

**Denis Gore**, who has gone aloft, joined the Club in 2001, aged 73. His was not a nautical career, other than as young man, as can be determined from the following, written by his friend Roy Martin.

Dennis' education ended abruptly at fourteen, when his school was relocated to Anglesey, because of the Liverpool blitz. He went for an interview at Alfred Holt's offices; where he was told that he had the job - as long as he turned up in long trousers. His main task was to take documents to the ships; though the female staff told him that it was more important that he joined any queue that he saw and they would buy any food that resulted. He was fascinated by the ships, particularly the high sided troopers, and resolved to go to sea. Holt's told him that he would not be accepted until he was fifteen and, because he did not have a School Certificate, they could not take him as a midshipman. However they offered to train him with the Middies. I haven't seen his discharge book, so I don't know which ship(s) he was on.

After a year there was a change; but he was offered a transfer to Port Line, on the same basis. With Port Line he made a number of trips to Australia, and was on one of the hazardous Malta convoys.

In April 1945 he was on the *Port Wyndham*, when she was attacked by a midget submarine. The badly damaged ship made Southampton, where it seems to have been under repair for the rest of the year. The war was over and the Thorneycroft workers were determined to stretch the job out. Towards the end of the refit he decided to look for a shore job; and started driving buses for Hants and Dorset, with the occasional run to London for Royal Blue. He was surprised to find that bus drivers earned more than merchant seamen, without any of the risks!

In 1946 his driving career was brought to a halt when the Shipping Office sent him a message to say that he, in common with hundreds of other merchant seamen, would be required to do two years National Service in the Army, unless he completed four years at sea. He hurriedly signed on a newly acquired Castle boat, an experience that he did not enjoy. Four years sea service entitled him to sit for a Second Mate's certificate. He studied at the School of Navigation, possibly when it was still at South Stoneham. But he failed the navigation paper, finding spherical trigonometry too much. So it was back to driving.

Later he made a move into insurance. After doing well at that, he was 'head hunted' by the solicitors Lamport Bassett; where he spent the rest of his working life.

Denis and his wife Mags, who predeceased him, liked to go cruising and Denis was a regular in the club room until last year.