

# ***The CACHALOT***

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB**

**No 73**

**September 2019**

## **Captain's Log**

Since my last jottings, I've been active at work, on holiday and representing the club at various events. The last of these is always a pleasure, with the opportunity of meeting a range of interesting people.

I attended the 797th Mayor Making Ceremony of the City of Southampton where Councillor Peter Baillie was elected Mayor for the year. He was proposed by his son, councillor James Baillie, who gave a heart felt speech proclaiming his bias towards the new mayor. I always wonder what kind of conversations went on around the meal table in their house. Was not sure what to expect of this event but it did not fail to keep me entertained. Music accompaniment was by piano and cello with a finery of robes and mayoral chains, I subsequently attended the Mayors "Courtesy Call" reception in the Mayors Reception Room. Both occasions were well attended by different organisations resulting in plenty of conversation, accompanied by an array of "tabnabs" and drinks.

As I mentioned in my last jottings. D Day 75 was looming. It was an extremely busy week in Portsmouth Harbour with a number of vessels involved in the commemorations. My first escort onboard HMS St Albans was for a Brittany ferry taking veterans and families to Normandy. There was a brisk wind blowing as we collected vessels representing the Dunkirk little ships and Historic little ships and a number of Royal Navy Patrol boats. As the flotilla headed out, we were required to maintain station behind some of the struggling vessels. A healthy send off. For the actual D Day event, again on St Albans, we were required to pass the VIP stand on Southsea Common at a particular time, to fire the guns, to mark the end of proceedings and the Queen finishing her speech. This would then signify the start of the flyover of up to 23 aircraft (the aircraft had a 10 minute window with fuel range). Timing was very crucial with out ETA for firing the guns passing Southsea War Memorial down to the last second. To complicate things even more, this timed arrival was a constantly moving point even up to the last minute. We succeeded, gun salute fired, fly over started with a spitfire and hurricane. I don't think the public realise how much effort goes into what just seems a natural progression of events, but they all seemed to enjoy the commemorations, including the Red Arrows putting in their amazing air show.

To continue with the D Day celebrations. I represented the Club at the Remembrance Parade at the Canadian War Memorial at Stokes Bay. Also attended by representatives from HMCS St. John's, the Canadian warship in Portsmouth, various dignitaries from the Canadian embassy and the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire. A very moving service.

Another major event in the Clubs calendar is the Shipping Festival Service at Winchester Cathedral. The weather gods were against us, but fortunately the cathedral was warm and dry. The Colour Party and Standard Bearers were volunteers from various bodies including the Warsash

Maritime Academy, the Royal Logistics Corps and Sea Cadets from the Southampton and Winchester Units. A slight variation in their seating arrangement meant they were more visible and involved in the service. Unfortunately, numbers attending this memorable event continue to fall, so you are all encouraged to put Thursday 11th June 2020 in your diaries for next years event. Drinks and nibbles were supplied and consumed at the West End of the Cathedral due to the inclement weather. A big thank you to all those who took the time to supply these tasty treats. The City of Southampton (Albion) Band provided the music for the service, and continued to entertain us during the serving of refreshments. I understand they enjoy playing in the Cathedral as the acoustics are amazing.

I had the pleasure of attending the 2019 Maritime Passing Out Dinner held at the Solent University. It was great to speak to our recently qualified maritime professionals. Many parents were there to soak up the prestige of the achievements of their children. Drive and passion were clearly evident, but unfortunately, the number looking for future employment was large. There must be some way we can assist these newly qualified officers find employment in their chosen careers. There must be a vast network they can plug into within the Club to further their career. Perhaps we can foster some kind of mentoring programme for them as do a number of other organisations. It would be a shame to see the enthusiasm of these individuals be curtailed before they have even begun due to a lack of job prospects.

GAFIRS, my chosen charity, have been very busy over the last few months with a number of call outs including four call outs in a 24 hour period during the heat wave in July. They also had their open day in July which, due to the glorious weather, was well attended, with the public being able to meet the people behind the blue lights and sirens. Various drills were practised, as "casualties" were rescued from the sea either by boat or helicopter and given medical treatment by the paramedics. Donations are always gratefully received, it costs £900 to kit out one member of the crew enabling them to continue saving lives on the Solent.

A final reminder for those interested in purchasing any of the club assets and memorabilia. The silent auction closes on August 31st.

A reminder that the club room is open on Thursday and Friday lunch times for anybody and everybody who wants a good catch up with like minded individuals.

Captain Rachel Dunn



## Boatsteerer's Locker

Fellow Cachalots

Since my last Blog we held our annual Shipping Festival Service in Winchester Cathedral in June and this year we tried a different route for the parade of flags and seating for the flag bearers in the Cathedral which worked out very well. Unfortunately this year, due to inclement weather, we held the post-service reception inside the Cathedral instead of outdoors. Once again the Winchester and Southampton Sea Cadet Units helped with the serving of the mouth watering canapés which were provided by the wives/partners of the Cachalots and enjoyed by all. Unfortunately this year no record was made of the donors so I couldn't send an individual 'thank you' note but must include a big THANK YOU to you all in this Blog, please accept my apologies. My thanks must go to Cachalots Paul Leece and Ian Thomson for their help in organising this event and to those Cachalots who acted as sidesmen etc. The Parade went off very well and our thanks must go to Cachalot Lt. (SCC) Julia Whorwood-Pugh who stepped back into the role of Parade Marshall after a number of years absence.

Two days after all this excitement we departed on a cruise for R & R to ease my shattered nerves. We started in Eire then Scotland, Faroes, Shetland, Orkney before returning to Eire and Guernsey. The weather was good and the seas calm my only complaint that three days before the end of the cruise we ran out of brown sauce for my cooked breakfast, I may add that on a cruise I only have a cooked breakfast on Thursdays and Sundays otherwise I go continental or vegetarian; at home its always cereals. I duly wrote a letter of complaint to the Lady Master but didn't receive a reply before disembarking. (In future I must add brown sauce to my grain mustard and gin packing list).

Dates for your Diary - the first of the proposed Thursday lunchtime Magic Lantern talks will be on Thursday 24th October at 12-30 by Past Captain Robin Plumley MBE on his 'Life at Sea' with another talk in the pipeline for Thursday 14th November by Barry Peck on 'Cable Ships'. (Your support is requested and ideas for future talks).

If you would like to give a talk on any nautical subject next year please make yourself known and don't be shy.

Memorabilia – the deadline for bids from members is 31st August, after which the items will be offered to an Auction House as we need to downsize our storage space to improve our finances. (Catalogue on Cachalot website).

I see that I'm down for the Club Autumn Buffet Supper as Speaker with the subject 'More reminiscences as British Consul Le Havre'. Sorry to disappoint you but I gave that talk in September 2015 and during the talk I apparently said "how I came to be in France is another story" which was duly noted by the Functions Committee. (I must have been suffering from alcohol, tankeritis, touch of the sun, mental disorder.)

Noted on Cruise ship that at each lifeboat station there was a 'Emergency Descent Device' box secured to handrails with adjacent small davit as per photo – what is in the sealed box and what is mode of operation ? Perhaps one of our knowledgeable Cachalots has the answer. (See page 5)

Finally the 2020 Sea Pie Supper will soon be upon us and at this Supper as an experiment we will not have the brass band.

Happy Holidays  
Ken Dagnall  
Boatsteerer

## From the Editor

Preparations are well in hand for the Trafalgar Dinner on the 25th October. All we need now, as ever, is you and your money.

The ticket price of £50 is set close to the break-even point taking into consideration the cost of the meal, the reception in the splendid lobby of South Western House and the entertainment after, which will again be provided by the Portsmouth Shantymen. Because the function is for charity, they have generously offered their services at a greatly reduced rate and our thanks to them for that.

The charity, as in the past two such events, is the Southampton Sea Cadets and the money is raised through a Prize Draw on the night. Attendees will be encouraged, by our Staff Captain and Chairman of the Southampton Unit, Andrew Moll, to make donations and submit their place card, which shows their name and ticket number, to the raffle drum.

There will be just one prize, a modern signalling device in the shape of the latest iPad thingy.

Such devices retail at around £400 and in 2017 we raised the necessary from generous contributions from a few select members who were unfortunate enough to be around the club room at the time. Last year it was donated by the ever generous Southampton Shipowners Association. This year, rather than test their generosity yet again, we intend to extend the call to all hands, particularly those who may be unable to attend the function. Any surplus raised will go to SSC on the night.

Contributions, great or small, can be made to the office by cheque (The Cachalots, SSC on the back) or by Bacs: Sort code 56-00-68 A/c no 0003769 ref SSC. All donations will be treated confidentially.

The reception, in the beautifully refurbished lobby of South Western House, will commence at 1900 and Cadets of the Southampton unit will form a guard of honour.

The Mayor, the Admiral of the Port Councillor Peter Baillie, will be received by the Captains at 1915 and after all hands are piped to dinner the Mayoral party will proceed to the top table, preceeded by the Silver Oar of Admiralty (see page 11) and the Mayor's Cadet carrying the Admiral's flag.

The menu will be:

*Creamy Butternut Squash Soup*  
*Roast Beef, Yorkshire Pudding and Trimmings*  
*Sticky Toffee Pudding*  
*Selection of Cheeses per table.*

The Captain will call upon Honorary Cachalot the Rev'd Reg Sweet RN to give the Grace and after the meal Commodore Richard Farrington CBE will propose the toast to the Immortal Memory of Nelson.

The Prize Draw will follow and the evening will end with shanties and songs led by the Portsmouth Shantymen.

This function is not exclusive to The Cachalots but open to other maritime organisations and businesses around the port, much like the Sea Pie Supper. Grand Café can accommodate up to 180 diners and last year we raised £2000 for the Southampton Sea Cadets Expansion Plan (see pages 12 & 13).

Tickets are available only through our office and an early indication of interest would be appreciated.

## Coffee & Cakes

(The home-made sort)

**Friday, 4th October**

**1100**

**In the downstairs room at the RBL Club**

All money raised will go to help the wonderful work done by

## Macmillan Cancer Support

and any donations will be gratefully received.

Tabnabs to taste - or take away



## Sea Pie Supper

**Friday 7th February 2020**

**St. Mary's Stadium**

Tickets go on sale, to members only,  
on a first come, first served basis

**Thursday 7th November**

**£53 for members, £65 for guests**

## Curry Lunch

**KUTI'S ROYAL PIER**

The last Curry Lunch for this year will be held at  
Kuti's again.

**Sat 9th November 1200 for 1230**

Price is **£17** each to include the gratuity.

Kuti's Brasserie at the Royal Pier has recently been  
awarded the prestigious 'Tiffin Cup' in an annual  
competition at the House of Commons.

This gives them a claim to be  
"Officially the Best Indian Restaurant in the UK"

See Kuti's award

Still great value but we can expect an increase in the  
price next year.

Friends and family welcome.  
Book through the office please.

Parking in Mayflower Park is currently  
£2 for 4 hours

# Admiral of the Port's Trafalgar Dinner

**At Grand Café**

**South Western House  
Southampton SO14 3AS**

**Friday 25th October 2019**

**1900 for 1930**

**Black Tie**

**Tickets £50 each**

**In Aid of the Southampton  
Sea Cadets**

## Christmas Lunch at the Medbar

**Saturday 7th December 1200  
for 1230**

Join the crowd at the Medbar in Oxford  
Street, where we will have exclusive  
use of the upstairs room and you will  
have the choice of starters, mains and  
desserts. This year they are including,  
just for our party, a traditional Turkey  
main dish with all the trimmings. A full  
menu will be circulated later and posted  
on our website.

All for **£23** per head, to include  
the gratuity.

A raffle will be held, proceeds to the  
Captain's Charity.  
Donations of prizes will be appreciated.



## At the Shipping Festival Service



Sea Cadets become acquainted with their allotted flags



Marshal of Parade, Cachalot Lt (SSC) Julia Pugh, instructs the Flag Parties inside the West Door



HM Lord-Lieutenant and Mrs Atkinson are escorted to the West Door by the SMMC Brolly Brigade



The Dean and Chapter receive the High Sheriff of Hampshire, Mrs Sarah Le May



The Procession prepares to move along the Nave, Captain Dunn and Captain Jordan RFA between the Virger and the Port Chaplains



The Marshal of Parade leads the Colour, Standard and Flag Parties



## Vexing Vexillology



Cachalots in the club room were somewhat bemused to see the flag (left) flying over the nearby Star Hotel recently. A distress signal from a desperate RNR officer locked in the bar perhaps? The Boatsteerer was intrigued enough to trot along to the Star and enquire about the strange hoist.

“Oh! Your the second person to enquire,” says the manageress. “We ordered a Union flag and that was what they sent us.”

The offending rag was still fluttering there a week later, signalling yet another disconnect between the Great British Public and their once proud maritime heritage.



## The happy sailor

**Lloyd's List Viewpoint 15 August 2019**

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

The "Seafarers' Happiness Index", conceived by Steven Jones and taken up by the Mission to Seafarers and the Shipowners' P&I Club is something we all ought to applaud, even though happiness is supposed to be a relative state of mind and somewhat personal. I can just about understand why, in its latest survey, it was found that seafarers on cruise ships and ferries are less happy than those on other types of vessel. I suppose you have to have a certain stoicism to cope with the unreasonable demands of passengers and the permanent urgency of a ferry crossing, which tends to lack a beginning and an end of the voyage.

It was interesting to see that people who worked on dredgers seemed to be the happiest of all. I once spent a few days on a sand sucker and it was a fascinating combination of precision navigation, high technology and bashing mud-smeared ironmongery with enormous hammers. There was a lot to be happy about. In addition, you are fairly unlikely to go deep sea, which might be thought of as an advantage, never being outside mobile phone range. I read some time ago that the Dutch dredging sector is the best paid and never has any trouble in finding recruits.

You might wonder whether it is altogether realistic to aggregate the individual responses of the happy or unhappy seafarers into industry sectors, as happiness is surely dependent upon life on an individual ship, and that lived by individuals. The happiness index itself is a useful gauge in general terms, although it seems to drill down into somewhat narrow segments, as to whether you have decent communications and get paid and relieved on time. The importance of the "ship-shore gulf", which seems as wide as ever, was emphasised and that isn't exactly revelatory.

Do people still talk about a "happy ship"? It is surely a factor of many things, such as the behaviour of the senior officers, whether shipmates actually get on with each other and the personality of individuals. Curiously, it didn't seem to have much to do with the age or condition of the ship, or the luxury or otherwise of the accommodation, although the skills of the cook contributed. There were plenty of instances of a ship's company thriving in adversity, which was once again a matter of personalities and, dare I mention it, a certain amount of leadership.

I can also see that present conditions can be quite challenging, with multi-national crewing and ridiculously small numbers of people rattling around in big ships. How do you ever make friends if you cannot communicate anything other than in "toolbox talks", helm orders or asking somebody in sign language to pass the salt in the messroom? Could you describe that as a happy existence, month in, month out? And if you never ever even get ashore, because shore leave is prohibited, or there is never any time, that won't make you a bundle of joy, either.

It would be interesting to see whether the happiness of those afloat is in fact any better or worse than that of people in other jobs. People in what we call the "caring professions", such as health workers, never seem to stop complaining. Indeed when my wife went to a medical specialist just last week he asked her specifically to complain on his behalf to the "useless" health trust he was working for. Teachers, airline staff, people in the retail trades, farmers, construction workers; you can make a long list and not meet anyone who seems happy with their lot. Maybe inherent unhappiness is just part of the human condition in our pressurised, modern life, ashore or afloat.

And while seafarers complain endlessly about the wretched people "in the office" and those ashore never understanding them and their needs, those in other jobs are in exactly the same boat, with their directors, employers, supervisors, and all those up their respective chains of command issuing unreasonable demands all the time. Those ashore who have to run, direct or superintend ships are human beings too, so we shouldn't be surprised if they look upon the employees afloat as a bit of a blooming nuisance sometimes.

Nobody in my working life, in my recollection, ever asked me if I was happy. It would have been a reason for great suspicion if they had. When I was at sea, if you had admitted such a thing, it would have been an excuse to reduce the feeding rate, wages or to make you work longer hours. You just could not imagine the old Lord Vestey, or Colonel Ropner or the dreaded Hogarth clan enquiring in such a manner of their employees. It was said of the former that when he was presented with a plan of his new ship by a designer, he struck out the "Officers' Lounge" and put a whole deck of junior officers into the space. "What do they want a lounge for?" he angrily asked the trembling naval architect. "They should be out on deck working, not lounging around!" I expect, despite their terrifying boss, you would have found happy people working for him. As I said, it is a relative term.

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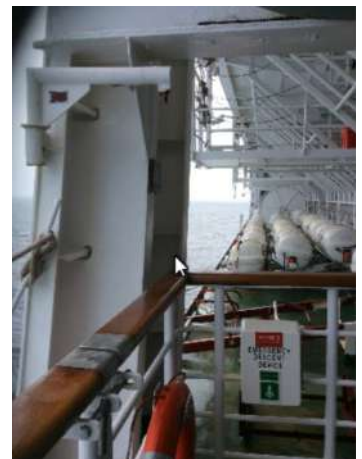
## Emergency Descent Device

*The photograph, right, shows the device mentioned in the Boatsteerer's Blog on page 2.*

*From what I can gather from the 'net, they are designed to facilitate escape from structures, rigs, aircraft on the ground etc, by trained personnel.*

*Having no experience of passenger vessels or such equipment I shall try and resist the temptation to speculate on their efficacy in an abandon ship scenario, perhaps from a listing, or even worse, rolling vessel. Perhaps some of our MCA or NI members might be able to elucidate.*

*Ed*



## Visit to Solent University Maritime Simulation Centre

With about three days' notice, our esteemed Boatsteerer, Ken Dagnall, indicated he was unable to join a visit to the and was I available and would like to go in his stead. Of course, says I.

Three days later on Monday July 29th, I arrived at the main entrance to Solent University, now home of Warsash Maritime Academy, to meet with Steve Pink and his team from Poole Maritime Volunteer Service (MVS). We were met by Lars Lippuner, Head of Commercial Operations for Warsash School of Maritime Science and Engineering and given a background and history of maritime simulation, including images of the original first simulator at Warsash. I recall them in wooden huts and the floor used to vibrate to simulate a ship!!!!

Following various questions and discussions, we were taken through the numerous suites now available.

The UK's largest and most sophisticated maritime simulation centre, situated at Solent University's main campus in Southampton, was officially opened by Sir Michael Bibby Bt., DL, President of the UK Chamber of Shipping, on Tuesday 21 May 2019, and is the UK's largest maritime simulation centre.

The new facility includes the latest equipment and software from Wärtsilä including:

- 8 full-mission navigational bridges
- Full mission engine room simulator
- Over 50-part task simulators
- Full-mission Dynamic Positioning (DP) simulator and 6 DP stations
- 4 multi-purpose desktop simulation classrooms
- 2 Electronic Chart Display Information System (ECDIS) suites
- On-shore and off-shore crane simulators
- Liquid cargo operations simulators (LICOS)
- High Voltage (HV) simulators
- GMDSS radio communications suites
- Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) suites
- 4 debriefing classrooms, with replay capability for effective debriefs
- All simulators and classrooms interconnected with 35,000m of data cable for joint exercises
- Virtual Shipyard to build digital twins of existing ships or ships under design/construction

The state-of-the-art centre will also offer the opportunity for several new specialist training courses, such as dynamic positioning, vessel traffic management and ice navigation.

Everything is networked for joint exercises between bridge and engine compartments, or ship and shore. The simulation centre also features hundreds of ship models, which will be used by cadets and maritime professionals alike.

Designed with the future in mind, the new centre also features a 'Virtual Shipyard', to test ships which are in the process of being designed, or to create digital twins of existing ships. This allows officers to train in a virtual environment that mirrors their own workplace, further enhancing the experience.

The 'Virtual Shipyard' will also be available for the undergraduate and postgraduate degree students on the University's yacht design and production courses. Students benefit from testing their designs in Solent's own 60m towing tank and within a virtually unlimited set of environmental parameters.

The centre will also play a pivotal role in the University's maritime research - from Sea Traffic Management to the machine execution of COLREGS, and further studies looking at navigational safety and the human-machine interface and operations.

Unfortunately, on the day, most of the bridge simulator units were being worked on with upgraded software although we did see the crane, HV and machinery space simulators in use.



360-degree marine simulator



Crane simulator



Machinery space simulator

Past Captain Robin Plumley MBE

## Army versus Navy

*This tale comes from Cachalot David Fisher, in response to my plea in the last edition for more copy.  
Thanks David, any more out there?*

Some time ago, 1980 in fact, I was in command of an Army Landing Craft Logistic which was alongside a Naval frigate at Faslane. The names of both ships will remain undisclosed to protect the innocent (if indeed there were any).

Late the night before we had arrived back at Faslane from our weekly sailing to St. Kilda to drop off more supplies to the Army base at that time stationed there. Trouble is we'd had a lot of fog on the return and I was therefore on the bridge a lot of the time and a bit 'diffy' of sleep (as we used to say).

We berthed late at night, and I 'crashed out' in my cabin. After what seemed like no time at all, but it was actually about breakfast time, my steward woke me up informing me that I had been invited to coffee at 1000 hrs on the frigate alongside.

'Just what I need', thought I.

'Oh well, better make myself look decent and put on my sports jacket and tie I suppose'. (The normal off duty clothes after a sailing were jeans and jumpers or indeed anything relaxing, so I considered this to be a real effort).

At 1000 precisely I strode onto the brow between the two vessels, but was immediately horrified to see 4 sailors standing to attention and lined up on their ship, waiting for me to be piped aboard. Two officers were with them, and worst of all, the Captain of the vessel, a Commander, with his full ceremonial uniform and what I presume was his ceremonial telescope was also standing smartly awaiting my arrival. Much piping and saluting followed. But being in 'civvies' I couldn't return any salute. 'B..... H...', I thought to myself.

There followed a very stiff, awkward and virtually silent meeting for coffee in the Captain's day cabin. The taste of the coffee matched that of the atmosphere. During coffee I was asked if I would move my ship off at 0545 the next morning because the frigate had to sail. (Of course I had no choice in this, and anyway 'Ops' had already told me. Was he thinking of things to talk about?)

Anyway, feeling caught out, and to make up for my obvious ignorance of Naval customs, I later invited 8 of their officers on board for lunchtime drinks. That event went swimmingly well, (the Frigate Captain wasn't there) and the officers were considerably less stuffy than their Captain. In return they invited myself and my officers onto their ship for dinner that night. That also went swimmingly well, and we ended up celebrating in their wardroom until a horribly late hour. (The Captain with the telescope was not there because you may know that on Naval ships, as I understand it, the Captain has to be invited into the wardroom by his officers, unlike on Army ships).

The night lengthened, but on RN ships (apparently) the bars must be closed by a certain specified time, whereas on Army ships there is no such rule and we rely on common sense. When their bar closed it seemed therefore a friendly gesture to invite the officers back to my ship for a night cap and/or coffee, or even tea and buttered toast. This I did, and the offer was gratefully accepted, with much disbelief that this was actually possible. Of course the subsequent conversations carried on until an even more unsubtle hour.

Eventually however we all turned in, having discussed in detail the oddities and surprises of each other's service.

Then, rather like the night before, the next thing that I was aware of was my First Lieutenant (chief officer equivalent) waking me up at 0545 asking me if I was going to take the ship out or should he?

'What time is it?' I asked.

'Five fourty five'.

'S.....' .

I leaped out of my bunk.

The first thing that came to hand were my old faded jeans, I put these on, with nothing underneath, then grabbed my naval issue duffle coat (made incidentally, the label said, in the same year that I was born, 1944) to go over my bare chest, stepped into my suede desert boots, and grabbed my army side hat.

I was on monkey island in seconds. (We normally conned the ships from there because of better astern visibility and the twitchy nature of the flat bottomed shallow draft vessels). Our monkey island was exactly level with the frigates bridge. Unfortunately. For on the frigate's bridge who should be staring at me in disbelief but the Commander, the Captain of the frigate. A very strange look on his face. Can you imagine how I felt?

Then I spotted something even worse. Two of my crew were walking around on the frigate's bridge offering sandwiches on silver platters to their incredibly large bridge party. WOW. And in today's terminology - OMG.

I gestured for them to return, and, well trained, they quickly scrambled back aboard my ship, no brow, and we let go.

I held onto the after spring and got the bow out as quickly as possible using the useful torque of the twin screws on a relatively beamy shallow draft vessel. (No bow thrust).

Then immediately ordered full ahead, a bit of a surprise for the engine room and not normal procedure, but then these were not normal circumstances. We left in an impressive cloud of dirty black engine exhaust from the funnel and lots of foamy white water slamming into the frigate's side.

I gave a little wave as we left, but as far as I can remember got nothing back from the Commander who still seemed to be staring. About 15 mins later and from a safe distance, I watched his ship depart, and then berthed back alongside where he had been, and went back to my bunk for a bit more rest.

After all, it had all been a very stressful experience.





## A Shipyard Apprenticeship Part Four

### Hope Ferguson, and McIvor, and examinations

*The concluding part of Cachalot Eddie Hunter's memoirs of his electrical apprenticeship in the Belfast yard of Harland and Wolff*

#### Hope

At the beginning of my Fourth Year, I found myself working in Hope Ferguson's squad again, on one of the Union Castle ships, she could have been the *Dunbar Castle*, I can't quite remember. But I do remember the back-breaking job of helping an electrician to heave out and clip up a run of thick, heavy mains cables along an alleyway. And, given my reputation, I was closely watched by Hope and could not slide off. . . I also remember thanking my lucky stars that she was a DC ship and there were only two of the damned cables.

When installing main and sub-main cables - the first job was to fix a run of heavy duty cable tray to sturdy brackets welded to the deckhead. The next job was manhandle two wooden cable drums through the ship to the alleyway and set them up on drum jacks. Next job was to haul the cables off the drums and drag them down the alleyway, usually that was carried out mob-handed. Today the same cables would be pulled out by a winch, run along the top of the tray, and held by plastic cable ties, but not so then - the cables had to be heaved up and tied at intervals to the underside of the tray using lengths of heavy brown rope previously draped in place. Then the cables were affixed to the tray every nine inches using specially-made heavy-duty brass cable clips bolted through the tray. Dull, brutal, heavy work. Yes?

One Friday, when we were only about half-way along the alleyway and still only at the stage of tying the cables in place, the electrician didn't turn up for work. It transpired that he had done his back in at home that morning - tying his bootlaces!

Well, being an enterprising young lad, and not to be beaten, I gave the problem a good coat of looking at, then a dose of thinking about before deciding that, yes, I *could do* the job by myself.

I found some empty cable drums, rolled them into place under the tray and turned them on their . sides to give myself a working platform. I then commenced to heave one of the cables across my shoulder and pushed it up to the tray. Supporting the cable and tying reef knots to hold it ready for the clips was real donkey work, but this donkey was managing bravely. Or so I thought.

I had managed about ten feet with one cable by ten o'clock when the great Hope came along. He stood watching for several minutes, while I fought and struggled. Presently, he put his head to one side, summoned my attention with a "come 'ere" flapping hand gesture and said, with a lift of his chin, "Son, you'd better go to night school - you'll never make a bloody electrician!"

Sarcastic bugger.

And I was convinced I was doing so well, showing determination, initiative, and ingenuity. Just doesn't pay to be enterprising, does it?

That evening at close of play, I received a transfer order with my pay packet. It told me to report for work in the Electrical Test House on Monday morning.

I next saw Hope some four years later, just before I left the Company and went off to sea.

By then I had finished my apprenticeship, and he came across me one morning on a recently completed ship. I had a roll of draft "as fitted" drawings under my arm, and I was wearing a collar and tie and the Draughtsman's ship-visiting attire - a pristine white boilersuit.

Hope stopped, and looked me for a few moments, not a flicker of recognition, then the head went to one side, he leaned slightly towards me and he said, "I see you took my bloody advice."

Definitely a sarcastic bugger . . . Good memory, though.

#### That weasel McIvor. and Examinations

By about the middle of my third year, there was a marked decline in the number of boards taken by managers in connection with tea boiling episodes on the ships under construction. The Pope, the Brown Bomber and the others congratulated themselves on the ultimate success of their sustained anti- tea-boiling campaign. I don't think they ever discovered the truth, which is that Frank Mac and I had solved the tea-boiling problem using technology, and our solution spread throughout the workforce quicker than bad news.

For the benefit of anyone who has never visited a shipyard, - ships under construction were lit internally by temporary lights strung along the alleyways and extending into the various void spaces, cabins, etc, like ugly industrial fairy lights in stout wire cages. In the Belfast shipyard, the voltage of these temporary lights was 110 volts DC which came from numerous substations containing motor-driven generators. The distribution system was crude but effective.



Tired of the Tom and Jerry antics that took place at least twice a day, and the resentment of the resulting waste of time, Frank and I experimented in a laboratory at the technical college and perfected the design of a crude but effective immersion heater which could be plugged in to the temporary light wiring. The immersion heater consisted simply of a calculated length of Eureka (resistance) wire which replaced a lamp-holder.

In place of the usual Ohm's Law, the  $I^2 R$  rule applies to the design calculations - I can't make this machine insert powers! But I'm working on it... Wait... Yes, I can, I've just done it.

The method of using the immersion heater was as crude as the device itself - it was simply dipped in a tea-can containing cold water then plugged in to the temporary lighting wiring. The water boiled in seconds!

But - there's always a but - there were two principle difficulties arising from the use of our crude elementary immersion heaters.

- 1) As the element was bare, the body of the tin can was alive at 110 volts - and 110 packs quite a nasty punch. Not good.
- 2) The live can was resting on the steel deck! Dead earth! Also not good...

The solutions, however, were simple...

- 1) Avoid touching the can when the element was in action... Hence no nasty electric shocks.
- 2) Stand the can on a piece of dry timber... End of earthing problem.

Actually, there was a third problem. The inrush current when the immersion heater was plugged in resulted in localised dimming of the temporary lights, which could betray whereabouts of these illegal devices. There was no solution for that...

As word of the technology spread throughout the workforce, there were soon numerous very poorly-designed immersion heaters, some of which blew the fuses of the temporary light circuits. This resulted in a second game of cat and mouse, this time between the immersion heaters users and the temporary light electricians whose workload had suddenly increased enormously!

Now, all that might seem quite irrelevant to examinations, but not so. Not so at all.

As it was no longer necessary spend time dodging managers and foremen and boiling cans of water on riveters' fires, and there was only water collection to worry about, Frank Mac and I were able to spend most of each lunch break studying together.

(Statistically, we found it much more effective for three of us to study together. When two were studying together and calculation results differed, it was necessary to go over the work again, but when three studied together we often got two answers agreeing if not all three. It was only if we got three differing answers that it was necessary to redo the work. We also found that groups of three were ideal, much better than four or more, which came as a bit of a surprise. Perhaps because four or more became a committee.)

We prepared for the examinations endlessly, allowing ourselves only one evening a week free of study. We studied every Saturday and all day Sunday in one home or another, starting at 9 AM and working through with only meal breaks until, exhausted and irritable, we gave up at 9:30 PM sometimes later. (I always made time for the hospital Cub Pack, which annoyed the others.)

We spent Bank Holidays studying. In all this we were immensely grateful for the never-failing encouragement and active practical support of our parents and families.

We obtained as many past examination papers as possible from the college libraries, going back as much as twenty and more years, and we worked through these endlessly again and again until we could do calculations in 12 minutes or less. The allocated time for each question in the examination room was 30 minutes. Three hours, eleven questions, chose six.

Assisted by the college lecturers, we analysed the examination papers and we picked out the "bankers" - question types that we could (almost) rely upon appearing year after year. Some of the bankers were bound to turn up. It wasn't really education, just cramming, but it was effective.

One regular banker was a question about measuring bridges and the conditions for balance thereof. A typical bridge question would read "draw the circuit diagram and deduce the conditions for balance for a Wheatstone Bridge (or a Maxwell Bridge, or a Wien, or a Sheering Bridge.)" Occasionally, just to be awkward, the examiners would slip in an invented bridge of their own, but the principles are identical. The trick was to memorise the circuit diagram and the balance formula for each of the standard bridges and apply the basic theory if a non-standard bridge appeared. Just took a bit longer, that was all.

On the evening of the examination we filed into the room and chose our places to sit. I avoided sitting near Potter and went towards the back of the room. Frank Mac was across the aisle to my right. McIvor was across the aisle to my left.

As usual, blank answer books, each topped by a square of white blotting paper, had already been set out on the small single desks.

As usual, many students were frowning over their notebooks to the very last moment before the invigilators insisted that all books be placed on the floor.

The usual instruction from the senior invigilator, "No names on any paper. Write your entry number in the top right hand corner of each page. Hold your hand up if you want more paper. Remember to write your number on... .. No conferring. No referring to notes or text books. No smoking. No ... ..Three hours, eleven questions, choose any six, any order."

You have all been there. You're familiar with the tension, the sweaty hands, the dry mouth.

"You will be given eleven minutes to read the questions." - the usual torture routine.

According to the established pattern, it was the turn of the Wheatstone Bridge to appear on the examination paper. McIvor was furtively writing something in pencil on one side of his square of blotting paper, copying from his notebook. I leaned closer. He was hastily copying out the conditions for balance of the Wheatstone Bridge. I was instantly and irrationally enraged!

"You bastard," I thought. "I'm going to fail, and you're going to pass - by cheating." I was so infuriated and worked up I was tempted to call an invigilator.

"Right, gentlemen, all books and notes face down on the floor under your desks."

The last minute crammers obeyed, sat back, closed eyes in wishful resignation, tried to remember. The examination papers were distributed, face down, as all the while I seethed with anger. The invigilators returned to the front. The senior invigilator coughed to clear his throat. "Eleven minutes. You may read..." Sixty or so papers were snatched and turned over.

Questions one and two were lengthy and descriptive. Tackle those only if desperate. Look for the calculation ques ...

Question three read, "State the principal use of, draw the circuit diagram and deduce the conditions for balance for either the Maxwell, or the Sheering, or the Wien Bridge."

I glanced over at the perspiring twitching white face to my left and nearly choked suppressing my laughter. McIvor couldn't even cheat properly.

Potter passed, naturally.

Frank Mac passed.

I passed.

McIvor? He wasn't with us in the next year ... and he never caught up.

Eddie Hunter

*This article has previously appeared in the Official Organ of the Seven Seas Club.*

## New Members

**M. Forkanul Quader** is a Master Mariner with an MSc in Maritime Education and Training and recently retired from the MCA after sixteen years service with them. He spent 17 years at sea rising from cadet to master before coming ashore as a surveyor in 1988 and serving as the principal of a seamen's training centre. In 1994 he joined the Malaysian Maritime Academy as a lecturer and went on to become the Head of Pre Sea (Nautical) in 1997. He came to the UK in 1999 to take up a teaching career at Blackpool & the Fylde College.

Forkanul joined the MCA in 2003 as one of the Examiners of Masters and Mates in the Training and Certification Branch before moving to the Navigation Safety Branch and taking up the post of Port Liaison Policy Manager in 2017. He regularly represented the MCA at the IMO and at other forums and enjoyed public speaking on Port Marine Safety, Maritime Education and Training.

He lives locally and is the current Vice Chairman of the Nautical Institute Solent Branch.

**John Prince** is Training Manager at Bachmann Training and was born and still lives locally. He started his career in electrical engineering as an apprentice with Vosper Thornycroft and in 1979, after applying for a job within BT's workshops in Southampton, 'found' himself in the position as an Electrical Engineer, Cableship Officer aboard *C.S. Alert*. Thus started a ten year career afloat and John has written a short book, "The Engine Room", about his experiences both onboard and ashore. It is an enjoyable read and John has placed some copies in the club room which are yours for a £5 donation to the Captain's Charity (GAFIRS).

**Tom Dynes** is Operations Director at Solent Stevedores and has a Bsc Honors degree (first class) in Oceanography. He is a keen dinghy sailor and previously worked as a RYA Senior Instructor.



## Mr. Mayor, the Admiral of the Port

Since the inception of the Sea Pie Supper the Mayor of Southampton has been our guest at the Top Table and, invariably, his badge of maritime jurisdiction, in the shape of a silver oar, has been laid out in front of him - or nearby.

WHY, I wondered does OUR Mayor have such a Badge of Office and why does he carry the additional title Admiral of the Port ?

Few, if any, of us will remember a "picturesque and interesting" ceremony enacted in the port on September 12th 1951 when the Mayor and Corporation sailed around the port, visiting the ancient boundaries - with the silver Oar of Admiralty occupying pride of place in the wheelhouse of the Southampton Harbour Board patrol launch. This unique occasion was to mark the 500th. anniversary of the title Admiral of the Port being bestowed on the Mayor by the King, Henry the Sixth, and the presentation of that Badge of Office.

These honours were bestowed to acknowledge the tremendous contribution the port had made to the country by "the eminence it had attained in overseas trade" and his "Admiralty Jurisdiction" extended from Hurst Castle in the West to Langstone on the East - and included Portsmouth. The inclusion of Portsmouth will surprise many but, in those days, it was small and made little contribution to trade or defence. In fact, the tiny fishing village of Hamble made a greater contribution to the king's service, in terms of ships and mariners than did Portsmouth !

At the ceremony in 1951, as in 1451, Hamble presented the Mayor with a crab whilst Redbridge, at the mouth of the Test, offered him a salmon - a fish that once abounded in its waters. These gifts were a recognition of the Mayor's powers as Admiral of the Port; he controlled all fishing rights and issued licences to those desirous of fishing in his waters. He also maintained a Court of Admiralty supported by a prison to accommodate those who broke his laws.

It is unsurprising that not everyone locally recognised the Mayor's powers and when, in 1684, a Dutchman - laden with wine - foundered on Calshot Spit - and the Mayor, his burgesses and customs officers hastened to the scene, there was a clash with some men sent by the Governor of the Isle of Wight who claimed to be Admiral of that part of the Solent. The Mayor of Southampton was summoned to appear before the King and Council in January 1685 which resulted in the curtailment of some of his powers, but it was not until 1835 that all of his admiralty powers were removed

The trade at the port (which gave rise to the honours being bestowed) is attributed to the prosperity of that with The Levant ports which once used Calais but who now found Southampton to be closer and more efficient. The port soon became the centre of all the Levant trade - in and out.

Wool was the principal export but, in later years, when Henry the Eighth prohibited its export that trade fell away to such an extent that, in 1598, Southampton was classed a "decayed town" - similar to Newcastle and Hull - and only its trade with the Channel Islands prevented its total eclipse - but this at the expense of Poole.

Happily, for the area, the New Forest provided an abundant supply of quality timber for shipbuilding. The town had already built the "Grace Dieu" and "Holy Ghost" for Henry the Fifth and, by the end of the 18th. Century, frigates and merchant vessels had been built at Northam and Buckler's Hard on the Beaulieu River turned out no fewer than 21 "ships of the line".

The Port of Southampton has many natural advantages in addition to its proximity to the trade routes of the Globe. Besides its "Double Tide" with the second High Water occurring about two hours after the first, the "Young Flood" a tidal stand of between five and six feet meant that it could accommodate the largest vessels afloat. Unhappily, it did not have any docks - merely wooden wharves - but, in 1803 a celebrated engineer embarked on a project to construct docks, thus enabling the "decayed" port to re-enter the world of ocean trade once again. BUT ...that is another story.

CRK 1/8/19

(With acknowledgements to "The Nautical Magazine" 1952.)

*The Silver Oar of Admiralty can be seen in the picture, right, taken at the Shipping Festival Service.*

*It is being carried by the Town Sergeant, preceding the Mayor.*

*The role of the Town Sergeant outdates even that of the Admiral of the Port, being first recorded in 1447.*

*The oar was displayed at our Trafalgar Dinner at St. Mary's stadium in 2017 where we described it thus:*

*The Silver Oar is the cherished badge of maritime jurisdiction of the mayor and is symbolic of rule over the seas.*

*It is hallmarked, "London 1707-08", and inscribed with the Town Arms and the Town Rebus (symbol).*

*Sir Henry Englefield, in his 'A Walk through Southampton' (1801) described it as "modern and not handsome".*



*So, not the original perhaps, or maybe the original oar essayed in 1708.*

*We expect that the Mayor will be attended by the Town Sergeant bearing the Oar of Admiralty at the Trafalgar Dinner at Grand Café on the 25<sup>th</sup> October.*

## Update on Southampton Sea Cadets' Expansion Project

Over the last few years, Southampton Sea Cadets has benefitted enormously from funds raised by the Southampton Master Mariners and, as our current expansion project draws to a close, it has been (politely) suggested that I write a piece for the newsletter to tell fellow Cachalots what has been going on. In the following article I have tried to tell the story and have mentioned many of the organisations who helped us to give some sense of the immense levels of support we have received. Without them, this project would have been impossible.

As a quick primer on the background, Southampton Sea Cadets moved to its current location on Vespasian Road in 1996 when the Unit was displaced from Southampton docks following the closure of the Royal Naval Reserve unit HMS WESSEX. After much searching, the cadets took over a derelict boathouse, which was then refurbished for their use. In many ways the new building was ideal as it fronted the River Itchen and had a slipway suitable for launching dinghies and canoes. There were, however, some downsides. The larger boats had to be kept at a nearby marina, so the cadets had to hike down the road with anchors and oars every time they wanted to get afloat. More importantly, the boathouse was quite small, which limited the Unit to a maximum capacity of 40 cadets.

The immediate objective was to make boating easier by installing pontoons. This was achieved early in 2014, and Cllr Ivan White, the then Mayor of Southampton, cut the ribbon to officially open the facility on 12 April that year (*right*). With the Unit's power boats now immediately accessible, the next obvious step was to seek Royal Yachting Association (RYA) accreditation as a Recognised Training Centre (RTC). The Unit became an RTC in 2015, which allowed it to award cadets with RYA recognised powerboat qualifications, and accreditation has been renewed each year.

It was at this point that we realised there was a great deal of support and affection for the Sea Cadets in Southampton; and with this support through donations, grants and discounted or pro bono work even expensive projects were within the reach of a small charity such as ours. Buoyed up with success, we decided to tackle the expansion project.



While in the docks, in its heyday, the Unit's strength was somewhere north of 150, so it was a reasonable assumption that if the Unit were bigger there would be local youngsters keen to join. A suitable plot of land on which to expand was adjacent to the Unit, and it was, effectively, derelict (*left*). However, the plot had been earmarked for housing and was subject to a planning restriction that prevented its use for other purposes. Knowing that the plot was liable to flood if a storm surge coincided with a Spring Tide high water, it seemed unlikely that anyone would be building houses there anytime soon, so we decided to try and secure it for the Sea Cadets. We approached our local Councillors and explained our aspirations, and their view was that, provided we could secure the plot, the planning restriction could be lifted.

It took two years of hard bargaining to secure a lease on the plot for use by Southampton Sea Cadets. Much credit is due to Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP who, through the LawWorks scheme that provides pro bono legal advice for small charities, helped steer us through the process of leasing the land from The Swathling Housing Society and having the planning restriction lifted. Our only costs were for searches and registration charges, and Swathling's legal costs, though the peppercorn rent we secured for a 10-year lease made this latter expense a reasonable bargain.

We signed the lease on 43-45 Vespasian Road in May 2017, and the hard work of fund-raising began in earnest. We were very grateful when Cllr Les Harris chose Southampton Sea Cadets as one of his charities for his year in office as Mayor of Southampton. This act of faith provided a much-needed profile for the expansion project, and during Cllr Harris's term as Mayor our war chest started to grow, and local organisations and companies began to take an interest in our project.

We knew we wanted to increase the Unit's capacity from 40 to roughly 80 cadets, and the most important element of the project was more teaching space so we could ease the pressure on the boathouse. We would not be building permanent structures as our lease was just 10 years, so we were looking for temporary office / classroom options that would provide three to four teaching spaces, each for groups of 10-12 cadets. To complicate matters, the new buildings needed to be raised one metre above ground level to keep them above any flood water.

So began a torturous 12 months, as each possible solution required its own foundation design, and separate planning approval. Further, we were caught in loop as we were reliant on second-hand buildings coming on the market but could not purchase anything until we were able to install it. With even basic planning approval taking 8 weeks, anything of interest was being snapped up before we could move, and so our only option appeared to be to purchase new. At this stage, self-build log cabins nearly became the solution of choice.

Again, fortune smiled on us, and the project was able to move forward. Elliot's, a Midlands company that supplies site buildings was turning over its stock, and offered us a 17m x 8m temporary office block for just a few thousand pounds (if new £90,000); ABP agreed to store it in the docks for a few weeks while we secured final planning approval; and one of Keir Construction's site foremen came up with a simple foundation solution.

So, all good? No quite, although some good progress had been made. By now, Keir Construction and CEMEX had cleared the undergrowth, trees and rubbish from the site, and Haywards Fencing had erected palisade security fencing along two boundaries. To obtain planning approval, we agreed to split the application process in two, with Phase One being the installation of the concrete pads that would support the building; and Phase Two the installation of the temporary building itself. Weeks passed as we worked to meet the Council Planning department's conditions, during which our contractors did their best to remain flexible.

Eventually we had Phase One planning approval in hand, and on 8 April, with Council archaeologists in attendance,



PT Contractors started digging the first holes for the foundation pads (*right*). Our friends CEMEX gave us ‘mate’s rates’ on the concrete, and 10 days later the pads were ready to receive the building.

By May, the pressure was on us to complete. We had already used up 2 of our 10 years of lease, and our temporary building was becoming a problem for the port. We bombarded the Council Planners with e-mails and telephone calls, Councillors waded in on our behalf, and we moved to Phase 2. With ABP craneage in the port and William’s Shipping providing the transport, the six separate sections of our temporary building were moved to Vespasian Road where they were craned into positions and assembled by ANR Site Services (*below left*).



Edinburgh award scheme expeditions to be undertaken afloat. After all – this is the Sea Cadets!

Throughout this article, I have attempted to name the local firms that have provided practical assistance, often for little or no money. Nonetheless, money was required, and our sincere thanks also go to the Cachalots, Southampton Shipowners Association; the Connaught Trust, the Marine Society and Sea Cadets, Williams Shipping, and a host of private donors for their gifts and grants that enabled to make this project a reality. (*above right*) Thank you.

Andrew Moll, Chairman of Trustees, Southampton Sea Cadets.



## Guidelines for Collecting Maritime Evidence Volume 2 (GCME v2)

Many Cachalot readers will be familiar with the series of The Nautical Institute publications that dealt with the Master’s Role in Collecting Evidence and The Mariners’ Role in Collecting Evidence; the brainchild of Dr Phil Anderson. In 2016 a publication entitled *Guidelines for Collecting Maritime Evidence* was issued and it has sold over 12,000 copies; where surplus funds went into The Nautical Institute’s education initiatives. The *Guidelines for Collecting Maritime Evidence Volume 2* is due to be published on 9th September, with a second launch in Southampton at The Sailors Society premises in East Street in mid - October (date to be confirmed).

It was agreed that a follow up publication would be issued under the GCME umbrella. The initial GCME book dealt with the role of those who might be among the first to attend an incident, or casualty dealing with evidential matters. Contributors included maritime lawyers, arbitrators, marine surveyors, P & I claim executives, brokers, state accident investigators (MAIB) and insurance interests. In other words those people, who were not crew, but acted as first tier responders, whose task was to collect the evidence that would be required to assist in claim resolution. If there was a gap in the GCME volume, it fell into the fields of electronic evidence. Since the 2016 edition was published considerable advances have been made in collecting and interpreting evidence based on electronic data, for example ECDIS.

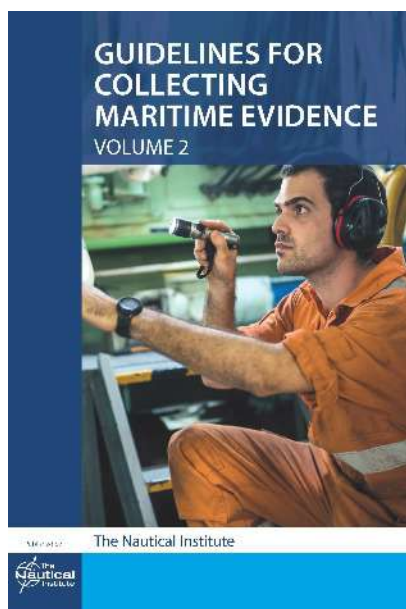
### GCME Volume 2

The intention of Volume 2 is to take claim resolution factors further into the need for “expert” collection and analysis of data of a more scientific nature that would further assist in post incident claim settlement. Contributors include fire experts, food scientists, naval architects, marine engineers, senior P & I executives and those with skills in analysing the electronic evidence arising following an incident. There is also input from the enforcers (Jerry Smart, now retired) and the judiciary as well.

The GCME Vol 2 should provide a good follow up to the initial publication and the readership will be as wide; offering more detailed background into what happens following an incident and how specialist evidence is gained and used.

Past Captain John Noble has undertaken the joint responsibility of undertaking Technical Editor ably assisted by Jack Hatcher, a former mariner and P & I executive and who is currently a senior solicitor in the marine field, with experience in handling “electronic” evidence.

Readers of the Cachalot will find this volume very interesting, even captivating and members of the Cachalots will be invited to the Southampton launch.



## Gone Aloft

### Captain Alaric J. Corner

Past Captain "Larry" Corner was born in 1925 and, in the dark days of 1942 when UK shipping losses were at their peak, he joined his first ship as an Apprentice. The "*Fort Abitiri*" was operated by Smith Hogg & Co. of Hartlepool on behalf of The Ministry of War Transport and he served on her until 1945 earning awards of The Atlantic Star, Burma Star and Italy Star.

His career then followed the traditional path and he served as a certificated Officer with Ropners, Australian Shipping Board and Furness Withy before culminating his educational career by achieving "Extra Master" in 1955.

In 1956 he joined the Bowater Steamship Company and, in 1957 was appointed to Command - reputedly, the youngest person ever to Command a Bowater vessel.

In 1960, Larry joined the Department of Transport as a Marine Surveyor subsequently serving as an Examiner and Ship Surveyor. He was a specialist in Marine Pollution Control and, as such, safeguarded United Kingdom interests following the "Amoco Cadiz" incident in 1978. His impressive career reached its peak in when he was promoted to Chief Surveyor – a post he held until his retirement in 1987.

I first met Larry in 1967 when I was posted to Southampton as A Marine Superintendent and he was one of the BOT Surveyors locally. I, too, had commanded a Bowater vessel (when that company merged with B&C) so we had a common interest. Traditionally, we both attended the weekly Fire & Emergency Drill on the pre-sailing day of the Union-Castle mailship and this was preceded by luncheon. Invariably these were jolly affairs and the laughter from our table - usually generated by Larry's reminiscences – could be heard throughout the Saloon !

He became a Cachalot in 1969 and served as Captain of the Club in 1977 having been a member of several Committees. Thereafter, he remained a regular and popular attendee -often accompanied by his late wife, Marjorie, who pre-deceased him -until ill-health deprived us of his welcome company. He was – and still IS - GREATLY missed.

Crk 3.8.19



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### Captain Paul John Moodie

Paul Moodie was born in Australia on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1949, and lived there until he went to sea at the age of 17 with Blue Star Line. His cadet training and all his certificates were studied at Warsash School of Navigation. He later served with Hudson Steamship Company and North Sea rig supply vessels before finally joining the then Post Office Marine Division on 11th December 1980 as a Navigating Officer on *CS Iris*. He was part of the relief crew for *CS Iris* during her service in the South Atlantic in 1982 following the end of hostilities. He remained with the cable ships through the company name changes which became Global Marine Services Ltd, serving in all ranks until being promoted to Master on 21st June 1999, once again on *CS Iris*.

Eventually the heart condition he had contracted some years before forced him to take early retirement from seagoing, whereupon he joined ABP as a VTS officer. When full retirement came he spent some time doing charity work for the Fire Fighters and the Southampton branch of the Mission to Seafarers, and for several years was an usher at the Shipping Festival Service.

Paul's long standing heart condition became serious in May and he spent a number of weeks in the Queen Alexandra Hospital before being moved to the Countess Mountbatten Hospice where he went aloft during the evening of Thursday 18th July.

Paul was an excellent ship handler and was liked and respected in all ranks as well as being a good shipmate. He was always cheerful with an enormous collection of jokes, and could be guaranteed to raise a laugh at any time. He will be greatly missed.

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### Mrs Mary Juelsdorf

Mary was the widow of past Cachalot Hans Juelsdorf, who went aloft in 2005. They were regulars in the Club and attended most of the functions and trips. Seen here with Hans and his fellow Dane, Post Captain Pedersen and wife Susanne, at our Dinner & Dance held at Botley in 2003.

Mary attained her centenary in January and passed away on 14th July.

Hans's obituary can be found at [URL: http://www.cachalots.org.uk/cachalots-deck/gone-aloft-2/](http://www.cachalots.org.uk/cachalots-deck/gone-aloft-2/)





## Towards the self-parking ship

**Lloyd's List Viewpoint 25 July 2019**

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

We are told that in addition to the compulsive summer viewing of Wimbledon and the cricket World Cup final earlier this month, thousands enjoyed the Facebook film of the unfortunate contest between the port bow flare of the container ship *Soul of Luck* and the ship loading crane in the Javanese port of Semarang. It was, as all these crane strikes are, an unequal contest, the ship winning by a knockout, leaving the crane a tangled mass of expensive wreckage, fit only for the scrapyard. The sound effects were terrific, although I would have welcomed sub-titles in order to comprehend the urgent shouts of the bystanders.

URL: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=54&v=ktFIMvo8xAI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=54&v=ktFIMvo8xAI)

There seem to be rather too many of these so-called “allisions” in the confines of ports these days, although if you are in the replacement crane business, life must be good. I used to assiduously watch all of the video footage of ships crashing into quays, knocking down cranes and demolishing shiploaders, colliding with berthed vessels, terrifying folk in Venice as an alternative to frightening diners alongside the Bosphorus. But today there is such a wide choice that I have become quite selective in my viewing and tend to be influenced by the critics.

Frankly, you can rage all you like and threaten hapless shipmasters and pilots with criminal sanctions for the destruction of port assets, but it is difficult to know how the situation is going to get any better. The design of ships with great bow (and stern) flares, to facilitate bigger deck loads, is not likely to change. If you shift the crane rails so that the equipment is out of danger, then the crane jibs don't reach the far side of the ship. The cranes are already so high that in some ports, such as Savannah, there are complaints from the local aviation authorities.

They used to trundle the cranes down the quay out of harm's way but that means stopping loading in adjacent berths and we can't have that. All they do is prudently get the drivers out of their cabs until the ship is securely alongside and keep everyone else well clear. They probably also regularly check that their insurance is up to date. The situation isn't helped by all parties - owners, charterers, terminals and port authorities - yelling at the pilots and ships' people to hurry up and get ships in and out of port faster; turning caution into a sin and prudence something that will get you marked down on your annual assessment.

There are, I read, exciting things being done by scientists and engineers in the field of “automatic berthing”. Might this take the potential for grief out of ship-handling? Somehow, I doubt it. I have a friend who disconnected his “self-parking” facility from his posh new car, such was the state of abject terror to which he and his wife were reduced, as the vehicle, with the device engaged, backed with speed and confidence into a space which they were convinced was too small. They just couldn't bring themselves to trust the thing, even though they had paid through the nose for the option on the car's spec.

There are helpful things that makers of equipment can do to make life easier, such as the provision of decent visual aids, so that those on the bridge know what is going on forward and aft of the container stacks. I saw Doppler docking aids demonstrated once and it was very impressive, and doubtless there are clever satnav driven devices that have taken over that role. But there is still a great deal riding on good spatial awareness, judgement and experience, which is why good pilots are worth their weight in gold, and probably always will be.

You can have all the electronics, clever sensors and automatic aids you like, but you will, from time to time, still be dependent upon somebody who knows what to do when it all goes pear-shaped. Automatic docking software will be as much good as a chocolate teapot, if the engine refuses to go astern, stutters to a stop amid lots of alarms going off, or there are gremlins that have got into the pitch control, a tug wire has snapped or there is a sudden and unanticipated blast of wind from just the wrong direction. These things happen more than many people seem to realise.

Then it is down to what people call the “human element”, with cool, calm and expert people doing exactly the right thing to save the day and a lot of expensive steel repairs. You might also say the same about the so-called virtues of “remote pilotage” about which certain port authorities become regularly over-excited. Some person sitting in a tower several miles from the action won't be much help when there is cry from the man on the wheel “she's not answering the helm, pilot!” Especially if the distress is enunciated in a different tongue as everyone, it is said, panics in their own language.

I'm regularly being accused of Luddism, but I just wonder whether all the science and engineering research into automatic docking, autonomy of various kinds and doing away with people, might be better channelled into other, more useful areas. Such as designing a container crane that would be rather more robust, enabling out of control ships to merely bounce off its elastic legs, or shock-absorbing fenders.

*rjmgrey@dircon.co.uk*



*At the Blue Funnel 'Middies' and Friends reunion, reported in the last newsletter, Capt. Richard Woodman LVO read this specially composed poem and we are grateful for his kind permission to reproduce it here.*

### An old Midshipman's lament

The descent from greatness is hard to bear  
For us whose birthing was on the ebbing of the tide  
When still some whiff of grandeur lingered in the air  
And drew us boys down to the water's side.

Some last few remnants ploughed the main  
Still proud, still certain of the country's need of them,  
In ships so glorious that ne'er will be again  
When history's wheel turned – only to condemn.

We flew the flags on gaff and mast,  
Symbols of something that we could not grasp  
And thought not that we'd be the last  
That island fastness would hold out our task.

Now, in the nights I lie unsleeping,  
I dream of days when the whole world wide  
Bore out my hopes, now dashed to weeping,  
Far, far beyond the turning of the tide.

But powers greater than my small ambition  
Ground out our glory days in rust,  
And engines of a greater mission  
Reduced our splendour to mere heaps of dust.

For now, apart from you and me  
Whose memories dim each passing day,  
We have forgot th' encircling sea  
And with our deaths, all this will pass away.

© RMW  
May, 2019

### Gone Aloft

#### Peter Morgan

Peter Morgan, who went aloft on the 18<sup>th</sup> June aged 78, was a Blue Funnel man who, after coming ashore, worked in the ports of Liverpool, London and Southampton before becoming operations manager for the new container terminal in Jeddah in 1977. In 1986 he moved back to the UK to work on a planned new container terminal at Falmouth. Apart from another short stint in the Middle East in Fujairah in the late 80's, he remained in the south west of England doing port consultancy work before setting up his own sail training and yacht chartering business, 'Trysail', which he ran for around 10 years from the mid-1990's. During his time in Cornwall, he was also involved in the harbour commissioners office in Falmouth (as deputy harbourmaster) and more recently has heavily involved with the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club in Falmouth, as Honorary Secretary for several years, and becoming Commodore in April this year. Peter became a Cachalot in 2003 and was a regular at the Sea Pie Suppers.

### The CACHALOTS

#### **The Southampton Master Mariners' Club**

**1st Floor, Southampton Royal British  
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SOUTHAMPTON, SO14 3HB**

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The Club room is currently open **two** days a week, Thursday and Friday, 1130 - 1500. Liz will be only too happy to serve you a drink. There is no catering on site but there are many sandwich outlets within easy walking distance.

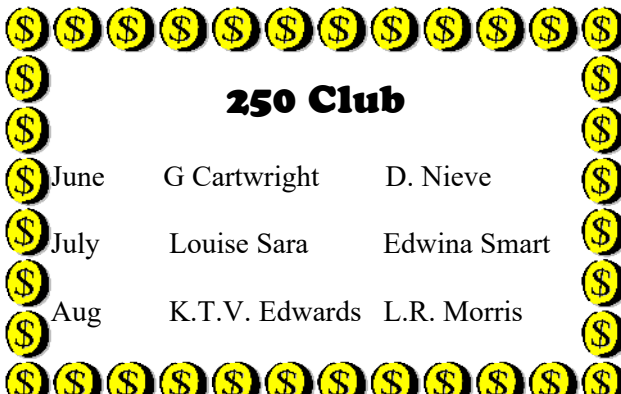
Suggestions for events, for improvements, offers of help, articles and anecdotes for inclusion in this newsletter will all be received with pleasure. We are even prepared to receive complaints if they are constructive.

### Dates for your Diary

Wed	4 Sept	Club Buffet Supper, RBL
Fri	4 Oct	Macmillan Coffee Morning, RBL
Fri	25 Oct	Trafalgar Dinner, Grande Café
Thu	7 Nov	Sale of Sea Pie Supper tickets
Sat	9 Nov	Curry Lunch, Kuti's Royal Pier
Sat	7 Dec	Christmas Lunch, MedBar

**The cut-off date for the next edition will be**

**1st November 2019**



**250 Club**

June	G Cartwright	D. Nieve
July	Louise Sara	Edwina Smart
Aug	K.T.V. Edwards	L.R. Morris