

The CACHALOT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB

No 51

March 2014

Post Captain's Log

This is my last contribution as Captain of the Cachalots. First allow me to welcome Ian Odd as your Club Captain for the next year. Ian is unique in today's nautical world; he spent all his working life from 1965 to 2013 at sea. In his working life Ian achieved his ambition – not to be a commuter!

In retirement, Ian works on the SHIELDHALL bridge team, enjoys fly fishing and helps to rebuild large steam locomotives, most recently as a riveter! As his wife Lesley says, "playing with choo-choos!"

The CACHALOTS are honoured to have as their Captain a true seafarer.

I am pleased to report that Jeremy Smart has agreed to take on the role as staff captain for the forthcoming year.

The new rules, discussed before in *The Cachalot*, were endorsed at the recently held AGM which was very well attended.

The Harpooners' dinner went off very well at the beginning of November, with some 35 in attendance. The quality of the anecdotes recounted by some attending was, as ever, truly entertaining!

The Christmas festivities were very well attended too, Kings court serving up very generous portions of "real" turkey. Again at the Burns Dinner on 25th January, the CACHALOTS and guests present were well fed and royally entertained. Fleming Pedersen gave the immortal memory and I had the honour of addressing the haggis, without injury to those sitting near the "Great Chieftain o' the puddin' race" as it was attacked by me with a sharp knife. Lionel Hall proposed the toast to the lassies with his usual aplomb, with my wife Louise responding; she was presented with a beautiful flower arrangement prepared with great skill by Peter Marriott's wife, Janet. I am sure you will wish Peter and Janet our best wishes and support for Peter as he goes through difficult times.

David Stocks stands down as Boatsteerer and our thanks must go to him for his skilful organisation of events, perhaps especially, the Shipping Festival Service in June! Indeed the Sea Pie Supper was David's final event where in all the throes of last minute panics, he moved house! Reg Kelso has (been) volunteered to take over and he has set about his duties with his usual thoroughness. Barry Peck has also volunteered to continue as Storekeeper and it is no small credit to his efforts that we find ourselves enjoying a period of relative financial security.

Curry lunches continue to have a strong following, thanks to the continuing and tireless efforts of the Entertainments Committee. Many of us do not really fully appreciate the work undertaken by them and I would like to express my thanks to all the members of that committee.

The list of Officers and elected Harpooners appears elsewhere in this edition of *The CACHALOT*. Indeed the newsletter, Cachalites circulated by email, menus and other printed items are all prepared by Terry Clark. His computer

continued on page 2

New Club Captain Ian Odd

I was born at Cheam in Surrey in 1948. Cheam is on the edge of the Greater London Area and it was the sight of commuters going to and from work in London that convinced me I was never going to join them. I was either going to be a farmer or go to sea.

I started my sea career in March 1965. I never harboured any interest in joining the bigger companies. I had this romantic notion that the tramp companies were the way to go. I thus joined Turnbull, Scott, an old family run Whitby company, which was formed in 1872. The Turnbull family shipping roots go back to the 1840's before that they were clock makers. As good tramp owners they never kept all their eggs in one basket and when I joined they ran three general cargo ships and two product tankers all involved in world-wide trading. They later went on to own and manage OBO's, mini-bulkers, geared bulkers, small tween deckers and chemical tankers ranging from 3,000 to 116,000 deadweight. This meant my serving on a large variety of ships in varying trades and this experience stood me in very good stead when I was promoted Master of a 5,000 deadweight geared cargo ship in 1979.

My first voyage involved taking a cargo of steel and a 220 mt stator from Manchester to Montreal and the Great Lakes as far as Duluth. A true baptism of fire featuring the heaviest lift ever out of Manchester docks and 200 miles of ice on Lake Superior. This coupled with a less than sober C/E and a C/O well past his sell by date!

I left Turnbull's in 1990. My specialisation in chemical tankers stood me in a good position and I went on to work for a few chemical tanker operators under the Liberian and Norwegian flags before joining Expedo Ship Management in 1997. Expedo ran chemical and oil tankers and I found myself back with an excellent family run company once again. I stayed with Expedo until my retirement in 2013 at the age of 65.

I chose to stay at sea rather than seeking shore based employment or Pilotage work because I really enjoyed being in command with its very variable daily challenges. I always found tremendous job satisfaction working at sea, especially as Master. I was fortunate in spending most of my time as Master working on a 1 on 1 off system of work and leave, normally working 4 months away followed by 4 months at home. Seafarers wives are very special ladies, putting up with a lot of stress whilst their husbands are far away. In our nearly 40 years of marriage, Lesley never once asked me to give up my chosen career and was always upbeat about things at home, never burdening me with her troubles whilst I was far away.

I have been a Cachalot for nearly twenty years and it is an honour for me to be invested as their Captain. Changes are afoot for the coming year with the implementation of the new management structure. I feel I have a challenging year in front of me but I am happy in the knowledge that I will have excellent support.

I will never be bored in retirement; my family, the Club and other interests, as mentioned by Captain Noble, keep me very busy.

Ian Odd, Club Captain

and artistic skills are a great benefit to the social events.

My final function of the year was, as ever, the Sea Pie Supper. It was the final appearance of Dame Mary Fagan in her role as Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire. We look forward to seeing her at future events in her retirement. The Sea Pie Supper was, I think, a resounding success; with nearly 600 Cachalots and guests attending. The Admiral of the Port, Mayor Ivan White, attended with his badge of Admiralty, a splendid silver oar. Andrew Winbow, Assistant Secretary-General at the IMO gave an interesting address to a hushed audience. The Southampton Shipowners Association donated a prize and a draw was held where a truly grand sum of £3253 (plus \$10 and 5 Euros) was raised for the Captain's charity, the Mission to Seafarers. This sum will be added to the money raised during my year and presented to the new incumbent Chaplain, John Attenburgh, sometime in March.

John Noble
Post Captain

Boatsteerer's Locker

In 1994 I was appointed Boatsteerer/Storekeeper of the Master Mariners' Club and, in 1997 Douglas Gates relieved me of the Storekeeper's responsibilities. Some three years later – in 2000 – Lionel Hall took over as Boatsteerer and I retired to the "back benches".

Thus, it was a bit of a surprise to find myself re-appointed Boatsteerer at the AGM 2015 – but I have no-one to blame but myself!

Writing in the September 2013 "The Cachalot", George Angas commented:
"As a consequence of reforming ourselves to maintain an external relevance and so encourage a younger membership, we have had to recognise that our own internal management structure has to change as well. *NO LONGER CAN WE RELY ON "THE FEW" TO SUSTAIN SUCH AN ORGANISATION: IT WILL FAIL.*

We need to foster a growing sense of teamwork in which responsibilities can be shared or even changed around"

Much of the day-to-day administration is now in the very capable hands of Richard James, but "the few" that organise and implement our social calendar will undoubtedly welcome the assistance of those Cachalots able to afford it – and a notice in the Clubroom invites them to enlist!

Additionally, our Archivist, Hamish Roberts, is keen to "tidy up" the mass of documentation in the "back" room and any offers to assist him will be welcome.

Undoubtedly, the Sea Pie Supper went well and to those who ensured its success – David Stocks, Richard James, Terry Clark, Lionel Hall, Gerry Cartwright and others – we say a sincere "Thank You".

In wishing Ian Odd every happiness for his year in office as Club Captain we also pay tribute to John Noble (Post Captain) and David Stocks (Boatsteerer) whose steady hands on the tiller saw us through the turbulence of 2013.

Reg Kelso, Boatsteerer.

CLUB MANAGEMENT **WITH EFFECT FROM 8th FEBRUARY 2014.**

The Club **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** will comprise five **CLUB OFFICERS** together with six **HARPOONERS**. As from this date all existing Club Committees and sub-Committees will be disbanded.

OFFICERS OF THE CLUB

CAPTAIN	Ian Odd
STAFF CAPTAIN	Jeremy Smart
PAST CAPTAIN	John Noble
BOATSTEERER	Reg Kelso
STOREKEEPER	Barry Peck

HARPOONERS

George Angas
Gerry Cartwright
Terry Clark *
Chris Coote
Douglas Gates **
Peter Grant ***

- * **Editor of "The Cachalot" and Club webmaster.**
- ** **Club Membership Secretary**
- *** **Functions Organiser**

In discharging their responsibilities the three Harpooners with specific titles may seek assistance from those Club members willing to afford such assistance. The resultant body will be an "ad hoc" Committee reporting to the Management Committee.

Members willing to afford assistance are asked to inform the relevant Harpooner.

Assistance will be welcomed for organising and discharging the Sea Pie Supper, the Shipping Festival Service and other "Programme Events".

The MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE will meet at regular intervals (at least four times per year) and any CACHALOT wishing to bring any CLUB MATTER to the attention of the Committee is asked to furnish details to The Boatsteerer to facilitate inclusion in the agenda of the next meeting.

The reorganisation of the Club management structure (as agreed at an Extraordinary General Meeting and, subsequently, at the Annual General Meeting) is designed to afford ALL CLUB MEMBERS a greater opportunity to become involved in the running of their Club and it is hoped that as many as possible will seek to take advantage of this.



Club Captain Ian Odd



Skittles Evening



at the
SOUTHAMPTON (OLD) GREEN BOWLING CLUB
(The world's oldest bowling green, Lower Canal Walk, Southampton.)
On

Friday, 28th March

Another popular and relaxed evening and we have chosen to stick with

Fish & Chips

again for the main but this year there will be a selection of delicious sweets for you to choose from.

Price retained at **£13** per head.
1900 onwards

Names to the notice board or Richard by 14 March please,

Ladies that Lunch

Further to the notice in the previous newsletter, at least a dozen ladies have expressed an interest and the first such event has been arranged at the



on the corner of Oxford and Latimer Streets.

<http://medbarandkitchen.co.uk/>

1200 for 1230

on

Friday 4th April

The restaurant has offered an exclusive upstairs room and the following 2 Course Menu:

Starters

- a) soup of the day
- b) fried calamari with tomato salsa
- c) roasted flat mushroom with ricotta and spinach
- d) garlic pizza bread with cheese

Main Course

- a) pizza di carne - meatballs, pepperoni, parma ham and chilli
- b) paella for one - meat or seafood
- c) pork/chicken souvlaki with rice and mixed salad
- d) spaghetti with chicken, broccoli and mushrooms in a creamy tomato sauce.

The price, to include a soft drink and a tip, will be

£11.50

Guests are welcome and names, choices from the above menu and payment, should be directed to Lesley Odd at the time of booking:

lesley.odd@btinternet.com

Mob: 07780 586073

A Club Supper has been arranged in the Club Room

On

Friday 30th May

A Speaker, Pete Yeoman, one of the skippers of the **'Lively Lady'**

will bring us up to date with the fortunes of Past Stowaway

Sir Alec Rose's

round the world yacht.

The Menu:

BROCCOLI & STILTON SOUP

CHICKEN KIEV

FRUIT & CREAM MERINGUE

1900 for 1930

Catering by John Davis

Price will be **£26** per head and numbers limited to **38** on a first come basis.



Curry Lunch



The regulars continue to be satisfied with the food and service on offer at Kuti's in Oxford Street so the next Curry Lunch has been booked there on

26th April, 1200 for 1230.

Price held at **£12.50** per head.



Captains and Distinguished Guests at the Sea Pie Supper

from left: Capt. Robert McCabe, *Snr Vice-President, Nautical Institute*, Capt. Ian McNaught, *Deputy Master, Trinity House*, Capt. Ian Odd, *Captain Elect*, The Very Rev'd James Atwell, *Dean of Winchester*, Mrs Lorna Atwell, *Vice-Admiral Sir Alan Massey, CEO MCA*, Captain Christopher Fagan, *Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire*, Dame Mary Fagan, *Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire*, Capt. John Noble, *Club Captain*, Andrew Winbow, *Director, Maritime Safety Division, IMO*, Councillor Ivan White, *Mayor of Southampton and Admiral of the Port*, Commodore Rob Dorey, *Royal Fleet Auxiliary*, Mr Rupert Younger *High Sheriff of Hampshire*, Capt John Hughes, *Master, Hon.Co.Master Mariners*, Mr Nick Ridehalgh, *Port Director, Southampton*, Capt. David Stocks, *Boatsteerer*, Mr Gerry Cartwright, *MC*

Another successful and well attended event at the City Cruise Terminal on Friday 7th February saw an increase of members and guests to 585.

Once again, the large departure hall was transformed into a buzzing social venue as those present tucked into their Sea Pie fare and were entertained by the 30 strong City of Southampton (Albion) Band.

Our thanks go to ABP for the venue and to Halo for the excellent catering and service.

Outgoing Captain John Noble installed his successor, Captain Ian Odd, who then introduced the Principal Speaker, Andrew Winbow, the Director of the Maritime Safety Division at IMO.



The Mayor and his Silver Oar of Admiralty

The Mayor, as Admiral of the Port, brought with him his badge of Jurisdiction, The Silver Oar of Admiralty. The Jurisdiction, but perhaps not this particular oar, dates back to 1451 and was granted by Henry VI. The oar was ably carried by one of the six Town Sergeants, and their history dates back even further.

In another departure from the usual routine the Southampton Shipowners Association had generously donated a prize, an iPad Mini, which was raffled in aid of Captain Noble's charity of the year, The Mission to Seafarers. Those present were encouraged to place a currency note of their choice (to avoid a weight of coins) into an envelope with their named place cards. We should have seen it coming but the haul included a \$10 note and a 5 euro one! But after exchange the total came to a magnificent **£3262**. So, well done to everyone, even those bragging of recent foreign travels.

The evening concluded with the traditional and spirited singing of Sea Shanties, led by our Hon Shantyman, Mr David King. This year 'The Leaving of Liverpool' was included; not really a shanty, more a folk song, but nobody was being pedantic at that stage of the evening.



Blue Funnel men at the SPS. Mike Pugsley was also there but couldn't be located in time for the line up

Fifty Years on Salt Water

Episode six of the memoirs of Leslie (Charlie) Chapman, who served his time in sail, in one trip, and went on to become a Southampton Pilot. Here, Charlie ends up in temporary command of the sailing tanker "Hainaut" before becoming, at 21, the youngest man to gain a master's certificate.

Another experience we had in Tampico. We were loading a cargo of crude oil, the gas from this was very strong, it turned the white paint almost black overnight. About two in the morning, feeling a bit tired, I went and sat down in my cabin. Suddenly there was a loud bang; I rushed on deck to find a column of flame coming up from the after hatch, about thirty feet high. Quickly, with the assistance of the Captain, we pushed the tank top over the hole and stood on it. The fire was smothered right away, much to our relief, as the tank was three quarters full.

The reason we could handle the tank top so easily, was that it was a plate of metal about three foot square, and slid easily on the main tank top. When the tank was loaded, the lid was bolted down with forty bolts. I asked the Irish night watchman what had happened to cause the fire, he calmly informed me that he had sat down on the hatch with an ordinary oil hurricane lamp, only three feet away from the open hatch.

At the time the "Hainaut" was not fitted out with electricity. We made a report to the head office about this, and had orders to wire the ship for twelve electric lights. We were to be allowed three hundred dollars for this which in those days was the equivalent to sixty pounds. The idea was to plug a main wire into any installation that we were near when we were in port. We found out that nearly every port had a different voltage, ranging from sixty volts to two hundred and twenty, and in one port they had no voltage at all. The Captain agreed with me that the idea would not work, and in New Orleans he went ashore and managed to buy a very good engine and dynamo from a sugar plantation, also a switchboard. This cost us the three hundred dollars, after buying the wire and bulbs, also half inch conduit piping to put the wire in.

As we had spent our limit, we decided to install the machinery ourselves, getting technical information from some ships engineers. This was a very interesting job, we ran wires into all accommodation, also into the boiler room and tween decks where the pumps and valves were situated. Altogether we fitted forty lights and a fan in the Captains room and one in my own. Of course this was only used in port, as the boiler was shut down at sea. We carried a donkeyman and a fireman to look after the boiler and pumps but they were not too reliable. I went to the boiler room at midnight on one occasion, as they were relieving one another, and they were arguing the point if the boiler was full or empty, as there was no water showing in the gauge glass. I asked a few questions about the pumps, had they been going etc. On being informed that they had not stopped, I came to the conclusion that the water was below the glass, knowing the boiler was hardly man enough for the pumps, and could not be over. We stopped the pumps and put on the boiler pumps with bated breath. We all gave a sigh of relief when the water showed in the glass.

We occasionally had a little trouble with the crew, especially after they had been on shore drinking, but generally speaking they were very good and very few left us. On one occasion we were heaving up the anchor and an Irishman, the same man that caused the fire with the hurricane lamp, came on the forecastle head very much the worse for drink and started a row with another man, and threatened to stab him. As Chief Officer, it was my place to restore order and I went to take the knife away from him. I sustained two nasty cuts on the hand, so decided to take drastic action, as he was still threatening violence. I unscrewed the nozzle from the hose with which we were washing the mud off the anchor cable and told him to put the knife down. He made another lunge at me, so I gave him a good belt on the head. When he came to he did not remember anything about it. He was very sorry when he saw my hand in a bandage, and gave no more trouble.

Sailing round the Gulf of Mexico was very pleasant, the weather was usually pretty good, except in the winter months an occasional Northerly Buster would blow up, these lasted about twenty four hours, but blew very hard during that time. We were lucky regarding hurricanes, we were never in the vicinity of one, but several hundred miles away.

It was interesting going up the "Mississippi" in a fog, the pilot sometimes went to the foretop, where he had a clear view of the tug's mast, and could see the trees on the river banks, also the masts of other ships coming down the river. He then called out orders, telling the officer on watch how to steer.

One day when coming down from Baton Rouge, the Captain had an attack of malaria, a fever he had got into his system through spending a few years in Burma. It was decided by a doctor from New Orleans, that he should be landed. The question

arose as to where we could get another Captain, at that time I only had my first mates certificate. I pointed out that the ship had cleared from Baton Rouge and would not have stopped at New Orleans if the Captain had not been taken ill, as we had started our voyage. Everyone concerned seemed quite pleased with the solution, as I doubt if a sailing ship Captain with an English certificate could be obtained in America. He did not sign off the articles.

We carried on like this till my time was up to go to England to study for my masters certificate. The Captain rejoined us at this time, and a relief was sent down from New York to relieve me as the first mate.

Imagine my surprise to find out it was Captain Jarvis, whom I had sailed with in the "Lawhill". He was quite old by this time, and actually wept when he said, to think I have come to relieve one of my former apprentices. Sailing ships were going out of business fast, and Captain Jarvis was out of a job. In fact the "Hainaut" had all masts and yards taken out of her in a very short time. Only the three lower masts were left and she was then towed around the Gulf ports as a barge. The last reference I saw of the "Hainaut" was that she had been sold to the Cubans and was being used to carry cargoes of molasses around the Gulf of Mexico, and her name had been changed to "Marta". What a sad ending to a fine old ship, that had sailed across the Atlantic Ocean, carrying paraffin, for twenty five years.

So ended my days in sail.

On one voyage we had carried an American and his wife from Tampico to Galveston, Texas. He was a ranch owner and said, if at any time I would like to visit his ranch, he would be glad to have me. Now was my chance, before travelling overland to New York for a passage home. I got in touch with him by telephone and made all arrangements as to how I could get to the ranch. I took a train from Houston for several hours, to a small wayside station, and sure enough there was my friend and his wife waiting with a buggy to take me to their ranch.

I stayed with them for a month, and had an enjoyable holiday. In fact I was asked to stay for good, but life there seemed almost as lonely as being at sea, as the nearest neighbours were quite a few miles away. It was very interesting to me, as after all I had been brought up on a farm. I was fortunate enough to be there at round up and branding time. I did a lot of horse riding and camping out, but I had not achieved what I set out to do, and that was to obtain my square rig masters certificate, and I still felt the call of the sea.

I left promising to visit the ranch again, but I was never in the Gulf of Mexico again, sad to say, and I have never been back there since. I travelled from Houston by train up North to Chicago, and East to New York. During the journey, the whole train was put on a ferryboat to cross the Mississippi, above New Orleans. I had a few days to wait in New York, before one of the company's tankers was available to take me home. We had a rough passage as it was winter time, and the ship was not very large, in fact the engines broke down twice during the trip. We eventually arrived in Dublin, and I joined the steamer for England right away, then made my way home to Norfolk. Only the second time in seven years that I had been home. Still not entitled to any leave or pay, an unheard of thing in those days. The modern seafarer would have a fit if he had to put up with that sort of thing these days.

After spending two or three weeks at home, I went to London to study for my masters certificate, and found that the same masters were still at the Navigation School. One was Captain Nicholls, author of the well known book, "Nicholls Concise Guide".

Having studied a lot while at sea, I was able to sit for my examination in three weeks. I was very fortunate in passing at the first attempt, which was a great weight off my mind. I was congratulated by the examiners, as to the best of their knowledge they thought I was the youngest man to pass for master. I was only twenty-one and a few months at the time. Of course, nowadays it takes much longer to study for examinations, as there are many more subjects to study. Of these I consider the compass syllabus is about the hardest to memorise.

The system of marking examination papers, in those days, was entirely different to that used today. Every answer had to be correct and on completion of each paper I was handed the next paper to do. If it was incorrect it was handed back for another try, then if it was still wrong you were politely informed that you had failed and to come back the next week. The seamanship examination was different, this was oral and if you failed in this, you were sent back to sea again, for a term of three or even six months, all depending on how bad your answers were.

I believe the present system is judged by the number of marks obtained on the papers. I must admit that I nearly failed on the simplest question in navigation. It was: if a star rose at a certain time on the 12th, how many minutes later would it rise on

the 16th? As it was four minutes later each day, naturally the answer was sixteen minutes. I made it twenty minutes, as I counted the 12th as one day, which was wrong. I could only put it down to nerves, to think I could have failed on such a simple question.

Having passed my examination, I was handed what was known as "your blue paper", to show that you had passed your examination, and a certificate would be issued in due course.

With this paper I reported back to the school, and Captain Nichols asked me right away would I like to join the Union Castle Line. This came as a surprise to me, as I had intended to report to my old company, the Anglo American Oil Co. Without any hesitation I said yes. This was the changing point of my whole career at sea. Definitely finished with sailing ships. I reported to the Marine Superintendent the next day, and was politely informed that they did not employ American officers in their ships.

This came as a great surprise to me, as I had no idea that I spoke with an American accent, I suppose having spent nearly seven years sailing out of American Ports, this was inevitable. Also at that time I must have been wearing American cut suits.

Eventually I managed to persuade the superintendent that I was born in Norfolk, and now held a British masters certificate. He was satisfied and wanted me to join the Company right away, but as I had not been home for Christmas for seven years I persuaded him to let me join on New Years Day. This superintendent was a very religious man, and gave me a good lecture on the things I should do, and those I should not do, when I joined a passenger ship, such as keeping away from wine and women. On leaving his office he handed me a book, printed on the outside in gold letters, "Instructions to Officers". He said, stick to that book and what it says, and you will not go far wrong. It was the "Holy Bible" he had given me. Unfortunately I lost this later when the ship I was in was torpedoed in the First World War.

After leaving the Union Castle Office, I decided to call on my old company, the Anglo American Oil Co., and informed them that I had obtained my masters certificate. I was asked what kind of a job I would like, I replied, nothing under a chief officers. They looked shocked at one so young asking for this, and as I already had a job I would not have accepted anything. While spending Christmas at home, I received a telegram from Anglo American, asking me to report in London and be prepared to travel out to San Francisco, to join a tanker as third officer, and to get the sum of seven pounds ten shillings a month, to be reduced to six pounds if the ship came West of Singapore.

I suppose I had been a bit too cheeky, when in the London office, and they would teach me a lesson. My only regret to this offer, was that I wasted money on a reply telegram, telling them I had received employment elsewhere, when a letter would have served the same purpose. They would not have a hard job to get someone to take my place, as there were several unemployed officers around at that time.

Having finished my holiday, I duly reported to the Union - Castle Line in London, and enrolled as a fourth officer in the firm. A considerable step down from my last position at sea, still I felt there was a future here, in having a more enjoyable life on a passenger ship, and getting home more frequently, than carrying oil to the far corners of the earth, with only two days in port and weeks at sea.

Even on my new appointment I received higher pay than I was offered in tankers. I received orders to report in Southampton as a staff officer, which really meant being the duty officer for the day and night, quite a nice job. During my stay in Southampton, I was able to fit myself out as becomes an officer of a liner, different to the rough and ready nondescript gear used on a tanker or sailing vessel. This included a bridge coat, mess suit and a uniform frock coat. The latter has gone out of the regulations long since.

In those days a frock coat had to be worn by the officers for drill in the docks, on sailing day, and the ships were coal burners and had bunkered, it is not hard to imagine the state of the boats inside. The boats had to be lowered and rowed around the dock, and hoisted again by the crew. One third officer I knew, was determined to ridicule the idea of wearing frock coats under such conditions. He got into the boat ready for lowering, and when he put his life jacket on, purposely tied a life line in the tapes. When the boat was lowered, he was left hanging on the life line. After this was over, he was asked to explain how it happened, he said he was more concerned about keeping his coat clean and did not notice the rope. Soon after this event, frock coats were ruled out for boat drill in port. I could not say if this was caused by this episode, or just a coincidence. My first use of a frock coat was, with several other officers and engineer officers, attending the unveiling of the 'Titanic' memorial in Watts Park in Southampton.

to be continued



New Members

Bryan Chipperfield is a retired Master Mariner who did Pre-Sea training at HMS Worcester from 1959-61 before being apprenticed to the P&O S N Co. In '69 he transferred to Container Fleets Ltd and was promoted Master of the 'Jervis Bay' in '78. He retired in 2004, his last command being the 'P&O Nedlloyd Cook'.

He maintains an interest in all aspects of the shipping world and feels that he can contribute on nautical matters, especially with reference to container shipping.

Aart J. Hille Ris Lambers is Head of Commercial at DP World Southampton container terminal. He is an Msc (Naval Architect) and has experience in Liner Shipping, Dry Bulk Shipping, Container Terminals and Port Development.

He joins us to give general professional support to the Port of Southampton.

Greg Holmes is a retired Master Mariner who retired from the command of Cable ships. His leisure interest is photography and he is a Licentiate of the Royal Photographic Society.

He joins us to continue his association with professional seafarers and the Sea Pie Supper.

Craig Raeburn is a Lieutenant Commander RN, whose present appointment is Operational Capability Manager of the Warfare Development Group. He graduated with a B.Sc. from Aberdeen's Robert Gordon University and has qualified for STCW 95, CQ1 and CQ2 with the RN since he joined as a Midshipman in the Reserves in '87. He served as a Deck Officer in HMS BRILLIANT, CHIDINGFOLD and TALENT, as a Navigating Officer of HMS TIRELESS, TRAFALGAR and SOMERSET, then Principal Warfare Officer HMS MANCHESTER and Operations Officer of HMS MONTROSE. He spent 7 years in the submarine service and was a duty Submarine Controller at Northwood. He completed Operational tours in the SFOR HQ in Sarajevo and was the HQ Operation Officer in the Falklands in 2008, which included the role of Harbour Master at Mare Harbour. He has been a senior instructor in Navigation, Air Control and Anti Submarine Warfare in the UK, Canada and the Netherlands. In 2011/12 he was the Deputy QHM of Portsmouth.

Craig has a wide interest in both professional and leisure maritime activities and likes to get involved with sailing activities with various clubs on the Solent during the summer. He has enjoyed 3 Sea Pie Suppers and the opportunity to engage on a social and professional level with fellow mariners and thinks it important for serving Naval Officers to be involved in all aspects of maritime activity.

Mark Raeburn is a Lieutenant Commander RN, currently Fleet Surface Navigator and Seamanship Officer based in Navy Command HQ at Whale Island. He gained a Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Navigation from the University of Plymouth and joined the RN as a Midshipman in '89. Like his twin brother Craig, above, he is qualified in STCW 95, CQ1 and CQ2. He was a Deck Officer in HMS BEAVER, Navigating Officer of HMS LINDISFARNE and CAMBLETOWN, Staff Warfare Officer to Commodore Mine Hunting, C/O of HMS EXAMPLE then Principal Warfare Officer HMS CORNWALL before becoming a Specialised Navigator working for Flag Officer Sea Training. He then navigated HMS OCEAN and BULWARK. After his last sea appointment he taught the Specialised Navigator Course and was then posted to Canada for 4 years as Head of Navigation Training and Policy.

Also, like his twin, he has a wide interest in professional and leisure maritime activities and joins us for the opportunity to engage with the civilian side of the maritime industry.

Alwyn Rees is a Master Mariner and Head of Fleet operations at Red Funnel. His leisure interests include sailing, small craft and motorsports.

He joins us to network and enjoy the company of fellow professional mariners.

Alasdair Wilkie is Director of Marine at Hibernia Atlantic, a Submarine Telecommunications Cable Owner & Operator. He is a B.Sc. (Electrical and Electronic Engineering) and is a Member of both the Institute of Engineering and Technology and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineering. He has spent the last 28 years working in the submarine cable industry, having started work for STC Submarine Systems on leaving university. Initially he started on the design and development of the terminal equipment used on the systems, but then in '88 started work on the installation and commissioning of the cables themselves. This involved working on board the cables as a cable engineer with the jointing, testing and handling of the cable during both the loading and laying of the cable. Following on from that he started working as a project manager on the cables for both the cable supplier and latterly for the cable owner. He now works for a cable owner and operator and organises repairs of the cables with the cables as a cable engineer with the jointing, testing and handling of the cable during both the loading and laying of the cable. Following on from that he started working as a project manager on the cables for both the cable supplier and latterly for the cable owner. He now works for a cable owner and operator and organises repairs of the cables with the cables as a cable engineer with the jointing, testing and handling of the cable during both the loading and laying of the cable.

He is actively involved in both regional and international submarine cable trade associations as well as being Chairman of the Atlantic Cable Maintenance Agreement. In addition, over the years he has developed an interest in the history of submarine cables and their evolution. In particular the social aspects of submarine cables and how they have improved daily life around the world.

Having spent a number of years at sea, as a cable engineer on numerous cable ships from '88 till 2003, Alasdair wishes to give something back to the industry that accommodated him so well during those years.



While trawling through previous issues of The Cachalot, which is my wont (after all, someone has got to read them) I came across this from issue 15 of March 2005 which, with reference to the note in the Boatsteerer's Locker on p.2, would seem to be as relevant today as it was then.

The Archivist's Artifice on the Artefacts

At the AGM on Thursday 13th January 2005, Captain Kelso brought up the subject of the Club's artefacts, as he had on previous occasions.

The Club's collection of silver, glassware, nautical instruments and other items has, since we moved from St Michael's Square, and in the absence of any secure display facilities, been confined to storage in various places. With the passage of time, and in spite of all good intentions, there is the danger that the provenance and ownership of some of the pieces may become blurred or forgotten. There is also the problem of actual physical ageing and decay of certain items if not kept under the proper conditions. It had to be recognised that there would be insufficient room at our new Club-Room (*at the British Legion*) to display any of the items and that most of them would probably not see the light of day again. It was a sad fact that of those items that we had chosen to decorate the room at the B&ISS with, several had been stolen, including the signed photograph of H.M. The Queen and the picture of the return of the Canberra from the Falklands.

Our Honorary Archivist, Captain Hamish Roberts, read the following to the assembled members. He claimed it was a cutting from the "Evening Echo", dated 13th January 2015.

"Early this morning, in a largely unfrequented area of the City formerly known as dockland, an 87 year old man was observed by passers-by to be in a confused condition. On being approached he explained that he was an ex-merchant seaman of no fixed abode, but had once been a member of a long since defunct club for mariners called the Cachalots, which some older readers will remember. At the relatively early age of 70, he had become the club's archivist, but sadly, very soon afterwards and through unavoidable circumstances, his archives had been removed, an emasculation painful in itself but made more so because he did not know where to find them. It was, he said, a disgrace that in Southampton, old sailors should be denied the pleasure of looking at, admiring and fondling their archives and also, if they wish, their artefacts, as they were wont to do in earlier years.

But all was not lost, he went on, providing surviving Cachalots followed the advice given by Prince Philip, himself a distinguished Cachalot, who although still eligible for a bed in the Sailors' Home is, mercifully, being well cared for in a large house, with gardens, in Central London. His advice, which can easily be appreciated without the privilege of a classical education, was "Digit Extractum". As the old man was led away, the repetitive, plaintive cry "digit extractum, digit extractum" echoed across the quiet waters of the Test.

Psychiatric reports are being obtained."

Captain Roberts called upon all Cachalots to spare this old man such indignity.

It was resolved that, after the SeaPie Supper, a subcommittee of the Executive & Finance Committee would be formed, to inspect and evaluate, where possible, and report back to the General Committee.

We now have less than eleven months to prevent Capt. Roberts unsettling vision from coming true. The artefacts were, in fact, evaluated and it was decided to keep them while we still have the facilities to display them. It is the archives that need tidying, cataloguing and digitally copying, where suitable.

In the wake of the recent violent storms it is, of course, typical of old sailors to recall even greater events that happened in 'their' day. In the absence of any other contributions to this journal I bring to you two such recollections of The Great Storm of '87.

The first from Cdr P.C. Tambling RD, who was the Port Manager and Harbour Master at Weymouth at the time.*

The second from your editor, which account has previously appeared in The Master Mariners of Southampton, edited by Simon Daniels.

So settle back while we empty our sea boots, wring out our socks and regale you with tales of a storm of yesteryear.

The October 15th 1987 Hurricane.

Memories of the Events leading up to and including the passing of the eye of the storm over Weymouth

On Monday 12th October, the Met Cell at HMS Osprey on Portland phoned me to give their advance warning of an approaching hurricane which they had been plotting as the eye of the storm developed in the Bay of Biscay. A calculation had been made as to the timing of the Storm Centre passing over Ushant, and the estimated course and timing of a likely landfall in the Portland Bill area.

Laid-up on the No.1 berth for the Winter period was M.V. "Portelet", whose Agents were Denholm' of Glasgow. She had operated the Channel Island route from Weymouth for British Channel Island Ferries Ltd. for the summer season. Owned by Marlines of Greece as the "Baroness M", she was originally the P& O RoRo ferry "Lion", running out of Dover. There were only three stand-by crew aboard.

We watched the storm through Tuesday and on Wednesday I took legal advice from the well known legal author on Harbour and Pilotage Law, and Legal Advisor to the British Ports Association, Mr. Richard Douglas in London. As the vessel was likely to be in danger of parting her moorings should the storm proceed as forecast over the Western Approaches from

Ushant, it was vital to have sufficient crew aboard in case of *Portelet* breaking adrift due to a heavy swell or Gale/Hurricane force winds.

Mr Richard Douglas advised me how to issue a Harbour Master's Directive which I followed in detail by telephoning the vessel's Agents in Glasgow who had initially refused to agree. This Directive was confirmed by facs. message and a copy published in the local press in addition to placing a Public Notice in my Office Notice Board on Custom House Quay, for sufficient crew to be aboard by 2000 next evening.

After considerable protesting by the Agents, they advised me that there would be sufficient crew aboard by my requested time, saying that no hurricane was expected.

As far as I understand the issuing of a Harbour Master's Directive is rarely used, which I discovered later when Chairman of the Small Ports Section of the BPA in 1992.

I visited the vessel at 2000 to satisfy myself that my instructions had been carried out. All was well and I went home. The skies were completely overcast with the strong South Easterly wind continuing as it had been for several days resulting in a heavy swell running across the beaches.

At 0320 next morning my telephone rang, and it was the *Portelet's* master asking me to supply two tugs as he was struggling to hold his ship alongside the quay. He was told that in no circumstances would an MOD tug be available, and on leaving my house it was blowing a full storm from the East. Eventually after avoiding many fallen trees, I arrived alongside the ferry to find one bow rope parted, the gangway fallen off the quay and stuck between the hull and quay piles. She was being held off the quay using both engines and bow-thrust. The port engine was turning Half Ahead and starboard unit at Slow Astern with full thrust on the bow unit to the quay.

Portelet stayed in this mode for several hours until the eye of the Storm passed overhead at 0450, when the wind swung round to the WSW blowing at what must have been force 12+. (There was no National Coast Watch lookout on Portland Bill in those days to record wind strengths!) The easterly heavy swell which had been running during the previous ten hours had been flattened as smooth as a sheet of glass. The spume carried off the waves made a fantastic sight looking towards the coast off Lulworth Cove at sunrise.

In Portland that was another story altogether.

Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) had ordered the total evacuation of his port on the Thursday afternoon. All the fleet under work-up training sailed as instructed with exception the German Cruiser "Schleswig Holstein", whose Admiral refused to sail.

Eventually the Naval Attache from the Embassy in London was called and briefed by FOST.

On boarding the German vessel, the German Naval Attache in company of FOST, told his Admiral that the German Government were paying a vast sum of money to bring his vessel up to operational strength following a major refit. If FOST had ordered his vessel to go to sea for the safety of his vessel and crew, to sea he must go, and to sail immediately.

Obviously I cannot print the verbal exchange that took place, but to say it was heated is an understatement of facts.

Schleswig Holstein sailed to join the fleet which was hove-to in the English Channel all night.

The Fleet returned at 1100 to Portland in line ahead, with the German warship at the tail end.

There was a knock on FOST's Office Door at 1500 ,when the German Admiral presented himself to apologise !

Many small boats vanished during that storm never to be seen again.

I have scanned the Barograph recording taken at Winfrith which was presented to me later as a souvenir. This shows the fantastic rise/fall during the night of 15th & 16th October 1987 when the barometric graph ran off the paper as the storm passed overhead in a forty minute period. Winfrith estimated the barometric reading at the centre of that hurricane was 935 mb.

Those are my memories of the 87 Storm

P.C.Tambling



Portelet in Weymouth Harbour in '88

The Night of the Big Storm

By Terry Clark

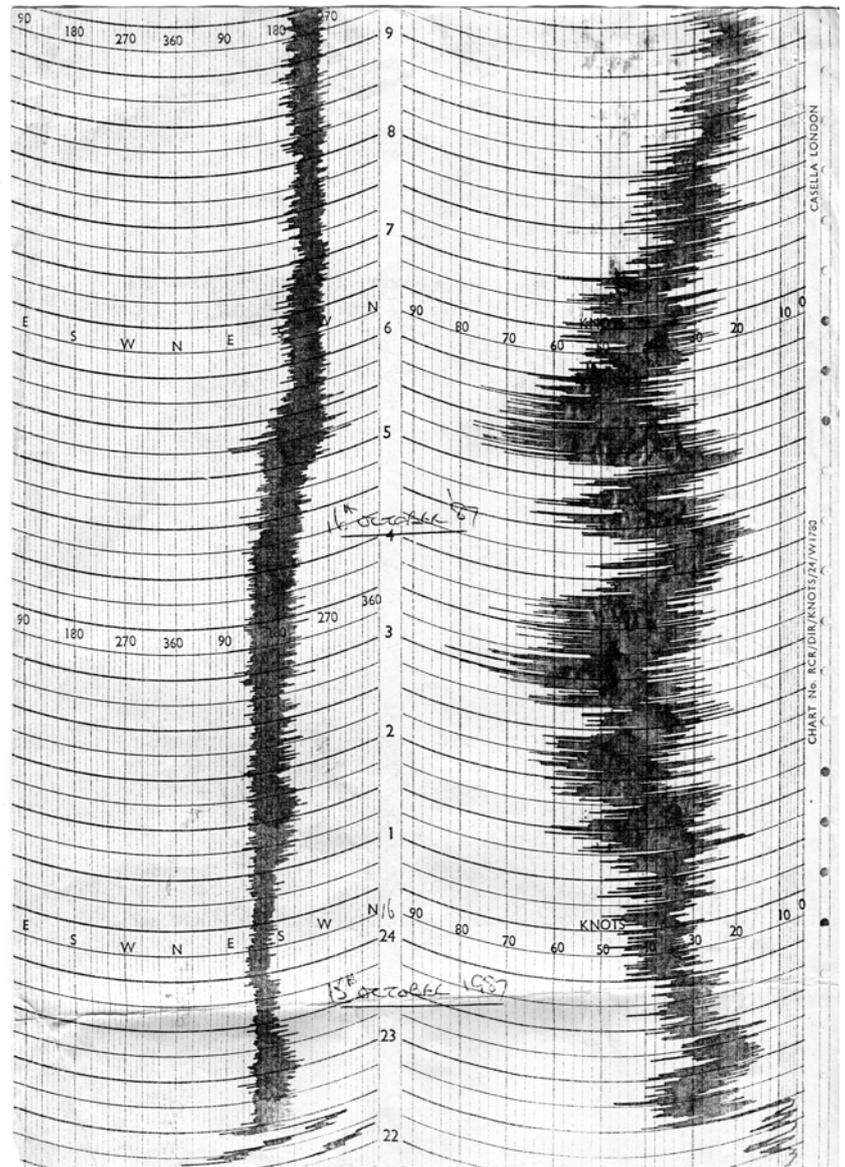
I was a Marine Officer with ABP for fourteen years before being authorised as a Southampton Pilot in 1990. I retired in 2002.

On the night of October 15th 1987, I was the duty Marine Officer onboard ABP's Harbour Patrol launch in Southampton, all set for another 12 hour night watch as the floating extension of the Port Authority's VTS system, then still known as SPR (Southampton Port Radio).

The watch started quietly enough and we proceeded on the routine nightly inspection of the lights, buoys and other navigational aids. Just before 2230 a strong Southerly wind set in and at the same time we were instructed to proceed to the Netley anchorage where a small freighter, the *Sam G*, appeared to be dragging her anchor, SPR being unable to raise her on the VHF. We made all sorts of noise with our whistle and finally resorted to banging on the hull with a hammer before faces appeared over the gunwhale. We advised the Master to contact SPR on the radio and overheard him dismiss their fears, assuring them that everything was OK. We resumed our routine patrol and the wind increased steadily.

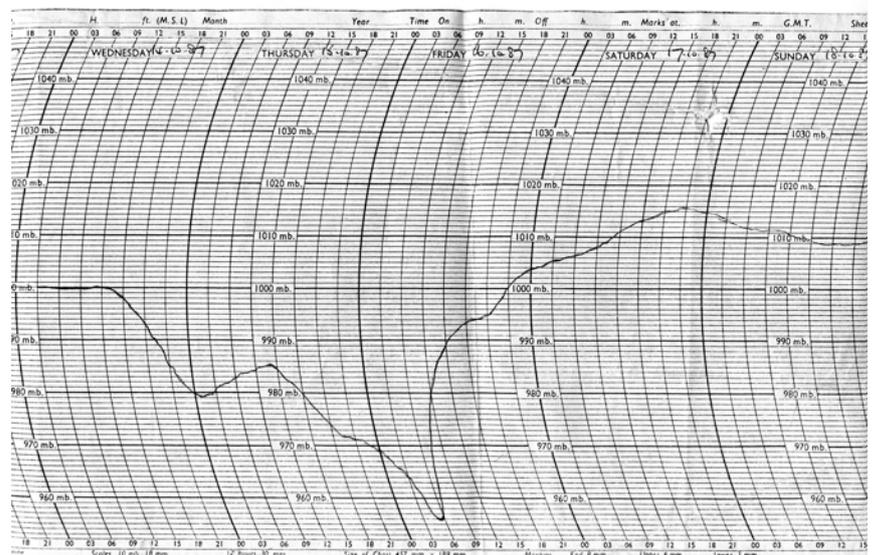
At 0110 we returned to stand by the *Sam G*, now dangerously close to the Netley shore and hollering for a Pilot. During this excitement we were obliged to return to the Marine Base at 25 berth, where one of our own craft was reported adrift. It turned out to be the *Naomi*, the Mooring Officers work-boat. *Naomi* had started out as a luggage boat for the flying boats of Aquila Airways and we were pleased to be able to re-secure her safely and check the other craft at Marine Base.

On returning to the Netley anchorage we found that a Pilot, Gordon Thornton, had been able to board the *Sam G*, but having no time to recover the port anchor and cable which by then had all been laid out, he slipped the cable at the bitter end from inside the chain locker at 0220 and made for sea. Unfortunately, as he passed Fawley, the wind piped up so strong that he made more lee-way than head-way and clipped the south end of Hamble oil jetty with his stern. This had the effect of



Above, the wind speed and direction as recorded at Southampton Port Radio (now VTS). The maximum recorded was 83 knots shortly after 0300 but I believe more than a hundred was showing at Fawley at that time.

The barograph, below, recorded a low of 956 mb. at 0530 when the wind was still reaching nearly 80 knots.



canting the stern into the wind so Gordon tried full astern into the wind but achieved not much more than going aground on Hamble Spit at a much reduced rate. It is ironic that when Gordon was a pre-sea cadet at Warsash in 1953 he gained some fame by putting Wally Wakeford's gig aground just before the Lord Mayor was about to board it. This time he ended up about 100 yards away from the spot of his previous notoriety 34 years before. You could say that he was, at least, consistent.

By this time we were off the Royal Pier observing the *Cowes Castle* whose forward lines had parted. And that was as much as we could do, observe. There is, after-all, a limit to what two men in a 42ft GRP launch are prepared to do in 70 knot winds. I advised SPR of the situation and hurried to the River Itchen to seek shelter. We had hardly got above the Itchen Bridge when we received a plea from SPR asking if we were prepared to embark a Pilot and take him down to Fawley where a VLCC was breaking free from No.5 berth! The Southampton based Pilot boat was at that time single manned and in light of the deteriorating conditions it was deemed unsafe for the cox'n there to attempt the task on his own. So at 0330 we were bouncing up and down alongside the *S.H.B. Seahorse* at Marine Base, endeavouring to embark Pilot John Crowder. While doing so we were in a grand position to see one of Bowker & King's bunker barges detach itself from 22/23 berth and head North across the Empress Dock towards 26/27 berth. Another craft bound for a lee shore! Our priority was to get to Fawley so we could do nothing to assist.

Our trip down the main channel was fraught with unexpected hazards. Yachts and other small craft that had been securely moored in the Hythe area had been jerking and straining at their moorings and dragging them into the deeper water where they were then free to drift across the channel until those same under-slung moorings brought up again in the shallow water on the Weston and Netley shores. Those were the lucky ones; the unlucky ones fell foul of the U.S. barges and their moorings at the DARSA base at Hythe.

John Crowder was understandably eager to make all haste to Fawley but with severely restricted visibility in the by now 90 knot winds I was reluctant to push too fast through the line of unmanned and unlit yachts crossing our course. It was forty-five minutes before we were alongside the *Captain John G.P. Livanos* off Fawley, a journey that would normally take about twenty. There was a ladder over the starboard (windward) side but one of the big tugs was able to make a lee for us so that the Pilot was able, at some risk to himself, to scramble aboard.

The tanker, of 259,646 tons deadweight and 331.69 metres long, had been secured starboard side to (head out) at No.5 berth, discharging crude. The discharge pipes would have been disconnected as a routine safety measure several hours earlier when the wind got up, so no pollution risk there. The immediate, and very real, danger was that the tugs would not be able to hold her and she would fetch up on the Hamble Spit, alongside the *Sam G*. The possible consequences of a partly loaded VLCC grounding outside one of the world's most famous and crowded yacht havens is the stuff of Harbour Masters' nightmares. On the bridge of the *Sam G*, as they watched the unfolding drama, the West Indian Captain turned to Gordon Thornton and said, "Dat dam big bugger, he come to join us, man". Luckily, there had been a North Sea Pilot already on board the VLCC, ready to take her on to her next port, and this gentleman had taken charge as soon as she began to break free from her berth. On the arrival of John Crowder the two of them managed to conduct the vessel safely out to sea, which feat was subsequently recognised in the form of a significant salvage award.

Elsewhere in the Port area, other vessels were also experiencing problems in the extreme conditions. Choice Pilot Tony Howard had managed to board the in-bound P&O container ship *Osaka Bay* at around mid-night out at the Nab and after consulting with the Master immediately ordered two extra tugs. By the time they were past the Sturbridge the vessel was proving difficult to steer and they prudently decided to abort their berthing plans. Captain Jim Thomson was reluctant to attempt to turn round and head back to sea so they managed to get the way off the ship and anchored in the vicinity of S.E. Ryde Middle, a full 10 shackles out on the starboard and 6 on the port. The vessel ended up with both anchors streaming out on the starboard beam but dragging them back the way that they had just come. During the rest of the night they battled to get the head round and the weight off the anchors, the engines being almost constantly in use. It was not until around 0600 with the wind starting to moderate, that they were able to get her head to wind, by which time they were back at the Sturbridge, having dragged nearly two miles.

That expected arrival and subsequent aborting of the *Osaka Bay* was very fortuitous as far as the *Captain John G. P. Livanos* was concerned. The two tugs stationed at Fawley would have been unable to hold her on their own and had the docks tugs for the container ship not been pre-ordered and already manned up then it is doubtful that their crews would have been able to get in at a later stage what with fallen trees blocking many roads by then. As it was they were able to respond as soon as the moorings started to part, making all haste to Fawley.



The Sam G, minus the port anchor, aground on Hamble Spit. BP jetty behind and Fawley on the other side of Southampton Water.

of the dock just as the stern light of our Southampton Patrol launch was disappearing out of the entrance. Being a resourceful chap and an all-round seaman he prepared some fenders for a hard landing and dropped the port anchor at just the right time to arrest the bow. He secured the vessel safely as she came alongside and congratulated himself on a job well done. And that was all the congratulations that he did get, for when his owners found out that he had been sleeping on board, what he got from them was a rollicking!

On the SP we finally found shelter at about 0500 in the River Itchen, where we spent a couple of restful hours tucked up alongside Drivers Wharf by Northam Bridge before returning to Marine Base for change of watch. On the way home I was surprised at the amount of debris in the streets and wondered what had been going on. It was only when watching the early evening news after spending the day in bed that I realised the extent of the storm and its effects around the county. No mention of that VLCC though!



The Captain John G.P. Livanos



English Harbour, SW Turkey



The photograph shows Cate and her daughter Joanne and in the background my Westerly 33 yacht "Lillias C" at anchor in a beautiful and extremely well sheltered bay between Bodrum and Marmaris in SW Turkey which is known locally as English Harbour. Nobody seems to know much about it, but according to the pilot book this secluded bay was used during the Second World War by Royal Navy motor torpedo boats. They would refit and rest in this bay between raids made on German ships attempting to carry supplies to North Africa.

We landed and walked round the shore looking for traces of the occupation but were unable to see any sign of a former naval presence. I had expected to find, perhaps, the remains of a jetty or a clearing or flattened area ashore. There was no road to this bay until quite recently, so it would have been

completely isolated during the war.

Can anyone enlighten us with any stories about what went on there? One wonders what the attitude of the local Turks was to the use of this area as a foreign base? They are proud of the association now, but it may have been quite different then.

Alec M Macpherson.

(see map on back page)

Scene on Burns' Night



Capt John Noble, splendidly clad for the occasion, was at pains to explain to the uninitiated the meaning and subtleties of his address to the Haggis. This was before he 'clapped in his walie nieve a blade, and made it whistle', which really focused the attention of those close by.

(translations can be found online)



The Top table was well attentive to Lionel Hall's *'Toast to the Lassies'* and he has promised to bring us the second half at a later date.



Flemming Pedersen gave the *'Immortal Memory'* a Danish Twist which wasn't as soporific as the picture tends to suggest.



However, he had at hand all the paperwork he needed when he accompanied his daughter Ingrid in the *'Sangs and Clatter'*, which was again ably led by Alec Macpherson.

Kindle Kachalot (continued)

With modern technology advancing with such leaps and bounds, it seems that your latest device is out of date, perhaps not quite as soon as you've extracted it from its plastic straight jacket, but certainly by the time you've come to grips with it, if ever. This update from Barry Peck would also seem to have been overtaken by the latest HDX version currently being advertised. Who knows, by the time you read this, you might be in possession of an even newer HDXS, or whatever, delivered to you by an Amazonian heli-drone.

In the December issue (edition 50) the editor described how you can get the newsletter on your Kindle reader via e-mail with or without his assistance.

If you have invested in the more expensive Kindle Fire HD tablet and you have a PC or laptop equipped with a USB socket, there is a quicker way to get the PDF file on to the tablet, and the screen colour quality makes for excellent reading and really justifies the quality of the publication. You will know if you have a suitable Kindle version because the charging lead will terminate in a USB plug that will fit into the computer USB socket.

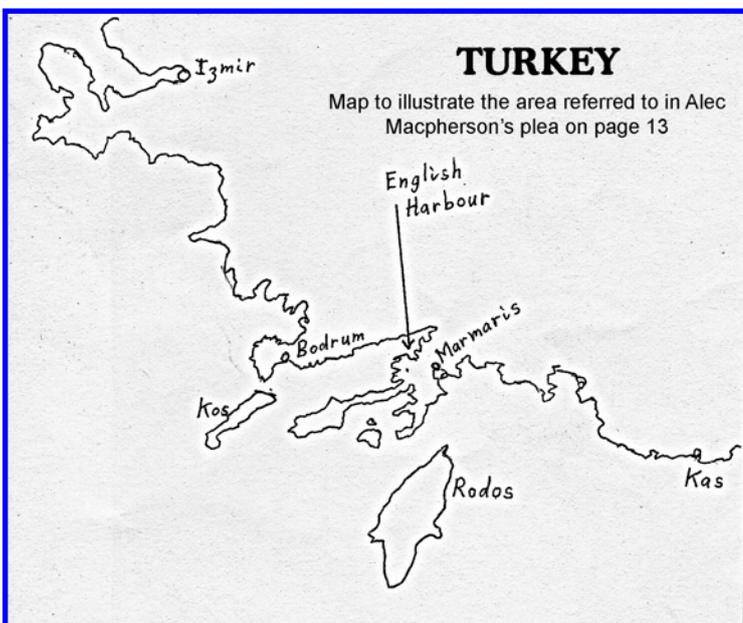
First download the newsletter PDF file from the Cachalots' website on to your PC. Then plug the charging lead from the tablet into the USB port, and very importantly switch the Kindle on and go to the home page.

Open up Windows Explorer, then "My Computer". The Kindle will appear in the list as an external hard drive. Open up the Kindle folders and then the "Internal storage" folder. In the list of sub-folders will be one marked "Documents". Left click on this and you will see a list of documents if you have any stored on the device.

Now find where you have downloaded the newsletter PDF file on your hard drive and drag and drop it into the Kindle Documents folder. It should appear as an icon on the home page, but if it doesn't then tap on "docs" in the top strip carousel and you will find it.

Finally, when you have had a good read, if you wish to delete the file from the Kindle it can be done in Windows Explorer just like any other file.

Barry Peck



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The Club room is currently open **two** days a week, Thursday and Friday, 1130 - 1500. Liz will be only too happy to serve you a drink and she can take your orders for meals, sandwiches and snacks. 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.

Dates for your Diary

Sat Mar 1 Curry Lunch 1200 Kuti's, Oxford Street
Fri Mar 28 Skittles Evening, So'ton (Old) Green BC
Sat Apr 26 Curry Lunch 1200 Kuti's, Oxford Street
Fri May 30 Club Supper, 1900 Club Room
Thu June 12 Shipping Festival Service, Winchester

The cut-off date for the next edition will be

16th May 2014

Members' Profiles

I have in mind to bring to you profiles of Cachalots, as provided by them on a voluntary basis. To date we have only published details of the Captains when they come to office, and new members on joining. It seems unfortunate that, quite often, we only learn the histories of other members when they Go Aloft.

There are issues of privacy and modesty to be considered as members will be reticent to be perceived as bragging or self-promoting.

I have one such offering to hand but it is six pages long and would need some editing.

I shall be guided by the officers and yourselves.