

**MY THOUGHTS
ON
MERCHANT NAVY DAY**

September 3rd which for us now marks Merchant Navy Day also marks a more momentous moment in history – the declaration that Britain was at war with Germany.

In preparing these pages I have been using Google to look for media reports of MN day events around the world in doing so I have come across a lot of articles about the first few years of the war 1939 to mid 1943 when Britain was struggling to survive.

Much has been written about who saved Britain in her ‘hour of need’ as those times are often phrased.

War needs two essential components to be able to exist – People and the wherewithal to wage war.

The two main items that people need to fight a modern war are Metal & Fuel.

Britain had limited sources of ore for the metals needed and virtually no fuel oil within its own shores and massive amounts of both these vital materials had to be brought in by ship.

The fact that the Merchant Navy was able to continue that supply despite the sinking of hundreds of ships in each of those early war years can only be put down to the sheer size of the British merchant navy at that time, as the efforts of the Royal Navy in trying to protect it though valiant, were woefully inadequate.

Despite the impact of the horrific losses of ships and seafarers the supply chain was never broken and enabled Britain to stave off defeat until the Royal and allied navies were able to gain the upper hand over the enemy.

Had that supply chain failed Britain could not have continued to fight and would at best have had to sue for peace or at worst surrender.