



**ROYAL NAVAL
ASSOCIATION**

Funeral Support Guide

Naval funerals are steeped in ceremonial traditions, including the dressing of the coffin, the procession, the role of the Standard bearer, the Last Post and Reveille and “Piping the side” on the Boatswain Call.

The Royal Naval Association is here to support families in providing support and guidance to ensure a dignified and fitting tribute to mark the passing of a Shipmate. It is important to us, that the support we offer reflect the wishes of the deceased’s family.

Our compassion and care to the family extends beyond the funeral; through our Branches we are here to offer support to the families and shipmates of those who have passed away in the days and weeks that follow.

Many families may not be aware of the length of service or where indeed their loved one served. The Next of kin may apply for the Service records.

[Get a copy of military records of service: Apply for the records of a deceased serviceperson - GOV.UK](#)

Royal Naval Association “Cross the Bar” Obituary

If you would like to place an obituary to notify members of the passing of a Royal Naval Shipmate or a member of the Royal Navy community in our monthly newsletter and social media channels.

Please email us with any text and accompanying photo to cml@rnassoc.org

This can include funeral details, if you would like them publishing.

Liaison with Funeral Directors

It will be important that people understand the requirements of the family, so a good relationship with the funeral directors is crucial. The RNA can assist with any specific Naval information you would like to give to your funeral director.



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Coffin Drape

The Union Flag is used to draped over the coffin. N.B Officially not the White Ensign.

Please note, the RNA does not supply coffin Drapes, Flags or Ensigns. These can be arranged by the Funeral director or purchased online

Dressing the coffin

Wreath / Flowers, Caps / Berets, Swords, may be placed on the coffin.

Medals

A family member may wish to carry the deceased Medals; this is always a nice touch; a cushion would be recommended to place the medals on.

If family believe the deceased has medals but cannot find them an application maybe made via this link.

[Apply for or replace a medal or veterans badge : Apply for a medal - GOV.UK](#)

Standard Bearers (SB)

Again, depending on the family's requirements a SB may attend a funeral to represent Naval Associations that the deceased belonged to, or local RBL Standards can be invited to attend. Once again, we suggest liaising with the whole family to ensure everyone is happy.

The RNA does not offer Coffin Bearers. This be undertaken by the Family or Funeral directors.

Piping Side Party

Someone with a Boatswain's Call may be available to "Pipe the side" & "Carry On"

Bugler

A Royal Marine Bugler may be available but not guaranteed. The RM Bugler maybe available to those shipmates who has completed full pensionable service or been awarded an operational service medal is entitled to a Bugler at public expense, subject to approval by the Single Service Tasking Authority for the RMBS. The mail address to request a RM Bugler is

NAVYRMBAND-HQBSRMENGCOORD@mod.gov.uk



Piper

If the deceased was of Scottish decent, a Piper may be considered. The Piper may play and march in front of the hearse and may play a Lament at the funeral service. But again, we suggest liaising with the family and the funeral director.

Burial at sea - England

A Burial at sea is something that the deceased has requested.

A burial at sea is the process in which human remains are committed to the sea as a final resting place.

A marine licence is required from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for a burial at sea in English waters or Northern Irish offshore waters.

For England -There are three designated burials at sea locations, which are:

Off The Needles, Isle of Wight

Between Hastings and Newhaven

Off Tynemouth, North Tyneside

Burial at sea - Wales

Natural Resource Wales for burials at sea in inshore and offshore areas of Welsh waters.

Burial at sea – Northern Island

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, for burials at sea in inshore Northern Irish waters; and

Burial at sea - Scotland

The Burial, Cremation and Death Certification Team, for burials at sea in Scottish waters.

For more information about Burials at sea please visit

[How to arrange a burial at sea in the UK marine area - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-arrange-a-burial-at-sea-in-the-uk-marine-area)



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Burial of Ashes

You do not need a licence or permission to scatter ashes at sea after a cremation. Please contact St Ann's Church in Portsmouth Dockyard who will be able to assist with this.

[Naval - Diocese of Portsmouth](#)

Pensions

For information & guidance regarding Veterans Pensions please visit.

[Armed forces pensions - GOV.UK](#)

[Death of an Armed Forces Pension Scheme member - GOV.UK](#)

Bereavement Support

[Get help with grief after bereavement or loss - NHS](#)

Joining the RNA Family.

Those relatives of any deceased Naval Veteran, who wish to carry on the memory of their loved ones, can do so by joining the RNA as an Associate member.

With Branches across the UK there will always be support just a phone call away.

[Join Us - Royal Naval Association](#)



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Links to other possible support

[What to do when a veteran die - GOV.UK](#)

[ARNO | The Association of Royal Navy Officers](#)

[Royal Naval Benevolent Trust | Royal Marine & Navy Charity](#)

[Home - Association of Wrens](#)

The deceased may also have been a member of their ship's associations, so it may be worth contacting them as well.

For further support or guidance please feel free to contact our Welfare & Wellbeing Support Coordinator.

wws@rnassoc.org