

Here's something different for you. You might remember an exhibition which toured about 2 years ago called "The Longest Yarn". It was a series of knitted dioramas produced by various knitting groups around the UK and showed the build up to D Day, the landings and the subsequent events

<https://www.thelongestyarn.com/>

There is now a successor - imaginatively called "The Longest Yarn 2". It consists (again) of about 90 knitted dioramas but this time the whole of WW2 from outbreak to peace. I visited the exhibition at St Giles Church Wrexham today. As well as the dioramas there are knitted full size figures of individuals in a series called "Duty Calls" and a board giving their story in WW2. I found a submariner amongst the 6 or so figures - AB Forster of the S Class Submarine HMS Trooper. The board and the mannequin speak for themselves, but I thought the story of the knitting, the exhibition and backstory might be of interest to the S/M community. Here's the link to the new exhibition

<https://www.thelongestyarn.com/visit-us/britain-at-war>

Best wishes, Howard

Michael Forster, HMS Trooper

Every member of Duty Calls Life-Size Models carries a unique story.

One such story belongs to Michael Forster, HMS Trooper, who shares a namesake with my husband—his uncle, his father's brother.

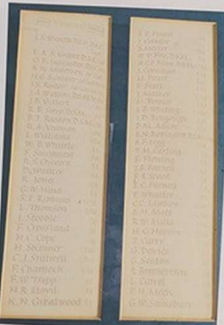
We travelled to Leros to lay flowers above the watery grave in remembrance of the 75th anniversary of her disappearance. Local fishermen and a diving instructor were aware of her location, but she had not been officially identified until recently. A specialized deep dive team has now conducted a thorough survey, finally bringing recognition to her resting place.

This is the report taken from the submarine site usub.net
HMS Trooper (Lt. John Somerton Wraith, DSO, DSC, RN) sailed from Beirut on 26 September 1943 for a patrol (including a special operation) in the Aegean Sea off the Dodecanese islands, including the Leros area.



She failed to return to Beirut on 17th October and was reported overdue on that day. She was long thought to have been lost on German mines to the east of Leros as it was thought she had been sighted off Leros on 14 October.

The Germans claimed that HMS Trooper was sunk by Q-ship GA 45 on 15 October 1943. But this claim to have sunk Trooper was erroneous. GA 45 carried out an attack on a submarine 2.5 miles south of Kalymnos on 15th October. The Germans were unaware of the identity of the submarine or whether it had been destroyed. The attack was made initially with depth charges, then when the submarine surfaced with gunfire. The submarine in question was HMS Torbay and she was not damaged during this encounter.



On 6 October 2024 it was announced that a Greek search team, lead by Kostas Thoctarides, had located the wreck of HMS Trooper in 253 meters of water to the north of Donoussa Island in the Aegean. This was in the area HMS Trooper had been ordered to patrol in between 6 and 9 October 1943. The submarine is broken in three sections. The wreck is found in the position of one of the minefields out of the five minefields (287 magnetic mines in total) laid on 26 September 1943 in this area by the German auxiliary minelayer Drache. The submarine must have been running on the surface when the mine detonated given the fact that the forward hydroplane are in their stowed position and several hatches are open.

As we do not know the exact date HMS Trooper was lost the date displayed is the day she was declared overdue failing to arrive at Beirut. The most likely date of loss is somewhere between 6 and 9 October 1943.



TROOPER'S SEABOARD MESS



Swindon Stitch Club. Photo L to R: Jane W, Sue C, Linda S, Jane T, Tracey M, Teresa L, Alison K and Eileen A standing with model Michael Forster, HMS Trooper Engineer.

Swindon Stitch Club is a vibrant knitting group that combines creativity with community spirit. The group was set up over 17 years ago and continues to grow. The group loves a project/challenge and have been involved in some truly unique projects, like recreating famous Swindon figures in wool, including Billie Piper and Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Their work has even been showcased at the Swindon Museum and Art Gallery. Beyond their artistic endeavours, they also contribute to charitable causes. It's a group that stitches together art, history, and goodwill. The group has loved being involved in making a life size Navy Engineer.

