see the world you live in.

"It's always valuable wherever you live, that you live with the natives and be part of the extended family," said Shapland. "It is very important that people, like Scott and Laura, live with us and do things with us that they would never, ever have done, or encountered, or even have had knowledge of if they hadn't done so."

So, what things can Sailors do in the

Cornish countryside of England?

The options are limitless. Whether Pageau is hunting with his dogs and the neighbors, or his daughters are fishing in the family pond with the girls next door, or they are all just having a good old-fashioned English dinner at the Shapland's farmhouse, they are able to gain from the British living experience. If you're not careful, you'll find yourself doing something totally uncharacteristic,

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▲ When driving around this part of England, you count on landmarks, because the signs that direct commuters are few and far between.

stretching your habits and hobbies beyond your normal tendencies.

"I am actually in a choir now, and I have never been able to sing before in my life," said Pageau. "Getting involved in the community you work and live in does affect you in a positive way. You grow as a person."

People are always making excuses in life about why they can't do something. It is no different with Sailors and their families overseas. It may be a little more difficult meeting people in a foreign land, especially when they speak a different language. You would think though, that in England, where the language is the same, it would be a little easier to get out into the local culture, but it's not always as easy as it seems.

"It was Winston Churchill who said, 'We are two countries divided by a common language,' which is true, but the children now are making a common

language of their own," said Shapland.

And it is the families with children that Shapland's husband, John, feels have a little easier time developing relations with the locals. "There are several ways the American personnel could become acquainted with the community," he said. "The easiest, by far, is if they have children. They will all meet up at school. An English child will meet up with an American child, and then the parents subsequently end up meeting. Another way we have found, is when the local parish gets involved with the Americans through either sport, teaching each other their local sporting games or through religious activities."

This may sound like a case of the Americans taking from the locals and not giving back, showing off what makes our culture diverse and unique. This couldn't be any further from the truth.

One thing that the local families in

St. Mawgan really enjoy is sharing American activities, such as the good old American BBQ or even a game of baseball with all of the family members.

"It's very nice that the Americans invite the kids to participate in their sport," said John. "Our granddaughter, for instance, is really into baseball. Before the American families came, she had never even heard of baseball."

Now it may be a little more difficult

to find the time and space for a game of baseball in the big city, but that doesn't mean the Sailors stationed in London don't offer something in return to their friends.

"Having David around makes us want to get out and experience London as well," said Sally Jones, a native Australian from Melbourne and transplant to England 11 years ago. "We gain a richer social experience and greater under-

standing of cultures when we deal with people from other countries.

"It's a positive exposure having someone else to talk with," added Jones. "We all bring something to the friendship."

The bottom line is that, yes, we are visitors in their land, and have the greater potential to gain something positive from the experience. But at the same time, just as in the states, when "different" people show up in our lives, we learn and grow

in a way that can only make us stronger.

"It's a win-win situation, because I grow from them and they gain an understanding of life as an American, at least from my view," said Pelow. "I am proud to be part of their close group of friends. I know I have developed true friendships, and I will cherish that most when I leave." ❧

*Keres is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands*

"I think there are too many people who just stay in housing and don't venture out," said Scott. "They usually end up building a wall, rather than getting out and being adventurous. They would rather stay at home than get out and test the waters."

