

# ***The CACHALOT***

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB

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## Captain's Log

I am never quite sure when it becomes too late in the year to wish someone a Happy New Year, but as this is my first column of 2021 I think I can get away with it – Happy New Year.

The year has already marked a 'first' in Club history, which is the holding of an on-line Annual General Meeting. Who says that the Cachalots have one foot in the past? The good news is that it was a remarkably civilised affair. The WiFi held up well; attendees were very polite and did not talk over each other (and if they did it was easy to 'mute' them); and, we had a good turnout. Certainly, more tuned-in than could have fitted comfortably in the Club rooms, and the on-line format allowed those living outside the 'SO' postcode area to participate.

The bad news from the AGM is, I am afraid, that you have me as Club Captain for another year. Ken Edwards stood down as Staff Captain, and he has been replaced by Captain Martin Phipps MBE, our erstwhile harbour master. And, as I am bed-blocking and have refused to hand over the reins, Captain Rachel Dunn stays in place as post-Captain.

Last month's newsletter had something of a theme, which was container losses. Micheal Grey's article "Pushing the Boundaries" commented on, what was then hot news, the loss of 1816 containers on 30 November from the *ONE Apus*. And, in his Tales of the Union Castle Line, President Reg Kelso ascribed the demise of the mail ships to the growing fad of containerisation. An appropriate topic for Cachalot discussion as the Port of Southampton is the UK's second busiest container terminal.

World Shipping Council figures indicate that since 2008 an average of 1382 containers have been lost each year, so the losses from *ONE Apus* immediately hit the record books. Unfortunately, since last November there have been two other notable container losses: *Ever Liberal* lost 36 forty-foot containers on 31 December, and on 16 January *Maersk Essen* lost an estimated 750 containers; both ships were sailing eastbound across the Pacific to Los Angeles when the accidents occurred.

Does this mean that containers have had their day? Well, probably 'not yet', as around 90% of non-bulk cargos are moved around the world by container. But I do wonder whether Michael Grey has put his finger on it when he questions how far the boundaries can be pushed. Container ship size is measured by their capacity to carry 'twenty-foot equivalent units' (TEUs), as the original containers were twenty feet long. *One Apus* (14000 TEU) and *Maersk Essen* (13800 TEU) were the largest of their kind when built, but the newest container ships carry over 20,000 TEU, and the internet informs me that the largest container ship in the world, *HMM Algeciras*, can carry 24,000 TEU. The cost of dredging channels and modifying port infrastructure to accommodate these behemoths is, itself, enormous, so I sense the time is right with respect to large container ships to ask the question, do the sums still add up? Answers on a postcard to the Editor....

Keep safe

Andrew Moll, Club Captain



### Not so welcome aboard

Further to the report in the last *Cachalot*, the seven men involved with the so called hi-jacking of the *Nave Andromeda* have had all charges against them dropped.

I wonder how much that little exercise cost. The SBS operation, the diversion of the vessel to Southampton for several days, the police investigation and the legal costs.

These men had not just sprung out from the rudder trunk as the vessel approached the Nab anchorage. They had been accommodated by the ship and its crew since it left Lagos. En-route, she had anchored twice, off the Canary Is and off St. Nazaire, in attempts to disembark the stowaways but the Spanish and French authorities would have none of it. As they neared the I.O.W. the relationship between the crew and the stowaways deteriorated to such an extent that the crew, threatened with violence, felt obliged to retreat to the citadel and issue a Mayday call.

Let's hope that this country's own 'accommodation' of these stowaways does not result in further costs or the future involvement of our police and security forces.

No doubt we can expect to hear that the master of the vessel has been charged with the aiding and abetting of illegal immigrants. A much easier target.

Terry Clark

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## Boatsteerers' Locker

In a book I hold entitled *The Dundee Whalers* by Norman Watson, in the Glossary of Whaling Terms, **Boat-Steerer** is described as *"the member of crew who steered a whaleboat during the pursuit of a whale. He ranked second to the harpooner, who was in charge of the boat"*.

This is quite a nice summary of what the outline job description provides, passed to me by my predecessor, Ken Dagnall MBE, for whom a grateful thanks.

I am not sure I can compete with the various events and happenings witnessed by Ken in his area of Hythe and included in previous blogs in his name, but as the saying goes, 'never say never'.

My first blog for the excellent digital Cachalot finds us still in the depths of dealing with Covid-19 and we all hope the outreach of vaccinations will have the desired effect. We heard at the Zoom gathering on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> that some of our members have had their first jab or have received a letter to attend. However, I do not hold out much hope that our freedoms to meet up will be allowed for some months to come. To this end I will continue to hold a weekly virtual gathering using Zoom which certainly appears to have brought a not insignificant number of members to their desktops, tablets and phones from 1100 each Friday.

Sadly, the effects of the restrictions make it very difficult for our new Functions Officer, Captain John Noble, to develop a meaningful and achievable programme of events although we have started the process of making contact with the team at Winchester Cathedral in respect of the Shipping Festival Service but we will have to be guided by any controls which may remain.

Our first 'virtual' AGM on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January at 1900 was very well 'attended' by thirty-seven of our members. It was good to see many faces that we have not seen since March last year and who have not made it to our Friday Zoom gatherings from 1100.

It was decided to re-instate the 250 Club draw in 2021 having completed the December draw, with Richard James and his wife making the independent drawing of the numbers. The next 250 Club draw will be made at midday during the Zoom meeting on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January.

In my early days as Boatsteerer I will be trawling through the myriad of files passed to me by Ken and develop a checklist!! As our social events and activities are somewhat paused at present, I will be making an electronic approach to the catering team at St. Mary's with a view to starting the process of planning for a Sea Pie Supper in 2022.

In the meantime, keep well.

Robin

Captain Robin Plumley MBE

Boatsteerer

### ***Meeting of the Past Captains***

From 1100 on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January, a meeting of the Past Captains was held virtually. This meeting, which has no agenda and no minutes, is held primarily to allow the Past Captains to discuss and review the appointment of the Club Captain for the coming year and also of the Staff Captain.

The outcome of these discussions is then declared at the Annual General Meeting a few days later. The list of Club Officers, Harpooners and Co-opted members of the management committee are recorded in the minutes of the AGM.

I did remember to record a screen shot of the Past Captain's and it is shown below.



## ***The Cachalots' Annual General Meeting***

From 1830 on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January, thirty-seven members, braved the cold and frosty evening to attend the Club's AGM. Well, that may have been the case if we had been able to meet in person at the Royal British Legion in Southampton. Instead, we had a strong line of members appear in the virtual Waiting Room, some with names showing which were easy to identify, others with an element of guesswork required, but who all, in true watchkeeping spirit arrived for their watch by the designated start time of 1900. At this point a brief introduction was made and an outline of Zoom etiquette before 'muting' all members and allowing the Captain, Andrew Moll, to commence and chair the meeting.

We think the Club room at the RBL would have been struggling to contain the numbers. Last year we had twenty-eight attend and some of those were just able to make it in standing in the doorway.

Without wishing to duplicate what was recorded, and in the normal manner, the minutes of the meeting may be found on the Cachalots website. *Under 'Records' in the Members only section, or click [Here](#)*

Unfortunately, due to taking notes I forgot to take a couple of screen shots of the attendees!

RP

## ***The outgoing Boatsteerer's report to the AGM 2021***

My report for the year 2020 is very short as with the onset of coronavirus the activities of the Club have been none existent except for the Linkedin site and Friday morning Zoom meetings inaugurated by Past Captain Robin Plumley who will take over the role of Boatsteerer.

Past Captain Peter Grant your Functions Officer and myself are both stepping down from our positions in the Club and we wish our successors Past Captains John Noble and Robin Plumley every success and I'm sure like Peter and myself they will enjoy their terms in office.

Due to the virus the Royal British Legion and our Club Room was closed down and both the Sea Pie Supper and Shipping Festival Service had to be cancelled as well as our Skittles Evening, Trafalgar Dinner, Harpooners Dinner and Christmas Lunch. We can only hope that 2021 will

be better than 2020 and we can resume the opening of our Club Room and activities.

It does not seem very long ago but was in fact 4th September 2014 that I was appointed Boatsteerer to succeed our President Reg. Kelso who had to retire due to health reasons.

Finally with much of the day to day administration in the very capable hands of Richard James and our finances in the hands of Past Captain Ian Odd, both of whom deserve a big thanks as well as Liz behind the Bar. I must not forget my thanks to my fellow Officers and Harpooners and those Cachalots who helped out at the Sea Pie Supper and Shipping Festival.

As 'Finish With Engines' on the telegraph has now been rung I shall done my boiler suit and return to the Engine Room clutching my bottle of brown sauce. Adieu .

Ken Dagnall



## From the Editor

### **The Printer Friendly version explained**

*The Cachalot* has always been digital in that it is produced as a file on a computer using a desktop publishing program. It was designed to be printed as an A4 folded and stapled booklet and this was done professionally to produce a pleasing looking (hopefully) newsletter of 8, 12 or 16 pages.

The main cost to the club was the printing and postal expenses. To save on posting expenses many members opted to receive it by e-mail as a pdf version which was exactly the same as the printed version. They could read it on screen or print it out on their home printers if they so wished.

With the advent of the first Covid-19 lockdown we were unable to continue in this manner so the magazine was re-designed for easier online reading on small screens. The font size and the space between the (shorter) lines was increased, all in the hope of making it a more comfortable reading experience with less eye strain. With no restrictions on page sizes or numbers there was room for more graphics and pictures. The result is that a newsletter with the normal content is now extended to 30 – 36 pages. We are also able to produce it monthly, at no additional cost to the Club.

From the start it was realised that many members prefer to read a hand

held physical copy while sat in their favourite armchair, rather than peer at yet another pesky screen while hunched over a computer desk. To this end an alternative ‘Printer Friendly’ version was also produced, with the print size and lines reverting to the original and some graphics and pictures being adjusted. The text content remains the same and the only real difference is the omission of the ‘contents’ page. This was an innovation for the all digital version in that the blue page numbers are embedded links and by clicking on them one can go straight to the chosen page. Great if you can’t wait to get to the latest Michael Grey offering but not much use in a printed copy. The end result is a printable version of around 16 sides of A4, much like the original printed one but not produced to the same exacting standards. If one is competent enough to cope with the technical complexities of double sided printing on one’s home printer and have a stapler to hand one can produce a presentable magazine with around 8 sheets of paper. I must admit that my own first attempts resulted in an Eric Morcambe version in that it had all the right pages but not necessarily in the right order. But you won’t save on ink because the amount of text is the same and there will probably be more colour photographs. So ‘Printer Friendly’ is a bit of a misnomer, it should really be called ‘Paper Friendly’.

So, if you are going to read it on a screen, opt for the ~36 page Digital Edition, but if you want to hold it in your hand, and why wouldn’t you, and you can master your printer, then the paper friendly ‘Printer Friendly’ version is the one to go for.



And, don’t forget, all previous editions of *The Cachalot*, in both versions, are available in the Members’ only section of our website: [here](#) or from me, on request [editor@cachalots.org.uk](mailto:editor@cachalots.org.uk)

Also, feel free to pass them on to family, friends and acquaintances.



At our Friday Zoom meetings John Noble will brandish the bottle of Malt Whisky that I won in the writing competition (see *Cachalot* 80), just to prove that he hasn’t drunk any of it before he can actually get to present it to me. Perhaps we should make it an annual competition, “What I did during the... 3rd,... 4th,... 5th lockdown of 2021...2022...2023 etc.”



## Weather wise, or design foolish?

### **Baird Maritime Workboat World, January 2021**

There was an amazing satellite image taken of what was supposed to be the largest and deepest depression that had ever been recorded in the North Pacific. And it was exceedingly extensive, blanketing the whole of the Aleutian chain of islands and revolving around a huge low several hundred miles south. You had to feel for those aboard any ships that might have been caught out in the high winds and mountainous seas that were being reported.

Was it the worst ever? We are constantly assailed by statistics that purport to demonstrate that the world's weather is becoming ever more violent. Each so-called "record" tells us that it is becoming hotter, windier, or wetter than those extremes recorded in previous years and that it is all attributable to "climate change". And for the most part we go along with these propositions, the scientists and meteorologists falling into line with the wisdom of seers such as Greta Thunberg, unwilling to suggest that the more extreme elements of climate doom might be over-stating the case.

It may be heretical to suggest, however mildly, that we are in a better position than ever before to record extreme weather, with better instruments at sea, in the air and in space, along with more intense scientific analysis from the growing community engaged in the burgeoning business of "climate science".

But that is not an argument for today, in a publication devoted to maritime design. And if seas are indeed getting steeper and stormier, extreme waves more common and hazardous conditions less exceptional, then surely we should be making our ships, ports and coastlines rather more resilient in order to cope with what nature is throwing at us.

One could only wonder, in the midst of a northern hemisphere winter that has seen record numbers of container cargoes ending up in the sea, that operators are continuing to order even bigger ships. Newbuilding orders of nearly 24,000 teu were announced, as the stevedores in Kobe were getting down to painfully picking over the wreckage of the ONE Apus' deck cargo and warnings were being broadcast of another stack in the drink from an Evergreen ship off Japan.

Maybe the people who are ordering these monsters, which will not secure their monstrous deck loads in any different fashion to that which has prevailed for the past 50 years, don't believe the meteorologists. Maybe they sort of shut their eyes and ears to what seafarers tell them and think that size trumps outdated sea sense. Like container fires, which don't happen often (one serious incident every six weeks), they allow themselves to be comforted by the laws of spurious percentages. Or is it that they have become totally focussed upon the payload, or

the horsepower, or the unit cost, with the seaworthiness of a design regarded almost as an afterthought?

But it's not just those designing container ships in a desperate search for lowest unit costs, who are ignoring what the weather people tell them. Look at the number of curious designs that emerge with the bridge upon the forecastle, horribly vulnerable to green head seas, even though the superstructure protects what is stowed behind it. Obviously, that is the point of such a configuration, but you wouldn't want to sail in anything so designed. There are ships with almost no poop, once again utterly exposed to a following sea. Big ships don't get pooped? There was a sad report by the Maltese authorities just the other day of a double fatality on a bulker in the Norwegian Sea where the mate and a seaman were swept to their deaths over the poop, just like they were in sailing ship days.

It is a matter of better weather reports being transmitted faster to those at sea, some suggest. That would be helpful, no doubt, but a ship designed by somebody who thinks of weather in the abstract, needs a lot of time and sea room if it is to escape a battering. And when a less resilient ship perhaps goes "the long way around" to avoid the possibility of horrible weather, her master will invariably get a roasting for his failure to meet the schedule, which is entirely predictable, but rather unfair.

We are constantly being told that our "post Covid world" needs to be different from that which has gone before, and maybe this sea-change might include a long and hard look at the "seaworthiness" of the next generation of ships. We are still going to need ships, and just as many of them, and seafarers will have to take them to sea. And if the weather is really changing for the worst, maybe ship designers, operators and above all, seafarers, ought to be getting together and pooling their expertise on how to keep the sea where it belongs and the cargo on board. But it probably won't happen, as long as the bean counters have the final word.

**Published with the kind permission of Baird Maritime and the author, Cachalot Michael Grey. [rjmgrey@dircon.co.uk](mailto:rjmgrey@dircon.co.uk)**

The cartoon below is from the Splash247.com bulletin of 27th January. They have just launched the 25th edition of *Splash Extra* in which as well as looking at containership designs, lashing and stowage issues, the editorial team have conducted an extensive survey into the phenomenon of rogue waves, something



that is especially problematic in the winter in the North Pacific. *Splash Extra* is a subscription only service costing from \$200 p.a. but the Daily Splash newsletter is free.

## Sixty Plus Years Ago

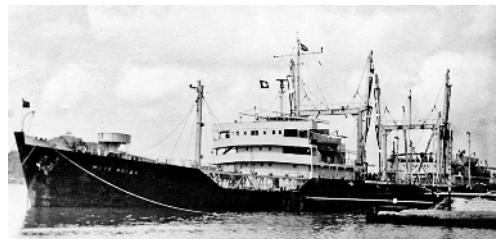
by Captain Terry Hughes FNI FRIN



RFA Tiderace - HMS Bulwark - HMS Jamaica \_ Hms Tyne - RFA Amherst  
in Valletta Harbour prior to Suez

Having spent two wonderful years on the training ship HMS Conway, I was fortunate enough to be posted to the then largest and newly commissioned fleet replenishment tanker, RFA Tiderace. She was a fine vessel sporting a displacement of 26000 tons. Just under a year later the RFA Tiderace was directly involved in the 1956 Suez Crisis. It was very hard work with almost continuous refuelling of various Royal Navy vessels, which were part of the task force - Operation Muskateer. In those days we spent twelve months on one ship so we got to know the ones we served on pretty well.

Two years later I was posted to the RFA Wave Ruler as Third Mate. RFA Wave Ruler was a much older vessel but a proven war horse with many assignments under her belt. In 1958 we had orders to proceed to Christmas Island in the Pacific as part of Operation Grapple. New ground for me and, having heard that the fleet had spent a lot of time in Hawaii, I was looking forward to this new adventure. Little did I, or any of the crew, know what was in store for us. On arrival we were told that we were to be part of the atomic tests, only this time it was to be a Hydrogen bomb test and that we were going to be there all the time and not be sent to Hawaii. Much groaning!



RFA Wave Ruler

When the crew got hear this, there was quite a rumpus and the RNO (Resident Naval Officer) had to come out and talk to us about how we were not to worry and that everything would be under tight control - or words to that effect. Cameras (no mobiles in those days) were to be handed in, as no

photographs were to be taken. We would be given an official one afterwards. All the Officers were provided with a radiation dosimeter. It was a pen like device for placing in a shirt or jacket pocket. I remember getting one but did not know how to use or read it.

Very soon the big day arrived. I seem to remember everyone was evacuated from the Island itself and HMS Narvik accommodated the local islanders. We were briefed as to what our duties would be during the H-Bomb test. I remember the bridge windows that could be opened were opened and left that way so the blast would not damage them. My duty was to go below decks near the engine room to ensure that none of the crew moved during that time. We were given a countdown, 10, 9, 8 etc and then we waited. My own personal experience was that the bang sounded like being next to a four inch gun when fired without ear plugs and then shortly afterwards a very strong wind passed through the ship. This H-Bomb, like all the others, was exploded above rather than on the surface, apparently to reduce the effects of fallout.

When we were given the all clear, we were allowed topside and saw the huge mushroom cloud. The RAF flew a few sorties through the cloud, I guess to pick up air samples. I seem to remember we were allowed ashore on the island the day after (it may have been a bit more) and some of us went swimming. Those of us that did, suffered very badly from sunburn, well I hope that is was it was. Since that time



[The Official photograph](#)

I have never taken my shirt off to bare my back to the sun. On leaving Christmas Island we went from one extreme to the other - Christmas Island to Iceland (Cod War) via Greenock to pick up our cold weather clothing. We were probably sent there to cool off!

I never quite understood why we were used as guinea pigs (lab rats) especially after seeing the results of the bombs that were dropped over Japan during WWII. So many people have suffered and are still suffering today.

The British Nuclear Testing Programme ran between 1952 and 1967, it was the largest Tri-Service operation since the D-Day landings. Over 20,000 servicemen participated in the Weapons Tests. The development of these super weapons bought the United Kingdom's place at the world superpower table. Worldwide hundreds of nuclear tests have been carried out and still are.

Some years ago a Charity was set up for Atomic Veterans. The British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA), a UK charity, represents all those who have worked with or alongside radioactive material for the benefit of this nation. Formed initially to campaign for recognition and restitution of all Servicemen who participated in the British Nuclear Tests the organisation has evolved over the years to share its knowledge and heritage with people from all walks of life. (<https://bntva.com/>).

Another international organisation is LABRATS - Legacy of the Atomic Bomb. Recognition for Atomic Test Survivors. (<https://www.labrats.international>). LABRATS represents all individuals across the world who have been affected by the Atomic Testing program. The Atomic family, includes Veterans, descendants, indigenous people and organisations that represent all aspects of the Atomic tests.

Thousands of people have been affected by the tests, and there are many organisations across the world representing these people. Many of those involved in the original tests have unfortunately passed away. Soon there will be no one left to tell what happened, leaving behind their descendants to pick up the pieces and who unfortunately are still suffering health problems as a result of their forebears experiencing these atomic tests.

Terry Hughes

Past Captain, 1997



*Terry Hughes was not the only Cachalot present during the tests. See 'The Voyage of HMS Cook' in Cachalot 21 of September 2006. It can be found in the open section of our website, under 'Club Journal: "The Cachalot"', or [Click here](#)*



*Regular readers will be familiar with **Baird Maritime**, one of the world's premier maritime publishing houses and home of the world famous '**Workboat World**' and other online titles. Cachalot Michael Grey, former long-term editor of Lloyds List and described by Baird as a 'Maritime industry legend', has a regular column there and he and Baird Maritime kindly allow our modest journal to reprint some of them here. Recently, Michael flagged up to us an article written by another of their regular columnists who goes under the pseudonym Hieronymus Bosch.. It was titled '**False economy**' and Captain Reg Kelso has extracted the meat of it for us here.*

## **Autonomous Ships**

### **Is there really a business case for them?**

Writing in Baird Maritime, *Hieronymus Bosch* discloses that the taxi app company UBER has been spending 20 million USD MONTHLY since 2016 in their quest to build its own fleet of driverless cars - and to have some 100,000 on the road by 2020. Today, however, this quest has been discontinued despite the fact that Uber spent such a vast sum of money - calculated to be in excess of that spent by the entire marine industry in its endeavours to develop "unmanned ships". Mr. Bosch then goes on to ask if "the grinding cost cutting that the offshore sector and the shipping industry have experienced in the last forty years have undermined the business case for remotely controlled autonomous vessels?

The IMO has divided "autonomous shipping" into four divisions ( "degrees"):

Degree One: Ship with automated processes and decision support.

Seafarers ready to take control. Some operations automated.

Degree Two: Remotely controlled ship with seafarers onboard.

Degree Three: Remotely controlled ship without seafarers onboard.

Degree Four: Fully autonomous ship. Shipboard operating system makes decisions and determines actions.

Currently, Degree One is commonplace today - Dynamic Positioning is now the norm offshore with computers being guided by sensors to adjust main engines and thrusters. A Norwegian study found that only 5% of DP accidents were caused by human error alone -so perhaps offshore the people are not the problem.

To further quote Mr. Bosch - the ECONOMICS of Degree Two look "horrible"! WHO wants a ship sailing around with crew onboard supported by

a duplicate shore-based staff of similarly qualified mariners, doubling up costs.

UNFORTUNATELY, until systems and equipment are completely tested and approved many operators will find themselves tied to Degree Two and their vessels will still have crew accommodation and all the creature comforts. Ashore, they will need at least two Remote Operating Centres (ROC's) for redundancy reasons.

Reservations about the economies afforded by autonomous ships have been muted throughout the industry with the Chairman of the Odfjell group declaring that "autonomous ships were a low priority for the shipping industry compared to the need for zero emissions ships to combat climate change.. Saving the Planet is more important than removing crew from vessels".

Degree Three is more suited to low value hydrography and bathymetric work and the race to digitalise and automate offshore survey work and, in Norway, a fleet of small vessels is already under construction and will be used for hydrographic research and collecting survey data.

The Chief Executive of Ocean Infinity is a firm believer (and has already placed an order for eight vessels worth 200 Million USD - and has declared that "the impact and scale of this robotic fleet will spark the biggest transformation the maritime industry has seen since sail gave way to steam" but he admits that such vessels would "initially" be crewed.



Photo: Ocean Infinity

The first milestone in AUTONOMOUS SHIPPING was met in November 2020 with the delivery of the YARA BIRKELAND, a 120TEU container vessel of 3,200dwt and a l.o.a. of 80 metres. Her primary role is to take trucks off the road in Norway. She will undergo extensive testing throughout 2021 before undertaking a shuttle role over short-distance coastal routes.



Yara Birkeland (Photo: Yara)

The question being asked IS... "Will the savings be there, even at Degree Three, where unmanned vessels are supported by satellites ROCs ?

Shipping has already offshored all its jobs to the lowest regulation, lowest tax jurisdictions — Liberia, Panama, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Bahamas, the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, the usual and successful flags of convenience, and by opening ROC's the Owners are re-shoring the jobs at a higher cost - their offices are not ships. Currently, the ILO Maritime Labour Convention dictates that shipboard working hours should be:

8 hours a week, under normal circumstances. With one day as a rest day

A maximum of 14 hours in any 24 hour period.

A maximum of 72 hours in any seven-day period.

10 hours of rest minimum in any 24 hour period.

Few, if any, shore workers will work six days a week and up to 72 hours a week ... plus commuting time ...for 10 or 11 months of the year.

Seafaring is intense, but seafarers have the benefit of some of the longest holidays in the world. Even with poor salaries, the possibility of tax-free earning, the opportunity for worldwide travel and long holidays make seafaring attractive and providing the same salary and hours ashore to a Master Mariner working in an industrial unit with fluorescent strip lighting, staring at a screen all day, won't cut it compared to actually being on a ship.

CRK 18.1.21

*The complete article can be found on the Baird Maritime website, or [Here](#)*



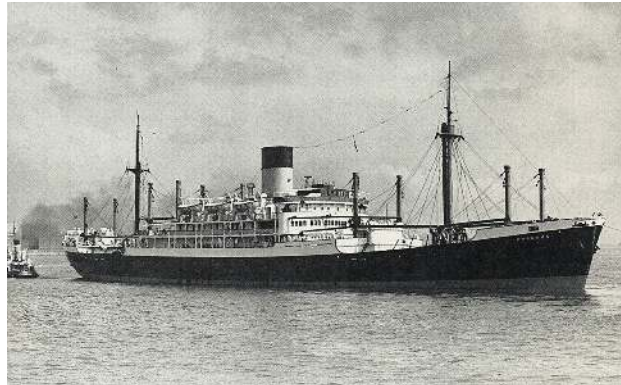


## Captain Ken



*Another contribution from Ken Owen which appeared in his local Mellor Church Parish magazine "Outlook" of January 2021.*

The Blue Funnel Line, with which I served from the rank of Midshipman to Master, named all their ships after heroes in Homer's Iliad. This was a fascinating fact, but did cause a lot of pronunciation problems over the radio and signal lamps within the fleet. I first became aware of this was whilst serving as Second Mate on S S Pyrrhus in the sixties. We, and three of our sister ships were engaged on a very fast four months' service sailing between Liverpool and Yokohama and many ports in between. In the days prior to every ship being installed with VHF radio communication, the Officer of the Watch on the bridge communicated with other ships visually by flashing messages in Morse Code to them by way of a hand-held signal lamp known as an Aldis lamp. However, operators receiving the messages, invariably not being familiar with classical Greek names like PYRRHUS were concerned that they were not reading these names correctly and it would take a couple of repeats to assure them that what they were reading was correct. They were more used to ships names such as Clan McGregor or City of York .



On one particular voyage I made, the master of the ship was a Captain Harris. It was his last voyage before retiring after a long distinguished career. He was very well known throughout the fleet for his extremely tall stories. So much so that he was given a rather rude nickname. First syllable is male of the bovine species, the second is up to you. It was rumoured in the fleet that when he arrived at Buckingham Palace to receive an award, he entered talking with a rather grand military-looking man and the King asked his Aide 'Who is that man, with Captain Harris ?' He was told it was General Montgomery.

Once when his ship was in Australia, Captain Harris boasted of being a member of the MCC and that he knew everybody. Someone thought they would catch him out and happened to mention that as England was playing a test match against Australia in Melbourne, why not invite the team to visit the ship. Imagine everyone's astonishment when the England captain and several members of the team did arrive on board for drinks one evening.

He once told me that on his orange grove in Florida, he had grown the world's largest melons 'you could only fit two in the boot of the car' he told me and I didn't dare to question it. On this same voyage, halfway down the Red Sea, we came across a Liberian registered wartime victory ship which had been abandoned and was drifting following a fire in the engine. The captain of this vessel, who was nearby in a lifeboat, asked if we would tow his ship to Aden. Everybody on board our ship became really excited about this, as the salvage award involved in such cases can be very substantial, with the captain being awarded the most but each individual crew member picking up a large sum. I myself was particularly excited as my share would have paid off my mortgage, However, it was very hard work for everyone to prepare for the tow as a very heavy insurance tow wire had to be brought up on deck which was no easy task. Fortunately just before we attached it, Captain Harris asked if they agreed to Lloyd's Open Form. This is the most wonderful agreement in maritime law and states that those involved in this type of situation simply get on with the job and Lloyd's of London will arbitrate a fair award and guarantee to pay. The captain of the disabled ship, however, told us he would not agree to using the Lloyd's Open Form agreement and, out of nowhere, appeared a salvage tug which was willing to tow the ship to Aden without Lloyd's involvement. To us this was a very obvious scam and we were disappointed but relieved to continue our voyage and take Captain Harris home to a well earned and well-deserved retirement.



## Not getting over it

### **The Maritime *Advocate* online Issue 769 January 15th 2021**

One curious phenomenon of our present pandemic is the frequently expressed hope and desire of well-meaning and invariably self-appointed “influencers”, that when the emergency is over, we should not return to our old ways of doing things, but move on to a better world. This usually introduces a lecture on the flaws in our present way of life and the improvements that can be ours by embracing environmentalism and WFH, preferring seeds and pulses and electric cars to red meat, while eschewing long-haul aviation.

History tends to inform us that such behaviour often may be found amid a catastrophe; in the past usually involving extreme forms of religion - environmentalism might well be the modern equivalent in a secular age. Such records also remind us that once the memory of the terror has receded, the old ways re-establish themselves. People, it might be said, “get over it”.

But in our maritime world, we do not need to channel our inner Thunberg to realise that the past year has indeed shown us some things that really could be done better in the post-Covid future. The undoubted inadequacies of seafarers’ lives, for a start, could be subject to some serious study, with a view to improvement, as their treatment since the Pandemic struck has been little short of disgraceful. They, and the shipping industry in which they serve, has kept the global supply chain operating. Their thanks has been to have been taken completely for granted, denied shore leave, treated like pariahs by authorities and expected to operate their ships ad infinitum. The struggle, in the future will be to persuade the clever people we need to operate sophisticated ships to remain in the business, or indeed to become recruits to a calling where their predecessors have been so abused. It might be suggested that the “old ways” will not be sufficient.

Nothing new, you might suggest, about merchant seafarers being taken for granted or even badly treated. Here’s a thought. “The first duty of a government is to protect the lives of its subjects, and to every other class of workmen, excepting sailors, this duty is discharged”. That was from a letter to The Times in December 1869 by the Newcastle ship-owner James Hall, which may be found quoted in Richard Woodman’s History of the British Merchant Navy Vol. 3. Hall was writing about the appalling loss of

life in the seafaring workforce in old, overloaded ships and beginning a long process of reform that would culminate in the Load Line Rules and a more diligent maritime regulator, at least in the UK.

What might be done to improve the seafarer's lot as the 21st century grinds its way back to some sort of normality? If we want bright people to embrace a seafaring career, then a career it ought to be; not an industry that depends for the most part upon casual labour, with little job security. There are good employers who train, maintain and retain their staff. Why must they compete with operators whose modus operandi is really little different to that of the late 19th century?

There is a major piece of work to be done on the sheer nonsense of "minimum safe manning", a scam in which flag states with an eye on an income, seek a competitive advantage offering a cascade to the very lowest manning they think they can get away with. The figure – I have just been looking at a 13 person "safe" headcount for a 25,000dwt non-UMS bulker, offered by an ambitious Caribbean state to a thrusting owner – which is ridiculous from start to finish. It is all very well saying that the "Safe" manning figure demanded by the flag will be invariably exceeded. It probably will be, but the manning level that counts should surely be one that takes into account the workload of the ship and if you believe the recent study by the World Maritime University on "adjusted" hours of rest and work, it never is.

And it is not good enough to cite the supposedly long leaves that allegedly compensate for the ridiculous hours of work. We are talking here about health and sanity, along with the provision of "decent" work. If flag states are to be permitted to regulate numbers, (and we might start by questioning this) "safety" can surely be automatically assumed in a crewing level that takes into account the realistic operation of the ship.

If we are to retain and recruit, we must start thinking about what people ashore like to call the work-life balance, and getting some fun and pleasure into seafaring, something that has been eroded utterly, not just during the pandemic but in the years leading up to this current disaster. We won't "just get over it", and action is long overdue.

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## Family in far flung places

One of our sons lives in Alberta Canada in a small town approximately a three hour drive North East of Edmonton (in the summer that is). Currently they have deep snow and ice, which normally lasts to around late April early May. On a really good day this time of the year the temperature is between  $-5^{\circ}$  to  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  with the normal average being  $-15^{\circ}$  to  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ . During storms the temperature can drop to well below  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

We were impressed that when our Granddaughter was at pre-school all playtimes (or recesses as the Canadians call them) were outside unless it was pouring with rain or the temperature was below  $-9^{\circ}\text{C}$ . She is now five and has moved on to Kindergarten or as we know it the first year at infant school. Just before Christmas our son received the email below from the school. Now we are really impressed!

### COLD WEATHER REMINDER

The weather is always changing outside. Please ensure your child is dressed for the weather. Layering is best. Please pack extra clothing (pants and socks, etc.) in your child's backpack as they may need it throughout the day. Children will go out for all recesses. They will stay inside if the temperature is below  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  (with or without the wind chill).



Food for thought:

A saying where snow is substituted with “lockdown”.

**Find joy in the lockdown**

**Because if you don't find joy**

**You will still have the lockdown!**

John Mileusnic, Past Captain

# Cachalots and Messmates

*In 1973, Commodore D.M.MacLean D.S.C. R.D. R.N.R., who had been Captain of the Club in 1965, wrote "A Brief History of the Southampton Master Mariners' Club". In an occasional series we shall bring you extracts from that volume to remind us of the history of our unique club. The Foreword was provided by Stowaway Member Horace Maybray-King who was Speaker of the House of Commons from 1965 - 1971 and a regular attendee at the Sea Pie Suppers.*

## CACHALOTS AND MESSMATES



(A Brief History of The Southampton Master Mariners' Club)

1928-1973



FOREWORD

By

LORD MAYBRAY-KING, P.C.

When in 1928 some twenty-one master mariners came together and decided to set up a Club where the captains of merchant ships might maintain ashore some of the comradeship of the sea, they little knew how big they were building.

Today, with six hundred members, at least as many other friends, and fine premises, the Club's Annual Banquet and its Sea Pie Suppers are among the most important social events of the year in Southampton.

Commodore Maclean, in this excellent history of the Cachalots and their wide range of social and educational activities, has caught the warmth and quality of the Club of which he is himself so distinguished a member.

I count it a privilege to commend it to all Cachalots, Messmates, Stowaways and all who know the magnitude of the contribution made by officers of the Merchant Navy, not only to the Port of Southampton, but also to Britain.

MAYBRAY- KING

Stowaway

*House of Lords*

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As a rule the history of any organisation must necessarily be incomplete; so much of interest that happened has, in the nature of things, been forgotten and the highlights of the story are, unfortunately, limited by the whim of the author. In that respect this brief history of the Southampton Master Mariners' Club is no exception.

Unhappily, owing to the not infrequent changes, and often lack of space in the early Boatsteerer's Office, coupled with the absence of secretarial aid during and around the war period -not to mention the fact that in its first quarter century the Club was naturally more pragmatically than historically inclined-the records of events for a very considerable period are therefore unavailable.

Should, however, there seem to be mention here of perhaps an over-abundance of names of persons and ships, it is hoped that this may be accepted as a modest tribute to those who in their day have unobtrusively contributed so much, not only to setting the high standards of the Club, but incidentally to shaping the maritime status of Southampton as a seaport.

One feels that the life of the Club is inextricably linked with that of the port. Any day in the Club you can rub shoulders with the people who operate this vast marine complex, and also the men who navigate its many-purpose ships.

As will be observed, the Club makes no pretences to any sort of architectural merit nor to historical antiquity, but this short chronicle may assist in serving as something on to which its future story might be added with a little more detail.

In order to reveal the varied strands of personality which have been woven into the pattern of the Club's character, an attempt has been made to give a few thumb-nail sketches of some of its members - taken at random - people whom we sometimes refer to affectionately as "characters".

Here I should like to express my deep gratitude to Mr. Reg R. Gleave, O.B.E., J.P. (a former General Manager of Southern Newspapers Ltd.-and incidentally, the first Honorary Recorder of The Southampton Master Mariners' Club), and also to Captain Guy Meakin-Farmiloe (a former Captain of The Master Mariners' Club, and at present its Storekeeper), for their unstinted help by granting me access to their own private papers and other Club memorabilia.

My thanks extend gladly to the Southern Newspapers Ltd. for their most valuable assistance with the book page illustrations.

I am much indebted to Captains H. J. Pellow, M.B.E. and A. Nicholls, A.I.N.A. (both former Captains of the Club), and also to Messmate Philip Filer for the kind loan of press cuttings and a few of the Club's very earliest Committee Minutes.



## Chapter 1

### ORIGINS OF THE CLUB

In the late nineteen-twenties Southampton Docks presented a matchless array of big, proud passenger and cargo liners: *AQUITANIA*, *MAJESTIC*, *ALCANTARA*, *LEVIATHAN*, *MAURE-TANIA*, *BREMEN*, *EMPRESS OF BRITAIN*, *ILE DE FRANCE*, *NIEUWAMSTERDAM*, to mention only a few. The daily-changing kaleidoscope of tall, bright-hued funnels was indeed a constant source of wonder and delight for the many visitors to Southampton's Dockland.

The shrill notes of busy tug-boats' whistles matched that of the crowded trains arriving at or departing from the Ocean Terminal Station.

Oddly enough the highly skilled officers who navigated these mighty ships as well as those who superintended the shore-side of the complex marine operations involved in servicing them, found that they had no common social meeting ground where they could spend their limited period of leisure. There was no place where they could foregather and perhaps discuss matters germane to the seafaring profession.

The Royal Navy had its big Clubs in London and Portsmouth, but the Merchant Navy had nothing. Dissatisfied with this state of affairs, the more aggressive types, principally Marine Superintendents, of the various shipping companies, got together and decided that instead of the haphazard and casual meeting-places they should organise occasional luncheon meetings on board available ships. The idea was excellent, and many enjoyable functions were held, and pleasantly informal speakers were eagerly listened to, but somehow the atmosphere was not quite right - the salt tang of the sea was missing. These occasions were presided over by the various shipping companies' "Office" management and it was felt that, albeit enjoyable, the unique camaraderie of the deep-water sailormen failed to break surface.

Nevertheless it was a beginning, and shortly afterwards a few Master Mariners, twenty-one to be precise, all square-rigged sailormen, took fresh soundings and set off on a new tack. They decided to form a



Club of their own at Southampton which was to be confined exclusively to holders of Foreign-going Master Mariners' Certificates of Competence, where they could feel thoroughly at ease during their varying periods of leisure, and entertain kindred mariners visiting the port.

Therefore, on 15th February 1928, seventeen Master Mariners met in the Staff Dining Room of the old Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's office at Southampton to discuss the general idea of a Club, under the chairmanship of Captain S. N. Braithwaite, M.B.E., Marine Superintendent of the R.M.S.P.Co. This then can be considered the date and place of birth of the Southampton Master Mariners' Club.



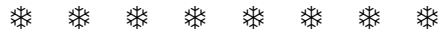
Present at the inaugural meeting were the following Founder Members:

Captain E. Aikman	R.D.	Com'dr.	RNR
" J. B. Bailey	A.I.N.A.	Lt. Cdr.	"
" S. H. Braithwaite	M.B.E.		
" W. V. J. Clarke	D.S.C., B.A.(L)		"
" R. Coombes		Sub-Lieut.	"
" E. W. Harvey	M.B.E.		
" H. Harvey			
" J. King	O.B.E., R.D.	Com'dr.	"
" R. O. Lloyd	O.B.E.	Lt. Cdr.	"
" J. E. Pardoe-Matthews			
" W. C. Ramsay		Lt. Cdr.	"
" A. H. Raymer		Com'dr.	"
" J. G. Saunders	O.B.E., R.D.	Capt.	"
" D. S. Stonehouse			
" J.M.Williams	D.S.O., R.D.	Capt.	"
" G. A. Williamson			
" J.A.Wolfe	R.D.	Com'dr.	"

The following four Master Mariners were invited to this formation meeting but were unable to attend :

Captain Irvin Hayward	R.D., J.P.	Capt.	RNR
" A. E. Howe	M.B.E.		
" W. S. Thornton	R.D.	Com'dr.	"
" J. B. Whitton			

Mr. Reginald R. Gleave, O.B.E., J.P. (then Shipping Representative of "The Southern Evening Echo") was duly appointed the first Honorary Recorder of the Club at this meeting.



The firm decision to form their own Club having been taken, the newly-appointed committee members applied to Southampton's five leading hotels for suitable terms and accommodation where they could hold weekly luncheon meetings; and after due consideration of the responses selected the now defunct South Western Hotel as their initial venue.

The Founder Members wasted no time in forming the various functional sub-committees such as the General, Executive and Finance, whose task was the day to day running of the Club, while the Banquet Committee organised luncheon and "Hot- Pot" suppers as well as the provision of suitable speakers. Later, they formed a Church Committee whose duties embraced the religious aspects of the Club's affairs. To this end they appointed the Rev. F. A. W. Wilkinson, M.A. (then Padre of the Southampton Missions to Seamen) to be the Club's first Honorary Chaplain.

At later dates when the need became apparent, they appointed Technical, Selection, Sports, Mess and Entertainment Committees.

After much lively discussion one Founder Member had the happy inspiration to adopt some sort of description that would be unique, with a characteristic style of its own. With this in mind some of the Founder Members suggested that the nomenclature used to describe the Club's administrative staff officers should be similar to that in vogue aboard old-time sailing whaling-ships. The reason for this somewhat unusual idea stemmed from the fact that a few years earlier the proposers had met Frank T. Bullen, the celebrated writer of stirring sea stories of life aboard the old whalers sailing out of Dundee and Hull, and his colourful conversational style had evidently made a very deep impression on these Founder Members. So far as the Founders could ascertain, these whaling-ship titles were not in use in any other Club, and so they readily agreed to adopt the whaling-ship titles for the Southampton Master Mariners' Club.

As a secondary title the Club chose that of *The Cachalots*, because, according to F. T. Bullen, that particular specie of whale, the *Cachalot*, "Has the thickest skin, blows the hardest and spouts the most"!



# The Long Lockdown

A hundred thousand, we are told. A figure far too high.  
It' for the few who understand to state the reason why.  
Who knows? Not I, nor most of us, who can but watch and wait;  
And wonder now who might be next by happenstance of fate.

And hunker down, as best we can, quite powerless to fight,  
Except by acting properly to set the matter right,  
By following the basics in our overcrowded camp,  
As taught to fighting soldiers by The Lady With The Lamp.

No need for repetition here. We know what we must do.  
The evidence is far too clear to doubt it might be true.  
Salute those who know better. Give no cause to make things worse.  
And lend a hand, if possible, to Doctor and to Nurse.

And spare a thought for those who move essentials, day by day.  
The wheels of commerce need to turn. There is no other way,  
To feed the population of our tiny, tiny planet,  
In peace and health, we can but hope, until we might regain it.

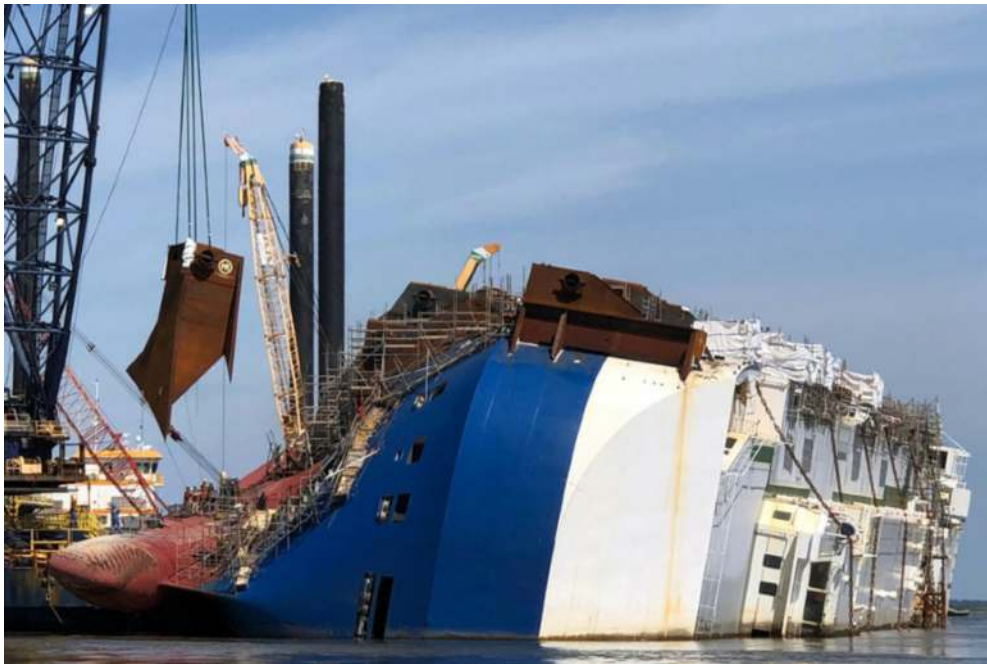
And so we will. We can but hope, within this fight infernal.  
It' hope which will sustain us and it' hope which springs eternal.  
And does not die, though thousands might, whose time with us runs cold.  
The rest of us will carry on until each one grows old,

Enjoying life, as once we did; and most will do again;  
And few might dare to query - who are women, who are men?  
Et vive la difference toujours! Vivalite en plus!  
Until we meet again one day, I'll raise a glass to us!

BY  
26.01.2021

## Stable at all times

**Baird Maritime Ship World, 19th January 2021**



*Photo: St. Simons Sound Incident Response*

It was a recent picture of the car carrier *Golden Ray*, lying on her side and being sawn up by the salvors, that got me thinking that there really seems to be something of a problem in keeping modern car carriers the right way up, despite all their loading computers. They look a bit top-heavy, but quite a few have alarmingly listed in embarrassing places, seemingly because nobody seems entirely sure of the weight of the vehicles they are rushing aboard.

Loading computers hadn't been invented when we sailed off to the other side of the world and back again, requiring no end of long-hand calculations as the all-important metacentric height was endlessly computed. It was usually the second mate's job, or at least he would get the blame if the ship was a trifle stiff on passage.

Our ships took a general cargo from up to half a dozen ports in the UK and Europe for discharge in perhaps three or four ports in Australia and New Zealand, bunkering en route at Aden or Curacao. Stability tended not to be a problem outwards, as there was invariably plenty of heavy machinery, steel or "long iron" that could be stowed in the lower holds that would give us plenty of bottom weight, with every conceivable sort of product loaded on top and in the tweendecks.

Homeward bound, with the ship frozen down, stability depended very much on the cargo mix, which tended to vary with the seasons. The ideal was a couple of lower holds of butter, which made subsequent life much easier, but carcase lamb (think about the hole in the middle of it) was a bit more problematical. Cheese was a good old weight in its crates, while apples, because of all their packing, tended to be a bit lighter. Wool was not a heavy cargo, being stuffed in where space could be found, although in later years, the individual bales became far denser.

The homeward passage was sometimes made a lot easier when perhaps three holds were bottomed out with ingots of zinc from Port Pirie or Risdon near Hobart, this being floored off with dunnage before the freezers got to work.

Stability, when cargo was being loaded and discharged, along with the shortish voyages between ports around the various coasts, was thus something of a complex and moveable feast. It required constant calculation. Also, significant contributors to the ultimate result were the contents of the various oil and fresh water tanks, mostly in the double bottoms.

The bunker situation at any one time tended to be a closely guarded secret presided over by the chief engineer, who often seemed reluctant to part with this crucial information, when the second mate came calling. It will be realised that the daily consumption of fuel and water on passage also affected both the stability of the ship and its trim, so that all had to be part of the calculation.

Every ship in our fleet of about thirty had different stability characteristics, some more docile than others. Some of the newer vessels, elegant and streamlined, were rather harder to stow than older pre-war tonnage, which was flush-decked, without the lavish superstructure that everyone admired. We used to suggest that their designers really didn't understand the first principles of ship stability and were only interested in their looks, but that was probably unfair.

We may not have had the amazing loading computers they use today, but we were not entirely left to our adding machines and slide rules. The ships each were supplied with a device called a "Ralston Indicator," which could be used, usually to plan cargo stows and keep a check on the second

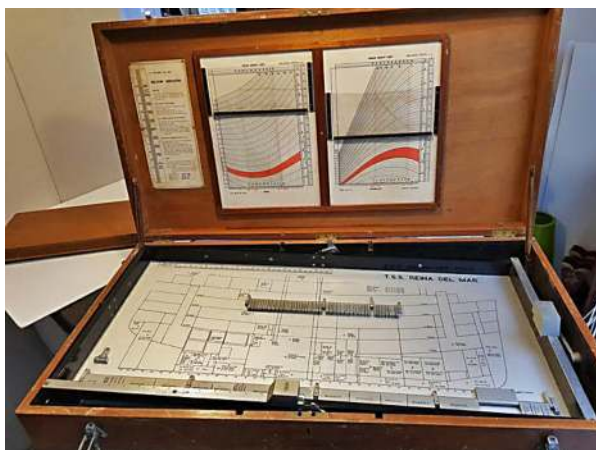
mate's arithmetic. These were rather beautiful flat mahogany boxes in which was to be found a large brass plate with a general arrangement plan of the ship and her tanks inscribed upon it.

Also to be found within was a collection of little boxes with small brass weights, each carefully machined to correspond to a number of tons. It looked, at first glance, like a children's game, but it had a more serious function.

The weights, some of which were quite small and fiddly, were placed on the corresponding compartments, to "load" the ship with both cargo and liquids. Then using a system of levers, the whole table could be balanced longitudinally to indicate the righting moments at any one time and laterally to provide the ship's trim. It was a useful device as you could fairly rapidly see what the effect of filling or emptying the fore or after peak tanks might be, or what that unexpected 300 tonnes of late cargo was going to do to the stability, at any stage of the voyage.

The only problem was that after spending ages loading the ship with its umpteen little weights, eventually finding out what the stability was, you had to put it all away again as the slightest motion of the ship on a coastal passage would have the whole lot sliding all over the place. Some officers who were better than others at their sums would tell you they could work out the stability longhand faster than fiddling around with little bits of brass. Mind you, we never trusted the Ralston anyway, and still were required to work out the vital statistics on paper. Maybe we were just lucky, but we never saw one of our ships on its side, being chopped up by salvors.

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**A Ralston Indicator.**

**This one, from the *Reina Del Mar*, was sold at an online auction for €380. Perhaps Captain Kelso had played with it.**

## An Appreciation

Dear Michael,

### SAFETY FIRST?

In most if not all spheres of transport it is the habit of responsible operators to boast in their publicity that the maxim of “safety first” is uppermost in their thoughts at all times, full stop, with questions unwelcome. As a licensed pilot of almost thirty years of experience including a six-year apprenticeship and now long retired I am most grateful to you, as are other mariners, for your exposure of the falsehood of the boast.

Possibly since the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act in 1974, such boasts have become increasingly fatuous. Most of us are familiar with the humorous recounting of reports of the Battle of Trafalgar as imagined under modern law and the absurdities which have arisen in recent years, whilst many absurdities and horrors have arisen without any assistance from the law. You have most helpfully exposed many absurdities beyond the point where the facts speak only too loudly for themselves. The matters of containerisation and the ever-increasing dimensions of the ships which are built to carry them are but two cases in point. As to any Health and Safety legislation, by 1974 it had become clear to me that many aspects of a life in shipping are neither healthy nor safe, as our ancestors had known since time began.

The falsehood of the “safety first” boast is exposed by the reality that many operations are carried out only after the considerations of physical possibility and commercial viability are carried out, with matters of safety being a third consideration at best. As to containerisation, it would be physically possible, I suppose, on firm ground and in calm weather conditions, to stack containers a mile high, provided only that those at the bottom of the stack could bear the weight of those at the top. Whether such a project has ever been attempted I do not know, but the obvious point needs to be made that when any box-shaped object is placed inside or on board a floating ship which is not perfectly box-shaped, then the container will need to be properly secured by lashings. This point might technically be described as glaringly obvious, as you have described far better than ever I could describe. Quite apart from the obvious need to lash any deck cargo securely, I have vivid recollections of how the height of a stack of containers on deck

As to size, and as to my own personal experience, I plead guilty not only to having been a pilot but also to being the son of a pilot. I was licensed as a Mersey pilot at the age of twenty-three, as was the practice at the time (1966). For the next nine years restrictions were placed upon my licence, as limits to the size of ship whose pilotage I was both licensed and required to conduct. I have a vivid recollection of a family lunch at the age of thirty-two, together with my father, my mother and my wife, shortly after I had been granted an unrestricted licence. Over lunch, my mother (having been married to a licensed pilot for forty years) enquired of her darling son as to how he might be enjoying his career? She was well aware that effectively I had been granted an unrestricted licence to kill. It was a moment of truth. My answer to my own mother, in front of both my father and my wife, was that “Pure size no longer bothers me, but the things which I am now expected to do (with ships of steadily increasing size) certainly do bother me.”

With repeated thanks to you, Michael, and more power to your pen,  
Best wishes,  
Barrie Youde

250 Club

The 250 Club draws were resumed in December, the draws taking place at the last Zoom meeting of the month.

January	C D G Driver	J M M Noble
December (£100)	R C Plumley	Victoria Yelland



## Cachalots on LinkedIn

The groups aim is to provide a central forum for Cachalot members to stay in touch, especially during the current coronavirus epidemic.

We have now attracted thirty-one members with four Cachalots who are registered on LinkedIn and who have been invited but have not completed the final action of accepting the invitation.

The group is marked by the Cachalot emblem in place of the usual 'mugshot' and a banner photo which is changed on a weekly basis, normally on a Tuesday. I will always be grateful for 'new' images of ships you have been on or associated with or marine activities you are involved in.

Hopefully, as a Cachalot member, you are reading this article in the digital edition of the Cachalot and I hope if you have not done so already you will be moved to come and join us. The instructions are included below.

To join the group:

1. Register with LinkedIn if you are not already a member.
2. Search for Captain Robin Plumley MBE
3. Send him a Connect request. There should be a box on his page or you might find it under 'More'.
4. Once he accepts your request, he will send you an Invitation to join the Group.

This is all very new to many of us so please be patient in the event of unforeseen wrinkles.

Important Club news will still be circulated using the *Cachalite* e-bulletin system.

If in any doubt or require assistance please email at [plumleyrobin@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:plumleyrobin@yahoo.co.uk)



## Read it on your Kindle too

We can also send a copy of these newsletters, (including ALL the previous ones, on request) direct to your Kindle device, as well as to your normal email address.

Each Kindle has its own registered e-mail address and to find yours go to Settings → My account. It will look like *your name* @kindle.com

Send this to me at [editor@cachalots.org.uk](mailto:editor@cachalots.org.uk) and I will add you to the Kindle distribution list.

## The CACHALOTS

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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.

**The cut-off date for the next edition will be  
19th February 2021**



The  
World  
Ship  
Society

WORLD SHIPSOCIETY DORSET BRANCH

### Another Zoom Meeting

Again, of the Dorset branch of the World Ship Society

**At 2.30pm, Feb. 13th 2021**

**Krispen's Travels - Another visit to South East Asia ~  
with Krispen Atkinson**

**... a day on the Saigon River ... Singapore waters ... container ships, bulk  
carriers, cruise ships & more ...**

Their Secretary, Steve Pink, says:

There is no need to request an invitation to our February event ... everyone on our circulation list will be sent a Zoom Invitation Link about a week beforehand ... but do make sure its in your diary.

If you are not yet on that list, visit their website [shipsdorset.org](http://shipsdorset.org) and follow the links.

With increasing interest in the Branch and its online initiatives and events during the pandemic, they seek to finance some of their increased costs by inviting donations from those who would support them.

Again, explained on their website. [Here](#)