

# The CACHALOT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB

**No 54**

**December 2014**

## Captain's Log

After a quiet period over August, when I was able to enjoy the good weather in the garden, my first engagement since my last Captain's Log was to attend the MN Day service at Holyrood Church. This event is organised by the Solent Branch of the MNA. I wore my uniform for this occasion and I laid a wreath on behalf of the Southampton Master Mariners. I feel this event could be better supported given the maritime influence of Southampton. Holyrood church is the so called Mariners Church that was bombed out during the 2nd World War. The building was made safe and the Chancel glazed over but otherwise it remains a shell, much as it was after the raid.

Dame Mary Fagan came to the end of her tenure as Her Majesty's Lord- Lieutenant of Hampshire on Tuesday the 9th of September which was also her 75th birthday. In honour of this occasion, a reception and beating retreat was held in the Great Hall Winchester. This event was attended by many of the dignitaries of Hampshire. The Great Hall is a splendid place for such a gathering with its fine architecture and the round table of King Arthur fame hanging on the wall. We were treated to a brass quintet from the Scots Guards as we enjoyed drinks and canapés. Dame Mary was presented with a fine book detailing her time as the Lord Lieutenant by the Leader of Hampshire County Council who also made a speech. Reg Kelso wrote a contribution to the book on behalf of our Club. Following this we all assembled outside to witness Beating Retreat by the Band of the Scots Guards. This very enjoyable evening in good weather was a fine tribute to Dame Mary who has done so much for the county during her term in office. Nigel Atkinson, the new Lord Lieutenant, has a very difficult act to follow.

Our buffet supper held in the club room on the 12th September was well attended and we all enjoyed the talk given by John Noble on the salvage of the 'Costa Concordia'.

The day trip by coach to Bristol was most enjoyable. It started with a guided tour of the 'Great Britain'. It is incredible to see the amount of restoration work carried out since the vessel was brought back from Sparrow Cove in the Falklands in the 1970's. For £10, and after signing a disclaimer covering several pages, you can climb the rigging under the guidance of two young ladies. One of our party took the challenge and climbed to the cross trees. I would, of course, have done the same had my gout not been playing up!

It was really good to see the response for the Macmillan Coffee Morning held in the Club on 10th October. Final figures are awaited as we are not sure how much the gift aid will come to but it looks like being slightly above last year's splendid result.

The annual National Service for Seafarers was held at St.Paul's cathedral on the 15th October. This year marked the 500th anniversaries of, not only the Corporation of Trinity House but also the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames. The Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society or the Shipwrecked Mariners for short were also celebrating 175 years this year. Princess Anne attended the service and also read the Second Lesson. The service was very well attended with a lot of persons attending in full uniform as did the Princess Royal. It was good to see a good number of fellow Cachalots at the service.

This year we made a change to the bursary. More about this can be found in Peter Marriot's article further on. My part of it consisted in attending the AGM and award ceremony at Winchester Sea Cadets on Thursday the 16th October. Four of us from the Club attended including Peter. I was very impressed with the whole set up of the Winchester Sea Cadets. The cadets themselves were clearly very keen on what they were doing and the waiting list to join shows how successful the group is. The two cadets we sponsored gave a very good presentation of their time on the T.S. Jack Petchey. I enjoyed a most interesting and rewarding evening. Clearly we made the right choice in supporting the Cadets and we hope to help both Winchester and Southampton Sea Cadets in the future.

Trafalgar Night dinner in the Club Room was very well supported. A few persons were disappointed as the 39 available places were quickly filled. Our thanks go to Lionel Hall for his efforts in providing the decorations for the night. Lionel also gave us the Immortal Memory to Lord Nelson.

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Reg Kelso for temporarily taking up the reins as Boatsteerer when no one else was available. As always, Reg has done a splendid job of keeping us afloat. Ken Dagnall has now volunteered (???) to take on the role and I wish him every success.

Very best wishes to all fellow Cachalots and friends for Christmas and the coming New Year.

Ian Odd,  
Captain, Southampton Master Mariners

*Merry Christmas*



## Boatsteerer's Locker

Fellow Cachalots

I'm still a bit mystified as to how I reached this exalted position, as some are born to greatness, some strive for greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them, but what happened was - there I was down in the engine room with the rest of the black gang minding my own business. When feeling a bit overcome by the heat and thirst I ventured upwards to just short of the pearly gates for a breath of fresh air where I was accosted by Reg Kelso, The Boatsteerer, looking for a likely lad to help him out. The sun was shining with the wind a gentle breeze so I was encouraged to swap my sweat rag for sailors hat and whistle and requested to try and look intelligent like someone who knows what they are doing.

Under the watchful guidance of the Boatsteerer I soon learnt how to drink beer and show respect to my more senior Cachalots and not to disturb the Friday session with my whistle as normally there were ladies present and more importantly not to put my name down on any pieces of paper on the notice board as the paper wasn't there for a subs. request but mainly for donations.

Bless my soul within days my sailors hat and whistle were taken off me and replaced with a peaked cap and telescope. I was also given a long piece of wood and told that I had been promoted to 'The Boatsteerer designate for 2015' and shown some of the mystiques associated with that exalted position.

The most Senior of Senior of the Cachalots gave me a key which he said was for the Boatsteerer Locker which upon opening contained a moth eaten English dictionary.

I immediately looked up 'Boatsteerer' and found boatdeck, boathook, boatdrill, boathouse, boatload, boatman, boatpeople, boatswain, boatyard but no Boatsteerer, I then returned below where the work is done and fired up the magic Google pump which gave "A **boatsteerer** was a position on a nineteenth-century whaleship. One of the most responsible members of the crew, his duty was to pull the forward oar (propulsion) of a whaleboat until reaching striking distance of a whale". (so really he was an Engineer)

Having reported this back to the most holy of holies for instructions he ordered me to write an article of about 500 words for The Cachalot Newsletter and overcame my objections by producing a Job Description document on parchment and told not to put my oily fingerprints on it and that I was no longer designate but it had been agreed by others in my absence that I was elevated henceforth to the full position of Boatsteerer. (My good lady Margaret on hearing this exclaimed "Oh God! I hope they know what they're letting themselves in for")

Since taking over this exalted position I have missed a number of events as we have had a Club Supper where our Post Captain John Noble brought everyone up to date on the salvage of the 'Costa Concordia', the catering being reported as up to the usual high standard of John Davis and his team.

I also missed the coach trip to Bristol and the visit to the 'Great Britain' as I was on my way to a Bank Line reunion which is held every two years to coincide with the usual length of a trip, and then continued up North to the Wirral to celebrate my Uncle's 90th Birthday in North Wales and visit Tranmere Rovers.

The Ladies lunch at the Medbar Restaurant was by all accounts well attended but unfortunately my lady could not

attend as that morning we had just disembarked from 'Oriana' and we both were suffering from an over indulgence of food and alcohol, or was it alcohol and food.

Incidentally now that we have much improved catering at the Club, thanks to the Centre's new manager, Steven Hulbert, there is a rumour that the local sandwich bar is closing down through lack of our custom, which will please Steve who deserves our full support.

Club activities are well in hand thanks to Peter Grant and preparations are almost finalised for our Christmas Festivity Meals and other events.

The Club has made a donation to a proposed Captain Charles Fryatt Memorial plaque at Holyrood Church. Capt Fryatt was a Southampton master mariner who was executed by the Germans for attempting to ram a U-boat in 1915 when his ship the SS *Brussels*, was captured off the Netherlands in 1916. He was court-martialled and sentenced to death although he was a civilian non-combatant. International outrage followed his execution near Bruges, Belgium. In 1919, his body was reburied with full honours in the United Kingdom. (See Hamish Roberts comprehensive article in *Cachalot 32, June 2009*, or click on and visit <http://www.cachalots.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/The-Case-of-Capt.-Fryatt-in-the-Great-War.pdf> )

A gentle reminder that THE SEAFARERS' CENTRE meeting room is at our disposal on THE SECOND THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH to facilitate the attendance of those Club Members for whom the staircase poses problems, why not come and join them.

Paul Leece wishes to thank those members who loaned memorabilia to the Holy Trinity Church, Fareham for their maritime heritage week in October. (See page 15)

Finally - My thanks must go to Reg, Richard and the back room team for trying to show me the straight and narrow path (without the help of tugs) I hope that I don't disappoint them but no doubt I shall drop some clangers and beg your indulgence in advance.

Wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Ken Dagnall



### Outing to Bristol

Only 24 had signed on for the day trip to Bristol so there was plenty of room on the 34 seater coach. All hands managed to muster on time for our 0830 departure from King's Court in Chandler's Ford and after a coffee stop on the way we arrived at the SS Great Britain shortly after 1100.

Resting in the original dry dock where Brunel had completed her in 1843, she is surrounded at water level with a plate glass pool with a couple of inches of water in it. From above, this gives the the impression that she is afloat, and below it acts as a very efficient roof to the dry dock where the humidity is maintained at a maximum of 20% to prevent further corrosion of the hull.

We had booked a guided tour and our guide met us as we arrived and, after a brief photo call, gave us a very interesting and informative tour of the ship. Like most attractions nowadays, the tour, the displays and the information presented is aimed at a much younger generation and our guide had been a bit apprehensive as to how to pitch it to a group of (ex) professional mariners. He needn't have worried, our in-depth knowledge of 19th century steam sailers

was much less than his. After the tour we were free to explore the rest of the ship and the site and find some lunch. Those that ventured to the local hostleries were perhaps financially more rewarded than those who remained on site and paid the arm and a leg prices in the café.

There was much of interest for a group such as ours and some of those who had been on the earlier trip to the *Cutty Sark* thought that the presentation and content here were superior. We were blessed with very pleasant weather and that always helps to uplift the overall experience. After a 1630 departure and a trouble free journey we arrived back in Chandler's Ford in good time and well satisfied that we had enjoyed another rewarding day out.

TEC



### A Worthy Cause

Another rewarding experience for some Cachalots and Sea Cadets alike, this time at *T.S. Itchen*, at Worthy Down.

See page 8 for the full story.



### Tall Ship "Kaskelot"

Kaskelot is Swedish for Cachalot. The tall ship *Kaskelot* was originally a traditional Baltic Trader built in 1948 by J. Ring-Andersen for the Royal Greenland Trading Company at the Svendborg shipyard in Denmark.

During the 1960s *Kaskelot* worked as a support vessel for fisheries in the Faroe Islands. She was purchased by Square Sail, UK in 1981 and converted to replicate a traditional three masted Barque, double topsail, going on to feature in many TV and film productions, including *Return to Treasure Island*, *The Three Musketeers*, *David Copperfield* and *Shackleton*.

She has recently undergone major restoration in Gloucester to an extraordinarily high standard; one suitable for a global passage. Impeccable craftsmanship and engineering have been brought to bear, with many original features retained whilst incorporating state-of-the-art equipment and machinery. Original structures and interior accommodation have been restored in oak and her decks recaulked throughout.

At 47m. length overall she is one of the largest remaining wooden sailing ships in commission. A fine ship with a fine name.

*Cachalot David Swayne*



You can find more detail at <http://www.tallshipkaskelot.com/>

## The salvage of the S.S. Great Britain **The Voyage Home**

Part two of Roy Martin's pared down version of Chapter 8 of his and Lyle Craigie-Halketts' book, Risdon Beazley: Marine Salvor. The complete chapter is on our web site at <http://www.cachalots.org.uk/cachalots-deck/the-cachalot/salvage-of-the-s-s-great-britain/>

I doubt if any one present in Port Stanley will forget that special moment when the *Great Britain* returned to Port Stanley; with all the cars (or rather Land Rovers) blowing their horns and the bells from St Mary's and the much bigger Christ Church Cathedral ringing us in.

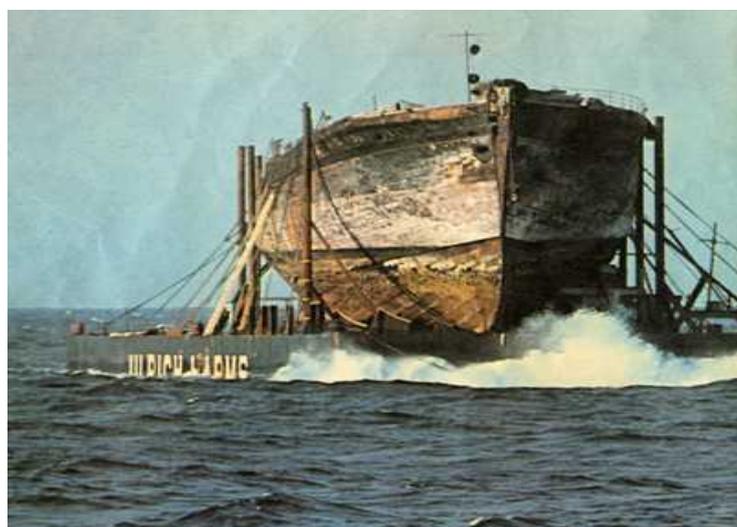
However, we could hardly manoeuvre at all and spent several hours getting no closer to the jetty. All we could do was drop anchor in the middle of the harbour, as the wind had increased to gale force again. It was a scary night, we dragged anchor and Hans was unable to do much with the main engine as we were yawing through 180 degrees; we were all very pleased to see daylight. The wind decreased and we weighed anchor, attached the *Lively* and the *Clio* to the fore end of the pontoon and put the *Malvinas* alongside the port side

Then, terribly slowly due to our restricted steering, we edged alongside the Falkland Islands Co. jetty. Had we not had this short lull in the weather we might well have had to head out to Port William until weather conditions improved. Over the next ten days the *Great Britain* was firmly secured to the pontoon. We had to take on several welders from Port Stanley and labourers to clear loose scale and debris, driving wedges between the hull and chocks and help us move most of the dolphins again to better positions for bracing.

We were not very popular with the project management team because we cut fairly large holes through the shell plate at the upper tween deck and weather deck levels to pass heavy wires and chains round the stringers. Turnbuckles were used to fasten the chains and wires securely to the deck of the pontoon to help prevent any movement on the long trip home.

Nearing the end of the preparations the *Great Britain* management team organised a cocktail party in appreciation for all those who had assisted in salvaging the famous ship. The party was held in the bar of a local hotel, and was a great success. With great difficulty I managed to persuade my mother to attend. I noticed at the beginning of the evening she was trembling and on asking why, she admitted that it was the first time she had ever been in a pub!

We sailed on 24<sup>th</sup> April at about 0900 hours. A large gathering bade us farewell from the jetty and the faithful *Lively*, *Clio*, *Malvinas*, and the Royal Marines hovercraft escorted us, plus a flotilla of small private launches. The local air services aircraft made some very spectacular passes over us as their final tribute. In spite of the success of the job, it was a very emotional time for the locals, as a slice of history was shortly to disappear from the Islands forever. For me the strange feeling of elation of a good job, and that I was on my way back to Southampton to my wife and son, was mixed with sadness at leaving my birthplace, mother, childhood friends etc. I doubted if I would ever return. *Lyle and Roy Martin did return some years later to clean up the South Georgian whaling stations.*



*Great Britain under tow. Photo Lyle Craigie-Halkett*

We cleared the Cape Pembroke Lighthouse about midday, and the tow was paid out. The sight of the great ship wallowing slowly in the South Atlantic swell was unforgettable; at times the pontoon was scarcely visible, making the *Great Britain* look as if she was going it alone.



We all agreed that the old lady really wanted to get back to her birthplace, during the whole of the operation we were constantly amazed that most things turned out for the best. After four days the gale died away, leaving a fairly heavy swell, but a calm sea. We took this chance to check on the pontoon and its load; some way was taken off the *Varius 2* and the tow wires adjusted a little.



Three of us, with a German coxswain, took

*Moving from Sparrow Cove to Port Stanley Lyle Craigie-Halkett*

the small steelwork boat and hung on fiercely as it was launched through the trawler's stern ramp. After clambering on to the pontoon we checked all the lashings, braces etc and found every thing to be in perfect shape. Nothing had moved, though a few more tons of mussels and rust had fallen down and was starting to smell quite foul. After being accustomed to the throb of engines, it was very strange and peaceful.

We were convinced that there was no reason why the long tow back to England would be anything other than a normal. Returning to the *Varius 2* we realised it was perhaps a bit foolish to have used this method of launch and recovery in the open sea. As we approached the stern we could see the rudder at times, and the wash from the propeller was not helping. The bottom of the ramp was lifting five to six feet above the surface. With much shouting, we attached a hook over the bow gunwale, and then waited until the stern dropped in a trough. The winch driver had to heave full speed and pull us up the ramp to safety, this was followed by a stiff drop of rum.

We reached Montevideo on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1970. The average speed for the trip was just over five knots, indeed much faster than the trip down to the Falklands. The following two days were spent with further cleaning, lashing, and bracings. We also put in a few more cradles to help support the hull for the other 7,000 miles or so to go.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> the convoy left Montevideo for the final and longest leg home. The Risdon Beazley salvage team returned to the U.K. to work on other projects. Historians had calculated that on her last and fateful trip to the Falklands, the *Great Britain* had averaged 4.5 knots, but on her return piggyback journey the average speed was 5.3 knots.

The tow was mostly uneventful until the 1<sup>st</sup> of June: approaching the Cape Verde Islands stormy conditions slowed them to almost no headway at all, but no damage was done. The 14<sup>th</sup> July saw them making good speed again, passing Madeira. On the 18<sup>th</sup> they were abeam of Cape Finisterre. Shortly afterwards an RAF Nimrod with a press photographer on board took dramatic photographs, which appeared in a newspaper with the headline "Grandmother of them all".

The Project Management team had a very difficult time with various authorities in respect of bringing this type of vessel into the United Kingdom on a pontoon, at one time it looked as if Bristol might not accept her. Additional insurance was required to cover the un-docking at Avonmouth and for the tow up the Avon to Bristol.

One thing that concerned the Risdon Beazley team was the seemingly silly attitude of the immigration authorities when they heard that there was a Falkland Island seaman on the *Varius 2*. Kenny Thompson was to leave the trawler on arrival to work on the Beazley salvage vessels. As Kenny was born in the Falklands, he required a work permit if he was to remain in England. As that had not been applied for, and he was on a German ship, he was refused entry. Kenny had family living in Oban, Scotland and his grandparents were born in the United Kingdom. I am not sure who came up with the ludicrous solution, (*me, Roy Martin*) but as the convoy neared the pilot station the work boat from the *Varius 2* had to take Kenny, complete with his kitbag, and put him on the pontoon. He then had to climb on to the *Great Britain*



*Great Britain's salvage crew*

and thus he was allowed entry to England, as a British seaman on a British ship. It took several months before Kenny Thompson managed to see the funny side of being the first able seaman on Brunel's famous ship since 1886, and it's last ever crew member!

Captain Hertzog also had a problem. He was asked to slow down so that Jack Hayward, who had financed the project, would be able to take aerial photos of the convoy passing Lundy Island. This was not easy, with the *Great Britain* acting like a great sail in the following wind and with the strong Bristol Channel tides.

The small Beazley diving/survey vessel *Queen Mother* had met the *Varius 2* in the South West approaches. She carried equipment to prepare the *Great Britain* for her last trip on her own bottom. The ship had been launched by the Queen Mother for the Bristol Channel pilots. One of the sale conditions was that the name would not be changed.

The convoy arrived at Avonmouth during the morning of 23rd June 1970. The tow was released and a local tug, the *Sea Challenge*, brought the pontoon and its load into dock. As we entered the Royal Edward Dock, the *Great Britain* was welcomed back by all the ships in dock sounding their horns. For the couple of minutes the noise increased until it was just about deafening. The docks were closed to sightseers, but every vantage point was packed with press photographers, reporters and the public.

The *Mulus 3* was put in a lay by berth as a ship was currently occupying the graving dock. We had quite a lot of work to do preparing for floating her off the pontoon. The major job was to cement over the patch covering the split in the starboard side. Bill O'Neil ordered a lorry load of quick setting cement, which we had to hand carry across a gangway and then down almost vertical ladders to the bottom of the ship. We then had to go like fury as the cement was setting so quickly. On completion there was more than half the load of cement in the lorry, when we told the driver we didn't require any more, he said we had to have it all as he had no place to take it, and it must not be allowed to set in his lorry. After a few heated exchanges he tipped the lot on the quayside and sped off. Next day a couple of workers with jack hammers took several hours to remove the now solid mound. On July 1<sup>st</sup> all the loose equipment, such as the masts, were removed from the pontoon. Another steel plate had to be welded over the split at the insistence of the people responsible for the tow to her final destination in Bristol.

Horst Kaulen flew from Hamburg to oversee the floatation. We had quite a fright during the operation; a sticky valve in the *Mulus* trapped air and she suddenly took a starboard list, causing the *Great Britain* to rear over. Meanwhile the trapped air was rushing out from the port side bottom valves. The press photographers just about caused a stampede on the dock edge, trying to get a good shot of the air escaping, but as soon as the compressor was stopped so did the escaping air. I dived and managed to free the faulty valve. After a few hours the *Great Britain* was safely afloat without assistance, except for occasional pumping to keep her totally dry inside.

Two of us split the night between us by keeping a close watch on the ship, keeping a keen lookout for new leaks. But I am proud to say that she was reasonably sound; the small trickle of water seeping in was no more than on many ships I have worked on. Additional portable pumps had been placed throughout the lower hold, and our big salvage pumps were primed and ready for any eventuality.

A platform was erected with scaffolding from side to side to act as a bridge so that the pilot would be able to keep a good watch on the tugs and bends in the river. Once again the weather took a hand in the schedule, and in spite of the riverbanks being lined with photographers and sightseers alike, the tow up the Avon had to be postponed due to the wind gusting force five to six. It was a great disappointment to the many people who had travelled a long way to see the *Great Britain* being towed to her final resting-place. British Rail had organised a special train from London that was to stop at the Avon Gorge as the ship went past. Whether they had time to cancel the bookings I never heard.

Though our main concern was to watch for any sudden inrushes of water, we took furtive glances of the world outside; we could not believe the great numbers of people everywhere. Many people had slept in their cars overnight in order to see the spectacle and it was later estimated that 100,000 people turned out to watch the tow to Bristol. It was quite an emotional trip, especially passing underneath the Clifton Suspension Bridge, another of Brunel's masterpieces.



At Bristol we berthed in Y Dock to await the next suitable spring tides, which were about two weeks away, to make sure that the *Great Britain* could pass over the sill into the dock that she was built in. We trimmed her by the head using a rubber water filled bladder, giving a weight of about fifty tons to bring the stern up.

Prior to the tow from Avonmouth through the river Avon on Saturday July 4<sup>th</sup> Bill O'Neil had been told by the Southampton office to ensure that all the team were suitably attired in clean coveralls. Bill gave £20 to a person closely associated with the team (although now deceased and should remain nameless), to buy him a white coverall. After several hours the person reappeared, obviously having had a very liquid lunch, clutching a plastic carrier bag. He was assisted by a taxi driver, who demanded his fare. The following morning was still a bit windy, but the dock the great ship occupied was required that day for another vessel, so the decision was taken to proceed. Shortly after leaving the dock, Bill O'Neil put on his new white coverall and commented "Not too bad, but a bit short in the leg." However, on turning his back to us, everyone burst into laughter as 'Kellogg's Cornflakes' was emblazoned across the back, he kept his jacket on for the remainder of the day. We finally squeezed into the Great Western Dry Dock during the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> July 1970. By chance it coincided with her being launched from the same dock on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 1843.

The Duke of Edinburgh visited the ship during the final docking. We were disappointed that he said little to Bill and gave us the impression that he thought that the Germans had salvaged Brunel's vessel. The Risdon Beazley involvement was now at an end, and, after the ship settled on the chocks, we gathered our equipment and returned to Southampton.

I would like to dedicate this as a tribute to Leslie James Collingwood O'Neil who sadly passed away some years ago.

For the BBC video see: [Chronicle - The Great Iron Ship part 3.wmv](#), and parts 4, 5 and 6.

Roy Martin

## **Christmas Events**

The **Christmas Dinner** will be held at King's Court Masonic Centre

On

**Saturday 6h December**

**Black Tie**

Expect generous portions of the traditional fare, 1900 for 1930, **£32** per head.

Donations for the raffle will be gratefully received, all proceeds to the Captain's Charity:

**Cancer Research UK**

The **Christmas Luncheon** will be held In the Seafarers' Centre

On

**Saturday 13th December**

This year the lunch will be served downstairs in the Seafarers' Centre and it is intended that we muster before, upstairs in the Club bar, 1200 for 1230.

**£25** each, names to the notice board, or call Richard in the office.

There has been a slight increase in the cost of these functions.

## Gone Aloft



**Captain Peter Marriott**  
**1939 - 2014**  
**Club Captain 2007**

Past Captain Peter Marriott went aloft on 8th November.

Peter was born in 1939 and attended Finchley Catholic Boys Grammar School and King Edward V11 Nautical College in London.

He went to sea in 1956, apprenticed to the British Tankers Co. Ltd, where he served afloat for 22 years, including Command.

There followed several years in various operational and safety roles ashore with BP including secondment to the Oil Companies International Marine Forum as Technical Advisor. As BP Gas fleet Operations Superintendent he was a member of the Society of International Gas Tanker and Terminal Operators and at the forefront of the global industry of the maritime transport of liquefied gas.

In 1988 he joined the Civil Service as the first Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents and the following year he set up and became the first head of the MAIB. Staff Captain Jeremy Smart, who was on secondment to MAIB in 1992, recalls that 'he was great to work for, he used the tea point as a meeting place and many a problem was resolved in that small kitchenette. He not only represented MAIB at significant national and international fora, but also in the infamous MAIB / Southampton Marine Office (MCA) cricket matches, where his efforts and enthusiasm were appreciated, but unfortunately not exactly memorable!!!'

Peter's appointment was for 7 years but he agreed to remain in post until he completed his report on the *Sea Empress* incident and submit it to The Secretary of State.

He was relieved by Rear Admiral John Lang in 1997 and, announcing that appointment, Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport, said, "I am extremely grateful for Captain Marriott's excellent work in establishing the MAIB as the UK's national marine accident investigation authority - thanks to Captain Marriott the MAIB

is now much respected for its expertise, hard work and independence."

Peter then worked as a consultant in Marine Risk Assessment at the Warsash Maritime Centre (now Academy). One contract that he ran was with a major marine insurance company and involved vetting every ship that requested cover. This involved flying out to many different ports, observing how the company operated both its office and ships. He then had to write a report based upon criteria, agreed upon by the WMA and the Insurance company, and advising whether to recommend that the company should provide the required cover and any terms that should apply to that cover or not as the case may have been. Peter was a very good choice. He had three members of staff working with him and always produced excellent reports that were accurate, concise and to the point. His team saved the Marine Insurance Company £ Millions.

One of Peter's last tasks "in the field" was to help Post Captain John Noble in monitoring the trials programme of the new Wightlink ferries that were introduced amid some controversy a few years ago. John, who had the highest regard for Peter and his work ethic, states that Peter 'conducted his duties diligently and with aplomb'.

Peter, who retired in 2001, had joined the Club in 1990 and was appointed Club Captain in 2007. The previous year, as Staff Captain, he stood in for then Club Captain George Angas during George's three month stay in hospital and was instrumental in cajoling other Cachalots to help with the decoration and fitting out of our new Club Rooms and helping to oversee the move from the RBL premises to our current home. George, who had worked closely with Peter at the WMA, says, 'Peter was, first and foremost, a gentleman. He was also a very nice person who was never too busy to talk to anybody. His experience as a ship's Captain, A Marine Superintendent and the first CEO of the MAIB enabled him to undertake a wide range of maritime jobs with a sure knowledge and a high level of competence and ability'.

With the introduction of the Bursary award in 2008, Peter was elected Chairman of the Bursary Committee and fulfilled that role with his usual thoroughness and efficiency. When he considered that the award was perhaps no longer meeting its original intentions he instigated a change of direction of the scheme, the results of which can be seen on the opposite page in Peter's final report, completed just two weeks before he died. Peter had been battling illness for a long time and, in spite of his failing health, was determined to see this last project through and it is, perhaps, a mark of the man that he achieved this in a way that is rewarding to all.

He will be sadly missed by us all.

Peter married Janet in 1967 and our sincerest condolences go to her, their daughter Vicki, son Nick and grandchildren Bethany and Joseph.

## **Bursary Award Changes Course**

Many of you will remember that for a number of years it was reported in *The Cachalot* who had received the £1,000 bursary for that year. The bursary was offered to a student at Warsash Maritime Academy studying for a higher Certificate of Competency. In total four awards were made in the years 2009 to 2012. After making the award in 2012 it was decided that the whole system needed reviewing as it was felt that we were not fully achieving the aims and objectives that had been set when the bursary was first introduced. After much discussion, and bearing in mind that one of the objectives of the Cachalots is to offer financial assistance to worthy causes, it was decided that the bursary should still continue but in a different format.

A number of ideas were put forward and discussed and it was finally decided that we should make the £1,000 available to the Sea Cadets. The Sea Cadets is a very large organisation and in the circumstances it was agreed we would channel our efforts to the Sea Cadet units who in various ways help the Cachalots, particularly at the Shipping Festival Service at Winchester and at the Sea Pie Supper. Those two units are the Southampton and Winchester Units.

We were also aware that just giving each unit £500 for them to decide what they would spend it on is not really a bursary. We felt it should go to something specific and what better than an aspect of the cadets training. One particular area of their training is to undertake Offshore Training on one of the vessels owned by MSSC (Marine Society and Sea Cadets). These trips are not cheap, for one week onboard the cost is £260. That money has to be found from various sources and in many cases the cadets' family can only afford a small amount. We felt that our money could not go to a better cause than to help pay some of that money as a bursary. Letters were sent to the COs of both units explaining what we had in mind and laying down fairly stringent requirements for a cadet to apply for assistance. The Bursary Committee would have the final say on whether the amount of money requested should be made available.

We had our first request for assistance from the CO of the Winchester Unit. The names of two cadets were put forward, Cadet Michael George (age 12) and Robyn Coff (age 15), and the Bursary Committee were of the opinion that both were ideal candidates to receive assistance. Cadet George requested £105 and Cadet Coff £155. The payment of these amounts was organised by our Storekeeper and paid directly to MSSC who handle the financial side of Offshore Training.

As this was the first Sea Cadet Bursary it was felt that we mark the occasion in some way or another. After various suggestions were looked at it was finally decided that the best way was for the two cadets to make a presentation of their experience and this would take place when the unit held their AGM on 16th October. Representatives of the Cachalots would be invited. After the business side of the AGM was completed there would be the presentation of various awards which the cadets of the unit had achieved during the year and incorporated into this part of the business would be a presentation made by Michael George and Robyn Coff.

Our representatives were Captain Ian Odd (Club Captain), Captain Peter Grant, Gerry Cartwright and Captain Peter Marriott (Chairman of the Bursary Committee).

On arrival at *T.S. Itchen* (the cadets "home" which is located in the Worthy Down Camp, just north of Winchester) we were met by the President of the Unit Management Committee, Rear Admiral John Lang, the Chairman of the UMC, Mr Edwin Martin and Officer in Charge TS Itchen Sub Lieutenant Lindsay Bassett. On completion of the matters related to the AGM the Parade Evening commenced in the traditional manner and then we were able to explain to all the other visitors (mainly parents and relations) why the Cachalots were there and the background to the Bursary. The presentation of the many awards that been achieved were then made and Captain Odd had the honour of being asked to present two of those awards, the Waterbourne Trophy and the Hamworthy Trophy. This was followed by the presentation by Michael George and Robyn Coff of their week onboard *T.S. Jack Petchey*, with of course the aid of overhead projection! It was extremely interesting and there is no doubt about it they did a great job and could be proud of themselves. By having that week on the *T.S. Jack Petchey* the two cadets gained their offshore power hand level 1.

There are so many things that could be written about the Winchester Sea Cadets but suffice to say they are a very solid organisation and youngsters are queuing up to join. Also Cadet Robyn Coff was presented with the awards for best attendance and female cadet of the year, and by what we heard they were justly deserved.

To sum up, it was a very rewarding experience being there and all of those we spoke to consider our bursary scheme is a wonderful idea and very much appreciated. From our point of view it is worth every penny and we hope that there will more applications for financial assistance before long.

Peter Marriott  
Chairman, Bursary Committee 25/10/14



### **T.S. Jack Petchey**

She is 22.5m loa and named after her benefactor, a 'rags to riches' entrepreneur from the East End of London.

See <http://www.jackpetcheyfoundation.org.uk>

## A SHIPBOARD CHRISTMAS.

In "A Christmas Carol", Charles Dickens describes the atmosphere aboard ship on Christmas Day:

*"They sped on, above the black and heaving sea --on, on --until, being far away from any shore, they lighted on a ship. They stood beside the helmsman at the wheel, the look-out in the bow, the officers who had the watch; dark, ghostly figures in their several stations: but every man among them hummed a Christmas tune, or had a Christmas thought, or spoke below his breath to his companion of some bygone Christmas Day, with homeward hopes belonging to it. And every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had had a kinder word for another on that day than on any other day in the year; and had shared to some extent in its festivities; and had remembered those he cared for at a distance, and had known that they delighted to remember him."*

My first seafaring Christmas was spent on a 10,000 ton general cargo vessel with an all UK domiciled crew, on passage from Barcelona to Middlesbrough. We had been "out" for some five months and as we voyaged through the Mediterranean there was a slight chance that we might be in port for Christmas but - it was not to be. The dockworkers in Barcelona - intent on starting their own festivities at the earliest possible moment - discharged their cargo with indecent haste and, by the early afternoon of Christmas Eve we were on our way homeward.

As we cleared the port the weather conditions steadily declined. The Chief Steward had made a valiant effort to arrange a Christmas Eve party for our 12 passengers - and off-duty Officers - but there was little enthusiasm for singing carols, the decorations on the tree fell off every time the ship pitched, the bottles in the bar crashed together when she rolled and, one by one, we had given up the unequal struggle and retired to bed - but not before wishing everyone a "Happy Christmas".

The Captain made a brief appearance at the party and had, with great diplomacy, managed to avoid answering any queries about the weather ahead of us.

Mail had arrived in Barcelona and as I sat in an empty cabin (the other cadet was on watch) I re-read my letters and Christmas cards - and steadily became more miserable. I had not yet become a "good sailor" and I could feel sea-sickness coming on. I lay down on the settee, fully clothed, and it seemed that I had only just fallen asleep when there was a knock on the cabin door and a voice said "One bell, Paddy - and Happy Christmas - it's bucketing down out there."

By now it was blowing a full gale and as I made my way along the Boat Deck to the Bridge, the cold rain quickly washed away any semblance of sleepiness. I felt VERY unwell and I knew that the bridge bucket would, yet again, play an important part in my life. In the dimly lit chartroom the Second and Third Officers were busy handing over the Watch and in the darkened wheelhouse I found my fellow cadet with his nose pinned to a forward window. He, too, was prone to sea-sickness and he did not linger - "the bucket is there, Reg - there are a couple of echoes on the radar -going the same way, I think - haven't seen a thing all night - God, I'm going to be sick again - Happy Christmas, I'm off"- and with that, I put my nose too close to the rotating "clear view" screen and suffered yet another friction burn. It was Christmas Day.

Many years later my ship berthed in a small port on the Mississippi River on the morning of Christmas Eve. Now I was the Captain and the ship was a 70,000 ton bulk carrier preparing to load a grain cargo for the UK. Once the Customs and Immigration formalities were over the agent arrived - bringing the mail and the good news that although preparations for loading would be made today there would be no cargo working until the 27th.

The port was little other than a grain elevator with a small town within easy walking distance and, once the dockers had finished their loading preparations, the crew closed the cargo hatches and, by the early evening of Christmas Eve the ship settled down to a very relaxed routine. The crew - again a happy mix of UK nationals - was one of the best I had ever experienced and she was undoubtedly a happy ship. In the afternoon we had had visits from a Presbyterian minister and a Catholic priest inviting us to services on Christmas Day AND to a "Community Christmas Party" Almost to a man we attended the party and we were made very welcome. Beer was plentiful (but nobody let the side down), the food was abundant and glorious, the dancing was fast and furious and invitations to family homes on Christmas Day were freely issued. Both deck boys fell in love (and were inconsolable until they met more girls in Tilbury). On a quiet and sunny Christmas Day we joined our American friends in church or chapel and many Officers and crew members returned to family homes to join in their festivities.

Next day - Boxing Day - the Officers served the crew with luncheon, the Petty Officers and senior hands were entertained in the Officers' Lounge and many then spent a happy evening ashore with their new-found friends. Throughout, the ship functioned normally with Deck and Engineer Officers and ratings maintaining watches, the gangway watchman doing his rounds of an almost empty ship and the galley staff wishing they could be in a small American port every day.

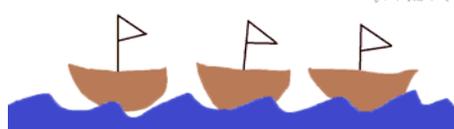
At 7.0 a.m. on the 27th. the elevator started its relentless pour, the ship was soon covered in grain dust with the crew busy warping her up and down the quay to allow loading in the various hatches. Early on the 28th. of December we sailed out into a tranquil Gulf - with happy memories of a very enjoyable Christmas and our American hosts.

Today, with small in number mixed-nationality crews, short stays in port governed by a commercial pressure that pays scant respect to any religious or national holiday, the abolition, in many ships, of the bars in officer and crew lounges and the harsh dictates of Port Security, Christmas festivities for seafarers can be almost a "non event". Although improved means of communication will, perhaps, allow many to be in contact with friends and family, for shipboard routine it is likely to be "business as usual". Undoubtedly, those crew members from countries that do not celebrate Christmas will respect the beliefs and celebrations of their Christian shipmates (as the latter will respect theirs) but - for a ship at sea - many will simply "hum a Christmas tune or have a Christmas thought or speak below his breath to his companion of some bygone Christmas day".

Globally, the Sailors' Society (and kindred organisations) endeavour to spread some Christmas cheer to the crews of the ships berthed in their area - and, through the good offices and hard work of the Southampton Guild of the Sailors' Society many in-port crews (and many that had recently visited the Solent area) will have a small gift to open on Christmas morning - a tiny token to tell them that they are not forgotten. Seafarers' Centres remain open throughout the Christmas period and a Padre is always on hand to share the seafarers concerns and to lead them in worship.

But, at sea or in port, in my experience "every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had a kinder word for another on that day than on any other day of the year and had shared to some extent in its festivities: and had remembered those he cared for at a distance, and had known that they delighted to remember him."

CRK 11.9.08



## Fifty Years on Salt Water

*Having closely escaped death at the hands of Helmut Patzig and U-86, Charlie finds himself in mortal danger yet again, this time from an even more indiscriminate killer: Spanish Flu. Episode nine of the memoirs of Leslie (Charlie) Chapman see him lying in a hospital bed in Archangel listening to a grave being blasted for him in the frozen ground, the armistice and, after a period of convalescence, his return to Russia in another hospital ship for the withdrawal from Archangel.*

But all good things come to an end and one afternoon I was hurriedly sent for and told to join the s.s. *Susquehanna* as Chief Officer, sailing that night for Archangel. The man I relieved was supposed to have been taken ill at the last moment. When I boarded the ship I didn't blame him; it was pitch dark, the decks were full of loaded petrol tins and other material which you had to climb over to reach the officers accommodation. This was situated in the poop, a relic of the old sailing ship days. She was definitely the worst ship I had ever sailed in. For many years she had been a collier on the South African Coast, between Durban and Capetown.

We sailed up the coast to the Tyne and a convoy was formed to take us as far as the Firth of Forth, where another convoy was to be formed to take us to Norway.

A trawler acted as a guide to take us in behind the boom defence to an anchorage. It was pitch dark at the time and suddenly he hailed us, shouting, "Go full astern, or you will be blown to pieces" (this was not exactly the word he used). He was taking us the wrong side of the entrance buoy and managed to turn quickly himself, but we just kept on going. The crew and myself, who were at stations on the forecastle head, abandoned it smartly. There was a lot of bumping and noise, as we ploughed our way through the buoys and nets, but thank goodness nothing else happened and we went back to our stations and on to the anchorage.

I must admit that I still feared the attack of another submarine, as my last experience was still fresh in my mind. However we made the journey safely and split up to go our various ways through the Norwegian Fiords. We travelled through the Fiords for the best part of a week, occasionally anchoring at night, and, passing in behind the North cape, we proceeded to Kirkenes for bunkers. This was a mineral ore town, a desolate looking place, even in the Autumn.

We then sailed for Murmansk, in the Kola Inlet. This was a very lonely place, only a few wooden houses and forest land. There was a very small submarine, Russia's first one, marked I. This had been hoisted out of the water and was just a red rust. While looking at this, a paymaster lieutenant came along from the British Navy house, which really was a large log hut, and bade us good morning. He was quite shaken when I said, "Surely you are the vicar's son from the little village of Claxton in Norfolk", and sure enough it was; just goes to prove how small the world is.

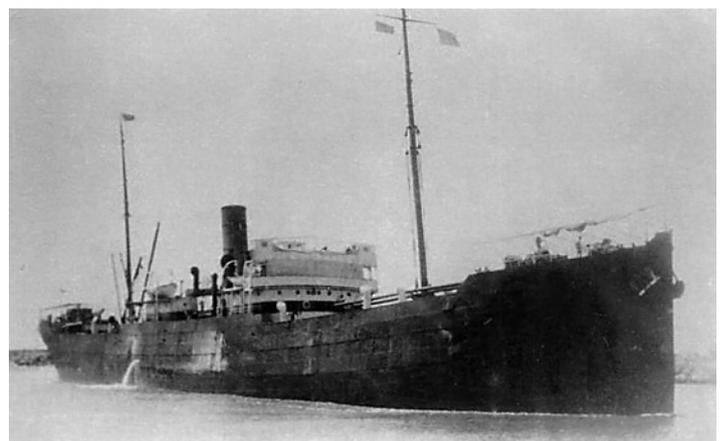
After landing a small quantity of cargo, we sailed for Archangel and went up the River Dvina to a place called Bakaritz, on the opposites side of the river to Archangel. Here we discharged our cargo, which consisted of practically everything you could mention, from boxes of chocolates to a side of bacon.

About half way through the discharging, the crew began to get sick. The "Spanish Flu" had caught up with us and, as we did not carry a doctor, it was my job as Chief Officer to attend to the sick. In turn they all got well, and suddenly I was stricken with it. The Captain told the second officer to put me to bed but less than an hour later both the second officer and myself were taken ashore on stretchers, which showed how quickly the flu acted. We were put into a long wooden hut where there were about 100 men lying about on the floor, most of them with the flu. When I asked for a bed pan, an orderly told me I was about number thirty four on turn. Being a bit light headed I went out into the snow, which was quite deep, looking for a toilet, where I was found later, consequently developing pneumonia and pleurisy. In the morning it was found that we were officers from a ship, and we were transferred to an officers hut, where we had a bed to lie on. The second officer recovered fairly quickly but I was very ill. In fact, the doctors had given up all hopes of saving me and a hole for a grave was blasted for me in the frozen ground.

The log hut I was in consisted of four rooms, three being wards having two beds in each, and the fourth was the kitchen, in which was a huge furnace, fed by logs of wood, heating a huge stove built of brick. This was situated in the centre of the building, protruding into each room and thereby supplying all the heat that was necessary. Really it was if the rooms had been built round the stove. This really was a necessity, as the snow was lying feet deep outside.

Eventually the *Susquehanna* finished discharging her cargo but, as I was too ill to be put on board of her, she sailed without me. What a dreary outlook for me, the winter was setting in fast and ships were leaving before they got frozen in the river. I did not relish spending a winter in Archangel, where the ice gets so thick that rails are laid on it and trains cross the river.

I had one experience which shook me: while in bed, a big Cossack came into the room and started talking in Russian, then drew a large curved sword, and started dancing round the room, slashing it backwards and forwards. The only word I could understand was



**Corfe Castle**

This is the only picture of this vessel that I could find. Built in 1901, 4592 tons, she was sold to a German co. in 1927 and renamed *Ostee*.

I could not find any pictures of the *Susquehanna*, (which Charlie refers to throughout as the *Susquehana*) but have determined that she was built in 1896 as the *Mount Sephar*, purchased from Smith & Service, Glasgow by the Union Line in 1898 and renamed *Susquehanna*. In 1900 she was transferred to the newly formed Union-Castle Mail SS Co, and in 1921 sold to Denaby Shipping Co, Southampton and renamed *London City*.

'Bolsheviks', and apparently he was telling me what he was going to do to them. He was in Cossack uniform and looked fierce. I was very glad when he left, as I was still very ill. When I was getting better, the doctor said I could have something solid to eat, as up to this time I had been fed only on tinned milk. Now I was to have my first meal; it was tinned rabbit.

As the ice was getting thicker, and I was getting better, the authorities looked around for a ship to put me on and fortunately found one preparing to leave. It was the "*Corfe Castle*", one of our own company's ships. She was partly loaded with timber but, owing to the ice, could not stop to finish loading. On boarding, I found the second officer had been transferred to the *Susquehanna* to take my place, anticipating I would be able to take a watch when I left hospital. Unfortunately I was unable to do this, as I was a mere shadow owing to my illness. On sailing we followed an icebreaker into the White Sea, then proceeded on our own. The ship was considerably by the stern, her bows flying very light, and caught all the wind that was going. For some reason which I have never understood, the Captain preferred going well North of the "North Cape", when he could have had the shelter of the Fiords for a week, and free from the submarine menace.

Off the Cape, we struck terrible weather and seas, the ship hardly moved for two or three days, except to blow right round, and rolling something awful. So bad that I was actually thrown out of my bunk, a thing that had never happened to me before.

I felt sorry for the watchkeeping officers, as they had to do four hours on duty and four off, all the way back to England, owing to my illness, which of course was nothing to do with them. As we were up in 72° North Latitude in November, it isn't hard to imagine the weather we were having, and the *Corfe Castle* was a tramp variety, not a liner.

We had a rendez-vous with a trawler, on a certain date, several hundred miles away but, owing to the stormy weather, we did not keep it. In fact, from the time we left Archangel till we arrived at Lerwick in the Shetlands, we never saw a ship. We arrived off Lerwick on a dark stormy night and, although we had no chart of the harbour, our Captain decided to enter and find a quiet anchorage, being guided only by information obtained from the "North Sea Sailing Directions". He made a very good job of it, and it was very much appreciated after the buffeting we had gone through, with fear of submarine attack all the time.

Before entering, the wireless operator received some news in French, and according to his translation, we had given in and an armistice had been called. Fortunately between us, we mustered up sufficient French to translate it correctly, to the effect that we had not been beaten. Next morning a Naval Officer came out and boarded us, and said hoist up all your flags, it is all over; it was November 11th. We did not hoist the flags, as it was blowing a howling gale at the time and we did not want to lose them.

We received orders at Lerwick to proceed to Aberdeen to discharge our part timber cargo. On arrival I left the vessel and reported to the Union Castle Marine Superintendent in London. When he saw me, he ordered me to go home at once, and put some weight on, which I was glad to do.

After my convalescence I joined the "*Garth Castle*", a Naval hospital ship, and went up to Scapa Flow, a place the ship had spent most of the war. This was a very interesting and quiet life, swinging round a buoy, with a telephone connected to the shore, very few ships left there, except the German Fleet, and they were all sunk, with only their upper works showing above the water. I was entertained in Kirkwall by the sister of Major Lyons, the Canadian doctor who was in the *Llandoverly Castle's* lifeboat with a broken ankle.

As there was very little hospital work for us to do, it was decided to send the ship up to Archangel, as fighting was still going on against the Bolsheviks, and there were a few naval vessels up there.

The *Garth Castle* went to Leith to store ready for our journey up North, Again I was entertained by another sister of Major Lyons in Edinburgh; this made my stay in port quite enjoyable, as we did quite a lot of sight seeing in that part of Scotland. We eventually sailed for Murmansk, to await there till the ice had broken up in the White Sea, and it was not till June 1st, that we left in convoy following behind a Russian Icebreaker, which escorted us to an anchorage off Archangel, a berth we were to stay in for four months.

Four months of beautiful weather, the sun was so hot, that the ships officers were actually in white uniforms during the day, and the days were long, twenty four hours of daylight for some time, the sun only just below the horizon in June and early July. It was difficult to know when to go to bed, and when to get up. The swimming was marvelous, the water quite warm, all the inhabitants of Archangel seemed to throng to the beaches all day long. But, Oh! the mosquitoes, they were something terrible at times.

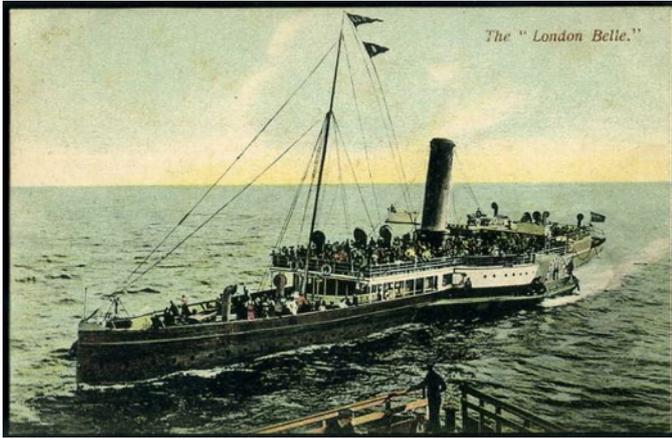
As headquarters ship it was strange to have a small flotilla of paddle steamers, bringing sick and wounded from several miles up the River Dvina. These vessels were none other than the excursion paddlers, *London Belle*, *Walton Belle* and others, so popular on the daily run, in summer, from London to Yarmouth. It is hard to imagine how these small ships managed to steam over two thousand miles from home. But, sad to say, these popular steamers did not return to their home port. When the evacuation from Archangel took place, later on in the year, they were all taken down the river into the White Sea and sunk.

I recall on one occasion when the *Walton Belle* was alongside the *Garth Castle* transferring patients, some shooting started and the quartermaster on the bridge was wounded, as were two or three Russian prisoners, in the confusion. We had several 'White Russians' on board at different times, both men and women, and their injuries were at times too terrible to describe; these were caused by the Bolshevik element.

Usually during the weekend, we had sailing races with boats from the Navy ships in port. We had a very sad accident at the end of one of these races. The boat was made fast astern of the *Garth*, and the crew climbed up a pilot ladder to board the ship. Our Church of England Padre had nearly reached the top when he slipped and fell back into the boat, striking his head, and died an hour later. We took his body ashore and handed it over to a Naval Party for burial, as he was a Naval Chaplain. He was laid to rest in the same cemetery as where a grave had been prepared for me, a year previously.

Before we left Archangel we had one more funeral. The laundryman died, but I am afraid his funeral was not as spectacular as the other one. The coffin was put on a Drosky, drawn by one horse, but the road was so rough, with deep pot holes, that eventually the axle broke and landed the coffin on the road. No other vehicle being available, the funeral party took turns in carrying it the rest of the way to the cemetery, where I had to conduct the service, no clergymen being available.

We were a very popular ship with the Navy, and had several invitations to parties and picnics. The reason was, of course, we had several English nurses on board and their company was very much in demand. Time was slipping away, the weather was



**London Belle**

One of the paddlers scuppered in the White Sea on the withdrawal from Archangel



**Garth Castle**

In hospital ship livery. Built in 1910, scrapped in 1939.

getting colder, the daylight hours much shorter, and as we did not appear to be doing much good, it was decided to leave Archangel. It was then the paddlers were sunk, with other small craft not worth sending home, but too good to leave for the Bolsheviks. We eventually sailed on October 5th, plenty late enough for a place so far North, and glad to be on our way home after such a long spell away. We were ordered to proceed to Portsmouth, to discharge our Naval Personnel, who we were sad to see go, as we had been shipmates for nine months. During that time we had many sporting activities, including a first rate football team, which beat a good many Naval teams, in spite of one of our team being carried off in nearly every match. He was the ship's Electrician, and was such a good player it was thought best to dispose of him, early in the game if possible. We also had a theatrical party which put on quite a few shows, as we had a stage built in No.2 hold, for the purpose of entertaining crew and patients; also billiards tables, to use while in port.

I remember one boat race, when the Naval Orderlies challenged the ship's crew to a race for a five pound note. The ship's boat came in several lengths ahead of the other, with the bow man lying back in the boat, smoking his pipe, not even rowing. They did not realize that they had challenged Shetland Island fishermen for the race, who in peace time would row all day without a rest. I was delighted at the result, as I was the coxswain.

Having discharged our Navy personnel and stores, we proceeded to London, where we were all sent on a long postponed leave, and the *Garth Castle* was handed back to the Company to be converted back into a liner again. *to be continued*

## Stowaway's Horse Honoured



*Here is a story, in keeping with the WW1 theme, from the IOW County Press of 2nd September, that I am more than pleased to reprint, as much for the wonderful headline that I am able to give it.*

WARRIOR, the heroic horse who became a legend of the First World War, has received the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross on behalf of all animals that died in the conflict.

The honorary PDSA Dickin medal was presented at a special ceremony at the Imperial War Museum today (Tuesday), to pay tribute to the millions of animals that died in the First World War. Warrior's exploits with his owner Gen Jack Seely during the First World War have become well known, thanks in part to writer and broadcaster Brough Scott, the grandson of Gen Seely.

Mr Scott, whose grandfather wrote the book *Warrior* — the amazing story of a real warhorse, was presented with the medal at today's ceremony. *Warrior* was dubbed the horse the Germans could not kill, serving on the frontline throughout First World War, including at Passchendaele and the Somme. "He was an inspiration to the soldiers as

they faced their greatest fears in the battle against bayonets, bullets, gas and tanks. *Warrior* was a true survivor and his story epitomises the vital roles played by millions of animals," said a PDSA spokesman.

Celebrities including Steven Spielberg, director of the Oscar-nominated film *War Horse* — based on the fictional work of the same name, by Michael Morpurgo — have shown their support for this honorary award.

He said: "Warrior is an extraordinary example of the resilience, strength, and profound contribution that horses made to the Great War.

"Recognising him with an Honorary PDSA Dickin Medal is a fitting and poignant tribute not only to this remarkable animal, but to all animals that served." (*Warrior died in 1941 at the age of 33 and is only the third horse to be thus honoured, the other two being Metropolitan Police horses during WW1*).

**General 'Jack' (John Edward Bernard) Seely, 31 May 1868–7 November 1947, became the Club's fourth Stowaway in 1931 and was raised to the peerage as the 1st Baron Mottistone CB, CMG, DSO, TD, PC, JP, DL in 1933. He was Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire from 1918 to 1947.**



Club Captain Ian Odd laid a wreath on behalf of the Cachalots at the Merchant Navy Day Service which was organised by the MNA at Holyhood Church on the 7th September.



Left, and below, some of the display arranged by Paul Leece at Holy Trinity Church in Fareham. See his article in *Rope Ends*, opposite.



Captain Ian Odd with Winchester Sea Cadets Michael George and Robyn Coff at their Bursary presentation on 16th October



Captain Flemming Pedersen, affectionately known around the club room as 'The Great Dane', has many strings to his bow and his garden in Fareham is as well turned out as he usually is himself. To such an extent that his 480 beautifully displayed bedding plants have earned him yet another two golds and a silver medal, awarded by his local council in their 'Fareham in Bloom' event this year. This is on top of the gold medal and overall winner that he achieved for his front garden in 2013. As befits a local authority competition, there are exacting standards to be met and many boxes to be ticked in the various criteria to attain such recognition, so congratulations to Flemming. All that bending and kneeling is taking its toll though and he threatens to hang up his trowel, but no doubt Flemming will continue, as he puts it, 'to keep things as tidy as a ship leaving port for a stormy journey ahead'.



# **Rope Ends**

## **New Members**

**Lee Davis** joined stevedores Southampton Container Handling earlier this year as Business Development Manager and is enjoying the challenge after working as a Terminal Operator in ports such as Tilbury, Antwerp and Portland. He joins us to expand networking and meet other maritime professionals.



## **Cachalots Contribute to Church Exhibition**

My Church, Holy Trinity, Fareham, is raising money to stabilise its tower and reorder part of the interior. A condition of a Grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund is that we should publicise links between the church and community. One of the ways we chose to do this was to have a maritime exhibition of memories of the sea from our own congregation. The reasoning being that the original church building was paid for with money from the Henry Thompson Bart, in 1835. Henry was the son of Vice Admiral Sir Charles Thompson who was second in command to Admiral Jarvis at the battle of St Vincent. To underline this connection we held the exhibition from Oct 18-25, covering Trafalgar Day.

Fareham is predominantly RN with HMS Collingwood still a major establishment. I felt I ought to make sure that the Merchant Navy was given good visibility. So I asked some Club members if they could loan any exhibits that would contribute to the overall interest of the exhibition. The response was brilliant. Thus, down one side of the church we had the local yacht club and The Merchant Navy and down the other side the memories of families with RN connections. Behind the font at the West End, we had the Club's Red and White Ensigns used at the Cathedral Shipping Festival Service and other Club functions.

The stand covered the topics of MN in WWII, my own experience at sea in the halcyon days 1954-1964, and how major changes were subsequently brought about through containerisation, electronic charts and GPS. In addition we had a wedding photo and marriage certificate of John and Louise Noble taken at the church door and an antipiracy chart and description of current conditions from Club Captain Ian Odd. Other exhibits were willingly loaned by Ian Thomson and Lionel Hall. My thanks to everyone for helping to make it a success.

The success thanks are expressed by our Vicar The Revd. Sally Davenport, who says, *"We were delighted with the quality and variety of exhibits and are very grateful to all contributors. A number of people crossed the threshold of Holy Trinity for the first time because they'd not had 'a good reason to come before'. Whatever the reason, we were pleased to welcome new and familiar faces who found the exhibition quite fascinating. Items and articles were a catalyst for conversation as people recalled their own stories of the sea. It's fair to say that those who came left with greater knowledge and insights into the role of our Royal and Merchant Navy in the wars, history of local sailing clubs and the huge impact technology has had on life at sea."*

Paul Leece

## **The Sea Pie Supper 2015**

**St.Mary's Stadium,  
Friday 6th February.**

Tickets, members £52, guests £60, went on sale on 6th November and as we go to press have all but sold out and there is now a reserve (waiting) list.

The Principal Guest/Speaker will be Rear Admiral Sir Alan Massey, Chief Executive of the MCA.

### Ladies that Lunch

On the 19<sup>th</sup> September we had our second Ladies Lunch. The numbers were down a little this time due to holidays and some unforeseen events. Everyone seemed to have enjoyed themselves. Neither Margaret nor I have had any complaints. We would welcome suggestions for an alternate venue at a similar price and with a dedicated room. We hope to book another lunch in February 2015. We were thinking of 10th. Will check to see if it will be the same menu or it is changed. Their set lunch menus seem to be seasonal.

### Macmillan Coffee Morning

I would like to thank everyone who came to the Macmillan Coffee morning on 10th October, also the kind people who made donations even though they could not attend. There was a large assortment of cakes and handmade Jams, Chutneys and Marmalades, not forgetting Terry's famous chilies. We had a small Raffle for a beautiful Christmas cake made by Margaret Grant and a rather powerful bottle of wine donated by Lionel and Julie Hall. The Club Captain was in charge of the 'Guess the number of hundreds and thousands on a cake'. This was won by last year's Captain John Noble who very graciously gave his winnings to the coffee morning. I would also like to thank Barbara Winsborough for bringing her lovely cards once again this year and her contribution of £50. The number attending was down from last year but when the monies were counted we had raised £609.50 on the day, that's £11.68 more than last year! The Gift Aid this year came to £82.97, giving a grand total of **£692.47**, beating last year's overall figure by £4.40! A very pleasing result for all concerned.

Lesley Odd



### Burns Supper

Trenchermens' portions of Haggis & Clapshaw, Roastit Beef and some Topsy Ladies will be in the offing again at our annual celebration of the Scottish Bard.

The entertainment Jimmys are keeping the exact programme for the event under their Tam O'Shanters, but you can expect much of the same for nearly the same: an increase to **£32** to cover the costs of the free-range haggis.

King's Court on  
**Saturday, 24th January**  
 1900 for 1930  
 Black Tie & Miniatures



### **The Southampton Master Mariners' Club, (The CACHALOTS) 1st Floor, 12-14 Queens Terrace, SOUTHAMPTON, SO14 3BP**

Tel/Fax: 023 8022 6155

E-mail: office@cachalots.org.uk

Editor: te\_clark@tiscali.co.uk

Web site: www.cachalots.org.uk

captain@cachalots.org.uk  
 staffcaptain@cachalots.org.uk  
 boatsteerer@cachalots.org.uk  
 storekeeper@cachalots.org.uk  
 postcaptain@cachalots.org.uk  
 functions@cachalots.org.uk  
 membership@cachalots.org.uk  
 editor@cachalots.org.uk

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 Dec 6 Christmas Dinner, King's Court
- Sat Dec 13 Christmas Lunch, Seafarers' Centre
- Mon Jan 5 Docklands New Year Service, SSC
- Thu Jan 15 AGM, 1830, Club Room
- Sat Jan 24 Burns Supper, King's Court
- Fri Feb 6 Sea Pie Supper, St. Mary's Stadium

Your 'Programme of Events, 2015' should be included with this edition. Any changes will be promulgated here and on our web site.

	<b>250 Club</b>		
\$	Sept	G B Angas	J M M Noble
\$	Oct	C C Coote	J E Reeves
\$	Nov	R E Lowther	I B Thomson