



**Notice of a Church Service in London
to remember all who fought in the
naval battles of Coronel and the
Falklands in November and
December 1914**



Above: Battle of Falklands Memorial in Stanley Falkland Islands.

Above: The memorial in Coronel, Chile

December 8th 2014 marks the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of the Falklands.

The Falkland Islands Association (FIA) is therefore organising a commemorative service at 11.00am on Monday, 8 December at the Royal Navy church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, off Trafalgar Square in London, to remember all those who fought in both the Battle of the Falklands and the preceding battle of Coronel which took place on the 1st November 1914 off the coast of Coronel, Chile. Both battles occasioned considerable loss of life.

The service will include representatives of both the Royal Navy and the German Navy together with any of the next of kin or descendants of those involved on both sides that can be traced. The FIA invites representatives of ships Associations connected with the battles to attend with their colour parties (if they have them) and to lay a wreath during the service. Other naval/ maritime and relevant civilian organisations are invited to send representatives, together with those of organisations that have traditionally attended the FIA's Battle Day Service at the Cenotaph in London each year.

The service will be open to any interested parties although tickets will be required for security reasons with a limit of 550 places in the church. There will be no charge for tickets for the service - see below for ticket applications.

After the service, a reception will be held at The Charing Cross Hotel for invited guests, FIA members and others attending the church service, although numbers will be restricted by the capacity of the room available. This will also be a ticket only event and these can be requested by FIA members at £20 each and by other guests at £25 each subject to availability.

Application forms for tickets for the service and the reception can be obtained from the Hon Secretary of the FIA via email to honsecfia@msn.com, by letter to the FIA at 14 Broadway, London, SW1H 0BH or can be downloaded from the FIA website at www.fiassociation.com. If the application includes tickets for the reception, then a cheque payable to Falkland Islands Association should be included. If the reception is over-subscribed, cheques will be returned. Early application is advised and certainly no later than 26th October 2014.

Further information overleaf.....

Notes to organisations interested in attending.

Dress - Military: No1 Service Dress, Daytime Ceremonial (without swords) with medals and decorations as appropriate.

Civilian: Lounge Suit (Ladies equivalent), with medals and decorations as appropriate.

Colour parties – these should include a standard bearer with the option of two escorts. Standards will be paraded into the church during the opening hymn and then paraded out at the end of the service.

Wreaths – Wreaths will be laid at the altar after the Act of Remembrance. They can be provided by the FIA if requested well in advance but if providing their own, organisations should use the British Legion **Type C** Wreath (17" in diameter) with badge of choice obtainable from The Poppy Appeal, Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX currently priced at £18.50.

(website: <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/remembrance/how-the-nation-remembers/wreaths?>)

Next of kin – we hope that anyone with family connections to those who fought in these two battles will attend the service. Please let us know if you wish to attend and whom you will be representing.

Further information can be obtained from the Hon Secretary of the FIA via email at honsecfia@msn.com or by letter to the FIA at 14 Broadway, London, SW1H 0BH. Note that the FIA office is not permanently manned although messages may be left with the Falkland Islands Government staff.

Note to Editors

The Falkland Islands Association: Set up in 1968 the FIA's main objective is to support the Falkland Islanders' right to self determination. The FIA has a widespread membership and publishes an illustrated Newsletter twice a year. The Association also organises the Battle Day ceremony in London in early December each year. Enquiries should be sent to the Hon Secretary by email at honsecfia@msn.com or in writing to The Falkland Islands Association, 14 Broadway, London, SW1H 0BH or by telephone to 0845 260 4884.

Historical Background:

The Naval Battles: The Battle of Coronel took place on 1st November 1914 between the German East Asia Squadron commanded by Vice Admiral Maximilian von Spee with SMS *Scharnhorst*, SMS *Gneisenau*, SMS *Nürnberg*, SMS *Leipzig* and SMS *Dresden* and the British Fourth Cruiser Squadron commanded by Rear Admiral Sir Christopher G. F. M. Cradock, with HMS *Good Hope*, HMS *Monmouth*, HMS *Glasgow* and AMC *Otranto*. Initially as both Squadrons approached the area each thought they were tracking down a single ship of the opposing force and it was only when they met that the true situation became apparent. The

German ships were more modern than the largely obsolete British ships with only HMS *Glasgow* equal to any of Von Spee's ships. After initial contact at 1600hrs firing commenced at about 1800hrs and both HMS *Good Hope* and HMS *Monmouth* were both sunk with the loss of all hands including Rear Admiral Cradock. The AMC *Otranto* was sent away from the battle and HMS *Glasgow* withdrew after the other two ships had been sunk.

Following the battle Von Spee rested his men and made minor repairs before setting off south towards Cape Horn with the intention of moving into the South Atlantic and making the long journey back to Germany to rearm. The British Navy had sent reinforcements down to the South Atlantic Squadron so that by 7th December the British Squadron, now commanded by Vice Admiral Sir Frederick Doveton Sturdee, had arrived at Port William in the Falkland Islands and was busy refuelling and making repairs after the long journey south. Under Sturdee's command were HMS *Invincible*, HMS *Inflexible*, HMS *Carnarvon*, HMS *Cornwall*, HMS *Kent*, HMS *Glasgow*, HMS *Canopus* and HMS *Bristol*.

On the 8th December the German Squadron was approaching the Falklands and Von Spee decided to enter the harbour and destroy the wireless station and the coaling facilities. SMS *Gneisenau* and SMS *Nürnberg* detached from the rest of the squadron and commenced their approach to Stanley unaware that the British Squadron was there. Also, until a civilian observer saw the masts of the German ships on the horizon, the British were unaware how close the Germans were. As the German ships approached they were fired on by HMS *Canopus* and Von Spee ordered the ships to break off the engagement and rejoin the rest of the squadron expecting that the British ships would not be able to catch the modern ships under his command. Quickly getting up steam the British ships set off in pursuit and battle commenced about 1300hrs. In the next few hours SMS *Scharnhorst*, SMS *Gneisenau*, SMS *Nürnberg* and SMS *Leipzig* were sunk whilst SMS *Dresden* managed to escape. Von Spee and his two sons went down with their ships and only a few of the German crews managed to survive in the cold Atlantic waters long enough to be rescued by the British ships.

After a lengthy search of the Chilean coastline the SMS *Dresden* was eventually found by HMS *Kent* and HMS *Glasgow* and chased to an Island off Chile where the SMS *Dresden* was scuttled by her crew.

For further information see *Coronel and Falklands 1914* by Michael McNally, *Coronel and Falklands* by Geoffrey Bennett or *Coronel and Falkland* by Barrie Pitt. Just published is *The Scapegoat – the life and tragedy of a fighting admiral and Churchill's role in his death*, a biography of Rear Admiral Cradock by Steve R Dunn. Hardback now available in good bookshops and on Amazon.