# The CACHALOT

#### THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB

## No.16

#### CAPTAIN'S LOG

Since my official installation as Club Captain, and Captain George Angas as Staff Captain, on 4 February at the Sea Pie Supper, I have attended a number of events and represented the Club on a number of occasions.

On the Monday after the Sea Pie Supper, the Club's administrative section was moved, lock, stock and barrel, from the old premises at the BISS Centre to the new one in the Southampton Royal British Legion Club. A special thank you to Barry Peck, who set up all the electronic and other office equipment and ensured that it was in good running order. It was interesting to note that during our first week in the Club, our room, although quite a lot smaller than we had previously been used to, held everybody present very comfortably.

A number of Cachalots, including the Boatsteerer, Storekeeper and me, were privileged to attend the funeral of Captain Hans Juesdorf at St. Michael's Church in Southampton on 16 March and at Ennio's restaurant afterwards

On Friday 18 March, I was privileged to attend the Fortieth Annual Dinner of the Southampton Royal Naval Officers' Association at the Tudor Merchants' Hall. The speech by Rear Admiral T C Chittenden highlighted, amongst other things, the mutual interdependence of the Royal and Merchant Navies and their strategic importance to the United Kingdom.

The following day, 19 March, Win and I enjoyed an excellent curry lunch with some 55 Cachalots and guests. The venue was POSH restaurant in Southampton, where the staff ensured that we were properly looked after.

On 1 May, the Cachalots were well represented at Walter Weyndling's Memorial Service in Winchester Cathedral. In addition, many seafarers and a large number of his and my colleagues from the Marine Directorate were present.

That evening, the Club held a Skittles evening at the Southampton (Old) Green Bowling Club. Our Functions Officer's wife, Anne Cartwright, received the prize for the highest score – I won't mention who scored the least!

On 15 April, I, together with the Boatsteerer and Storekeeper, represented the Club at the Service of

#### **June 2005**

Thanksgiving and Re-dedication at the Southampton Seafarers' Centre. We were welcomed by Captain John Hughes, the Chairman of the Trustees, and the three Chaplains, Fr Patsy Foley (Apostleship of the Sea), the Revd Michael Williams (Mission to Seafarers) and the Revd Bill McCrea (BISS), read the lessons. After the unveiling of the commemorative plaque by Mrs Mary Fagan, the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, we were able to look around the building. I was impressed with it and with the facilities it affords to seafarers visiting the Port of Southampton.

On 28 May, Win & I, and a coachful of Master Mariners and guests, really enjoyed the Trafalgar Band Concert given by the Lucknow Band of the Prince of Wales's Division at Tidwoth. The Director of Music, Captain Tim Cooper, is to be congratulated on such an excellent programme. I was invited to represent the Club at a special dinner given by the Garrison Commander on the following Thursday, but it clashed with our departure for France. Captain George Angas, Staff Captain, attended in my place, and he and his wife thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The Club weekend to St Malo was outstanding and, apart from one minor "breakdown", went without a hitch. It was really good to renew old friendships and to make new ones during our stay in France.

The first Club Supper held in our new premises took place on 11 May. The RBL's main room was used as our own Club Room was too small for the 57 or so people who came. Our guest speaker, Mr Geoffrey Skinner, who is a senior member of Fleet Support Limited, gave us an insight into the efforts made by his team to effect the repairs and fit replacement parts to HMS Victory using not only traditional materials but also modern products where this was thought more appropriate.

On 18 May, we were pleased to entertain members of the Watch Ashore to lunch at the Club, and, in the evening, Captain Reg Kelso chaired the Club's Annual Seminar "A Cause for Concern". It was very well attended (68 people) and the feed-back I have received indicates that those attending found it useful and interesting.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Club Officers, Harpooners, Committee Members and also Judith Peck for all their efforts and for the support I have received during the first few quarter of my year.

Captain Simon Harwood



# THE SHIPPING FESTIVAL SERVICE

THURSDAY 16th JUNE 2005 AT 7.00 p.m. CONGREGATION TO BE SEATED BY 6.45 p.m.

#### PREACHER:

The Very Revd. Michael Till Dean of Winchester

COLOUR PARTY FROM H.M.S. KING ALFRED, ROYAL FLEET AUXILIARY, STANDARD BEARERS OF THE ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION, THE ASSOCIATION OF WRNS, THE ROYAL MARINES ASSOCIATION and THE MERCHANT NAVY ASSOCIATION.

FLAG PARTY FROM THE SOUTHAMPTON, ROMSEY and WINCHESTER UNITS OF THE CADET CORPS.

MUSIC BY THE VOLUNTEER BAND OF H.M.S. NELSON UNDER THE DIRECTION OF BAND COLOUR SERGEANT CRAIG HENDERSON, R.M.

AFTERWARDS, IN THE DEANERY GARDENS, WINE and REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED.

THE PROCEEDS FROM THE SERVICE W ILL BE DONATED TO THE SOUTHAMPTON SEAFARERS' CENTRE And WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL

**ALL WELCOME** 

## **Curry Lunch**

1200 Saturday 2nd July



P.O.S.H. Restaurant

(Bottom of Queensway)

Come and join us for another of our Curry Lunches at POSH. The last one, in March, was well enjoyed by 55 members and there is no restriction on numbers. Tremendous value at

Just £6 per head.

Names to the notice in the Club-room or to the office, with payment please. Cheques payable to "The Cachalots".

And the following Curry Lunch is scheduled for Saturday 3rd September, just before you will receive the next edition. Watch the notice board for more details.

# SUMMER DINNER DANCE



## Saturday 25th June

Brook House Masonic Centre, Botley

Smoked Salmon & Lrawn Larcels
On a bed of Mixed Lettuce

Duck Breast a l'Orange Seasonal Vegetables & Lotatoes

Raspberry Torte

Cheese & Biscuits

Coffee&Mints

A non-alcoholic fruit punch will be served on arrival Drinks at sensible prices Music by Harmony House.

Black Tie, 1915 for 2000. Price retained at **£25** per person.

During the evening there will be a raffle held in aid of the Wessesx Cancer Trust. Any donations towards this raffle will be gratefully received.

There is no restriction on numbers so why not make up a table of family and friends?

List now on the notice board, or book through the office.

### TRAFALGAR DINNER

A Club Dinner to celebrate Trafalgar Night has been booked at the R.A.F. Yacht Club at Hamble on 21st October and arrangements are currently in hand. Improvements at the club will hopefully mean more seating available. Full details in the next edition of *The Cachalot*, meanwhile reserve a space in your diary.

# The Last Voyage Of the Cruiser H.M.S. Fox

Now that the fascinating diary account of the cruise of H.M. Armed Merchantman "Kinfauns Castle" has been completed, members may interested to read of the eventual fate of H.M.S. Fox which was one of the British warships actively engaged in blockading the ports of German East Africa in 1914-15.

After the First World War she was declared surplus to requirements by the Admiralty and sold for scrapping to a South Wales shipbreaker, Cardiff Marine Stores Co. Ltd. in 1919. This company

The cruiser H.M.S. "Fox", July 1920. The largest ship ever to enter Watchet Harbour. The ss "Rushlight" and a ketch lay alongside the West Pier.

intended to break up the cruiser at a berth in Cardiff but was unable to do so due to a lack of space.

The firm looked for alternative premises close to Cardiff and eventually the local Council at the small port of Watchet in Somerset was approached with an offer to lease the West pier and adjacent yard for shipbreaking, the sums offered being £90 per annum plus £20 for each ship broken up. The Council accepted these terms, apparently on the understanding that several small or medium sized ships would be broken up.

Imagine the amazement of the harbour fraternity when word was received that the first ship due for scrapping would be H.M.S. Fox, a light cruiser of 7,000 tons! She was towed across the Bristol Channel from Cardiff by three tugs and delicately eased through the narrow harbour entrance on a high Spring Tide in July 1920 (see photo).

Watchet harbour dries out at low tide, and even at high Neap Tides it is doubtful whether a ship of this size would have floated, so the cruiser lay aground for most of the time while she was being broken up. It is not certain exactly how the breaking up procedure took place, but as there would have been only one steam crane at the West Pier, and this capable of lifting no more than 50cwts, I would guess that the shipbreakers must have installed additional cranes of else rigged heavy swinging derricks on the guay.

Many local men were employed in the operation, but with lack of facilities it was a slow and laborious job. Every part of H.M.S. Fox had to be broken down into small pieces, loaded into lorries or carts and then taken around to the East Pier. From there it was either loaded into coasters to be taken to South Wales furnaces, or into railway trucks for carriage to various destinations, the local G.W.R. branch line having a siding which ran to the East Pier only.

Members will not be surprised to hear that the cruiser took nearly three years to completely break up and was judged to have been a financial failure, at least from the Cardiff Marine Stores Company point of view. To many local men, having returned from the First World War and finding themselves unemployed, she was doubtless a godsend.

The Company nevertheless persevered, and when the West Pier was clear again, they brought in the three masted steel barque "Dova Rio" of 2,000 tons for breaking up in 1923. She took two years to dispose of, and when completed in 1925, the Cardiff Marine Stores Company ceased trading.

The port continued trading into the second half of the 20th century, mainly sustained by imports of pulp and esparto grass for the local Paper Mill and coal for the gasworks. After a resurgence of foreign trade in the 1970's and 1980's including containers, Watchet became uneconomical to operate and closed as a commercial port in 1995. A tidal marina with lock gates has been built in the Eastern part of harbour and is home to about 60 yachts and fishing craft.

H.M.S. Fox was and still is the largest ship to enter Watchet, although it was a one way journey!

Terry Winsborough

Photograph reproduced by kind permission of Mr W.H. Norman, retired Watchet seaman and author of the book "Tales of Watchet Harbour" 1988. It should be noted that the caption under the photograph is in error as the ss "Rushlight" and the ketch are in fact lying alongside the East Pier.

#### The French Excursion, May 2005

A Personal Account

There were 39 on the coach, including Mike Smallbone, the driver, when we disembarked from the *Pride of Le Havre* at Le Havre on the Friday morning. Pick-ups on the previous evening, at Lyndhurst, Southampton and Portsmouth, had gone smoothly, as had our channel crossing despite warnings of strong winds.

First stop on that rather grey morning was just down the road at Honfleur, where we ambled ashore for reviving cups of coffee, avec croissants for those determined to savour the full French experience. It was very pleasant to just sit harbour-side and watch the picturesque little port coming awake.

Soon we were off to the *Pays d'Auge* – the green heart of Normandy- and a visit to the *Château du Breuil*. This fine château, dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, incorporates a Calvados distillery, and we were guided through the arts of distilling and aging before moving on to the delights of the tasting room and, of course, the shop. While making use of the "facilities" there I noted

that a superb shot of the château could be had by leaning out of the window that was adjacent to the porcelain. While I was thus engaged, some Officer of the Club, who shall be nameless, snatched picture of myself and another member who was addressing the porcelain at the time, both of us doing our business as it were. The idea was to publish the photo in this journal and caption it, "Maximum

exposure" or "Members' outing or some such. For the sake of decency and decorum I have of course desisted, this is a Gentleman's Club, after all. (Candid photos are available under plain cover and at vast expense.)

A two and a half hours drive through the Normandy countryside brought us to Mont Saint-Michel, described by Guy de Maupassant as "a sheer-sided abbey, rising in the distance, far from land, like an imaginary manorhouse, stupefying as a dream palace, improbably strange and beautiful." Luckily, the tide was out, (the tidal range here being more than 39ft) so the coach was able to park within a short walking distance of the 250ft rock surmounted by a further 300ft of abbey and citadel. It was, by now, time for a late lunch and being in the heart of tourist land our members experienced mixed fortunes. Whilst some found the local speciality, enjoyable, others omelette à la Madame Poulard, eating in different establishments described them as indifferent and vastly overpriced.

Our two and a quarter hour visit was soon over and those of us who had lingered over a second beer at lunch time came to regret that we didn't have more time to inspect this flamboyant gothic monument. No change

there then.

After a brief stop at a supermarket to top up with essentials, mainly drinks it seemed, we found our way to Brittany and to our hotel, the *MARC'OTEL*, between St.Malo and Dinard. Here, the rooms were comfortable, some with balconies and many overlooking the River Rance.

Some of us descended on Tom and Sylvia Effenys' room to down some quick pre-dinner drinks. Tom had bought a bottle of that well known (?) King Edwards whisky at the supermarket and various polite comments were passed regarding the "interesting" taste. Then Tom discovered that the bottled water he had also bought and was using as a mixer was in fact apple flavoured, so he had just invented a new drink, "Normandy Noggin".

Dinner that night was a group event and once seating arrangements were sorted to everyones satisfaction the Captain gave a short speech of welcome and all hands

were served with a very nice meal. Wine was included and it seemed as though there was more than enough to go round twice. So no complaints here either.

Breakfast the following day was the usual buffet affair and was marred by what could have been a very nasty accident. The central part of the dining room was raised a few inches, purely as a design feature. I'm sure and

feature, I'm sure, and Sylvia Effeny, carrying a loaded tray before her was unable to see through it and tripped over the step, with disastrous results. Luckily she was unhurt although badly shaken. The staff seemed more concerned with the mess on the carpet than for poor Sylvia.

Our first stop on the Saturday was at Dinan, another idyllic looking walled medieval town. A steep descent took us down through cobbled streets and half-timbered buildings to the river where some had time for a quick drink before an equally steep climb back to the square. More refreshment was on hand here as Mike Smallbone treated his whole coachload to coffee before setting off for St. Malo.

We had the afternoon at leisure in St. Malo and were urged to make a booking for dinner at any restaurant that took our fancy, most of the party having opted to return to St. Malo for their evening meal. In the end we had all booked into one of two restaurants and set off back to the hotel with a stop at the supermarket on the way to get our duty frees.

On the way the coach began to slow considerably and it appeared that the fault lay in the governor which is



"A sheer-sided Abbey"

Page P

required by law to limit the speed of coaches on the continent. Mike was unable to rectify the fault while we were loading up with beer and wine at the supermarket, and had to call for reinforcements who promised to be at the hotel to attend to the fault, hopefully in time for us to make our evening foray into St. Malo at 19:30.

In the event the break-down van didn't arrive until well after 20:00, by which time the crew were getting restless and phone calls had already been made to the restaurants, amending our ETAs.

Modern coaches no longer have bonnets which you can open and attack the oily bits with either a screwdriver or a hammer, according to your level of expertise. Nowadays they have a pull out circuit board the size of a coffee table and as the *mechanic* surveyed it with seemingly no more comprehension than the rest of us, sucking his teeth and scratching his head in that universal way, the decision was made to abandon the trip to St. Malo, cancel the restaurant bookings and throw our collective selves at the mercy of the hotel who had been told at 10:00 that morning that only two would be eating in. The catering staff, aware of what was going on, had been standing by for a decision and with a whoop of joy set about preparing for another 33 *couverts*.

Somehow, me thinks, in similar circumstances in this country, there would be no whoops of joy and little chance of any decent fare. As it was, the *Marc'otel* pulled out all the stops and presented a meal which was, by all accounts, even better than the night before and at a cost of around only £15 per head. I say "by all accounts" because four of us, still keen to sample the restaurants of France, decided to stick with our original plans and made our way into St. Malo by taxi. There we found that there was still a table available at our chosen restaurant, made apologies for the twenty or so that were missing, and enjoyed good food and a most convivial evening.

By Sunday morning the coach had been fixed so after breakfast (prominent signs now in the dining room - "Mind the Step") we left the hotel at 10:00. The four of us who

had escaped the confusion of the previous evening shrugged off some cruel jibes about rats and sinking ships and enjoyed the few minutes drive into Dinard. This seaside town, with shades of Torquay, is situated on the opposite side of the bay from St. Malo and most of our members chose to walk off the excesses of the night before by following the cliff-side paths either side of the beach before settling down to yet another coffee back at the promenade. And very nice too.

At noon we were back on the road again, heading back eastwards and stopping at the small town of Avrenche for a latish lunch. They were preparing for a road (running) race that afternoon and the main vehicle park was closed off and signs were up saying that the roads would also be closed. Never say die, Mike parked outside the local supermarket, which was closed, and we made our way into the square looking for that special bar or café. The

one that a few of us squeezed into had just about finished serving food, all that was left was *croque Monsieur* and chips, but the beer was still flowing. Our Boatsteerer, as is his way, was flitting between tables sampling other peoples' chips when a large American lady, who was sat alone, said, "do you want one of mine?" "Oh, no," replied Lionel, "you've put tomato sauce on them." "Snob!" came the instant reply, putting him firmly in place.

We managed to extricate ourselves from Avrenche just as the first runners were coming in and headed back towards Honfleur. It was very quiet on the coach that afternoon and looking around I could see why. There were many open mouths but they just seemed to be catching flies.

Suitably refreshed we arrived back in Honfleur in time for an evening meal before we were due back on the ferry. Splitting up into small, manageable groups we again sought out those special places with good food, service and prices. There seemed to be so many of them in Honfleur that I don't think any of our members were disappointed, we certainly weren't. No pap music blaring, no yobbishness, just people out enjoying their meals in a civilised manner. And it seemed to me that the majority of people around us were British. More food for thought.

Finally it was back to the coach and to the *Pride of Le Havre* again for our overnight trip back to Portsmouth. To the bar for a nightcap only to be assailed once more by the obligatory pap music blaring away. We had to move into the casino area close to the roulette wheel before we could hear each other speak. Driven to bed early was probably no bad thing as we had an early call in the morning, the ship citing a safety inspection as the reason for an early, 06:00, disembarkation. On a bank holiday? Whatever, it got us home that bit earlier and didn't distract from a most enjoyable weekend spent in the best of company. Another success for the S.M.M.C. and thanks to our Boatsteerer and the Functions Officer for their excellent arrangements on our behalf.

Terry Clark



## A Report on the TECHNICAL SEMINAR

Held at the Royal British Legion Club, Southampton On Wednesday 18th May 2005

#### **NAVIGATIONAL CONTROL OF THE WEST SOLENT**

#### "A CAUSE FOR CONCERN".

Captain Simon Harwood, Captain of The Southampton Master Mariners' Club welcomed those in attendance and explained that, since the demise of the Technical Committee some six years ago, the annual seminar had been the responsibility of Mr.Walter Weyndling and tonight's Chairman - Captain Reg Kelso. Sadly, Walter died last year and Captain Harwood invited the assembly to stand in memory of our friend and colleague. Then, after giving a brief outline of the substance of the seminar Captain Harwood introduced the Chairman.

Captain Kelso opened by commenting on the decision by the Master of "ATTILIO IEVOLI" to disregard his standing instructions and depart via the Western Solent and Needles Channel. Tonight, however, we will concentrate on the two major recommendations made by The Marine Accident Investigation Branch in their report of its investigation into the grounding of the chemical tanker on Lymington Banks.

- 1. The Department of Transport is recommended to take action, working as necessary with the Competent Harbour Authorities of Southampton, Cowes, Lymington and Yarmouth IoW, to ensure "The establishment of an effective regime for the control and direction of all commercial shipping of 500gt or above using the Western Solent or Needles Channel. Such action should include the provision of appropriate VTS coverage, a suitable pilotage service and improved survey of navigable waters"
- 2. The Corporation of Trinity House is recommended to "Review the buoyage in the west Solent in order to better define the available deep water route"

The Department of Transport and Trinity House will be responding to the MAIB in the near future - and the Department is currently meeting with many of those likely to be involved in implementing the recommendations - so the Club has deemed it inadvisable to invite representatives of those parties to join the panel but their participation, from the floor, will be welcome.

In introducing the first speaker the Chairman said that **Captain Ian Stirling** first transited the Western Solent/Needles Channel in 1951 aboard the Solent based ketch "MOYANA" and, more recently, one month ago as "Marine Adviser" aboard the cruise ship "SAGA RUBY".

Captain Stirling opened by refuting the belief that the grounding of "Attilio Ievoli" was an isolated incident; he had personal experience of 3 of the "numerous incidents" in the Western Solent. Although impressed by the quality of the MAIB report he felt that there was a minor inaccuracy in relation to the Harbour Revision Order sought by ABP some years ago. ABP did not, at that time, offer a "pilotage service" for the Western Solent but they did, for sound economic reasons, authorise four pilots to carry out acts of pilotage on contract to shipowners and many, including Cunard and P&O took advantage of this. Three of that number are now retired and many large vessels - including QE2 - no longer use the Needles due to a change in the configuration of the channel. Large vessels are, on occasions, forced to abort their turn at the West Brambles and, for them, the area off Lymington is their last opportunity to swing and regain their track. Referring to the grounding of the chemical tanker, Captain Stirling said that it was obvious that there was evidence of crew neglect. The channel is wide, there was little recreational traffic and no commercial traffic but the vessel had steered well to starboard of her safe course. He saw no real necessity for additional buoys between Lepe and Hurst. He outlined instances of other vessels grounding after disembarking their pilot at East Lepe and suggested that fatigue - of Masters and Watchkeeping Officers - was a contributory factor in these accidents. He did, however, see a case for "some sort of VTS" in the Hurst area. He ended by saying that he would not dispute viewpoint expressed in the MAIB report that the current situation was "a cause for concern".

Introducing **Captain Geoff Stokes** the Chairman said that prior to joining The Coastguard and Maritime Agency Captain Stokes had been a Dover Harbour pilot and that tonight he would comment on the MCA's role as the competent VTS authority for The United Kingdom.

In outlining the Agencies involvement with hydrography, pilotage, VTS and the various inter-related legal aspects Captain Stokes said that the area under discussion had been surveyed "recently" and that a survey of the Needles Channel was scheduled for this year. He stressed that the MCA set the standards for VTS and Competent Harbour Authorities (in accordance with IMO and IALA requirements) but it was the port's decision on what to offer after the completion of an appropriate risk assessment.

The Agency was currently discussing VTS organisation in the Severn Estuary, East Solent and Sunk areas. Discussions with Competent Harbour Authorities were ongoing.

Finally, the Chairman introduced **Captain Nigel Hunt** and said that as a former Yarmouth IoW Harbour Master Captain Hunt's statement would "support the MAIB recommendations"

Giving details of his career background Captain Hunt said that he had sailed the Solent since his early teens, served some 22 years in the Merchant Navy with two years in command of "exempt" ships allowing him to bring his command through the Needles Channel without a pilot, been Harbour Master at Yarmouth IoW 1988 to 1990 before serving nine years at Warsash Maritime College in ship simulators and manned model ship handling facilities. Currently he runs his own marine consultancy specialising in Marine risk analysis, navigation audits and safety training. He reminded the seminar that up until October 1st 1988 the West Solent was an area of compulsory pilotage for most vessels with the pilots licensed by Trinity House. Currently, the area lies without the jurisdiction of ABP Southampton, it does not have a pilotage service and it is not covered by a shore based traffic monitoring systems. In consequence Southampton VTS has no authority to "organise" the movement of vessels in the West Solent. The area is classed as UK internal waters so vessels may transit by the right of "innocent passage" granted by the UN Convention of The Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Captain Hunt reminded the seminar that, in 1995, the Port of Southampton applied for a Harbour Revision Order to extend its jurisdiction to include the West Solent (in order to improve the safety of navigation and to provide a pilotage service) but, following a public enquiry, this application was rejected. Had the application been successful ABP would have, at that time, assumed full responsibility for (compulsory) pilotage, VTS coverage of the area, buoyage and hydrographic surveying of the area under discussion.

Increased awareness of environmental issues has altered the public's willingness to accept risks and the effects of adverse publicity following a serious incident in the West Solent should not be underestimated. The foreshore on both sides of the area is a Special Protection Area, a Special Area of Conservation, or both. Seafaring skills are often an unknown quantity aboard calling ships and the compulsory presence of a well-rested pilot with local knowledge would contribute massively to safety of navigation.

It was time to revisit the decision taken in 1995 to deny ABP the opportunity to extend its port limits to embrace the West Solent.

After a short break the seminar reconvened and the Chairman invited questions and comment from the floor.

Captain Downer asked if alcohol had played any part in the stranding of "Attilio Ievoli" and was assured that this was

Mr. Graham Butler, Chairman of Lymington Harbour Authority asked if it was the ABP viewpoint that there could be no involvement in VTS without statutory overall control and it was the view of the panel that this was the case (See comment by Captain Young).

Mr Reg Pretty, Chief Officer of an aggregate vessel operating in the west Solent/Needles Channel was of the opinion that the buoyage etc. was satisfactory and saw little reason for significant change.

Mr Don Alexander,RYCA asked if the random entry of potentially unsafe commercial traffic could be restricted and the consensus was that this could not be achieved.

Mr Paul King, RYA asked if compulsory pilotage alone could be reintroduced and whether this would be effective in dealing with the problem. The viewpoint was that this was neither possible nor desirable.

Captain Kelso reported that some years ago he had raised concerns about a Russian flag vessel - almost certainly without P&I club insurance cover -entering via the Needle and bunkering off Yarmouth. He sailed very close to this vessel and her lack of maintenance was very evident. Despite protracted correspondence with the relevant authorities he was unable to gain any assurance that a competent authority checked on the ability of such vessels to meet any claims in respect of oil fuel contamination etc. within the West Solent area.

Captain George Lang WMC outlined the commercial pressures exerted on today's Masters and Watchkeepers resulting in fatigue and poor watchkeeping practice. Falling standards of competency were a cause for grave concern.

After some protracted discussion about the need for additions or changes to the navigational marks in the West Solent Ms. Kathy Hossain, Trinity House said that prior to the publication of the MAIB report the Corporation had undertaken a consultation process to establish the adequacy, or otherwise, of navigational marks throughout the area. A copy of "Review of Trinity House Aids to Navigation in the Western Solent" was made available and a copy is attached to this report.

Further discussion centred on the reasons for the withdrawal of compulsory pilotage and the benefits of high intensity daylight lights as leading marks.

Mr Graham Butler referred to the Inspector's report on the 1995 Harbour Revision Order and said that it appears that it is open to ABP to extend its area of VTS cover and also provide pilotage services outside the current area of ABP control. There had also been some discussions relating to the reinstatement of Lymington Buoy.

Captain Steven Young, ABP Southampton Harbourmaster said that ABP was broadly supportive of the recommendations but that ABP had no plans to extend into the West Solent although discussions with the Department of Transport were ongoing. He agreed that there was provision in the pending Parliament Act which would allow Competent Harbour Authorities to extend their pilotage areas.

ABP had records relating to some 40 "significant" incidents in the area - 15 since 1995 - and he referred to the "EssoBahamas" passing within metres of Gurnard Rocks after machinery failure, The "QE2" touched Lymington Banks in 1991 and "Victoria" repeated this in 1994. In 1994/5 there were 3700 commercial movements through the West Solent and, in 2004, some 3000 - of which 2000 were over pilotage length - (60.9m). There were 1000 pilotage acts equating to 10% of the port total.

Captain Young was adamant that it was not down to ABP to recommend to vessels that they do not use open waters but, since 1995, ABP had, as a result of several risk assessments implemented more safety strictures relating to escort towage etc. They did not consider pilotage as being the panacea but more as part of an overall package incorporating VTS coverage and improved survey procedures of navigable waters. Indeed, to introduce pilotage in isolation might well be counter productive in terms of safety insofar as the area would undoubtedly attract larger and larger ships with a resulting increase in risk.

There being no further questions Captain Kelso invited Captain Harwood to sum up and to thank those who had made such a very significant contribution to an interesting evening.

Captain Harwood said that it appeared that the majority of those present was agreed that there was indeed "Cause for Concern" in respect of the subject under discussion.

Something must be done to improve the situation and possibly the reintroduction of compulsory pilotage - as a first step - might be effective but he welcomed the support given to the MAIB proposals by ABP and agreed that pilotage could only be part of an overall package incorporating VTS supervision and hydrographic surveying. The reluctance of the smaller ports to become involved in the cost implications of these changes is entirely understandable.

Captain Harwood closed by thanking the speakers and the participants expressed their appreciation with applause.

CRK 26/5/05



"Attilio Ievoli" alongside at Fawley Marine Terminal. L.O.A. 115.5m, 4450 Gross, 1982 Nett

#### City of Windsor

Further recollections by our Hon. Archivist, Hamish Roberts, of when he was a "first tripper" in 1945.

It may be interesting to reflect on what was taking place in the world beyond the dock gates as I became familiar, or slightly more familiar, with life on board a cargo steamer.

The famous Cunard "Queen" liners had been repatriating American troops, about 14,000 each voyage, and followed that up later

in 1945 by carrying large numbers of G.I. brides to their new homes in the USA. The "Khaki" election of July 1945 had replaced Churchill and his coalition with the Labour government under Clement Atlee. Many merchant ships were still subject to control by the Ministry of War Transport and, with passenger tonnage being fully engaged in trooping, as hospital ships, or repatriating prisoners of war, passenger accommodation was at a premium.

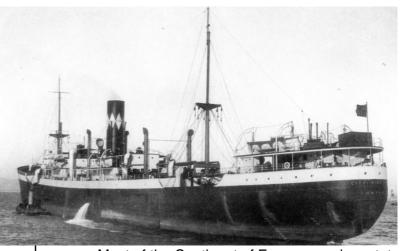
Demobilisation had got under way and those with early release group numbers were leaving the armed forces. Men continued to be called up under the Conscription Act, although it was not until 1947 that they were officially termed "National Service Men".

Details of the qualifications for the award of campaign stars and clasps for Service in the Merchant Navy were made public, and it was thought to be the first occasion on which the Merchant Navy had become entitled to decorations which ordinarily go to the Army, Navy and Air Force.

The Nautical Magazine for October 1945 reported that Sir Stafford Cripps, speaking at a Luncheon of the Radio Industry Council, predicted the day "when ships of all nations will be fitted with Radar, just as today they carry wireless" and, "once that day has come" he said, in perhaps over optimistic terms, "delays to shipping due to fog and perils of the deep, like icebergs, will have gone for good."

The Country had reverted to Greenwich Mean Time for the first time since 1939 and, when day work ended each day it was growing dark in London's dockland.

Vikkun Quisling, the Norwegian who aide the Nazi invasion in 1940 was standing trial as a war criminal, as was Pierre Laval, the Vichy French collaborator. Lloyds List of 15<sup>th</sup> October announced that the American authorities would that day hand over the port of Cherbourg to the French, and Reuter reported that the port of Antwerp had been returned to the Civil authorities and within four weeks the allied military forces would completely relinquish their control of the port.



Most of the Continent of Europe was in a state of ruination, particularly the great ports of Hamburg, Bremen, Rotterdam, Antwerp, and many others, including some of the Mediterranean. Quays, railways, cranes power supplies and roads were destroyed or badly damaged, and the approaches still had to be cleared of mines and wrecks. Many were under control of allied governments or military.

Soon it became apparent to me that the organisation of, or demand for, any communal recreational or social activities involving and for the common benefit of the European members of the ships crew was a non-event. Deprived of almost any form of female company, and having no interest in the doings, non-doings, or misdoings of the extensive variety of local, shore dwelling non-descripts who had each day ascended and descended the gangway, each man was left to find his own leisure time entertainment. This however, seemed to present few problems. Most people, when off watch, ventured ashore. Their private, or business affairs seemed to place few demands on their time or energy, and once ashore, rather than sight seeing or making an attempt to satisfy any educational or cultural appetite, their sights were set on easy entertainment of the baser type which, in London and most other large ports was, if somewhat repetitive, readily and easily accessible.

North Woolwich was neither exciting, interesting, nor attractive. A curving street, lined by small terraced houses, occupied by dockers and other longshore types, ran from the dock gates by Harlands works to the police station, and finally to the embarkation jetty for the Woolwich Free Ferry, a service maintained, since 1889, by the London County Council. The stout vessels 'John Benn and Will Crook were then in service.

The community centre for the locals and itinerant seafarers was a public house called the 'General Gordon', but known familiarly throughout the district, and perhaps world-wide as the 'Roundhouse', a typical East End dock area pub, complete with such anachronisms as a bottle and jug bar, flock wallpaper,

and local dockers family groups, including a lady of venerable but uncertain age, wearing bedroom slippers being short of teeth, and when being plied with another Guinness, or drop of gin, was fondly addressed as 'Gran'.

The Roundhouse was my first experience of a bar of the type internationally familiar to sailors as 'the first and last', being the nearest to the dock gate for a drink on arrival at a port, or the last prior to sailing or reboarding the ship. Sadly, some sailors never ventured far beyond the first and last whether in London, Lisbon, Lagos, or Liverpool.

Fortunately, escape from North Woolwich to other equally drab but entertaining venues was not difficult. Those who craved some fresh air could avail themselves of the Free Ferry crossing and sample the delights of Woolwich or nearby Greenwich on the south bank of the Thames. Alternatively, a cheap bus ride took us through Silvertown, of world war one explosion fame, and home to Tate and Lyle and Knights' Castille soap, to Canning Town. Here, the Liverpool Arms' rivalled the 'Bridge House' in offering hospitality to Jack ashore. Canning Town also provided an opportunity to see what was on at the 'pictures" in the large local cinema, the 'Imperial'. Buses from Canning Town were convenient for the whole length of Commercial Road to Gardiners Corner at Aldgate, on the fringe of the City. In the opposite direction, buses ran to East Ham High Street, for the popular-Saturday night dances held in East Ham Town Hall.

Seafarers approaching the Port of London might say they were bound for the "London River"; for the great port of London encompassed not only the well known 'Royal' group of docks but all the numerous wharves, jetties and dock systems sited on both sides of the Thames from Gravesend to London Bridge, as well as river buoy moorings, and the dry docks and repair yards required by marine engineering concerns. The principal enclosed dock systems were however, to be found on the northern bank - Tilbury Docks, as distinct from Tilbury Riverside Landing Stage; The Royal Group, the West India, Millwall, East India, St. Katherines, and London Docks. On the south bank were the Surrey Commercial Docks with extensive timber yards.

Hundreds of dumb lighters or swim barges were employed on the river and in the docks, usually under tow, but sometimes handled by a sole lighterman controlling the craft in the tideway with a large oar or sweep. Many substantial, well known towage and lighterage firms operated throughout the system, Vokins, Thames and Mercantile, Watkins, Braithwaite & Dean, Alexandra Towing, Sun Tugs, Tate & Lyle, and Gaselee Sons Ltd, to name but a few.

to be continued

#### **Captain William Robertson**

Captain William Robertson, known affectionately throughout the maritime world as Robbie, died in Oban, Scotland, on the morning of Monday 23rd May 2005. Some days earlier Robbie, together with his dear wife Jane, had driven north to attend the book launch of "Ferry Tales", written by his late friend and fellow Cachalot Walter Weyndling, (who predeceased him by three months).

Captain Robertson joined the Southampton Master Mariners' Club in 1983 and served as Harpooner in various committees before being appointed Club Captain in 1993. Robbie was a popular and enthusiastic Cachalot, always "doing the rounds" of each table to greet his friends and warmly welcome their ladies with an avuncular kiss before settling down to swing the lamp with colleagues. He rarely attended without Jane by his side and it was noted in 2003 they were honoured with a greeting from Her Majesty in recognition of 60 years of married bliss.

Robbie was buried in Tobermoray, his beloved homeland on the Isle of Mull, on Thursday 26 May.

Sadly, the unexpected demise of Robbie, coupled with the difficulty of travelling to Tobermory, precluded members from attending the funeral but we were able to speak with and communicate our sincere condolences to Jane and her son Malcolm beforehand.

Jane told me that a memorial service will be arranged to be held in Southampton and details will be posted on the Club noticeboard.

Boatsteerer. 27 May 05



Robbie with some of his tug crew when he was serving as a pilot in Gibraltar.

## Rope Ends

#### **CRICKET SECTION**

#### Club Officers For 2005

President. John Smart Secretary. Mike Weston Captain. Peter Starkey Vice-Capt, John Lloyd

Treasurer Ian Bagshaw Baggage Master. Position vacant



**FIXTURES LIST 2005 NB:** Home matches will be played at Hardmoor.

| , |    |                      |                    |           |      |  |
|---|----|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|------|--|
| ١ | ١  | DATE                 | OPPOSITION         | HOME/AWAY | TIME | NOTES  |
| 1 | 1  | Tues 03 May          | Shirley CC         | Н         | 1800 |  |
| ( | 2  | Thurs 12 May         | Portsdown          | Α         | 1800 | At Eastney   |
| ١ | 3  | Tues 17 May          | TBA                | Α         |      |  |
| Ì | 4  | Tues 24 May          | Winchester College | е Н       | 1800 | ,  |
| ١ | 5  | Tues 31 May          | HMS Excellent      | Н         | 1800 |  |
|   | 6  | Tues 7 June          | TBA                | Α         |      |  |
| / | 7  | Tues 14 June         | Shirley Police     | Н         | 1800 | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·              |
|   | 8  | Fri 17 June          | Eccentrics         | Α         | 1800 | Victoria Park. No spikes. £1 per player ground fee |
| / | 9  | Thurs 23 June        | Southampton Instit | ute H     | 1800 | per player ground fee                              |
| ١ | 10 | Tues 28 June         | St Cross (DHSS)    | A         |      | Probably at Soton Sports Centre                    |
| Ì | 11 | Tues 5 July          | HMS Collingwood    | A         |      | Venue to be confirmed                              |
| Ś | 12 | Tues 12 July         | Portsdown          | н         | 1800 |  |
|   | 13 | Tues 19 July         | Shirley CC         | Α         | 1800 | Probably at Soton Sports Centre                    |
| / | 14 | Tues 26 July         | HMS Sultan         | 7 . H     | 1800 |  |
|   | 15 | Thurs 4 Aug          | HMS Excellent      | Α         | 1800 | At Whale Island                                    |
| j | 16 | Sun 21 Aug           | Winchester College | • A       | 1400 |  |
| ⟨ | 17 | Thurs25 Aug          | Overseas Mapping   |           | 1800 | At Southampton Sports Centre                       |
| 1 |    | NI IEDIEO DEO ADDINO |                    |           |      | TADICO ( ON 04400 F70447/1 IOME)                   |

ANY QUERIES REGARDING MATCH TIMINGS, WEATHER ETC. RING PETER STARKEY ON: 01489 578417(HOME), 01489 556281 (WORK) OR 07789 037099 (MOBILE), OR EMAIL, peter.starkey@solent.ac.uk

MIKE WESTON ON 01489 556236 (WORK) OR 07855 741528 (MOBILE), OR EMAIL mike.weston@solent.ac.uk

#### **BRASS MONKETS**

In the heyday of sailing ships, all war ships and many freighters carried iron cannons. Those cannons fired round iron cannon balls.

It was necessary to keep a good supply near the cannon. However, how to prevent them from rolling about the deck? The best storage method devised was a square-based pyramid with one ball on top, resting on four resting on nine, which rested on sixteen. Thus, a supply of 30 cannon balls could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon. There was only one problem...how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding or rolling from under the others. The solution was a metal plate called a "Monkey" with 16 round indentations.

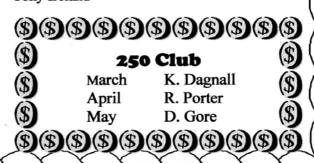
However, if this plate were made of iron, the iron balls would quickly rust to it. The solution to the rusting problem was to make "Brass Monkeys." Few landlubbers realize that brass

contracts much more and much faster than iron when chilled.

Consequently, when the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannonballs would come right off the monkey. Thus, it was quite literally, "Cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey."

(All this time, you thought that was an improper expression, didn't you?)

Tony Ireland



#### **Gone Aloft**

A. Bowers
H. M. Juelsdorf
S.Smith
W. Roberston

#### Capt. Hans Magnus Juelsdorf 1919 - 2005

I have been given the privilege to say a few words about the loss of our dear friend Hans, who was so proud to have spent most of his life among the British people and in the British Merchant Navy.

Hans was born in Denmark the 18th April 1919 and joined the Danish Merchant Navy at the age of 16. He was in Glasgow in 1940 on board the Danish ship 'Diana', the ship was taken over by the British to be used in the war and with the Red Ensign.

Hans decided to offer his service and ended up serving under the Red Ensign from 1940 until the war ended, risking his life for the freedom we all enjoy today. He took part in 4 D-Day landings including Operation Overlord the 6th June 1944.

In 1994 he was given a Medal by Le Prèsident du conseil

Règional 'Ronè Garrec' in France. He also received a personal letter of thanks from President Mitterrand and a diploma from The French Ministry of Defence in recognition of his help in liberating France.

He was a great Dane and I am sure you will all agree that he will be greatly missed by us all.

#### A Poem for Hans

We see a light shine brightly, on a far and distant shore.
We turn our heads, just slightly, The light, it shines no more.
Is this a life then faded —
A journey at it's end.
Must we then say farewell
To our kind and loyal friend.
We shall join him on his journey, we know not where or when.
We shall then be re-united with Hans, our special friend.

Hans made two wishes before he died, the first was for his ashes to be returned to the sea that he loved. This will take place from the stern of the 'Shieldhall' the 11th June. The second, which I will join him in, is that more members would visit the club and join in with the friendship and social events, it is a fantastic club.

We send our love and condolences to Mary and the family.

**Captain Flemming Nelleborg Pedersen** 

The Club is routinely open four days a week, Tuesday to Friday, at lunch time. Liz will be only too happy to serve you a drink and on Thursdays and Fridays she can take your orders for:

Homemade Soup of the Day, freshly made sandwiches, (which can be toasted,) filled Jacket Potatoes, Ploughman's lunches and other snacks. It is hoped to extend this service as custom demands.

Suggestions for events, for improvements, offers of help, articles and anecdotes for inclusion in this newsletter will all be received with pleasure. We are even prepared to receive complaints if they are constructive.

The Club's (NEW) address is:

The Southampton Master Mariners' Club,
(The CACHALOTS)
c/o Southampton Royal British Legion Club,
Eastgate Street,
SOUTHAMPTON, SO14 3HB

Tel/Fax: 023 8022 6155
E.mail: cachalots@smmclub.fsnet.co.uk
Editor: t.e.clark@which.net
http//homepages.tcp.co.uk/~glang/smmc.html

Note that in the e.mail address, "cachalots" is in the plural and not the singular as erroneously shown in the article in edition 15.

#### **Dates for your Diary**

Thu JUN 16 Shipping Festival Service.

Sat JUN 25 Summer Dinner Dance, Brook House Masonic Hall, Botley.

Tue JUN 28 Fleet Review, Son et Lumiere & Fireworks, Evening cruise, Shieldhall FULLY BOOKED

Sat JUL 2 Curry Lunch at P.O.S.H..

Fri AUG 5 Cowes Week Fireworks, Shieldhall.

Sat SEP 3 Curry Lunch.

Fri OCT 21 Trafalgar Dinner, R.A.F.Y.C. Hamble.

Tue OCT 25 Last Night of the Proms, Tidworth.

Tue NOV 15 Sale of SeaPie Supper tickets.

Sat DEC 3 Christmas Dinner, Kings Court. \*

Sat DEC 10 Christmas Lunch, Kings Court. \*

\* Please note that the dates of the above two festive functions have been changed around. I could try and explain the reasons but we would all end up even more confused. Remember, Dinner first, followed by Lunch.

#### NEW CACHALOTS

J.D. Bolt P.A. Leece