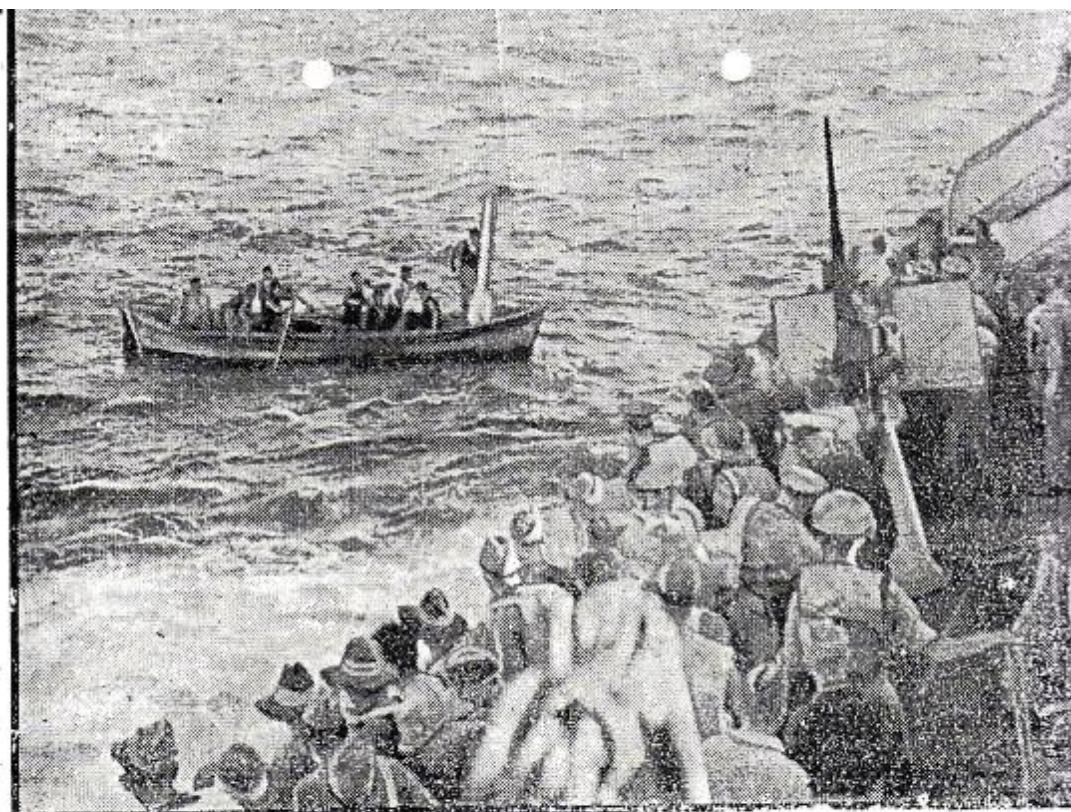

Frank L Trindall

Before the start of WWII I had left school in 1938 to be an errand boy. It was a job I did not care for so left it with the hopes of going to sea with my father. He had been going to sea fishing since he left the Navy after WWI. But Dad said if you want to go to sea join the Navy – so at the grand old age of sixteen I applied to join the Navy. I was told to try again when I was a bit older. I finally “got in” when I was seventeen. After ten weeks training at a camp near Portsmouth I was drafted to Chatham Depot. I was given one week’s leave and found myself on a troopship bound for Alexandria. I was taken to the docks and told to report on Board HMS Kimberly. Then first it was evacuation of Greece then next came Crete. After this load of trouble came Malta convoys. In between convoys to Malta we had runs to Tobruk. This was my first experience of “Oz” troops. We took fresh troops in and brought wounded troops out. To bring them all out was really good in more ways than one. Our “skipper” used to say, “What they have been though means something more than medals, give them all a tot of rum. If they don’t want it drink or pitch it.”

After all this I finally was on my way but not before being torpedoed near Tobruk. That meant instead of home it was off to Bombay to get a new stern on. Then it was really homeward. I finally arrived back in UK in 1942, just over three years after leaving UK. I was given three weeks’ leave before I joined with another destroyer HMS ISIS. I thought I had “seen it all” but “oh no” it was back to the “Med” for “Italy etc.” After several months it was back to UK. My first and best job in 1944 was to get married on June 3. The “powers up top” seemed to have it in for me because June 6 and it was onto a landing craft and across to France. I was lucky it meant one trip only then back to Chatham. Once again a week’s leave then back to Malta. Then on to Italy. Then I could not believe it. But it was back to Chatham. After three weeks’ leave I thought – this is it – and it was, my time in the Navy had come to an end and I finally ‘got out’ in June 1952, twelve years after joining. But my time was not finished. Up came Korea, but not for me. The navy said I was too old so I finished two years in Depot Chatham. We had one son who came to “Oz” with his wife and two children in 1990. So one day in 1991 we made our minds up and here we are and here we’ve stayed. For me at least it was a case of join the navy and see the world, I think I fought my way round it.

The enclosed photocopy may be of some use to you. On the destroyer is a mixed load of troops on the way back to Alexandria from Tobruk.



With a sixpenny compass and a map torn from an atlas, a little party of men set out from Crete in a rowing boat. They were soldiers who had been in hiding on the island since the Allied evacuation in May. This British official picture was taken from the destroyer Kimberley, which sighted the boat adrift