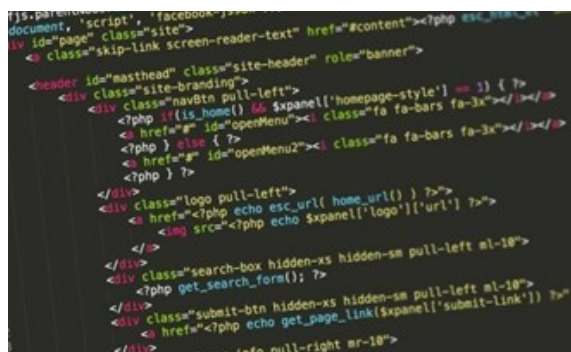


## Creating the RNIOA website

By RNIO Lt. Cdr Mike Rose

I grew up learning how to program – Machine Code, Basic, Fortran, Algol, C+, Lisp, Prolog, Pascal, etc., so when I decided to go into web design, I wanted to do it using programming, and not commercial (often free) software written for creating websites. Many people would say that not to use such software implies an unnecessarily burdensome task, since that type of software automatically does all the fiddly coding in the background, leaving the web designer to concentrate on higher-level functions such as layout, imagery and flow. But for me, the fun is in the details!

So, instead of using website design software packages such as Adobe Muse or Adobe Dreamweaver, and instead of utilising open-source software such as WordPress or Joomla, and instead of employing website builders such as Wix or GoDaddy to build a website, I have always started with a blank screen, and typed every single full stop, comma, semi-colon, hyphen, single quote, curly bracket, square bracket and ampersand, oh very laboriously – but oh with so much enjoyment, until the site is complete. For the RNIOA website, nothing was different.



I also love puzzles, so when a website page doesn't work properly, I need to examine the code line by line, word by word, character by character, until I find the mistake, and hence solve the puzzle. Satisfaction always guaranteed!

When I started website building, around the year 2000, I taught myself HTML, Javascript, CSS, SHTML, PHP, MySQL, Flash and XML. For the RNIOA website, I initially employed the following:

- HTML/SHTML for the structure of pages
- CSS for the visual elements
- Flash for the alternating images
- Javascript for some extra functions such as the "click to see comments" function on the new articles page.

However, I recently attended a course on HTML5 and CSS3 programming, as they are the most recent versions, and are quite different from

previous versions. Shortly after, the site was duly re-programmed using HTML5 and CSS3. One major advantage of this update is that alternating images on the site no longer require the use of Adobe Flash in the browser.



John Nixon, as the RNIOA site editor, helped me a lot by designing the top banners and the RNIOA logo, he usually writes initial drafts of material (with many exchanges between us to refine material and eliminate the dreaded typos we usually find) and has provided many of the images found on the site. His artistic eye also helped mould the overall design of the site.

We also value the suggestions and advice we receive from two former senior Schoolies on many aspects of the site and in providing us with useful links that we have on the website.

We also acknowledge the links and co-operation we have established with the authors of the highly impressive book/DVD 'Not Just Chalk and Talk: Stories of Schoolies in the Royal Navy,' by Dick Abram and Patrick Binks, as this is helping us to expand the number of service stories on the RNIOA website.

We are very pleased with the result to date but we are constantly exploring new options. We hope that the site is friendly to use and easy on the eye as the colour schemes were all chosen with the IO branch's history in mind (i.e. predominantly light blue for reasons fully explained in our history page).

However, we would be interested in the thoughts and opinions of former RNIOs as expressed in articles submissions you might like to send us, informal contact via email and/or service story submissions.....

For both John and I, the RNIOA website is a labour of love.

