

The CACHALOT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB

No.7

March 2003

(POST) CAPTAIN'S LOG

This is my last effort at producing our Log of the activities undertaken on your behalf by the Club Captain. The next one will be in the capable hands of my successor, Captain Geoffrey LEE.

Back in November (Saturday, 23rd.) we enjoyed a super curry lunch. On this occasion it was held in the P.O.S.H. Indian Restaurant which is situated within sight of our club room. The reason for the change of venue was the non-availability of the BISS due to the catering manager's absence on holiday. It was especially appropriate for me as I was on a self catering regime while 'Her Indoors' was in America visiting our younger daughter. Although the restaurant was open to the public we appeared to have the place to ourselves. It was a most convivial occasion and very well supported.

On the 29th. November a group of members were entertained to lunch by the Merchant Mariners of Wight. The event was held in the restaurant of a very pleasant hotel in West Cowes which had a dramatic view across Cowes Roads. Unfortunately, it was just my luck to be seated with my back to the window. The fellowship was such as to make these exchanges very likely to become an annual occasion.

The annual Club Christmas Luncheon was due to be held on the 4th. December. The previous year there had been about fifty people in attendance but on this occasion only thirteen were definitely booked in by the time confirmation of numbers was required by the caterers. They needed a minimum of twenty to make a full turkey lunch viable. Naturally, it had to be cancelled. However, the ever faithful Liz offered to lay out the tables for a Christmas Lunch with crackers and decorations. The difference was that we all ordered our own meals from the usual daily menu. About twenty of us sat down together at a long table and had a very jolly time together. Later, several other people said that they would have attended if they had known. There had been insufficient time to permit a general ring around but all those who had booked for the original lunch were informed. This should remind us all to book early for functions - if too few put their names on the list they will have to be cancelled or if the event is oversubscribed they may not get a place.

The following day, the Boatsteerer and myself, accompanied by our wives, were the guests of the Watch Ashore to lunch in the restaurant of Southampton City College. The ladies entertained us royally. Mavis and I sat adjacent to two other guests, the Rev. Michael Williams from the Missions to Seamen and his wife. They were extremely good company, as was the Lady Chairman and the other ladies on our table. This restaurant is entirely staffed by catering students. They certainly have picked up all the skills required for waiting at table in a first class hotel. The Watch Ashore is a very worthy organisation. It was originally set up as a meeting point for the wives of seafarers and ladies who had



Captain Geoffrey G. Lee

Your new Club Captain was born in Southport, Lancs. on 8th December 1942 and has been a member of the S.M.M.C. since 1977.

He attended H.M.S. Conway from 1957 to 1959 and was apprenticed to P&O S N Co in February 1960.

He sailed in cargo ships, tankers and passenger vessels gaining his 2nd Mates Certificate in March 1963.

Rejoining P&O as 4th Officer he attained 1st Mates in Dec. '64 and Masters in March '70.

He continued to sail with P&O being promoted to Chief Officer January 1971.

He was appointed to P&O Passenger Division in '72 as Chief Officer of ss Oronsay.

In 1976 he was seconded to the General Cargo Division as Cadet Instruction Officer for 6 months and then to the Sail Training Association for 12 months before being appointed to ss Oriana as Chief Officer in July '77.

He married his wife Carolyn in 1978 and they now live in Hampshire.

In 1980 he was appointed Fleet Safety Officer of P&O Passenger Division and the following year was promoted Deputy Captain of mv Sea Princess.

He then spent a further 3 years in the Princess Ships before coming ashore and toying with the Legal Profession.

He retired in 1990.

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been seafarers themselves. With the collapse of the British Merchant Navy they no longer find it easy to recruit so their numbers are dwindling.

On Friday the 13th. of December we held the traditional Club Christmas Dinner. It proved to be a virtual sellout. This was my first time at such a function. (Twelve months previously Mavis and I were dining on the 'Oriana'.) We certainly enjoyed ourselves very much. The BISS excelled themselves with their cooking and their service. Once again the fellowship was first class.

The next Friday evening was the occasion of the Christmas Party and Buffet of the Southampton Royal Naval Officers' Association, held in the Tudor Merchants' Hall. Once again we were most hospitably entertained and again sat adjacent to a man of the cloth and his wife. This time it was the McCreas from the BISS. Not only was it a hilarious evening but I won a bottle of wine in a raffle. The venue is one of the most historical buildings in Southampton, built against the city wall with exposed beams and rafters; all most charming.

The New Year was quite a busy time for events and meetings. We started out on January 2nd., 2003 most appropriately with the Docklands Service in the Chapel of the Flying Angel Mission. It was an Ecumenical Service in which all three Port Chaplains participated as well as the Bishop of Southampton who preached, and the Port Director who read one of the lessons. There was a full house for the Chapel and the refreshments following. The only depressing part was holding it at such an unearthly hour in the morning - 0930 hours. Then, on Saturday the 4th. We held the annual Past Captains Meeting to elect the Captain of the Club for the year. That was a little more civilised - it did not start until 1100 hours. Needless to say Geoffrey Lee was unanimously elected. As is traditional, he was on the premises to await the result of the deliberations. He was then called in to have the news broken to him and he thanked everyone for the privilege bestowed upon him. During the course of the next week there were two sub-committee meetings held at lunch time and one general committee which is always held in the early evening. We were all sick of the sight of the place by the end of the week but these meetings are essential to keep the Club functioning. The all came together because there was much business to be competed in anticipation of the AGM the following week.

Finally, on the 16th. January I presided over the opening of the Club's AGM. I then installed Geoff as Captain and hung his insignia around his neck. From then on he chaired the meeting and I was presented with the insignia of a Past Captain. In fact, we shall be going through that little bit of ceremony again at the Sea Pie Supper, for public consumption. That will be for the last time as we have now changed the rules so that Geoff will remain as Captain until the Sea Pie Supper of 2004 and his successor will stay as Staff Captain (and Captain-Elect) until then.

That completes my log of the events of the Club and others in which I represented it over the last twelve months. I thoroughly enjoyed my time but now I am happy to hand over the reins to my very worthy successor. Thank you all for your support. In turn I hope to continue to support the Club and its Captain during the coming year.

Ian Stirling

BURNS SUPPER



Captain Robertson addresses the haggis at the recent Burns Supper. The sight of the waiting dram brings a glint to the eye of Pipe-Major Joe Fagan.

*'Twas "The Selkirk Grace" from Alistair Cant,
'Twas the "beastie" piped in by the Pipe-Major and
carried in by the Chef,
'Twas an address to the haggis from Robbie,
'Twas Clapshaw or Champit tatties & bashed neaps with
their haggis for the assembled company,
'Twas the Loyal Toast by Captain Geoffrey Lee,
'Twas "The Immortal Memory" from Ian Stirling,
'Twas the toast to "The Lassies" from Lionel Hall,
'Twas a response to the same from Carolyn Lee,
'Twas "The Toon we bide in" from Alistair,
'Twas a sweet rendition of "My love is like a red, red rose"
from Valerie Plowman,
'Twas a very rude ditty from Alistair,
'Twas then time for "Auld Lang Syne" and "The Queen".
'Twas another thoroughly good evening enjoyed by
The Cachalots.*

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SEA-PIE SUPPER

Another successful Sea-Pie Supper was enjoyed by some 650 (mainly) men in black on the evening of Feb 7th at the Southampton Guildhall. Captain Geoffrey Lee was publicly installed as Captain of the Club by the outgoing Captain, Ian Stirling, and Rear Admiral John Lang, recently retired Chief Inspector of the MAIB, reflected upon the trials and tribulations that now await any unfortunate shipmaster who might be involved in an accident.

Michael Grey, in his inimitable style, managed to encapsulate the gist of the speech very succinctly in a report (Pressing the wrong buttons) in Lloyds List, and I am grateful for his permission and that of the editor of Lloyds to copy it on the following page.

One glitch on the evening was that some areas of the hall did not get good sound reception, something that was not apparent when testing the equipment in the empty hall earlier. I do have the full transcript of Rear Admiral Lang's speech and may be able to copy it to any interested members who missed it.

Editor

Pressing the wrong buttons

IT IS always good to receive the thoughts of influential public figures, immediately after they have left office, when they are able to speak their minds, without having spin doctors and important officials abridging the script.

Last Friday, there was an opportunity to hear from Admiral John Lang, who was a distinguished chief inspector of the Marine Accident Investigation Branch, and even though he retired some months ago has remained close to this important element in marine safety, producing blueprints for independent casualty investigation services for foreign administrations.

But he is a free agent and as such he was able to speak without restraint at the celebrated Sea Pie Supper of the Southampton Master Mariners' Club, with some 650 maritime industry folk present to hear him. There was great and audible approval when he laid into the prevailing system that, as he described it, pushes the button marked "lock up the master" almost as an automatic reaction after a maritime casualty. There is, said Adm Lang, "no other profession where people are so disgracefully treated by the authorities" after an accident. A doctor is accused of some misdemeanour; he or she is suspended. Policemen or lawyers are accused of corrupt practices or some failure to observe procedure; they are suspended. Shipmasters are marched ashore in manacles to be lodged in prison with murderers. Such behaviour of the authorities, said Adm Lang, represents a severe blow to safety.

The rational thinking of the authorities is suspended after high-profile accidents, when knee-jerk and unthinking reactions are implemented to address political enthusiasm. After double-hulled tankers, are we, he asked, to have multi-hulls inflicted on the industry?

Two things - money and public opinion - influence the shipping industry, complained Adm Lang, with quality not being publicly rewarded. He spoke of the need for casualty investigators to be independent, for IMO to remain the principal debating chamber for international regulation and, perhaps thinking of those numerous flag states which fail to investigate casualties, for these laggards to take up their responsibilities.

As the post-*Prestige* hysteria rages on, we might reflect on the wisdom of these words, and the importance of casualty investigation, before the panic buttons are pressed.

This report appeared in Lloyds List on Tuesday 11th Feb.03

CURRY LUNCHES

Saturdays March 8th and April 26th
In the Club-room at the B&ISS

1200 for 1245



SKITTLES EVENING

Following on the success of last year's skittles evening we have again booked the Southampton (Old) Green Bowling Cub for an evening of light-hearted rivalry between two teams of our Club members. We cannot promise a repeat cabaret performance of Alan Gravestock falling over the skittle alley, as he has decided it may be safer for him to go away for the weekend. No doubt those who took part last year will be looking forward to the very inexpensive bar prices. Once again there will be modest prizes for the highest scoring lady and highest scoring gentleman, and a suitable reward for the lowest score of all. We anticipate a maximum of about 30 players, but spectators are welcome to come along and hurl abuse (or even encouragement) at the players. The cost of the evening, including the meal, is £9.50 per person. As this is an outside function cheques should be made payable to "The Cachalots" and handed to the Storekeeper, Functions Officer, Boatsteerer or Judith as soon as possible.

MENU:- Scampi & Chips, Apple Pie.

FRIDAY 11th APRIL at 1900

SPRINGTIME CONCERT

Tuesday, 6th May

- The Lucknow Band of the Prince of Wales Regiment is once again presenting a varied musical programme in a springtime concert at the Garrison Theatre at Tidworth, by kind permission of the Commanding Officer, Colonel Tilney. This is usually a very popular evening and it would, therefore, be wise to enter your names on the list as soon as possible. The price is £17.50 per person. A deposit of £5 each is payable to either the Storekeeper, Functions Officer, Boatsteerer or Judith. Please make cheques payable to "The Cachalots". The coach will leave from the Club at 1700, and from Chandler's Ford at 1745.

SHAGGY DOG STORY

The following letters appeared in the Daily Telegraph last December.

SIR - I was watch-keeping officer on the bridge of a ship outward-bound from Greenhithe to Goole in the 1960s, with one helmsman (whose chief purpose was to give me someone to talk to about the fleshpots of Goole), when a Dutch coaster passed us inward-bound.

The only occupant of its bridge was a dog, with paws on the dodger, smiling as only mongrels can smile. As it could obviously identify port and starboard buoys and knew the rule of the road, I flashed it a message with the Aldis lamp, but it declined to reply.

Ian Dougall

Bournemouth, Hants

SIR - The attempt to signal the canine master of the ship (letter, Dec.19) was a forlorn task. The dogwatch takes place in the hours of 4pm - 6pm or 6pm - 8pm and would have had the probability of direct sunlight in the lookout's eyes and therefore the reduced effect of the Aldis lamp. This has always been a problem with old seadogs.

Anthony Rogers

The Lizard, Cornwall

CLUB SUPPER

At **GEORGE'S RESTAURANT**
FRIDAY, 4 APRIL AT 1900

George's Restaurant is one of the oldest eating establishments in Southampton. It is situated at 1-2, St. Michael's Street, more or less just opposite St. Michael's Church. No doubt many Club members can recall eating at George's after being thrown out of the Red Lion at closing time on the night before sailing. The food is good and the price is £16 per person. Please enter your names as soon as possible so that we may advise numbers to the restaurant. Please hand your payments to the Storekeeper, Functions Officer, Judith or Boatsteerer, so that there are less to collect on the night. Cheques should be made payable to "The Cachalots" as this is an outside function. If this evening proves a success it is likely that more functions will be held at this venue in the event of the B.& I.S.S. premises being unavailable.

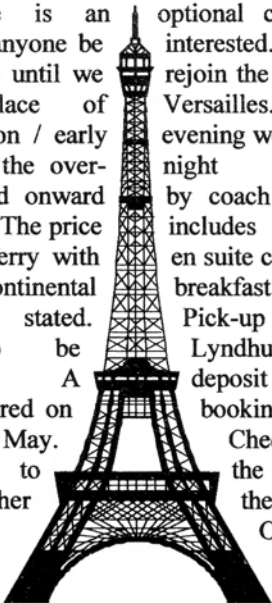
MENU:

Minestrone Soup
Chicken Chasseur
Profiteroles or Cheesecake
or Cheese and Biscuits
Coffee

WEEKEND IN PARIS

Friday 30th May - Monday 2nd June

Following the successful trip to Normandie last autumn, another trip to France has been organised, this time to Paris. Numbers are limited to 30 people only, so don't miss this opportunity of an excellent weekend trip. We will travel from Portsmouth to Le Havre overnight, and each couple will have sole use of a 4 berth en suite cabin. On arrival at Le Havre at 0700 (French time) the coach will travel to Paris arriving late morning. Those who wish may then stay on the coach for a tour of as many of the famous Paris landmarks as possible before booking in at the 3 star Hotel Mercure, Paris. The hotel is situated near to the metro, making the whole of Paris only minutes away. In the evening there is an optional cruise down the Seine, should anyone be interested. Sunday morning is free in Paris until we rejoin the coach for a visit to the Palace of Versailles. After Versailles, in late afternoon / early evening we journey back to Le Havre for the overnight crossing to Portsmouth and onward by coach to our original pick-up points. The price includes return coach travel, return ferry with en suite cabins, one night's hotel with continental breakfast and all excursions as stated. Pick-up points are expected to be Lyndhurst and Southampton. A deposit of £ 40 per person is required on booking, with the balance by 1 May. Cheques should be made payable to the Cachalots and handed to either the Storekeeper, Functions Officer, Judith or Boatsteerer. There is a single supplement of



75th ANNIVERSARY DINNER

February 15th this year marked the 75th anniversary of the Club and a celebration dinner has been arranged at the Royal Southampton Yacht Club on the evening of **Saturday 28th June.**

It is anticipated that a prominent Club Member, who just happens to be the same age as the Club, will be prevailed upon to talk about the first 75 years, (the Club's that is, not his own).

Dress code will be black tie and miniatures, as befits such an occasion, and the menu will be as follows:

*Smoked Salmon & Prawn Cornet
bathed in a dill & lemon dressing*

*Beef Wellington
roast fillet of beef wrapped in puff pastry with a
pate, mushroom and onion duxcelle
served with a madeira sauce and a selection
of seasonal vegetables*

*Individual fresh fruit meringue nest
with almond chantilly*

Fresh coffee and petit fours

The cost will be £35 per head and numbers will be limited, so please book early, cheques payable to the Cachalots.

AUTUMN BALL

Friday 3rd October

Please note the change of date for this function, due to the previous date being no longer available. We shall be returning to the Brook House Masonic Hall at Botley which has been refurbished and the bar area greatly improved since we were last there six years ago.

We are still in the planning stage and further details will be promulgated when finalised.

WATCH THIS SPACE

SLOP CHEST

In addition to the previously advertised articles for sale, the Club now has a supply of Club Baseball Caps, sporting the Clob logo. I am told that these are very useful if the sun is glaring in your face when driving. Modestly priced at £8.

Also, just arrived, "Wetcling" car stickers, also displaying the Club logo, a mere £1 each.

Just think, 8 stickers strategically positioned along the top of the windscreen and you might not have to wear a baseball cap! Ed.



SALVAGE OFFICERS M.O.D. (NAVY)

It is easy to understand the need for Naval Salvage Officers in war and thus, somewhat belatedly, the Admiralty Salvage organisation was born of necessity during the World War I. By the time of the Armistice, they had proved their worth in the successful salvage of damaged ships and the clearance of wrecks from important harbours and seaways. With the advent of peace their Lordships saw no further need for such an organisation (other than the Salvage Team working to recover bullion from the liner "Laurentic"), and it was disbanded. Seven years later the sole surviving Team completed their work off Ireland, and they too were

disbanded. In some respect the Admiralty was to rue this decision in 1939 with the advent of WWII, for it had to crash-start a Naval organisation by enlisting the relatively few salvage experts from the UK salvage industry and building them up with RN, RNR and RNVF officers and men, mostly without any specialist experience. Suitable ships and equipment were difficult to come by, and it was not until about 1941 that the organisation was effective and beginning to cope with the scale of the problem. In 1945 the same decision must have faced their Lordships as to whether to wind-up the Teams, but with so much work still to be done to clear harbours of wreckage, it was deemed a reduced Salvage Organisation should be 'civilianised' and merged under a new Directorate of Booms, Moorings and Salvage, headed by a Captain R.N. The post war years saw the important clearance of the block ships from Dover Harbour, the clearance of wrecks from the Harbours of Malta, specifically the "Breconshire", "Talabot" and the large Admiralty Floating Dock; the clearance of mines from the sunken "Port Napier" at Kyle Rhea, the raising of the French destroyer "Maille Breze" in the Clyde Estuary, and numerous other salvage and wreck clearance tasks around the UK coast, including U.N. support to clear the Suez Canal after 1956.

By the time I had my Masters ticket and had resigned from Blue Funnel (late in 1960) to look for shore employment, many of the older Salvage Officers were reaching retirement age and the Admiralty needed to recruit fresh blood. In response to their advertisement for an Assistant Boom Defence & Salvage Officer in September 1962, I applied for the job that was "temporary and not pensionable"! I was duly interviewed at Bath in October, and heard nothing more, so I applied early in 1963 to become a Fisheries Officer with the Ministry of Ag. Fish & Food, and was about to accept an appointment, when like a 'bolt out of the blue' I received a letter from the Admiralty 'commanding' me to report to the Naval Barracks at Portsmouth in March to start six months of training courses to become an Assistant B.D.&S.O! These courses embraced tuition at our own Marine Services School in Rosyth in the handling of heavy moorings and equipment needed to maintain both the various Boom Defences and Admiralty moorings that were laid in various harbours and estuaries around the UK and in foreign places like Singapore, Hong Kong, Mombasa, Freetown, Malta and Gibraltar. Other familiarisation courses included welding and thermal-arc cutting with British Oxygen, steel grommet net-making with British Ropes, and the operation of an underwater bolt gun with Cox Bolt Gun. A two-week course in diving (the standard suit with copper helmet!) to familiarise us as Diving supervisors, and a week's course with the Navy to learn how to use explosives for wreck clearance work.

Five of us joined in response to the 1963 recruitment, one from Royal Mail, one from British Tankers (BTC), one from British India, and one a Master transferring from the Admiralty's Port Auxiliary Service, and myself from British Railways Southern Division (Isle of Wight Ferries!). After training we were posted to the four corners of the UK, to Rosyth, Greenock, Dover, Bath (HQ) and Portsmouth. I was lucky to be given the posting to Pompey, where my family lived; but not for long! In 1964 I was re-posted to the Boom Defence Depot at Pembroke Dock to join the staff of a rather disgruntled Resident Naval Officer, a serving Commander R.N., who was losing his deputy (a Lieut. Commander RN), and getting in his place, an inexperienced civilian Asst. B.D. & S.O. I was somewhat curtly told my duties were to be 'Assistant to the Boom Officer (B.D.&S.O.) nearing sixty and retirement, 'Mooring Officer' for all the Admiralty moorings and navigation buoys laid in Milford Haven and the Bristol Channel, 'Salvage Officer' for any local or West Coast salvage incidents, 'Diving Officer', 'Welfare Officer', 'RFA agent for ships berthing at the Naval Fuel Depot, and 'Compass Adjuster'! It was the last that made me sweat, when a few weeks later we had orders to prepare one of the RFA ocean salvage tugs "Warden" laid up at P.D, for immediate passage to Rosyth as soon as the crew arrived. With no gyro it was essential to swing the ship to check the magnetic compass, and this I did, in a fashion that would have pleased Capt. Freaker himself!

I won't dwell on this and subsequent appointments that took me to Bath, Malta, Portsmouth and finally to Plymouth. Somewhere along the line my status changed to "permanent and pensionable" and I duly became a main grade officer although this title altered to Mooring & Salvage Officer (M&SO) when Boom Defences became redundant. The Directorate became the Marine Services (Naval) 'DMS(N)' organisation embracing all the dockyard port & other sea services provided by the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Services (RMAS), of which your past captain Robbie was a linchpin, as Admiralty Pilot, Shipping Master (marine superintendent) and latterly at his own choice, master of the naval



RMAS LAYBURN at Livorno 1971

armament vessel "Kinterbury" for the last year of his service before his retirement.

Throughout the 28 years I worked with the MOD(N) serving on the Naval staff in various ports, my most important role was to respond to the needs of the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and the Army in respect of any accident or disaster that involved vessels or craft at sea, or the salvage recovery of aircraft or equipment from the sea (or inland Reservoirs. It does happen!) At times we were lent as "salvage experts" to other Government Departments, such as my work on secondment to the D.T.I. at Southampton to help supervise the commercial salvor Smit-Tak's work to lift the sunken tanker "Tarpenbek" from Sandown Bay and avoidance of any major oil pollution, some time in the 1970's whilst I was the Salvage Officer at Portsmouth.

During the past forty years many changes have happened and this has affected the number of Salvage Officers employed by M.O.D.(Navy). There were few recruited in the late 1960's because of the rationalisation with the RAF's own Mooring Section but as these officers and other Salvage & Mooring Officers retired, even allowing for a considerable shrinkage in commitments, the closure of the Dockyards in Singapore, Gibraltar, Chatham, Rosyth, and several other depots in the UK and overseas (Malta) etc, the need continued for M.O.D.(Navy) to occasionally recruit and train new Salvage Officers, and these were drawn from the Merchant Navy.

I have been retired now for 11 years but I still keep in touch with my colleagues and understand that although the Salvage organisation has been streamlined over the years, it is now more flexible and even better equipped to meet the current needs of the Ministry of Defence.



Contributed by Mike Pugsley. January 2003

NEW CACHALOTS

We welcome the following new members to the Club:

Mr. W.J. Eastmond

Mr. M. Goodall

Cpt. F.N. Pedersen

Mr. P.I. Pegg

Cpt. R.V. Martin

Mr. Robin Richardson

Mr. Rupert Richardson

I had hoped to be able to give a bit more information about new members but,

- a) I haven't got round to getting all that information, and*
- b) I have run out of space again.*

And my apologies to those have contributed articles that I could not find space for. Rest assured that I shall include them in future editions. Ed.



PASSING THE PORT



May I add to Peter Powell's interesting article (The Cachalot No.6, Dec 2002) some brief notes on the pleasant custom of drinking healths and toasting.

"Health" comes from the old English "haelth", the condition of being "hal" or safe and sound. "Hail" is of Scandinavian origin and means an exclamation of greeting, to greet or call out to, "a good health to you", but the custom of drinking healths is probably derived from the ancient religious rite of drinking to the gods or the dead.

The Greeks and Romans poured out libations to their gods and also drank to them at their ceremonial banquets. The Romans drank as many glasses to their mistresses as there were letters in their names.

Thus:-

*"Six cups to Naevia's health go quickly round,
And he with seven the fair Justina's crowned."*

The Goths pledged each other with the cry "Haels", the Anglo-Saxon counterpart of which was "Waes hael", from which is derived "Wassail".

In the reign of Henry VII there was an ordinance for the regulation of the Royal Household which directed the Steward on Twelfth-Night, to cry "Wassail" three times on entering with a bowl, the royal chaplain responding with a song.

The English term "toast", as applied to drinking healths, is not older than the 17th century, and had reference at first to this custom of drinking to the ladies. Originally a toast was invariably to a lady and its origin was somewhat curious. In Stuart times it was the custom to put a piece of toast in the wine cup before drinking, from a belief that it gave the liquor a better flavour. There is an account of a celebrated beauty who, at Bath, in Charles II's reign, had a bath in public, when one of her admirers took a glass of the water in which she stood and drank her health to the assembled company. The account goes on to say that "There was in the place a gay fellow, half-fuddled, who offered to jump in and swore, though he liked not the liquor, he would have the "toast". He was opposed in this resolution, yet this whim gave foundation to the honour which is done to the lady we mention in our liquor, who has ever since been called a "toast"."

By the 17th Century health drinking had become a serious business. At Christmas, 1643, the members of the Middle Temple drank to the health of the Princess Elizabeth by standing up one after another with cup in hand and sword in the other and pledging her and swearing to die in her service. At this time the Princess and her husband, the King of Bohemia, were suffering great misfortunes.

Toasts were often drunk in the kneeling position, and a Scottish custom which still survives is to drink the toast with one foot on the chair and the other on the table.

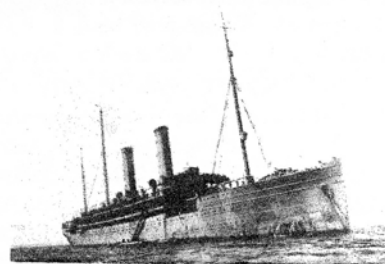
Thanks to Hamish Roberts for the above contribution. It will be continued in the next edition.

The Cruise of H.M. Armed Merchantman "KINFAUNS CASTLE"

From 4th Aug.1914 to 20th Aug.1915

Continuing the account by **Mr. LEONARD ROGERS, 1888-1937**

Chief Steward, Union Castle Line



23rd Aug. Church parade this morning. About 10 o'clock we sighted a steamer on the horizon. Steam was put on and we caught her up about 2 o'clock. Two rounds were fired to bring her to and she proved to be the steamer "Antinous" of London. We brought up just under her counter and her captain shouted that he was 22 days out of port and he was unaware that war had broken out. She was making for Madeira. About 7 o'clock we sighted the Armed Merchant ship "Macedonia". Early after midnight chased and caught a steamer named the "Diana", P.S.N.Co's ship. Her lights were screened and she refused to stop until we fired twice at her. She was boarded and her captain was warned of the consequences of ignoring the signal to "heave to."

24th Aug. Arrived at St. Vincent at 6 a.m. There were eight German ships there, one a dismantled armed merchantman. But they are in a neutral port so are safe. Some of them have been there three weeks. The flag ship "Carnarvon" and several of our armed merchantmen are in the vicinity. Taken on water and are awaiting orders. About 6 o'clock we moved anchorage, otherwise we should have risked being interned, no armed ship being allowed to remain more than 24 hours in a neutral port. During the night the ship's boat several times made the journey to shore with cables and messages.

25th Aug. The Armed Merchantman "Macedonia" came in. We left about 11 a.m. and remained in sight of the Island all night, cruising around. Increased speed late, the heat is terrific.

26th Aug. We are bound for the Cape, but the course is being changed continually. The stokehold crew are now on six hour watches and the utmost speed is being maintained. We are hoping to pick up our prize crew on the Gold Coast. Land sighted at sundown. The drilling of the ship's company is now incessant as it is very important that the men should have the utmost efficiency, as the crew is made up of all the various units from active service ratings, reserve men and the merchant service men. We are getting very little sleep, as we practice night and day and going to Action Stations has to be gone over again and again, so that in the event of meeting an enemy vessel of heavier weapons, we should have to rely on greater efficiency.

27th Aug. Received a wireless message from H.M.S. "Highflyer" stating that she had met and engaged the German Armed Cruiser "Kaiser Wilhelm de Grosse" and sunk her, the "Highflyer's" loss being one man killed and several injured. The German ship was coaling from three colliers when she was trapped, the colliers escaping to the southward during the engagement. The "Kaiser Wilhelm" can still be seen today, I believe, (1923) what is left of her off the coast of Rio d'Oro. A part of the crew got ashore and their fate remains a mystery, as the inhabitants of this part of the African coast are a particularly bloodthirsty lot of savages. Tomorrow Father Neptune comes aboard and all those who have never been over the line must pay homage.

28th Aug. Quiet day, much cooler. About 5.30 p.m. Father Neptune came aboard with his Court and read out his Proclamation. Tomorrow we shall have the shaving and ducking in full swing.

29th Aug. After breakfast we heard a very old custom of the British Navy as all hands were piped to "Skylark and Play", meaning that the day should be devoted to festivities. The whole idea of the Father Neptune sketch being to draw the men's attention off the war as much as possible. The strain of being continually centred on strict discipline making the men rather nervous.

At 9.30 Father Neptune held his "Court". A big bath was fixed up, the first to be tried was the Surgeon, then the Paymaster and so on. The fun was fast and furious, each "prisoner" being well lathered and then dumped into the bath. After about forty had been shaved one of the E.R.A.s objected to being initiated, and in the excitement drew a knife on the "policeman" and threatened to stab the first man who touched him. He was immediately arrested in earnest and placed in prison under a guard. The proceedings were then piped down. The whole affair caused the greatest amusement.

30th Aug. Muster and Church parade. Before Church the whole of the ship's company were assembled on the after well deck to hear the Captain read out the Articles of War. This is a very important proceeding as nearly all crimes are punishable with the death penalty.

31st Aug. The prisoner arrested on Neptune's day for threatening has been tried and let off with a caution. He was very lucky as he was liable to be shot, but allowance was made for his not being conversant with Naval discipline.

1st Sept. We are not going to St. Helena as thought. Are still going south, no-one seems to know where. Have not seen a ship since we left St. Vincent. Have just received by wireless account of English activities in Belgium and France of last week in August. Should not be surprised if we went to East Africa. At any rate we going to Simons Town. Our men are being drilled constantly.

2-4 Sept. Heavy sea running and weather much colder.

5th Sept. Passed Norwegian sailing ship during the afternoon. In the evening received orders to make all speed to Walfish bay. Are preparing to cover landing of troops from the Cape.

6th Sept. Altered course and shaped for Port Nolloth. Arrived there about 8 p.m. Military officers came on board. Troops landing all night. (About this time the South African rebellion broke out, under Gen. Byers and de Wet, and plans for the capture of German S.W. Africa had to be very much altered.)

7th Sept. Troops and horses landing all day. A notice posted up informs us that another expeditionary force is to land at Walfish Bay.

8th Sept. During the afternoon a Military officer came off from shore. Immediately a sailing vessel was sighted out at sea. We weighed anchor and gave chase, catching her up about 6 p.m. She hoisted the German flag so a projectile was fired across her bows. She failed to heave to, although great excitement was observed, so another was fired astern and we closed in to hailing distance. She then hove to and a boarding party was sent aboard. She proved to be the barque "Heinz" of Hamburg, 52 days out at

sea, and did not know that war was declared. A prize crew was put aboard and it was decided to take her in tow to Port Nolloth. The towing line broke several times, so the attempt was belayed until morning. We steamed back to Port Nolloth, landed the Military officer, who had made a forced passage with us, and then went back to our prize.

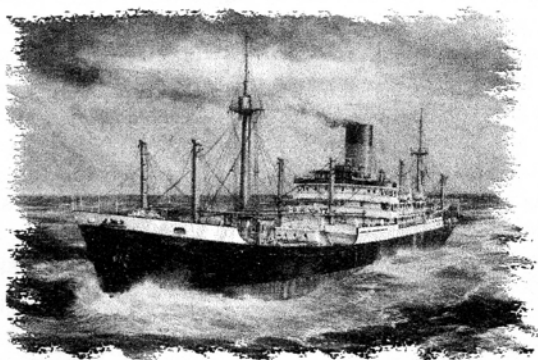
9th Sept. The crew of the "Heinz" had been troublesome during the night, so a stronger party was sent aboard and several Germans placed in irons. Made fast for towing again and about 3 p.m. proceeded to Simons Town. About 10.30 p.m. the towing hawser carried away, taking the capstan clean out of the deck and nearly unshipping the after gun. Made all fast again by 3 a.m. and proceeded on our course.

10th Sept. Ship rolling very heavily but no more trouble with the tow.

11th Sept. Arrived Simons Town at 5 p.m. Passed the Armed Merchant Cruiser "Armada Castle" just outside. She has not taken a prize or fired a shot whereas we have two prizes and have held up and examined over 20 other vessels on our way out. The Admiral of the Cape Squadron is very pleased with our eagerness and has sent off to congratulate the ship's company. We are to provision and coal.

To be continued

BOOK REVIEW



Blue Funnel's Alcinous in the Bay of Biscay

THE BRITISH MERCHANT NAVY Images & Experiences

I was very pleased to receive the above book in my Christmas stocking last year and thought that I might write about it. I was pipped to the post by John Clandillon-Baker, the editor of the PILOT magazine, in his January edition of, so with his kind permission I reproduce his excellent review here. Ed.

Most of us served on merchant ships in the 50s and 60s and these ships represented the last vessels to be built with a certain amount of elegance before aesthetic hull lines were sacrificed for specialisation into such monstrosities as car carriers! This book is dedicated to those years and will not fail to stimulate reminiscences of vessels, trades and companies. The 112 pages of this book contain 55 excellent paintings by marine artist Robert Lloyd depicting the vessels of 36 companies engaged on world wide trades. The accompanying text by Roy Fenton is interesting in that it not only describes the vessels depicted but also details their full life of trading along with personal accounts from seafarers who served on board. This text, on the facing page to the paintings, also contains photographs from John Clarkson's collection along with the house flags of the ships. A visual delight and a valuable record of the companies, ships and men from the golden age of the British Merchant Navy.

*Published by Ships in Focus, THE BRITISH MERCHANT NAVY, Images & Experiences costs £24 plus £3 p&p. Available from: J & M Clarkson, 18 Franklands, Longton, Preston. PR4 5PD.
Credit Card order: 01772 612855. On-line: sales@shipsinfocus.co.uk*

Don't forget; your Club is routinely open four days a week at lunch time. It serves sandwiches, snacks, salads or cooked meals. There is a cooked special each day and the price has recently only been £2.75. Don't forget that, when dining, a bottle of house wine can be bought for only £5 - a far cry from the usual hotel or restaurant prices. If you are in town at lunch time, Tuesday to Friday, Liz will be only too happy to serve you a drink and take your food orders.

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

The Club's address is:

The Southampton Master Mariners' Club,
The Southampton Seafarers' Centre,
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Editor: t.e.clark@which.net

Dates for your Diary

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| Sat | MAR | 8 | Curry Lunch |
| Fri | APR | 4 | Club Supper at George's Restaurant |
| Fri | APR | 11 | Skittles evening,
Southampton (Old) Bowling Club |
| Sat | APR | 26 | Curry Lunch |
| Tue | MAY | 6 | Tidworth Concert Garrison Theatre |
| Sat | MAY | 17 | Fish & Chip Supper & Quiz |
| Wed | MAY | 21 | Entertain Watch Ashore to Lunch |
| Fri | MAY | 30- | Weekend away in Paris |
| Mon | JUN | 2 | |
| Thu | JUN | 19 | Shipping Festival Service,
Winchester Cathedral |
| Sat | JUN | 28 | 75th Anniversary Dinner, RSYC |
| Sun | SEP | 6 | S.S.Shieldhall, Round Island Cruise |
| Sat | SEP | 20 | Curry Lunch |
| Fri | OCT | 3 | Autumn Dinner Dance, Botley |
| Tue | OCT | 28 | Tidworth- Last night of the Proms |
| Fri | NOV | 14 | Harpooners' Dinner |
| Wed | DEC | 3 | Christmas Lunch |
| Fri | DEC | 12 | Christmas Dinner |