

The CACHALOT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB

No 67

March 2018

Post Captain's Log

Greetings to you all and as Captain Les Morris highlighted in his Post Captain's Log a year ago, doesn't time fly just as you are getting into the hang of the role?

I agree with him and also others before him I expect.

I am writing this early as I am away to South Africa again the day after the Sea Pie Supper but hoping all goes well again, especially with our new-found shanty-man, Shep Woolley.

I look forward to handing over to Captain Flemming Pedersen who has held the post of Staff Captain during my year as Club Captain and has ably stood in for me when I was unable to attend some of the functions. We welcomed Flemming at the Past Captain's meeting in early January and he was formally welcomed at the AGM in late January prior to the official handing over at the Sea Pie Supper.

Timing for the last Log precluded noting the Christmas Lunch, being well attended at the MedBar and the Christmas Dinner, held at King's Court.

Well done to Peter and Margaret Grant with Ian and Lesley Odd for making the arrangements, running the raffle etc.

The Docklands New Year Service was held at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Bugle St and was well attended.

The annual meeting of Past Captains was led this year by the senior Past Captain present, Captain John Noble. As well as confirming Captain Pedersen in his role, Rachel Dunn was selected as Staff Captain. Rachel is an all ships 1st class Admiralty Pilot in Portsmouth and a Younger Brother of Trinity House.

The annual celebration of Burn's Night was held at King's Court with 28 members and guests in attendance despite the dreaded lurgy doing the rounds, since before Christmas in some cases. The Immortal memory was provided by our guest speaker, Mr Aitken Hunter, Engineering Superintendent for the research vessels based at the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton. He was born in Scotland and brought along a book of the works of Robert Burns he was presented with at the age of six by his father.

And finally, but by no means least, I pass a huge 'thank you', to all my fellow Cachalots who have supported and guided me throughout the year which has been very enjoyable.

I look forward to continuing in supporting the Club and getting on with some of the jobs I started but never managed to complete for the Club following the move from Queen's Terrace.

My best wishes to Captain Pedersen in this, our 90th year.

Robin Plumley MBE, Post Captain.

The New Captain



Captain Flemming N Pedersen
MCIM FInstSMM

Flemming Pedersen was born in Svendborg, Denmark and first went to sea on North Sea fishing vessels. He then attended Seaman's Training School and finished his initial training with three months on the Danish School Sailing ship *Danmark*.

As is customary in Denmark he then worked his way up on deck, serving worldwide with various Danish shipping companies, Kosan, Sorensen, Lauritzen, Torm Line, DFDS etc. In 1968 he served on a small Danish m/v *Evorian* which was on charter to Elleman & Papayanni Line and deployed transporting military equipment and ammunition from Singapore to Saigon to the Americans in Vietnam.

He attended the Navigation School again to gain his 1st Officer and Masters Certificates and returned to sea as an officer with Maersk tankers. His first command, in 1975, was the 289,064 dwt *Regina Maersk*. After two years, to suit his family circumstances, he transferred to the offshore business, working as Master on Maersk anchor handling and rig servicing ships in the Mexican Gulf and North Sea.

In 1979 he had a serious RTA and his injuries curtailed his career at sea. He retrained in the electronics and light engineering sector and progressed through selling and business management. He was with Cosalt Marine Safety until that company hit financial difficulties and then worked as a Certificated Bailiff enforcing court orders.

Since retirement in 2012 he has been a volunteer caseworker for the SSAFA and an Honorary Agent for the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society. He has been involved with the Southampton Sea Cadets for the past ten years and was instrumental in raising £10,000 towards their expansion plans last year.

Flemming has been a Cachalot for 16 years and has served as a Harpooner.

See page 7

Boatsteerer's Locker

Fellow Cachalots

Now that the festive season is behind us and all our New Year resolutions are forgotten what have we got to look forward to ? Frost on cars and the grass, wet and cold miserable days, or your thoughts may have strayed to Valentines Day (if not too old) and Pancake Tuesday. When I was serving my apprenticeship in a ship repair yard, all the apprentices had the afternoon off to go home and enjoy pancakes, a tradition which had been handed down over the years. A block of apartments now stands on the old site of the drydocks.

The AGM this year was at the end of January when we installed Captain Flemming Pedersen as our Club Captain and Rachel Dunn our first lady Master Mariner Staff Captain. The Minutes of this meeting are displayed on the board in the Club Room.

During the AGM the Editor of the Newsletter stated that he would appreciate fellow Cachalots submitting a brief article about their career, or anything else, otherwise he might have to resort to copying articles from other publications to fill the Newsletter.

The AGM was swiftly followed by our 90th anniversary celebration Sea Pie Supper at St. Marys which went off without any hiccups. Our principal guest, Captain Richard Woodman, gave a thought provoking response to the Guests Toast and the new shantymen proved to be an excellent choice.

We had invited our Stowaway HRH Princess Royal to the event but unfortunately it clashed with a previous commitment, she sent her best wishes for a successful evening.

We also took the opportunity to install as our Honorary President for this year our old sea dog Captain Reg. Kelso who also celebrated his 90th birthday (he was born six days premature before the Club's foundation). Reg. hosted a celebratory drinks & canapés in the Club Room and with the help of his good lady June managed to cut the birthday cake.

At the time of writing the Winter Olympic Games in South Korea are in full swing and thanks to television it is possible to record the highlights for viewing the following morning before the burra mem sahib awakes and gives out the day's joblist.

Now the S.P.S. is over my thoughts are on the Shipping Festival Service in June and a plea for sidesmen will be going out and also for your support at this event. The Preacher will be the new Dean of Winchester, The Very Rev'd. Catherine Ogle.

Ken Dagnall



Skittles Evening



at the

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

On

Friday, 23rd March

Another popular and relaxed evening and to keep it simple we have decided to stick with

Fish & Chips

again for the main and there will also be a sweet.

Price retained at **£13** per head.

1900 onwards

Curry Lunches

The next Curry Lunch is booked at our favourite hotspot



Kuti's in Oxford Street.



Saturday 21st April, 1200 for 1230.

Because these lunches are so enjoyed by our regulars, we are slipping in another one this year, on

Saturday 9th June

So note that in your diaries too.

Excellent value at **£14.50** per head

Join us if you can.

Club Supper

Wednesday 23rd May, 1900 for 1930

A supper is being organised downstairs at the Royal British Legion Club, Eastgate Street.

The theme will be our 90th year
(In case you hadn't heard)

And we are hoping for someone to give us a

Presidential Address

The date is booked with the caterer but the menu and price has yet to be agreed. Expect around £30.

There will be a limit in numbers of 42 so early booking is advised.



Captains and their Top Table Guests at the Sea Pie Supper

Standing, L to R: Rev'd Stone; Mr Welch (ABP); Adm Lang (Winchester SC); Prof Hill (NOC); Capt Lloyd (NI); Capt Woodman; Cdre Lamb (RFA); Cdre Higham (Portsmouth NB); Lord West; Capt Reed (HCMM); Capt McNaught (Trinity House). Seated, L to R: Adm Massey (MCA); Ms Goddard; Mrs Atkinson; Mr Atkinson (Lord-Lt); Capt Plumley; Capt Pedersen; Clr Harris (Mayor); Mrs Harris; Dame Mary Fagan (Stowaway); Capt Fagan.



Captain Richard Woodman

The Principal Guest gives his response to the Toast to the Guests (see pages 8 & 9). Master of Ceremonies, Past Captain Gerry Cartwright, pays attention.



Change of Command

Capt Robin Plumley MBE installs Capt Pedersen as his successor.



Our First President

Capt Reg Kelso gave a witty thank you after being installed as the Club's first Honorary President. "We can't hear you," shouted someone from the back. "You're very fortunate," replied Capt Kelso, quick as a flash.

The Prize Draw

raised a grand total of
£3825

Which was shared equally between the **Mission to Seafarers**, **The Apostleship of the Sea** and the **Sailors' Society**.

Our thanks to **The Southampton Shipowners Association** for their generous donation of the prize, an iPad Mini.



Left, Miss Serena Siani, an Italian Lady who is a MEng and 'Specialist-MTES ship structures' at Lloyds Register, was with the Southampton Shipowners Association party and pulled the winning number from the drum. She presented the iPad to the lucky winner, Derek Smith, who was on the Global Marine table.

Right, the new Shantymen, Shep Woolley on the left, who billed themselves as "The 'Ansome Cabin Bouys". A bit of artistic license perhaps but they led the singing well and introduced a couple of their own nautical numbers which were not strictly shanties but went down well with the audience. To this purist's ear, they took a few liberties with 'Spanish Ladies' but it was not deemed a flogging offence and now they know what we look like they might be induced back for a repeat performance.



The Peter Marriott Bursary

The 2017 bursary was fully utilized by both Southampton and Winchester Sea Cadet units. In November, Winchester cadets James Gallimore and Mitchell Browne had a successful voyage onboard TS Royalist sailing from Gosport to Weymouth, via Cowes, Torbay and Portland. A voyage report from James is printed below.

Three Southampton cadets have been awarded bursaries towards voyages for the 2018 training season, two onboard TS Royalist and one on the motor vessel TS Jack Petchey. The offshore training vessels are very popular nationwide and booking six to nine months in advance has become the norm.

T.S. Royalist

4th-10th November 2017

Report by Cadet 1st Class James Gallimore

The following report describes an amazing experience of a week's sailing on board T.S. Royalist.

Saturday 4th November

It started with a train journey from Winchester to Gosport. The train station at Gosport was fortunately right next to the ferry terminal, which took us closer to our destination, but required a walk of nearly a mile for us to reach T.S. Royalist, which was quite tiring.

When we got there, we were allocated our bunks and we settled in. After changing into Number 4s we were ordered on deck where we were issued our oilskins and received a full briefing on all aspects of life on board as well as instructions of how to wear our life jackets and harness properly. We were also allocated our watches. The ships company was made up of Sea Cadets, Air Cadets and Marine Cadets. The Staff included two serving Royal Navy officers, the Captain, the Bosun, the Coxswain an engineer, a chef and a training instructor. After dinner we had some free time until lights out at 10.30 pm.



Sunday 5th November

Early start! Woken up at 6.30. The two "aft" watches were instructed to clean the decks before having breakfast, who then swapped duties with the two "forward" watches. Colours were carried out in the morning (as they always were when moored up). We were then given the terrifying but exciting task of learning how to climb the mast up to the "course" sail, which we had to do to help us get used to this essential task. At midday we set sail and were put to our bracing stations. During the voyage to Cowes we did some tacking. After mooring up we were given dinner and had shore leave.

Monday 6th November

Another early start! Aft watches had first breakfast followed by polishing the port holes, bell and binnacle followed by shore leave and showers. At morning colours I piped. We set sail at midday doing tacks (including going to bracing stations, sail handling and setting stations). Because we anchored up over Monday night watches were carried out from 6.30pm to midnight. This included someone on the helm, someone of Port lookout, someone on Starboard lookout, someone on Stern lookout and time keeper. We anchored up at Torbay. From midnight until 7.00am we had Anchor watch, which involved three people making sure that the boat was not moving whilst it was anchored. During this day I (along with three others) were duty Messmen, which involved serving meals and washing up.

Tuesday 7th November

7.00am start. We weighed anchor after breakfast and set sail for Brixham which we reached soon after midday. After such a tiring 24 hours we looked forward to having a shower and shore leave. Dinner and bed by 10.30pm.

Wednesday 8th November

Up by 7.00 am. After breakfast I piped again for Colours. After morning shore leave we set sail for Portland. I went out on the safety boat to take off the ropes that were attached to the pontoon. We tacked again and went to bracing stations, sail setting and handling stations. During the voyage I went up to each sail – course, topsail, topgallant to fold the sails up. On arrival at Portland we moored up and had a couple of hours free time.



Thursday 9th November

Usual start. Sailed from Portland to Weymouth. During the voyage I and one of the Air Cadets climbed up the foremast and main mast to let down the course sails. On arrival in Weymouth I took the helm and steered the ship into harbour. After dinner we had shore leave. We all had to clean the ship for the Captain's inspection.



Friday 10th November

We packed our bags after breakfast ready to leave. We said our goodbyes and walked to the Weymouth train station. I was glad to get home after a week of hardship on board ship but I wouldn't have missed this experience for anything.

Autonomy – walk before you run

Lloyd's List Viewpoint 21 December 2017

with permission of LL and the author, Cachalot Michael Grey

The debate about maritime autonomy, which is beginning to resemble the endless circular arguments over Brexit, has at least reactivated a few jokes that I thought had died forty years ago. The one about an “autonomous ship having to appoint both a master and a ship’s dog to stay on the right side of international maritime law” is surely a recycled saying that was doing the rounds in the final days of the Tyneside tramp ship. The master, it is said, prevents the ship being declared a derelict and thus available for seizure by any opportunists afloat, while the dog is there to bite the master if he gets near the controls. In truth, the joke probably dates back to the final days of the undermanned sailing ships, or possibly the “coffin ships” that so appalled Mr Plimsoll.

Ships with nobody aboard them must be considered something of a gift horse for maritime technologists, as governments queue up to throw research money in their direction. Cynics like this writer wonder what on earth is the point, but people more streetwise than me suggest that subsidising autonomy is fashionable and enlarges the relatively modest financial gestures in the minds of the public, while providing the political donors brownie-points. If they were chucking the same amount of research funding to promote maritime efficiency, or increase the reliability of marine machinery, or indeed, ships in general- now that would be money well-spent.

In the case of autonomous ships, I was told by a ship operator recently, people need to learn how to walk before they try to run. He was suggesting that the sheer number of things that regularly do go wrong with any ship at sea and which are put right by the friendly agency of a human being aboard that ship, mean that major inroads into these problems must be addressed before anyone could seriously think about taking the seafarers off. It is one thing to have all manner of clever sensors telling you that there is a bearing running hot, or that you have a hydraulic leak, or that some vital bit of electrical equipment is about to short-circuit, but what practical remedy can you offer, if there is nobody with a spanner within two thousand miles?

You might retort that the availability of all this data will enable you to anticipate and head-off the problems and that all vital components of a ship will be duplicated, but I don’t know that this will convince any practical seagoing engineer. These are people who know what goes wrong and if you ask them they evince little faith in technological answers to what often begin as mundane problems, but if they are left, escalate into something far more serious.

People I speak to point out the fact that all too often, those clever technologists underestimate the sheer hostility of the marine environment which quickly shows that their products are insufficiently robust. I heard about some sophisticated electronic control gear that was supplied to a new ship, but which was utterly useless. It eventually transpired that the equipment was designed for a climate-controlled vibration-free location in a shore-side factory and the manufacturers admitted that it had no place in the rough, fierce heat of a ship’s engine room.

If people are sufficiently determined, I dare say that many of these difficulties can be overcome, but at what sort of price, and at what benefit to a commercial shipping sector that is perpetually driven by the need to minimise costs and buy ships on the cheap. From where are the savings to come? Crew costs on most ships are not really the items which break the bank. Who is going to pay a premium for shipping their goods on a ship without a soul aboard? They might be prepared to enjoy a few kudos for using a ship which minimises its environmental footprint, but autonomy, like kind words, won’t butter any parsnips.

There is all this enthusiasm about some Norwegian battery powered autonomous coaster that promises to take 100 lorry journeys off the roads. If it was such a big, green deal, they would be using a conventionally powered ship right now. But of course, they wouldn’t be getting the money in the shape of all the lovely grants.

I’m conscious of the fact that just as the autonomy enthusiasts are getting thoroughly boring, so am I. But I would suggest, without due arrogance, that my view represents that of the mainstream industry people, both ashore and afloat.

But before I finally shut up, I pass on one ingenious argument against the “autonomists” which suggests that far from making shipping more efficient, the absence of risk-taking seafarers aboard a ship will almost certainly slow everything down to walking pace. Because, before one of these ships sets sail, all its operational criteria will have to be subjected to intensive scrutiny by lawyers, at international, national and company levels.

The calculated risk-taking which is part and parcel of every maritime “adventure” (think about this word), will prove quite unacceptable to the regiments of lawyers who will be bound to prohibit anything that they think might result in a claim, casualty, accident or commercial legal problem. Thus, great fleets of gleaming autonomous fleets will be immured in port, waiting for the weather to calm down, or the visibility to improve, or the traffic to thin out to an acceptable level. At stupendous costs, the ships might be built and might end up safer, but I don’t know that autonomy will be a better deal for sea trade.

Misplaced Scepticism ?

In the British Isles the first waterborne craft made of iron were canal barges and, almost certainly, the first of these was a 70 foot craft, built by a Lancashire ironfounder in 1787. She was purely experimental and it was almost three decades before an iron vessel entered commercial service -again on a canal. These vessels had to be built in sections and taken to the banks of a nearby waterway where they would be reassembled. The builders were subject to a barrage of sceptical abuse from passing bargemen on their wooden craft and even from the craftsmen who built them. Few were willing to accept the reality that ships built of iron could actually float – and carry cargo – but most based their disbelief on the recognition that these craft threatened their livelihood. Despite this, however, the construction of iron ships continued apace with the majority being built inland and then transported in pieces for assembly alongside a waterway.

Obviously, the builders of wooden ships refuted any suggestion that they should convert to iron: They had neither the means nor the skilled workmen to use this "new" material and the prejudice was strongest in the Royal Dockyards where, for many years after commercial iron ships had become almost commonplace, the Admiralty refused to recognise their worth and, as late as 1850 they forbade the carriage of trans-Atlantic mails in other than wooden ships. Much of their scepticism was based on their fear of what damage shot might inflict on iron hulls. Wooden hulls, pierced by enemy gunfire could be plugged and repaired reasonably easily - but iron hulls were another matter altogether. Others feared that their magnetic compasses would be affected by the mass of iron surround - and there was little effort to experiment to ascertain the facts. Fortunately, private enterprise prevailed and the development of iron seafaring craft for commercial purposes continued - and eventually the Admiralty accepted the reality of their worth.

Today, there are many who regard to operation of the autonomous ship with much the same scepticism- and this despite the fact that 2020 will see the launch of the world's first fully autonomous cargo vessel. She will be employed carrying agricultural fertiliser between Norwegian ports and, in accordance with current International shipping law, will have to remain within Norwegian territorial waters at all times. However, in early 2017 the International Maritime Organisation convened a discussion that could allow unmanned ships to operate globally thus allowing crewless vessels to trade worldwide - "with the potential for cheaper shipping with fewer accidents". This potential has been challenged repeatedly and many are of the opinion that any accidents that do happen could be much more severe.

The major issue is the safety of relying totally on computers to operate ships over vast distances. There are those who contend that the majority of today's accidents - collisions and groundings — are the result of on-board human failings and, if it is accepted that the shore-based computer operators will not make the same mistakes as shipborne crew members then the advantages are obvious. Indeed, a study of some 100 accidents found that the likelihood of collisions and groundings might have been decreased significantly if the casualties had been unmanned ...BUT.. ..when accidents do happen the consequences might be more severe without a crew to deal with the situation. Undoubtedly, the initial outlay on an unmanned vessel will be less than that on a conventional one. There are obvious construction savings to be made in respect of accommodation and facilities and, of course, no crew wages. Initially the technology will be expensive but the cost will probably reduce as time passes.

Operational costs are an uncertainty and many query the ability of the autonomous ship to use cheap heavy fuel without the onboard heating and purification carried out today by the engine room crew. That being the case they would have to use expensive marine- grade diesel and operating costs would soar - unless they convert to LNG or battery-powered electricity.

Despite the widespread uncertainty, many millions of dollars are being expended in research and technology that, hopefully, will lead to the commercial "acceptance" of the autonomous ship and Rolls-Royce has already demonstrated the feasibility of the first remote-controlled unmanned vessel.

Undoubtedly, the Norwegian " Yara Birkeland" will attract a VERY great deal of attention when she launches in 2020 , if by that time, IMO's discussions bear fruit and she will be permitted to venture outside Norwegian territorial waters.

The consequences of making many thousands of seafarers redundant will have dire consequences globally and the rapid development of "cyber warfare" will surely lead to much head-scratching as to what might happen in the event of hostilities.

What with the autonomous electric car, the autonomous ship (and, who knows, the autonomous short-haul cargo carrying aircraft) there are interesting times ahead.

At the end of January, the Canadian Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications delivered its report on the deployment of "automated vehicles". The key message arising from the report, almost certainly, is:

"Canada is ill-prepared for the fast-approaching future of Transportation". Who is?



Captain Flemming N Pedersen

I was born in Svendborg, Denmark in October 1946 and completed my formal education in 1961.

My first experience at sea was on a fishing vessel with 4 crew members which I joined in December 1961. After two months fishing in the North Sea we had to seek shelter in Grimsby following storm damage and I then decided that my future was not in the fishing industry.

In February 1962 I joined a 220-ton coaster sailing in Northern Europe. While loading asbestos in Brussels in 1962 my left hand was severely injured and I was not fit for work until later in the year and therefore attended a private school studying subjects needed to pass an entrance exam to a Navigation school.

I decided to have a good and solid foundation for my future at sea and attended Seaman's Training School for 3 months in Svendborg and completed my training in September 1963. This was followed, by 3 months training on the Danish School Sailing ship (*Danmark*).

From January 1964 until I started at Svendborg Navigation School in January 1969 I sailed with various shipping lines. *Henning Maersk* (32,000-dwt), *Esso Danmark* (26,000-dwt), *Tanja Dan* (64,000-dwt) *m/s Britannia* 1,200-dwt sailing between the Arctic (Greenland) and Copenhagen. Torm Line (5,500 dwt) with bananas from Equador, Honduras, Guatemala to Europe and on return trip with German cars to Jacksonville in Florida. *M/s A.E.S* 2,200-dwt, between the Falklands & Gravesend. *M/s Evorian* with Military equipment and military vehicles to Tripoli. Then deployed to South Vietnam on charter transporting military equipment and ammunition to the Americans from Singapore to Saigon the contract ended in December 1968.

I started at Svendborg Navigation School in January 1969 and gained my 1st Officer's Certificate in January 1970. I continued at the Navigation School to obtain my Masters Certificate of competence, which was obtained in August 1970.

Joined *A.E.S* in September 1970 as a 2nd officer on two trips to the Falklands so I could re-pay a loan to the company for money borrowed while at school. In May 1971 I joined *Leise Maersk* (78,600 dwt Bulk carrier) as 2nd officer sailing with grain from New Orleans to Leningrad. In November 1971 I joined *Robert Maersk* (289065-dwt) as 2nd Officer and was promoted to Chief Officer in January 1973. Between 1973 and 1975 I attended Tanker Safety & Bridge Management course in Port Ravel (France). I also did a certificated distant learning Course on survey of mechanical stress and corrosion onboard ships

My first ship as a Master was *Regina Maersk* (sister ship to Robert Maersk), which I joined in Rotterdam in January 1975. After two years in command of *Regina Maersk* I requested a transfer to the offshore business and served on *Maersk Supporter* based in Dubai and then served as a Master on anchor handling ships *Maersk Boulder* and *Maersk Battler* working in the Mexican Gulf, the North Sea, chartered by the Netherlands Offshore Ltd.

Having a young family at home in Manchester working on these vessels was ideal as it was only two months on and one month at home on full pay.

My days at sea had a dramatic end when I had a serious RTA on the M62 in December 1979 while on leave and suffered a back injury, fractured skull and extensive facial injuries which required microsurgery. Due to my severe injuries I was now unable to return to service at sea and attended college in Portsmouth completing City & Guild parts 1,2,3 (System Technician Course) and then was employed as a senior Sales Engineer selling automation products, system integration & control system and then advanced on to become National Technical Manager for automation in the manufacturing, automotive and marine industries, emergency services, water industry including cell monitoring at various police stations in London. Made redundant in July 2006 but was immediately employed as the Garden Centre Manager for the Range in Gosport but left in December 2006 when a position as a Business Development Manager became available with Cosalt Marine Safety Co but was then was made a redundant again in October when the company ran into severe financial difficulties caused by various acquisitions of Marine companies in Europe.

I then applied for a position as a Certificated Enforcement Officer and following a 3-month training I worked for Ross & Roberts enforcing court orders for unpaid business tax, council tax and parking fines until I retired in 2012.

Since retirement I have been a volunteer caseworker for SSAFA, the largest charity for the Armed Forces, and have assisted 69 clients with funding of more than £380,000 over the past 4 years. I have also been a Honorary Agent for the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society for the past 4 years. I have also been involved with the Southampton Sea Cadets for the past 10 years raising funds, with the most recent being £10,000 towards the expansion of the unit.

Affiliations

Chartered Institute of Management
Fellow Member of the Institute of Sales & Marketing Management
Institute of Advanced Motorist since 1990
Rospa Advanced Drivers Association
Driving Instructors Advanced Master Drivers Club
Member of the Seven Seas Club
Member of Southampton Master Mariners club for the past 16 years

Captain Richard Woodman, LVO, FRHistS, FNI, is an Elder Brother of Trinity House and an award winning author of over fifty maritime books, both fiction and non-fiction. He was the Guest Speaker at the Sea Pie Supper and here, in full, is his response to the Toast to the Guests.

My Lord Lieutenant, Mr Mayor, My Lord, Ladies and gentlemen, good evening.

Thank you, Captain Pedersen, for your kind introduction reminding me who I am. These days I am apt to forget because I like drink, I have no proper job, I am on drugs and was only too glad to accept an offer of dinner. I was a tad fazed by being asked to join 'the Catchalots' by a chap called 'the Boat-steerer,' but it was only after I had left home that I wondered whether I should perhaps have brought a fishing-rod or a harpoon along with me.

Fortunately, looking about me, neither seems to have been necessary, though most embarrassing for me is that I so far forgot myself as to turn up in my pyjamas. On my arrival outside, this did not seem so bad since I appeared to be dining in a football stadium and I confidently assumed that I was having a nightmare.

However, with something of a shock, I now realise that this is real, and the stuff of nightmares is what, in recent years, we have become increasingly used to. Almost every walk of life seems to be infected with a kind of collective insanity through which the individual must perforce pick his or her way with care.

Historically, of course, such times are not unknown. One thinks of the effects of the Norman Conquest, the Black Death, the Civil War, the plague, two World Wars and so forth. But it seems to me that the span of time inhabited by my generation – in many, many ways a most fortunate generation – has nevertheless been affected by an astonishing chain of events. These extend from the Second World War, the Korean and Vietnamese Wars, through the grinding anxieties of the Cold War, the break-up of the Soviet Union, globalisation, the technological revolution, the rise of China from abject poverty to a first-class world power, Nine Eleven, the subsequent consequentially terrible upheavals in the Middle East, the exposure of the egregious folly of bankers, the election of Donald Trump, all the way to that Elephant in the room: Brexit. Faced with such a catalogue, one realises the pace of change is ineluctably accelerating, resulting in the apparent unravelling of The Age of Reason.

Of course, most of these so-called 'great events' are far beyond the control of the individual, but there are aspects of modernity which trouble me, chief of these is the apparently indispensable need of many people to be intimately connected by means of social media. I have to confess I do not understand this purblind and voluntary submission to an insidiously Orwellian construct, and I am horrified by the potential it possesses for the destruction of privacy and the damage it does, particularly to the young.

In my day a ship's log was the worst instrument available for character assassination and I recall one Chief Mate, after a particularly difficult time loading in Hong Kong following which he had sought solace in a bottle of gin, waking up next morning to find the Master had written in the Log: 'Mate drunk this day'.

The poor chap was mortified. His career was on the line, he had worked his socks off for four days and most of four nights and it hadn't taken much gin to knock him out at the end of it. For the first three days of the homeward passage he pondered his plight then he got his revenge one bright morning in the South China Sea when he wrote in the Log – with something of a flourish - 'Master sober this day'.

At such times of turmoil as we live in now, one seeks a lodestone, something to restore faith not merely in the UK plc – or whatever the UK plc morphs into during the next few years – but in the future of humanity as our numbers rise exponentially and we strive to exist on an increasingly depleted planet, jostling if not actually fighting for living space, food and water.

Perhaps from my perspective as an ageing former seafarer I might throw you a crumb or two of comfort. Much depends upon us as individuals and our ability to play a bad hand as best we may. Human interaction throughout the period of recorded history has sustained a desire to trade which, while commerce has its winners and losers, in general and over-time, has brought people closer together, creating an enlightened self-interest that opens possibilities for mutual and sustainable benefit.

Trade requires ships and ships require ports like yours here in Southampton. It remains to be seen to what extent Brexit affects the patterns and methods of trade and shipping, but I am mindful of the old Swedish saying that 'only a poor country can afford to send its sons to sea,' though for reasons of political correctness I should perhaps revise the quotation to say 'young people'. We may be heading in the direction of national poverty but whether or not we do so, there are still great opportunities at sea for any young person, even if only as a starting point for a career which may lead elsewhere. However, like many other careers throughout the world, seafaring is likely to be in the vanguard of those among the service industries taken over by robotics. Much manufacturing has already succumbed and, like driverless cars, autonomous ships are already well beyond the concept stage.

Nevertheless, whatever transpires long-term, and howsoever we solve the problem of large numbers of people being without work and therefore without the traditional means of subsistence, opportunities will offer themselves and I am personally convinced that many of these will be associated – one way or another - with sea-transportation.

This is an important point to make because, thanks to a national disconnection from the sea encouraged by the rise of cheap air travel in the 1960s, which has gathered momentum ever since, the ignorance of the general population regarding what is these days rather baldly referred-to as 'the maritime' is not merely distressing, it is a profound weakness in our national thinking and exposes us to exploitation at best, and possibly something rather worse, something that can most certainly be called a night mare.

This ignorance of the 'the maritime' is made manifest most frequently by the misuse of the noun 'boat'. Prick up your ears next time you hear the term used on the radio or television and ask yourself whether the user actually meant 'ship'. This may seem a small point, but there are many other such solecisms which irritate an old pedant like myself and although I am not here to rant, I do wish to make the point that the level of ignorance about maritime affairs, even among the supposedly informed intelligentsia in this country is, to my mind, staggering. This was brought home to me most forcibly not long ago by a lady whom I shall not name but who ranks among the great and the good of this nation, who asked me what exactly the Merchant Navy was. This was all the more shocking from my perspective because she had solicited my advice on the writing of a book about the Second World War and being a good few years my senior had not only been a teen-ager through those years of conflict but had lived not far from the Port of Liverpool.

In too many respects seafaring has been a disparaged vocation and I am reminded of the little boy in primary school in Liverpool who, when asked by his teacher what his father did for work, replied: 'He doesn't work, Miss, he goes to sea'.

But this misperception of merchant seafaring was – and is – rather more serious. Besides many modern commentators, many conventional historians have thrown a poor light upon merchant Jack and his doings. He was no more flawed than any other human being in any other walk of life, but his habitat at the margins of main-stream society, existing in a world that – in maritime terms at least - was globalised long before that word was coined, has exposed him to opprobrium, ridicule and misperceptions too numerous to detail.

But let me just give you a flavour of received history's contempt for him. Although the cure was imperfectly and intermittently applied, and the deterioration of Vitamin C was not then appreciated, the East India Company's commanders found fresh fruit and vegetables a means of significantly and rapidly affecting scurvy long before the Royal Navy. The medical establishment of the day pooh-poohed both this and the claim by a British merchant ship-master that mosquito-bites were the agent of malaria two hundred years before the connection was acknowledged during the digging of the Panama Canal.

Most recently, since 2014, during the various events memorialising the centenary of the First World War, almost nothing has been said by the media about the part played in that conflict by the Mercantile Marine. Nor has much mention been made of the fact that, in the spring of 1917, the failure of the Government, the Admiralty and the magnates running the shipping industry to adopt convoy, meant that the First Sea Lord was obliged to inform the then Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, that the war at sea was being lost. The dramatic effect of the immediate introduction of convoys transformed the situation, and within eighteen months it was Germany and the Central Powers that were brought to their knees and not Great Britain, but it was a close-run thing.

And incidentally, at this critical juncture, Andrew Bonar Law, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer and a man otherwise highly regarded, saw fit to make a tactlessly boastful speech about his investment in merchant shipping. On 3 July 1917, he enumerated his personal gains in detail for the benefit of the House of Commons, reporting a return of ninety per cent in two years. Bonar Law blithely told the House that 'One of the steamers has either been sunk or sold. I do not know, either way she has been turned into money for me,' echoing the investment advice of another British statesman who stated that if a ship completed her voyage he did very well, but if she did not, he did very much better, thanks to war insurance.

At the time Bonar Law and his associates were basking in their good fortune, the crew of that inconsequential but disposed-of steamer - to the fate of which Bonar-Law showed such indifference - had their wages stopped, no more money being forthcoming until they got home, if they ever did, and signed on another ship. In short freight being the mother of wages, the surviving crew members adrift on the ocean in a lifeboat were enjoying an unpaid excursion at the risk of their lives, while the ship-owner was an all-round winner despite the inroads of an Excess Profits Tax the introduction of which speaks for itself.

Alas, the vocation of merchant seafaring has, in general, suffered a depressingly bad press and this has, I think, deterred many from following it. Only ten years after the end of the Second World War, during which the Merchant Navy made such a noble contribution to victory, my own head-master asked me what I intended doing when I left school and when I said that I was going to join the Merchant Navy, his response was disparaging: 'Huh!' he retorted dismissively, 'We'll see about that.'

Sadly, many of us who shipped out as cadets and apprentices in the gilded days of our hopeful youth have learned a tough lesson not to expect much acknowledgement of our contribution to the nation's well-being from our fellow citizens, and especially from successive Governments, which, in all their stripes and colours, have shamefully neglected the national Merchant Navy, particularly over the past half century when its utility might have been expected to be better appreciated as a major service to the international community.

Maybe Brexit will influence all this. Perhaps, as a nation, we shall look once more to the sea. Certainly the local fishermen in my home town have high expectations in this regard. I have no way of telling nor any drum to beat other than that of stating the obvious: Brexit or not, we live on an island.

Whatever the future holds, we should not lose sight of the great highway that surrounds us, or of the great maritime tradition and heritage that we have as Brits.

My Lords, Ladies and gentlemen, with all this complexity in mind – our past, present and future - I should like to salute our hosts tonight on their ninetieth birthday. They represent that now tenuous connection with what very largely made us a great trading nation and gave rise to the prosperity of ports such as Southampton. You may not look like it, Cachalots, but you have to my old eyes an heroic cast and you represent a long and distinguished history.

Fellow guests, I invite you to rise and pay tribute to - The Cachalots!

New Members

Captain Phillip Buckley is a Captain RN and the new Harbour Master of Southampton. He joined the Royal Navy in 1979, qualified as a submariner in 1981 and served in the Falklands War in 1982. He passed the Perisher Course in 1991 and went on to command two Trafalgar Class submarines, HMS Trenchant and HMS Triumph. As a Staff Officer with the MOD he had the strategic oversight of planning and training and provided specialist marine advice on the entire range of Port Operations as Head of Professions for Queen's Harbour Masters and Admiralty Pilots. (2012-14). After leaving the navy in 2014 he became Harbour Master for Jersey Ports before taking up his present appointment with ABP in 2017. He is a Younger Brother of Trinity House.

Captain David Robert Carter is a Master Mariner, a Lt. Cdr. (RNR) and a Bachelor of Law, LL.B. He is currently the Royal Navy's Merchant Navy Liaison Officer on Full Time Reserve Service. He went to sea as a cadet with Shell Tankers and gained his Masters (Class 1) certificate in 1992. From '95 ~ '98 he was released on Company sabbatical and gained an Upper Second Class Honours law degree at the University of Leeds. He returned to sea as Master in command in '98. From 2008 ~ 2012 he was seconded to Nakilat, the QatarGas LNG carrier fleet and was Lead Master for the first three Q-Max class 266,000 m³ vessels in the LNG fleet, *m.s. Mozah*, *m.s. Shagra* and *m.s. Al Mafyar*.

During leave in 2011 he was committed for RNR service in support of RN operations off Libya with *RFA Cardigan Bay* and during 2012 /13 he was further committed to RN exercises and training, serving on *HMS Illustrious* in the Mediterranean and on RFA amphibious assault vessels and *HMS Bulwark* on exercise in the English Channel.

In early 2014 he was LNG Master with Dynagas Ltd, new build dual fuel diesel electric LNG carriers built for polar Northern Sea route over Russia for carriage of gas cargoes from Norway and Russia to the Far East.

In October 2014 he was appointed RNR Amphibious Warfare specialisation Training Officer and is based at the Maritime Warfare School at HMS COLLINGWOOD.

He is Vice Chairman of the CHIRP Maritime Advisory Board. He is also a Younger Brother of Trinity House and a member of the Trinity house Management Committee.

Jonathan Murray is Commercial Manager of Jotun Paints (Europe) Ltd and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply. Jotun Paints produce coatings for the marine industry and have supported the Sea Pie Supper for several years.

Gone Aloft

Rosalyn Mortimer, who went aloft just before Christmas 2017, was Crew Manager at BT (Marine) for five years as well as managing agency crew for Global Marine, P&O Ferries, Portsmouth, and BP Coastal Tanker Fleet. She had a total of 22 years working with marine staff when she became a Cachalot in 2011.

Paul Moodie writes:

Ros first appeared on our horizons when she joined BT Marine in the personnel department and was selected for the Deck side. As was the case in those days, there was a considerable swapping of experience and expertise, particularly on the "change over days", where crews for all the ships generally went on, and returned from, leave on the same day. This was a more complicated task than "bodies in slots", since specialist skills needed to be sent to specific ships. This was a task that Ros excelled in, using her inimitable skills of blackmail, bribery and coercion; flattery, good humour and returned favours were also in her not inconsiderable armoury. Her skills, and compassion led to Ros being selected as the Cadet Dedicated Personnel Officer. It is difficult to quantify or understate Ros' ability in this post. Her proteges held her in great affection, demonstrated by the number of "her" boys who maintained life-long contact with Ros, even after moving on from BT. She was a de-facto mother, confidant and in one or two cases, marriage counsellor to them. After re-construction at BT, Ros moved to Sealife, a Southampton crewing agent, where coincidentally she became (amongst other things) responsible for supplying deck crew to the BT ships, a task that she revelled in, often using her friendships from BT to her advantage.

Ros was a passionate supporter of Southampton Football club, attending Home and Away fixtures. She served at both the Dell and the St Mary's stadia as a Steward assisting the disabled supporters. Such were her abilities in this role that she was actively involved in the club with designing the disabled facilities in the new St Mary's grounds.

With her love of the sea she became a Cachalot of the SMM and regularly attended the Sea Pie Supper. She loved cruising round the Med with her family whenever funds and health permitted. Sadly, it was on her last voyage that Ros fell ill and never recovered. Her last year was not pleasant as her health failed and she spent more and more time in hospital. Ros died shortly before Christmas 2017. She has left an indelible memory of humour, compassion and friendship.

See also back page

Sea skills for the future

Lloyd's List Viewpoint Feb1/8 2018

with kind permission of LL and the author, Cachalot Michael Grey

I was across at Warsash the other day- not the college on the River Hamble where once upon a time Merchant Navy cadets learned rifle drill and table manners, but something very different. This is the new Warsash School of Maritime Science and Engineering which has moved into a very shiny new facility in Southampton City and which that day was being officially opened by the Princess Royal.

It is a splendid new college, that provides the "learning environment" modern merchant navy cadets expect, with lots of well-equipped classrooms, workshops and engineering facilities and soon will house the spectacular simulators, which will be duly relocated on the premises. The old college site on the Hamble will still provide facilities for sea safety courses where you actually need water, but some very posh flats, priced for stupendous views, will, in the fullness of time, appear.

It was a very grand occasion, the Princess, who is always well informed on maritime matters, swished aside the commemorative curtain and departed to inspect the model ship lake, which teaches mariners unexpected lessons in ship manoeuvring. I'm told that the reactions of the first cadets who have been trained in the new school and reside just down the road, have been positive, and that numbers of applicants are climbing.

And that is very important, when you consider that this is the country's maritime future we are considering here. There is a major job to be done in attracting young people to what is, undeniably, a very singular profession, seeing them through training and launching them into their career. Then we have to ensure that they do not depart, disillusioned by what the industry is offering them.

On such occasions, you get a chance to meet cadets and they always leave me with a positive feeling, that if we can get these young people to sea operating our ships, the industry will be exceptionally well-served. They present themselves well, speak confidently and clearly and exhibit what I still think of as "officer-like qualities" in spades. If they have served some of their sea-time, they are surprisingly enthusiastic about their experiences, even though many seem to find themselves as the only native English speakers aboard ships which have mysteriously become "British" and fly the Red Ensign.

That's another argument entirely, and I don't wish to denigrate the sterling job being done by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency in presenting the UK Register as a highly respectable flag, to owners who are spoilt for choice in the world. The Tonnage Tax arrangements were chewed over ad infinitum when the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott finally beat those swine in the Treasury into accepting them. The requirement to take British cadets to get their sea time was a way of finding training berths, which have been in remarkably short supply for years. And, I suppose, if we were too fussy about demanding even a couple of British officers should serve on the flag of convenience British ships, the owners would just go somewhere else. We have what we have and must make the best of it.

But it is when you meet cadets and junior officers who have to jump through hoops to get that first stamp in their record book as a qualified officer that the stark reality of what life is like for these young people kicks in. There is an account in the current Journal of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners of one of their Associate Members, just qualified, but involved in what he described as a "never ending search" for his first job as a junior officer. He spent the best part of a year, it seems, roaring up and down the River Thames as skipper of one of the fast passenger tourist RIBs, applying for work at sea, before he got a temporary job as second mate of a sandsucker. I sure that his persistence will pay off, but it is not exactly encouraging when so many young people have to follow this difficult trail.

At Warsash I spoke to a very personable young cadet, enthusing about his first trip aboard a gigantic Evergreen container ship, registered, of course in the UK and flying the Red Ensign. He found himself as the sole Brit aboard this monster, but seemed to enjoy the experience, although he confessed that he was sometimes a bit lonely. And as he knew from the start, there is not a chance of further employment aboard these great green giants when he qualifies as they just don't take British officers. He was there for tax reasons, which may not give him cause for complaint, but I think we ought to do something a lot better.

All our industry leaders are terribly well-intentioned about attracting the best people into our business, but it's just not good enough to burble about "nothing being certain in this world" and lots of people doing media degrees failing to find jobs in the media. Because, this isn't a bog-standard form of training, but we are schooling people for a very different and distinctive way of life. Somehow, whether we club together and operate cadet ships, or provide some financial support toward that first job (how many years have we been talking about that?) there needs to be some real commitment. We owe it to this next generation.

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Guiding Light

The report below is reprinted with kind permission from ABP.

AN ICONIC illuminated cross which has been used for decades as an informal navigation aid to Marine Pilots bringing ships into the port, has been restored thanks to ABP Southampton.

Marine Pilot Mark Bray (pictured) works in the Port of Southampton helping to bring some of the largest ships in the world alongside and when he noticed the cross on Christ Church in Freemantle was no longer illuminated, he was keen to see what could be done to remedy the situation.

He explained: "For many hundreds of years Marine Pilots and ships' navigators have used prominent landmarks to help fix their vessel's position.

Southampton Marine Pilots back in the days of sail and steam will have used the many magnificent church spires which surround the docks as navigation aids.

Today's Marine Pilots now bring in monster sized, ultra large container ships. They use modern hi-tec electronic positioning equipment called Portable Pilot Units to get the 400m long ships through the docks.

Even with this equipment, Marine Pilots still verify the ship's position and progress by looking at fixed objects ashore. The illuminated cross on the Freemantle church is especially useful at night to guide us into the 400m turning circle."

Mark contacted Priest in Charge, Reverend Angi Nutt and she was delighted to discover the cross was used as a guiding light by mariners.

"The iconic cross on the tower of Christ Church was first installed in the early 1950s and has been unlit for a while after the final tube in it failed. In the past, it has been a tricky and often eventful project to lower the cross to change the bulbs and do maintenance work on it," she said.

Apprentice Morgan Rodaway, 17, stripped back the 2.2m high cross and fitted LED bulbs with photocell technology so the cross lights up as darkness falls. He joined maintenance team colleagues who used a cherry picker to safely re-attach the cross at a height of 18m.

ABP Southampton Contracts Technician Joe Atkinson explained it was one of the most unusual projects his team has ever tackled.

"This is certainly not an everyday project for us and that's why it was great for Morgan, our electrical apprentice, to be able to work on it. It's great to be able to do something that helps our Marine Pilots - and also restores a much loved icon for the church community," he said.



The Portable Pilot Units mentioned above enable the pilots to not only monitor their own movements and progress in real time, but also that of any other vessels in the port area, without the need for ship/ship or ship/VTS communications.

Four images from such a PPU display are shown on the opposite page and were taken by a pilot, Past Captain John Mileusnic, on his mobile phone while sat at home.

The information displayed is from AIS; if John had been afloat he could have plugged his PPU into the ship's system and received much more data and information.

The images show the progress of the container vessel *Cosco Vietnam* which departed her berth (SCT 3/4) at 1730 on the evening of Saturday 18th Feb. With the assistance of two tugs, the *Svitzer Bargate* for'd and the *Lomax* aft, she backs round Post Office Corner into the swinging ground.

I have superimposed the transit line of the cross and the end of the shed at 109 berth and you can see that it nearly bisects the 400m turning circle.

In the second image the bridge position of the ship or, more correctly, the position of the AIS transponder (the small blue circle and orange cross) is right on the line.

The other transit shown on the chart, the YBR beacons, were established years ago to assist vessels using the KGV dry dock. Note that the *Vietnam* is too wide to have fitted in to that 'huge' dry dock.

The shadow profiles show the predicted position of the vessel up to five minutes ahead, each ship shape at one minute intervals, *if the vessel continues on its current path without any change of course, speed or rate of turn*. They are based on past data because all the wonders of modern technology have yet to develop a crystal ball. In practice, these factors are changing almost constantly.

The vessel on what was 201/202 berth, now designated SCT5, is the *CMA CGM Benjamin Franklin*, one of the new breed of extra large container ships of ~400m length. With my trusty dividers (what they?) I measured the distance from the edge of the turning circle to the hull of the *Franklin* and, comparing it to the 400m circle, calculated that it is around 44m. So that is precious little space for the 28m *Lomax*, hanging on the towing wire aft, to manoeuvre.

BUT, we need a bit of caution when doing such sums and making such assumptions. If you look closely at the *Franklin* you will see that her green hull shape is slightly overlapping the quayline. We can confidently assume that she isn't sat up on the quay so this indicates a discrepancy between the base mapping and the overlaying AIS data; this is not uncommon. What I should have done was measure the distance from the circle to the quay (both from the same map) and then deduct the 54 m beam of the *Franklin*, giving me a new clearance of 41m. That's 3m less for the *Lomax* to work in. The main lesson to learn from all this is that the modern technologies are wonderful aids, but just that, 'aids', and one must be aware of their limitations.

And, as a retired pilot myself, I know that pilots are still very happy to use the Mark I eyeball and visual aids such as the newly restored transit to re-assure them of the veracity of what their sophisticated equipment is telling them.



Elevated positions

Pilot Mark Bray and electrical apprentice Morgan Rodaway



The economies of scale

The *Cosco Vietnam*, above, is 334m x 43m, 91,051grt, 101,500 dwt and has a capacity of 8500 TEU (standard boxes).

The *Benjamin Franklin* on SCT 5 berth is 399m x 54m, which doesn't look a great deal bigger in the plan view.

But, consider the following:

That 19.5% increase in length and 25.6% in beam equates to an increase of 95% in grt (178,228) and 82% in dwt (185,070).

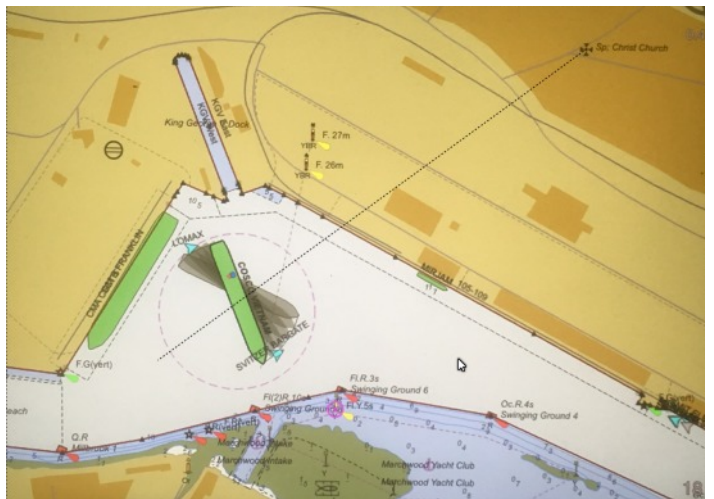
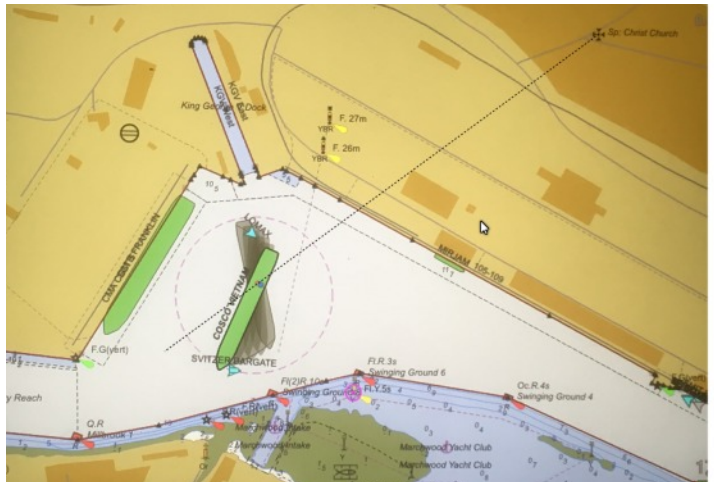
But at 18000 TEU it has more than double the carrying capacity, at + 111.76%!!

No wonder big is beautiful in the shipowners' eyes.

The container ships are divided into categories and the *Vietnam* is a Cat 3, > 60,000 dwt, and takes one Specialist Containership Pilot (no longer *Choice*). That pilot was Richard Harding, whose father, Roger Harding, was a lecturer at Warsash and a Cachalot who sadly went aloft last year.

The *Franklin* is a Cat 4, >100,000 dwt and >365m and takes two Specialist Pilots. who bring with them a berthing / navigation aid which once set up is independent of the ship, including power, and uses a fixed aerial system around the port giving incredible position accuracy, said to be around $\pm 2\text{cm}$.

They are now working on the criteria for Cat 6, at around 199,999 dwt and the rules governing their safe passage. There are only a few places in the port and its approaches where these giants can safely pass each other. Consider a Fawley pass, with perhaps a VLCC on no.5 berth. The vast quantities of water displaced by each vessel, with limited underkeel clearance, can only go sideways and the greater the speed, the greater effect. The slower the speed, the less efficient the rudder and you lose the steering. Take your pick.



What's that about a 90th?



Thirty six members managed to squeeze into the Club room on Friday 9th February to celebrate that 90th Birthday. In fact we might have managed a few more. There was a splendid Cachalot birthday cake and lots of nibbles and some more substantial fare.

Club Captain Pedersen presented the new nonagenarian (Who would have thought it? At his age!) with a birthday card addressed 'To Our Esteemed President' and signed by all hands. It contained some deathless prose (right). The recipient of all this goodwill seemed somewhat bemused, if not totally embarrassed, but worse was to come when we all burst into 'Happy Birthday to You'. "But it's the Club's Birthday too" he protested, whereupon we all sang, "Happy Birthday to Us" as well. We know how to have a good time. However, there was some, more tangible, reward for him.

We hadn't yet drawn the two 250 Club numbers for January and when I proffered the bag of numbers to Susanne Pedersen she drew out... yes ... Reg Kelso!

Now, the bag has all the numbers in it but not all the numbers are allocated, so when Susanne drew the next number it didn't match a sold one - nor the next - but, third time lucky, no.311 ... Terry Clark. I think Susanne wasn't the only one to wonder why I needed to have three numbers drawn before announcing myself, and Reg, the winners. All above board ...honest!

From Cachalot to Captain, he then became

A Boatsteerer, to great acclaim,

With Nautical Fellowship of some renown,

Honours followed, from Club and Crown,

An MN Medal his latest success

Awarded by the Royal Princess,

Now at 90, he doth consent

To be our Honoured President.

Eat your heart out, William McGonagall !

Further to the above story, when the time came to draw the February winners it was Douglas Gates who took the bag to Julia Pugh this time and she drew out...no.311...Terry Clark.!

My luck was definitely in so I dashed home to do the Euro Lottery but unfortunately that luck hadn't carried over.

The other winner this month was Les Morris so were are keeping it among the Past Captains so far this year.

But we welcome a bit of competition so it's not too late to buy a few numbers (£5 for 12 monthly draws)



Rope Ends

AGM 2018

15 Members attended the AGM on the 25th January and the following officers were confirmed for 2018:

Captain:	Flemming Pedersen;
Staff Captain:	Rachel Dunn;
Post Captain:	Robin Plumley MBE
Boatsteerer:	Ken Dagnall MBE
Storekeeper:	Ian Odd

Six Harpooners were elected: Gerry Cartwright, Terry Clark, Douglas Gates, Peter Grant, Andrew Moll and Jeremy Smart.

Harpooner John Noble has one more year to run.

Harpooners Douglas Gates and Terry Clark continue as Hon. Membership Officer and Hon. Editor respectively, Peter Grant continues as Hon Functions Officer and Roy Martin as Hon. Archivist.

John Mileusnic agreed to continue as Bursary Co-ordinator.

Honorary Chaplains are Mr John Attenborough and th Rev'd Roger Stone BEM.

Royal Institute of Navigation – Solent Branch Joint meeting with The Nautical Institute and UK Hydrographic Society (South)

Thurs 26th April 2018 - 1900.

**Warsash Maritime Academy, Newtown Road,
Warsash, SO 31 9ZL**

Professor Andrew Norris FRIN

“Autonomous vessels – a real revolution”

The age of the autonomous vessel has already arrived. The speaker will explain the present situation, how the future is likely to evolve and why their use will inevitably expand. He will consider where we are now and where we will be in a few years time and beyond.

He will look at the available and emerging technology, the various types of autonomy along with examples of UK and international examples of systems being sold and under development. Other implications will be considered such as the impact on the Colregs, maritime regulations, insurance and leisure sailors.

His presentation will be directed and open to all those with an interest in the maritime sector, including pilots, coastguards, the rescue services, harbour authorities, bridge staff, leisure sailors, insurers, trainers, insurers, legal experts, trainers, researchers and manufacturers. Members of yacht clubs, kindred societies such as IMarEst, RINA and the Soton Master Mariners Club will be welcome.

The speaker will allow ample time for questions and audience input. Prior booking is not required and there is no charge for attendance.

Note- This meeting will be followed by the RIN Solent Branch AGM

Contacts - solsec@rin.org.uk. solprog@rin.org.uk

