

## **Your Own Special Agent**

Cachalots who may be thinking of sailing their yachts through the Suez Canal in the near future are reminded that, beforehand, they should contact the Club's "Honorary Agent to the Masters of yachts belonging to members of the Southampton Master Mariners' Club during transits of the Suez Canal", Mr Sherif El-Kassiefy of Messers Billy Thompson, Ship Chandler, Master Contractor and yacht agent, 10 Memphis Street, Post Said, Egypt.

The association with the Club dates back to 27 September 1932 when the then Boatsteerer/Store-keeper, Captain W.V.J. Clarke D.S.C. Barrister-at-Law, wrote to Billy Thompson, Esq., Port Said:-

*"Captain Bellingham and several other members of this club who are in command of British yachts, have from time to time reported to us that you have been of invaluable assistance to them when their ships are at Port Said, and it is a pleasure to write informing you that your efforts to ease the burden of a Master Mariner are appreciated here.*

*We hope that you will continue to prosper and that you will continue to be of service to Shipmasters visiting Port Said, always remembering that "He who serves most, profits best."*

After 61 years of excellent service a letter arrived addressed to "Esquire, Secretary of the Master Mariners' Club (The Cachalots), Southampton, UK", which read:-

*"We have the great pleasure to write to you in order to avail ourselves of the opportunity asking the renewing of our appointment as your Agents as you have done in the past, 27/8/1932.*

*The Suez Canal Authorities are requesting us to present a new dated official letter confirming our appointment as your agents in the Suez area.*

*Hoping, Dear Sir, that you would do your best through this matter.*

*Thanking you very much in advance, we remain, yours sincerely..."*

Anxious to ensure that these valuable services would not be lost, the Club replied on 6 October 1993:-

*"Thank you for your letter of the 18 September attaching copy of a letter sent to you, in 1932, by the Boatsteerer/Storekeeper in recognition of your services to Captain Bellingham and other British Yachtmasters.*

*In recognition of this service and in view of our long association with you we are pleased to confirm your appointment as "Honorary Agent to the Masters of Yachts belonging to members of the Southampton Master Mariners Club during transit of the Suez Canal."*

*We are pleased that this honorary appointment has survived for some 61 years and we close with best wishes to you and to your company for many years of sound business and profitable trading.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*R.A.Stephenson, OBE, Captain,  
Boatsteerer."*

Twelve years on, and a reply is eagerly awaited.

I personally never sailed through the Canal in my daddy's yacht, although I must admit to having personal purveyors of leather wallets, Turkish delight and small bottles euphemistically labelled "Spanish-Fly", especially dispensed by a local gentleman whose boast it was that his father was two Scotch soldiers.

Hamish Roberts.