

The CACHALOT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB

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November 2021

Captain's Log

The one item in the Club Captain's calendar this month was the Club Supper on Trafalgar Day, and with a bit of padding I hoped that would fill this column. What I had not bargained on was making a complete 'horlicks' of my diary by assuming the dinner would be on the Friday. The result, a phone call on the night from the Staff Captain as I was putting on the marigolds (my wife has a dishwasher, and he is typing this column!) to say that everyone was waiting for me so they could sit down to dinner. So, instead of writing my speech in readiness for 'tomorrow', I am doing penance by writing my column. Fortunately, no-one witnessed my embarrassment, and my sincere apologies to everyone whose dinner cooled while they waited for the 'no-show'.

However, as I am writing this on Trafalgar Day, a bit about Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson, 1st Viscount Nelson, 1st Duke of Bronté, KB. Admiral Nelson has a special place in the hearts of Royal Navy personnel. His qualities are extolled during basic training, his battles are examined in detail, and his death at Trafalgar is commemorated in style each October. What is glossed over somewhat was his habit of disobeying orders, but if you are training recruits to take their place in a disciplined service that perhaps is not too surprising.

In 1997 I was commanding a destroyer on a flag-waving visit to Hamburg. On the day of our departure the Wardroom was entertained to breakfast in the City Hall by the First Mayor and Senators. Small talk can be slightly challenging at such events. When units of the British armed forces visit Germany there can be an 'elephant in the room' if you get my meaning. To dodge the elephant we talked about other things, and the Mayor was bowled to learn that I had grown up in Kings Lynn, one of Hamburg's major trading partners in medieval times. That kept the conversation flowing, but eventually we exhausted tales of the Hanseatic

League and it turned to the Royal Navy. At this point the First Mayor vouchsafed that Nelson and Lady Hamilton had stayed in Hamburg on their way back from Naples to England. Rumours had reached London of Nelson's relationship with Lady Hamilton, and ordering Nelson to return to London over land was the Admiralty's way of telling him he had been pushing his luck.

The conjunction of Nelson and the Hanseatic League set me wondering whether Nelson had any direct experience of the merchant navy, and fellow Cachalots will be delighted to hear he did.

In May 1771, Nelson was serving as captain's servant to Captain Suckling (his uncle) on board HMS *Triumph*, which was moored in Chatham with no likelihood of active service. What Nelson needed was practical experience of serving at sea, and when Suckling learnt that a former shipmate, John Rathbone, was the captain of the merchant ship *Mary Ann*, he asked whether Nelson could join him on his next voyage.

The *Mary Ann* left Medway in July 1771 sailing to Jamaica and Tobago, and eventually returned to England almost a year later. It was unusual for potential officers of the Royal Navy to serve in the Merchant Navy, but besides giving Nelson practical seamanship experience it highlighted the differences between the two navies. Merchant Navy pay was usually higher and the discipline much less harsh. Nelson later commented, *'if I did not improve in my education, I returned a practical seaman, with a horror of the Royal Navy, and with a saying then constant with the [merchant] seamen, "Aft the most honour, forward the better man!" It was many weeks before I got in the least reconciled to a man-of-war, so deep was the prejudice rooted'* (Nicolas, Volume 1, page 4). The experience was formative: throughout his career Nelson was known for treating his sailors well and earning their respect, and it is those qualities that are so honoured by the Royal Navy today. The Merchant Navy has a lot to answer for!

Keep safe

Andrew Moll, Club Captain



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Boatsteerers' Locker

Greetings to all, another quiet month with sad news of another Cachalot who has Gone Aloft. See later. I expect there will be good number of us attending the funeral of Richard Olden in Salisbury on Thursday 26th October.

Meeting's at RBL – our meetings at the RBL Club room are beginning to attract more Cachalots and guests which is good to see. However, for the time being we will continue on a Friday only basis and the office answer-phone message has been changed to reflect this.

Zoom gatherings – I am continuing where possible to maintain a Zoom gathering on a Thursday morning, opening from 1045. It has been good to see some new faces, and regular ones. For the most part I am free on a Thursday so not too onerous and happy to continue hosting this for members. Where I have something else on, usually golf, I will set the Zoom call up for people to join any time after 1045. You may find yourself on your own and looking at a blank bulkhead!

250 Club – following a flurry of wins by 'famille' Plumley, it was good to see other Cachalots winning some spoils!!

Remember, you have to be in it to win it!!!

Shipping Festival Service - Following a review of arrangements for this event being held at Winchester Cathedral, and issues which remained unresolved, the committee agreed that we should approach St. Michael's with a view to going ahead with a Shipping Festival Service here in Southampton. I have been in contact with St. Michael's and they have agreed for us to go ahead and plan for this on **Thursday 9th June 2022 at 1900**, so a date for your diaries. Further information and details will be promulgated closer to the date so please make a note in your 2022 diary or calendar.

Sea Pie Supper – Friday 4th February 2022 - With a contract signed and planning moving forward, we keep our fingers crossed that our Dear Leader will not invoke any controls through the winter months and spoil our evening. **Please note, tickets for the Sea Pie Supper will go on sale on Friday 5th November 2021.**

Annual General Meeting – 1830 Thursday 13th January 2022 - As indicated in my last September post, subject to any possible Covid controls being introduced by our Dear Leader, the AGM for 2022 will be held in person with an option for a link by Zoom. This arrangement has been tested on the Smart TV in the Club room and we reckon this will work provided we ensure a strict protocol for contributing to the meeting is in place and applied.

Functions - Thanks to John Noble, our Functions Officer who arranged our first 'home' club supper with a Trafalgar theme on Thursday 21st October at the RBL room. Catering was provided by Sam@chef and his sister.



The scene is set!

Please note the following changes to the programme of events:

Saturday 11th December – Christmas Gathering at Kuti's - **CANCELLED**

Wednesday 15th December – NEW – Christmas Lunch at RBL at 1200. John has worked with Sam@chef to produce a Christmas lunch on this date. The menu will be based on a roast Turkey lunch with trimmings followed by Traditional Christmas pudding (sauce to be confirmed) and cheese with coffee/tea. The cost is still to be evaluated and will be promulgated by Cachalite at the soonest opportunity. In the meantime a sheet will be posted on the Club noticeboard, as usual, but please let John or myself know by email using functions@cachalot.org.uk or boatsteerer@cachalots.org.uk if you wish to attend and number. It will also be helpful if you could indicate any dietary requirements, food allergies or intolerances at this time please so we can pass to the caterer.

Enjoy your November

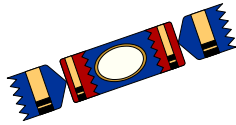
Robin

Captain Robin Plumley MBE

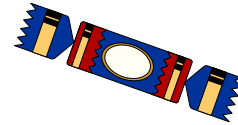
Boatsteerer

boatsteerer@cachalots.org.uk





Club Christmas Lunch



Wednesday December 15th

in the downstairs room at the Royal British Legion Club, 1200 for 1230.



Roast Turkey and trimmings
Christmas Pudding
Cheese & Biscuits



The price is yet to be confirmed and you will be advised by *Cachalite* and in the next *Cachalot* when it has been settled.

List will go up in the Club room and please advise
John, functions@cachalots.org.uk or
Robin, boatsteerer@cachalots.org.uk
of names and numbers.

There will be a limit of 44 for this function, on a first come basis

Sea Pie Supper

Friday 4th February 2022

St. Mary's Stadium

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

Friday 5th November.

£53 for members, £65 for guests



WORLD SHIPSOCIETY DORSET BRANCH

Zoom Meeting

Of the Dorset branch of the World Ship Society

2.30pm, Saturday, November 13th 2021

**~ All Around Panama Canal in 2017 ~ with Neil Davidson
A transit of the old locks .. views from visitor centres at
Miraflores and Agua Clara .. plus ships at Pacific anchorage**

Their Secretary, Steve Pink, says:

There is no need to request an invitation to our April 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 and follow the links.

See our 2021/22 programme via www.shipsdorset.org/events

Cachalots' Golf Day **Lee-on-the-Solent Golf Club**

On Thursday 30th September, thirty of us gathered at Lee-on-the-Solent Golf Club for a bacon buttie and coffee ahead of the first Cachalots' Golf Day since 1989. We were playing for the Charles Webb Trophy, the last winner inscribed on this cup was the late J.G. Dalton who was an Honorary Life Member.

The weather forecast had been dire during the days before but thankfully, Roger Holt's prayer mat actually worked for once and the rain stayed away until we had all finished.

The thirty players included people from DP World, ABP Pilots, SERCO, Warsash Association, Southampton Shipping Golfing Society (SSGS), Exxon Fawley, BMT Group, Svitzer tugs, MAIB and National Oceanography Centre. A number of these were also Cachalots.

One of our members of the management committee, Mark Oakley, had suggested a golf day at the March meeting of the committee. Mark convinced fellow Cachalot Bruce Thomas to start the process and as a member of Lee-on-the-Solent GC, made early arrangements. Unfortunately, Mark was unable to make the day!! I started to elicit support from local marine organisations which resulted in a superb response and at one stage we had thirty-six players registered. Unfortunately, some of these pulled out for various valid reasons and we were left with thirty, still a good number.

Bruce arranged prizes through the golf club professional and I recovered the Charles Webb Golf Trophy from the store and gave it a clean!!!

A history of the Cachalot's Golf Section was included in a previous Cachalot (#91).

The teams were chosen with a Lee member and mix of handicaps and different organisations which provided interest for players to mix and talk during the round.

The first of eight team's tee' d off by Bruce at 1002 into a brisk wind.



left: Bruce Thomas
(ABP Pilot/Cachalot)
in combative mood!



right: Rob Hinton
(SERCO) driving off
the 1st tee



I had my own team with
Past Captain George Angas
(SSGS/Past Captain), Sean
Finn (SERCO and Lee GC
member) and Mike Savaria
(Cachalot/Pilot).

The third hole is a par 4 but reachable in two shots and had a prize for closest the pin in two shots.

The ninth hole is a par 3 and a prize was on offer for nearest the pin in one shot.

The 12th hole had a prize for the longest drive.



The 9th hole par 3. Nearest the pin winner, Ben Halton with an unbeatable shot.

In the clubhouse while Bruce was counting up the scores, celebratory drinks were enjoyed as we sat down to a pleasant two course meal.



And then to the prizegiving! Firstly, I gave a short speech of thanks to all and a toast to the 'Winners' based on an experience of a friend of Cachalot Captain Ian Thomson, who gave a speech to the 'Winners' of a golf tournament in 1963! Nick Brewer from SSGS toasted the organisers on behalf of the guests.

The results:

Nearest the 3rd pin in 2 Doug Wray (BMT Group)

Nearest the 9th pin Ben Halton (DP World)

Longest Drive on 12th Rob Hinton (SERCO)

Team prize 86 points David Ardley (SSGS), Stephen Wallis (Exxon Fawley), Chris Dowty (Warsash Association), Nick Beer (Guest MAIB).

Individual 40 points Steve Wallis (Exxon Fawley).



Steve Wallis with his prize. (Steve received a crystal cut whisky tumbler inscribed with our crest and 'Cachalots Golf Day 2021').



Southampton Master Mariners', The Charles Webb Golf Trophy

J.G. Dalton is the last name to appear on this trophy in 1989. He also won in 1983 as well as winning the Cachalots Whitbread Golfing Cup in 1985. Gerry joined the Southampton Master Mariners' Club in 1969 and was appointed Honorary Life Member in 2005. He went aloft just five weeks after his 100th birthday in 2012.

An enjoyable and successful day in great company with £30 being raised towards Club funds. I took some Cachalot application forms along and hope to have attracted at least three new members.

Many thanks to all who came along and supported us on the day. Special thanks to Bruce for looking after the golf club organisation and to all the staff at Lee-on-the-Solent golf club for looking after us.

Finally, thanks to Mark for the suggestion! I have already been asked about a repeat in 2022.

For the record, the Boatsteerer came 3rd with 36 points!!

Robin



Stranger than fiction

The Maritime Advocate online
Issue 788 Oct. 8th 2021

By Michael Grey

Will what we used to think of as “normal” ever return? Black swans used to be rare, but now they are coming by the squadrons, like migrating geese, as one daft occurrence succeeds the last in bewildering succession. There is a world shortage of lorry drivers, as they all opt to drive delivery vans rather than queue up in customs or sleep in their squalid cabs. The Chinese are experiencing power cuts, despite opening a couple of new coal-fired power stations every week. They have run out of coal.

There are nearly seven hundred bulkers blocking up the approaches to just about every Chinese port, while on the other side of the Pacific giant container ships are drifting around aimlessly waiting for a berth, with every safe anchorage already full. “Once on demurrage - always on demurrage” was a saying frequently repeated by happy shipbrokers, but with maritime trade slowing to a crawl and worries about what will be in the shops this Christmas, it is not something they should joke about in public. Is it Covid-struck stevedores, property companies on the verge of collapse, or just run of the mill cash-flow problems that are keeping Chinese anchorages full? Meanwhile, the Suez Canal had its busiest day ever, so not everyone has ground to a complete halt. At least most ships are still running, even if not all is right with the world. Cheers to seafarers on World Maritime Day!

When you are attempting to cast light on this chronicle of curiosities, it is difficult to know where to start. You might begin close to home, having been trapped for the best part of an hour by panicking British motorists trying to force their way into our local filling station, while crazed climate activists have glued themselves to the motorway, thus effectively stopping the fuel tankers getting through to where they need to be.

You might wonder about the degree of self-harm that has been done through national energy policies which have been hopelessly skewed by the increasingly fanatical lobbying of environmentalists, now practising the fastest growing religion in the world. You could look for the “interconnectors”, not the useful cables moving power between neighbouring countries, but the way in which great power politics has exposed the vulnerabilities of industrial countries, which have precipitously


switched off dependable energy sources, leaving them at the mercy of either weather or dictators.

There are so many connections that you might wonder whether there is some evil guiding mind that needs a James Bond to sort it out. Nobody ever seemed to think about any of the consequences in the popular rush to go green. And who would have forecast that CO₂, the demon that haunts us, would be in such short supply that fertiliser production ceases? Or what bright spark thought that two or three days of gas storage was adequate to see us through the winter? What, it might have been asked, would that be exposing us to, if there was a huge anticyclone over North Europe on a freezing winter's day.

Mind you, there is such a thing as cutting off your nose to spite your face, with China banning Australian coal and, a few months later, finding nothing to burn in their blast furnaces or power stations. Perhaps, in their determination to teach those impertinent Australians a lesson, the Chinese never quite looked at the availability of alternative sources, mostly from very long distances. As Confucius probably never said, before you get on your high horse, you need to be able to ride.

And amid all this global turbulence, with a pandemic still raging around, you might think that there are more important matters than the "climate crisis" for our leaders to be focussed upon. It will be somewhat embarrassing if, just as the world leaders, stunned by ten days of green oratory and being shouted at by Greta, shuffle forward to sign the intergalactic climate convention, as Boris beams, all the lights go out.

If you are looking for a bit of perspective amid the Glaswegian hysteria, you might like to indulge with me in some first-class heresy and read Ian Plimer's brilliant book "Heaven and Earth", which, when published in 2009, endeavoured to put some real science (as opposed to dodgy data and useless modelling) into the issue of global warming. Plimer, who as a distinguished geologist thinks in aeons rather than decades, will have been cast into outer darkness by the scientific establishment - which demonises dissent - would go down in Glasgow like a distillery director at a temperance meeting. But it is a rational and scholarly book, that ought to be revisited at times like this, as we rush forward to make energy, domestic and transport policies fit with the new religion, in a world that is in a state not far short of chaos.

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and the author, Cachalot Michael Grey greyrjm@gmail.com

THE ANTWERP PARK BENCH

A recent discussion I had involved the pranks that cadets got up to at navigation schools, eg getting a Mini up on the classroom roof. I have no anecdotes in that context, but there was one excellent prank on board ship that I remember well, and proved to have a useful ending.



During 1964 I was sailing as senior cadet on the Strick Line general cargo ship *Baharistan*. It was the end of a normal voyage to the Arabian Gulf and return, and we arrived in Antwerp on Sunday and tied up on a lay-by berth prior to entering dry dock at 0700 on Monday. As we were paying off the next day for leave and would be up early next day for the dry docking both of us cadets went to bed and slept the sleep of the dead that only late teenagers can, so we heard nothing.

Other than the deck and engine duty officers, everyone else went on the inevitable end of voyage run ashore, which no doubt included some notably bars of merchant navy fame. The next morning when we went out on deck we found, on the second deck outside the officers' smokeroom, a four seat park bench. Apart from its obvious appearance it had a Belgian plaque on it, which was rather a giveaway! There was no obvious method of how this got through the docks and not only on board but up onto the next accommodation deck. Nobody then or ever since has owned up either who did it and how they did it.

Later in life when I was sailing with the Chief Officer on board at that time and who stayed on board for the Antwerp and London loading, he told me that morning the Captain and Chief Officer were walking round the decks and found the bench. "What's that?" asked the Captain. "Looks like a

park bench” said the C/O. “Excellent” said the Captain. “Every ship should have one. Make sure it is secure for sea.” This was followed a couple of weeks later in London when the C/O was walking round the decks with the Marine Superintendent, and they reached the bench. “What’s that?” asked the Super. It’s a park bench, sir” said the C/O. “Better keep it” said the Super. “Too much trouble getting rid of it now!” You couldn’t make it up, could you!!

This addition to the ship’s equipment proved to be a valuable asset. These were the days where there was the risk of the “oil and water” problem between the departments. However, from then on when the weather warmed up the usual case of the engineers burying themselves in their duty mess for “smoke-o” and lunch was replaced by the bench becoming the engineers’ seat outside the smokeroom where they were joined by the deck department, and it made for a pleasant and harmonious atmosphere.

The bench to my knowledge remained there until Strick was taken into the P&O General Cargo Division in 1972, and in all probability went to the breaker’s yard with her.

Barry Peck



The Royal Marchant Navy

25th August 2020
Denbighshire to fly 'Red Duster' on Merchant Navy Day
By [REDACTED]



The Red Ensign has been the flag of the Royal Merchant Navy since the mid-19th century. Picture Colin Horne

THE red flag of the Royal Navy will be hoisted above Denbighshire in support of the seafarers that have fed the UK since the 19th century. Denbighshire County Council will mark Marchant Navy Day on Thursday, September 3 with a ceremony at Ruthin County Hall.....

A striking example of sea-blindness was revealed in this well meaning report in a local Denbighshire online publication last year.

Sitting here in my glass house, this editor is all too aware of the pitfalls of lobbing stones in the direction of other publications but... please...!!!

A day in the life of.....

Post Captain Rachel Dunn describes a typical working day.

The authority that manages Portsmouth Harbour and the Dockyard Port of Portsmouth is the Queen's Harbour Master, even though Portsmouth International Port as a CHA are operating within it. As a result, there are two pilot organisations, Commercial and Admiralty, I am one of the latter.

As with all pilots, my primary purpose as an Admiralty Pilot is to provide pilotage support to Commanding Officers / Master's of designated ships within the Dockyard Port, in accordance with approved procedures and Statutory Instruments. This service may range from advice to full conduct of the move. I also assume full responsibility for the safety and navigation of any of Her Majesty's Ships being moved without power, in accordance with the Queen's Regulations for the Royal Navy, as directed by the Queens Harbour Master.

Coming from a merchant background, operating with the Royal Navy has some idiosyncrasies. One that still confuses me is "down slack a mooring line", for me it means slacken the mooring rope, in the RN it means heave it tight, but the eventual aim is the same, to berth or sail the ship safely. Our Admiralty pilotage service is able to operate three concurrent moves (ship size depending).

Early morning start today, means a 0730 sailing of a frigate from Fountain Lake Jetty 1, head in, to sea. Two tugs have been allocated and after the master pilot exchange (and a cup of coffee), the tugs are secured centre lead for'd and the transom for a turn off the berth. I am



HMS LANCASTER, a type 23 Frigate, passing carrier

an advisor to the ships' bridge team, advising the most effective method to use the tugs (although we direct the tugs), what to expect with the prevailing conditions and how to best utilise them for the departure. On leaving the harbour, we are made aware of any traffic not only arriving in Portsmouth, but traffic transiting to and from Southampton. For a vessel of this size, I disembark once through the forts and clear of the Portsmouth

Harbour Approach channel, another successful departure.

Back to the office and the next task is to check the remaining days movements and plan the following days movements ensuring the pilots, appropriate tugs, shoreside riggers and launches are available.

Next I have the arrival of USCG Eagle, a 90 metre barque sailing cutter which is used to train USCG Officers. With the tide on the ebb, it's going to be a slow arrival into Portsmouth harbour as we battle through 3 kts of tide in the entrance.



USCG EAGLE

A trainee officer will be doing the berthing, they are planning to turn at the top of the harbour using their own power but there will be insufficient room to carry out their planned manoeuvre, so tugs are secured. The vessel is turned and berthed safely. During the evolution I explain why their initial plan would not work, why they should be carrying out certain manoeuvres and what effect and

reaction will be experienced.

Next is a move of a Type 45 Destroyer from 3 Basin into C Lock. I've already held a toolbox talk with the Master Rigger and tug master's. The three tugs are already moved into the basin for this move.

The first tug is secured in the transom (with a large Yoko fender) as a composite unit (4 lines secured), a second tug is secured centre lead for'd and finally the third tug is used as roaming asset able to push as required.

I instruct the composite tug as to what revolutions to set for the move, I then give direction and thrust instructions for each azipod.



We sternboard away from the HMS DEFENDER, a type 45 Destroyer

berth, turn in the basin and enter the lock, bow first.

The vessel is pulled in using the bow tug, the stern tug works against the bow tug controlling the speed and lateral movement, under my direction.

Guys ropes, controlled by shoreside riggers are secured onboard and warped up the dockside as required until the vessel is in the correct position. Safely secured, another job completed. I have planned for the vessel to go tidal tomorrow.



HMS DRAGON, another type 45 Destroyer, arriving

Pilots are allocated to give practical instruction and guidance as an alternative to the text book training the Royal Navy team get for manoeuvring, so when the Royal Navy operates in other areas (where the pilotage is restricted or unavailable) they can utilise our training and their ship handling experience, gained in their home port to safely operate their vessels worldwide.

Post Captain Rachel Dunn



RFA TIDESURGE passing Blockhouse

Letter to the Editor

Michael Grey's Cartoon.

The laws of pilotage were first drawn to my attention in 1950. My father was a Mersey pilot and the son of a lawyer who had died in 1940 and whom I never knew. The lawyer's widow, my grandmother, I knew very well and I knew that she had been a schoolmistress. Both she and my father (a former HMS Conway cadet) were highly intelligent.

In 1950 a book was published under the title "A History of the Liverpool Pilotage Service" by John S. Rees. JS Rees had recently retired from lifelong service in the post of clerk in the administration of pilotage at Liverpool. His service had begun at the end of the nineteenth century, when pilot-cutters under sail were still the only means of the embarkation and disembarkation of pilots to and from ships in the Irish Sea. The history as recorded in Rees's book shows the origins of pilotage at Liverpool at a far earlier date, under the Liverpool Pilotage Act of 1766. Excerpts from that parliamentary Act are reported in Rees's book, including the provision of penalties for pilots found to have been drunk on duty.

Drunk on duty! I was aged seven and knew little of duty and even less of drunkenness, as both of my parents were virtually teetotal, save only for a glass of sherry at Christmastime and perhaps (just) a fleeting mention of gin. My older brother, aged eleven, knew enough to think that drunkenness was hilarious; and thus my interest was sparked at least in part by my brother's laughter.

And so I asked more questions. Why does this happen? Why does that happen? Who has command of the ship? Surely a shipmaster would be unhappy at having a pilot forced upon him by way of any compulsory pilotage scheme under the previously unknown law?

This latter question puzzled me for several years. At the age of seven I was far too young to understand any of it properly. At a later stage in life, probably at the age of about fourteen, I pressed my father for a clear answer to the question of how welcome a pilot might be aboard any ship? Dad gave me the clear (if surprising) answer that most shipmasters are pleased to see a pilot come aboard.

Sixty five years after hearing my father's advice it is good to know that his word remains true; and that, in principle, very little has changed in the intervening years. Michael Grey's cartoon (Page 22 of Cachalot 93) captures a moment perfectly, showing a clearly embraided shipmaster volunteering his instructions to a distinctly unembraided pilot. We can almost hear the words added, "She's right-handed. Have you brought the mail? Would you like some breakfast?" Events in the Suez Canal last March remind us that it is likely that the pilotage legislation will remain with us for some time yet to come. Thank you, Michael!



Barrie Youde

Chloé

Our immediate past Boatsteerer, Ken Dagnall, writes :

At a recent Probus meeting the speaker gave a talk about Tasmania and mentioned the ferry that runs between Melbourne and Tasmania.

Two members stated that they had travelled on the ferry and about eight had visited Melbourne. I then asked had they seen 'Chloe' and only one, an ex P&O man, put his hand up.

On my last visit on holiday to Australia I introduced my good lady to 'Chloe' !!

For the uninitiated I attach a copy of the story of 'Chloe' which may be of interest to our readers.



Young & Jackson is an iconic pub situated on the corner of Flinders and Swanston Streets in Melbourne.

The hotel is well known for the nude painting *Chloé*, painted by French artist Jules Joseph Lefebvre in 1875.

The painting is oil on canvas measuring a life size 260 x 139 cm. It was purchased for 850 guineas by Dr Thomas Fitzgerald of Lonsdale Street in Melbourne. After

being hung in the National Gallery of Victoria for three weeks in 1883, it was withdrawn from exhibition because of the uproar created especially by the Presbyterian Assembly. It was bought for the Young and Jackson Hotel in 1908 for 800 pounds, and was damaged in 1943 by an American serviceman who threw a glass of beer at it.

She has graced magazine covers, had wine named after her and poems written to her. She has experienced fame and adoration and has won high acclaim from critics. Her career began, like the many models after her, in Paris. She was created and moulded by a Master. She is a Melbourne icon, mascot for the HMAS Melbourne, an extremely fine work of art; she is an ingénue, a nymph, a celebrity. She is Chloe, the famous nude portrait which has graced the walls of the Young & Jackson Hotel since 1909. Throughout her life, Chloe has kept company with artists, poets, wharfies, Prime Ministers and drunks, soldiers, sailors, celebrities, bushies, labourers and art connoisseurs. Her history involves transformation, death, intrigue, love, war, depression and passion. Chloe now hangs upstairs in the carpeted Chloe's Bar, so you can enjoy a drink or a meal while you admire this true Australian icon.



Ferry future

Seatrade Maritime Analysis and Opinion October 2021

When transport ministers, policy makers, even the general public talk about connectivity, it is airlines, railways and roads that they think of first – with ferries (indeed the whole of sea transport) mostly omitted from the conversation. And if ferries ever feature, it is invariably because some ambitious politician wants to do away with them, by constructing a tunnel or bridge across the piece of water they serve.



How important are ferries in terms of their value to the world economy? Interferry, their trade association, has long campaigned for rather greater recognition of the sector and has commissioned research into its economic impact. Revealed at the Interferry annual conference in Santander this month, the research by Oxford Economics shows that in 2019, ferries carried 4.27 billion passengers and 373 million vehicles across a worldwide fleet of 15,400 vessels. The sector contributed some \$60billion to global GDP and provided 1.1 million jobs. This shipping segment, only between 3-5% of the whole shipping industry, thus deserves to be taken more seriously, according to Interferry CEO Mike Corrigan.

It might be suggested that all transport sectors blow their own trumpets in a bid for greater recognition, but this economic assessment of a mode of transport is perhaps timely, as all logistics comes under a greater level of scrutiny. And as the world emerges from the pandemic, it is suggested that ferry transport, perhaps for obvious reasons, is currently seen as a safer form of travel.

Ferries, of course, come in many different forms, from very large ships carrying huge quantities of freight to small domestic craft, which are sometimes the only transport option for the bulk of a developing world population. What they have in common is their flexibility, with most ships able to switch routes or add and subtract capacity on demand, something that has been amply illustrated in North Europe in recent months, as traffic has changed with Covid and Brexit challenges.

Perhaps because ferries tend to be ignored by policy makers and regulators, Interferry has had to work hard to prevent the sector being disadvantaged, or even overlooked, in all the technical changes being forced on shipping as it “decarbonises”. It is clearly inappropriate to treat them as if they were deep sea ships, with the same set of solutions to reduce emissions. At the same time, it has been possible to propose emission reduction strategies, such as battery and hybrid propulsions, and the use of experimental fuels, that would not be available for large, deep-sea ships, so in some respects, the sector has been something of a technology test-bed. This will hopefully be encouraged.

But if greenhouse gas emissions are to be reduced, it is also clear that ports will have to play their part in providing shoreside infrastructure that will make it possible for ferry operators to reduce their dependence on hydrocarbons. The provision of electrical charging facilities and green fuels obviously needs the co-operation of ports and energy companies, with a considerable burden requiring to be shared.

Interferry itself also deserves serious recognition for the way in which it has championed ferry safety, which in many parts of the world leaves much to be desired. It remains a sad fact that in those countries which need ferries most, and have few other alternatives, ferry accidents remain a blot on the landscape, overcrowding, aged craft, poor supervision and training exacting a terrible annual toll. And while the International Maritime Organisation is unable to regulate for domestic ferries, Interferry, along with other agencies such as the Lloyd’s Register Foundation and IMO experts have been able to provide a useful road map for safety improvements. Now, IMO has been able to provide an “advisory” to help to regulate domestic ferries, reinforced by a great deal of technical and practical assistance from people who know about ferry operations. Lives will surely be saved by these initiatives.

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British India Steam Navigation Co. Ltd.

Reunion 2020/2021, Bristol

At the beginning of October, my wife and I were pleased to be able to accompany our friend and fellow Cachalot Gordon Thornton to a British India Steam Navigation Co. reunion in Bristol. Gordon is ex BI but I never was, having served my time with James Nourse, later Hain-Nourse which, in 1972, along with BI, New Zealand S.Co., Strick Line, General Steam and other companies under the overall control of P&O, were all absorbed into the newly formed P&O General Cargo Division. The ships were all renamed, Strath-this and Strath-that, and within a few years they were all gone, sold on or sent to the breakers yards. I came ashore in 1971 so didn't have to experience the death throes of the British Merchant Navy as we then knew it.

We were all company men in those days, tending to stick with our chosen company, good ships or bad ships, and displaying a loyalty to them that was, inevitably, but with some exceptions, not returned. Perhaps that loyalty was not to the company as such, but to the ships and shipmates under the particular house-flags. Whatever, it has endured for over 50 years and we are still known to our peers and to fellow club members as 'a Blue Funnel man' or 'a Union Castle man', 'P&O man', 'BI man', 'Cunarder' etc. and we all understand the distinctions between them.

Reunions are still being held for all the major shipping companies of the era, even though time and tide have taken their toll and organisers are finding it hard to attract sufficient support from the dwindling number of survivors. Michael Grey reports attending a 'Vintage Port' Line reunion in London recently where there were just 36 attendees. A look online reveals that their reunion in 2017 was then declared to be the last but somehow these events continue to be resurrected. I understand that there was a Clan Line reunion in Liverpool, also early in October, and plans are in hand for Union-Castle reunions next year.

At this BI reunion, delayed from 2020, there were 47 ex BI officers attending: 30 deck, 13 engineers, 1 electrician and 3 Matrons. Wives and partners made the number up to 77, enough to make the programmed events viable. We were all white British but this did not really reflect the make up of BI personnel at sea until 1972. Indian and other Asian officers tended to

be of a more mature age in those days, as did Pursers and catering officers, and they would be well into their 80's and 90's now. Covid travel restrictions would also have prevented many of those from overseas attending.

The reunion started off with a Welcome Dinner for 64 in the chosen 4 star hotel in the centre of Bristol. Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, an ex BI man, from cadet to C/O before he went solo, gave a stirring pre-dinner speech which set the tone for the weekend. A boat trip up the Avon on a wet Saturday when it rained steadily from dawn till dusk was a bit of a wash-out but reinforced that old MN maxim that if you can't take a joke you shouldn't have signed on. Fifty stalwarts huddled behind the plastic drop down awnings sharing reminiscences and swinging the lamp.

The high-light of the event was an excellent dinner that evening, served in the sumptuously decorated first-class dining saloon on the SS Great Britain. Great food, great service and a great time had by all. And to reinforce the afore said loyalty to the house-flag, an auction of two of them raised £75 towards the RNLI, one of them won by Sir Robin himself.

Terry Clark

I did not manage to take any decent pictures at the dinner, but here is one of a table in the dining saloon, that I took earlier.

Seven years earlier in fact, to the day, on the Club visit to the SS Great Britain in 2014.

There were six such tables laid out on the night, but unfortunately without the centre-pieces



At such an event there are naturally many recollections of past shipmates and characters and one of those attending, Tony Boddy, who was with BI from 1953 - 1962 and later a Thames Pilot for 31 years before retirement in 2000, came up with the following piece about one such notable BI man.

Haji Reid

At the recent reunion one or two asked me about Captain David MacKenzie Reid, better known as Haji Reid and how he got his nickname. Over many days, evenings and glasses of beer he told me his story in bits. Haji was torpedoed in the Mediterranean while carrying case oil from Tobruk to Malta and was badly burned. He was sent to a hospital in Beirut. Eventually he recovered and had some convalescence. He realised that he had better get back to work, but travel to London across occupied Europe was impossible. He therefore decided to go to Bombay, but there were no flights in 1940/41. The only alternative was overland. He went to the British Consul and got some money and set off almost due East towards the Euphrates. There was no regular transport and so he hitched, first by lorry and van but soon by camel. Once at the Euphrates he headed down river, passing through the ancient cities of Nineveh and Babylon. He ate and slept where he could, but he was for the rest of his life always grateful for and an admirer of Arab hospitality. He then made his way to Baghdad on the Tigris and again reported to the British Consul and got some more money. With cash in his pocket he actually caught a train to Basra where he made his way to the dhow harbour and started his sea journey. I do not know how many legs he made on the voyage, but he would point out to me some of the places where he stayed and who he stayed with, including with a one eyed midwife. On the last leg of his journey, which would have been from Muscat he saw that the dhow had a set of ancient linen backed charts. He offered to exchange them for a brand new set, and by way of persuasion even offered some money as well but the Dhow Captain told him that his father and grandfather used the charts to navigate from Muscat to Zanzibar and he did not trust any others. He must have picked up a fair bit of Arabic because friends and acquaintances would come to visit him in "Dumra" and often he would sit on his cabin deck with them and drink coffee and they did not all speak English. It was an absolute privilege to have sailed twice with Haji Reid and whenever we were in port together I would always go to see him.

Salaams, Tony Boddy

Shetland and the Merchant Navy

By Michael Grey

Merchant Navy Day 2021 was a rather special event in Shetland with the unveiling of a new monument to Shetland Seafarers, past and present, on the quayside in Lerwick. Sited just in front of the Shetland Museum and Archives, the monument, of highly polished stainless steel manufactured by the locally based Ocean Kinetics, was unveiled by the Lord Lieutenant. An initiative by the Shetland Seafarers' Association, the event was also commemorated by the publication of a pamphlet which summarised the extraordinary record of the islands' seafaring community, from the hard times of the early 18th century to the present.

And for a small community, it is a fantastic record, from the days of the sailing whalers, service in the Merchant Navy under sail and steam, to the offshore energy industries of today. The pamphlet traces the hardship which drove Shetlanders to sea, and the reputation they cultivated as peerless seafarers in all manner of ships around the world. And today, where it is difficult to find anyone on the mainland with an intelligent grasp of the maritime world, the population of these small islands remains extraordinarily well informed about all maritime matters. (*I was in Lerwick once, after the Braer affair and remember having an amazing conversation in a newsagents about Worldscale rates!*) It is significant that one of only two maritime colleges in Scotland – the NAFC Marine Centre of the University of the Highlands and Islands is located on Shetland. The pamphlet concludes – “There is perhaps no equivalent community in the UK that has produced so many seamen over so many years...”

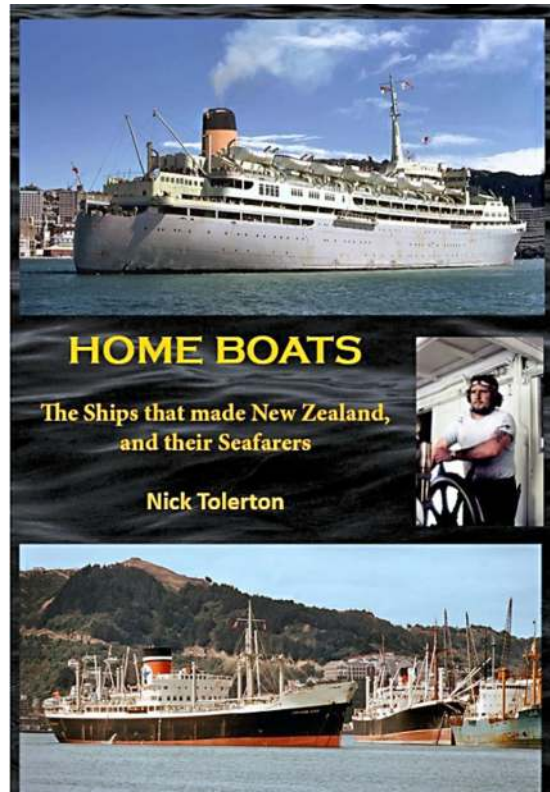


left to right – the Lord Lieutenant Bobby Hunter, Fisherman's Mission Superintendent Aubrey Jamieson, Capt Errol Smith, head of the local Coastguard, SSA President Eddie Knight, Callum Smedley of the Northern Lighthouse Board, Capt. George Sutherland and Ian Jamieson.

The way we were

Continuing on our theme of MN memories and nostalgia Michael Grey reviews a new book by Nick Tolerton

They couldn't go any further without coming back again, the 120 or so ships that maintained the longest liner services in the world, between North Europe and New Zealand. They brought to New Zealand just about everything that was needed in that young country and took away all the wool, dairy, fruit and meat that their farmers could produce. And in that country, until containerisation and the shock of the UK's accession to the EU treaty, they were known as the "home boats".



In a magnificent volume, packed with photographs and rich with recollection, "Home Boats – the ships that made New Zealand and their Seafarers" is the story of the four British shipping companies that maintained this service, which effectively turned the Commonwealth of New Zealand from a struggling land of subsistence farmers into what it is today. The author Nick Tolerton writes with great affection of the ships of New Zealand Shipping Company, Port Line, Shaw Savill and Blue Star that carried cargo and passengers on this long haul, over the best part of a century.

It is a book written very much from the New Zealand perspective and the author traces the history of the settlement, its early dependence upon sail, which lasted until the final years of the 19th century, largely because of the length of the passage and the limited range of the steamships which were capturing the trade elsewhere. The historical section of the book captures the principal milestones of the trade, from the 1841 establishment of New Zealand as a separate colony from New South Wales, such as the arrival of the first refrigerated ship, to the first steamship to make the long passage. But both under sail and with mechanical propulsion, the fleets of the four

companies remained keen competitors, which undoubtedly benefited their customers over the years.

The book is richly illustrated with pictures of these fine ships, but what makes the volume far more than a “ship lover’s” book is the large number of photographs showing something of what life aboard was like. People who actually sailed in these vessels will find illustrations of their old life; chipping paint, steering, splicing wire or relaxing at smoko, tugging at the distant memories. It is full of facts that might not have been particularly well known to those who sailed aboard these ships. The 1925 *Port Dunedin*, which we probably knew had been the first motor ship on the NZ coast, ended her life in 1962 as the oldest cargo liner under the Red Ensign and having given the longest service under one house flag of any British deep-sea trader. Nobody in post-war days ever thought the *Port Alma* was a speedster, but she apparently won the 1929 and 1930 Australian wool races from Sydney to Dunkirk. It is a book with all manner of fascinating curiosities.

But perhaps best of all are the personal recollections of people who sailed in these ships, in all ranks and ratings over the years. What perhaps stands out as so very different to contemporary shipping is the extraordinary self reliance of the admittedly large crews who sailed on these ships, some of them of considerable age, when their owners sent them for scrap. Here are recollections from apprentices and masters, chief engineers and chippies that bring back a distinctive flavour of the past. It is a great book of memories for anyone who might have sailed in these ships, in an age of British seafaring that has all but vanished. It is also a useful contribution to maritime history and the stories of two countries, joined by the longest liner route in the world. It’s the way we were.

Home Boats by Nick Tolerton ISBN 978-1-877418-88-4 is available in the UK from Coastal Shipping Publications of Portishead, Bristol.

www.coastalshipping.co.uk

Michael Grey

This review appeared on the **Vintage Port Website**

At £40 + £4 p&p this book might be an ideal addition to your Christmas list.



Captain Ken

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

The disappointing news that Liverpool had lost its UNESCO World heritage status, due mainly to spoiling the Mersey skyline with new building, brought back a very particular memory to me.

When World War Two broke out, my family were on holiday in Switzerland. My father was a very keen supporter of the League of Nations which was holding a special exhibition in Geneva. Due to this unfortunate situation it looked as if the family would have to remain in Switzerland for the duration of the war. Fortunately our government arranged a special train via Paris to bring the last British citizens back to the Channel coast and we were lucky to return to England on the last ferry. Although I was only five years old, I vividly remember that crucial voyage and the relief of seeing the white cliffs of Dover.

Although my parents must have been worried to death at this parlous situation, I recollect lying adjacent to a lifeboat and looking up at the stars on a completely blacked out ship, and thinking 'This is the life for me.'

Throughout my school life I was completely obsessed with my ambition to go to sea and was constantly urging my father to take me to Liverpool which was the only place I knew where I could take a Board of Trade maritime eye test certificate.

In those days this was absolutely essential for officers, apprentices or crew members serving at sea in the deck department. The finest treat for me was a trip to Liverpool and a ride on the waterfront Overhead Railway or Dockers' Umbrella as it was affectionately known. From a high-up position you rode for some thirteen miles, viewing ships from all over the world and to me it was just magic.

Eventually, having reached the advanced age of 13, my father arranged to take me for this so crucial certificate. I already knew the exact address where this eye test took place as it had always been at the famous Liverpool Custom House. It is hard to describe the excitement I felt at that age as we made our way to this grand Victorian building and climbed the

wide steps up to the impressive colonnade at the front. Suddenly, as we reached the top step, I looked between the huge stone pillars and to my horror there was no building at all, just an empty space.

Unknown to us the Custom House had been a victim of the terrible Liverpool air-raids in which a great deal of the city had been destroyed. We were, however, relieved to discover that the Three Graces, the magnificent buildings on the Pier Head waterfront, had survived the bombing raids, and the all important eye test had been transferred to a top floor of the Royal Liver Building

The testing room was in complete darkness and to pass the test you simply had to show you could see the separate pin-point oil lanterns showing red, green and white at a certain distance.

I passed the eye test and an ancient sailing ship captain in uniform shook my hand and wished me luck. It seems to have worked.

This note was appended, by 'Mr Editor', to Ken's piece in the October edition of *Outlook*.

The Cachalot

I have looked up the above word in the dictionary and it means Sperm whale. It is also the name used as the title of the monthly newsletter of the Southampton Master Mariners' Club of which our own Captain Ken is both recipient and contributor. It would appear that Captain Ken's Outlook articles have also found a place in their esteemed publication and I would just like to thank the editor of The Cachalot for his interest in Outlook magazine and his kind comments. The Outlook staff consider it praise indeed and coming from an ex-Merchant Navy man, this ex- Royal Navy man of eight years service feels very humbled and gratified.



New Member

Michael J Moss is a self employed ship outfitter/surveyor with an interest in marine history and archaeology. He rejoins us after a short spell away.

Bill McCrea has advised us that **Val Plowman**, who was the wife of the late Past Captain Eric Plowman (1999), was called aloft on the 28th September. Eric went aloft in November 2009.

Gone Aloft

Peter John Sara, who went aloft on the 14th October, aged 71, joined the Club in 2006. He was a marine engineer who went to sea with the P&O Group as an Engine Cadet in 1967 before joining P&O Cruises as an Assistant Engineer Officer in 1971. During the years that followed, he worked his way up through the various Engineer Officer ranks before leaving P&O in 1980, having gained his Chief Engineer's Certificate by the time he left.

His various ships included – Oronsay, Canberra, Spirit of London / Sun Princess, Island Princess and Pacific Princess.

He then joined Warsash Maritime Academy as a Senior/Principal Lecturer and stayed there until December 1997, spending his last year as Acting Head of Engineering.

In January 1998 he joined the Maritime and Coastguard Agency as a Marine Surveyor in the Seafarers Safety and Health Branch with a remit on COSWP/Health and Safety issues. He really enjoyed producing the many safety leaflets that were issued to ships and colleges, and he'd go out to both to offer H&S reviews on board UK flag ships, and advise on improving working practices, advice that was frequently greatly valued as it came from somebody who had worked onboard ships and really understood the practical issues involved. He is still remembered fondly by many in industry for covering ships in tiger tape to highlight snap back zones and trip/fall/edge hazards.

In 2008 that role evaporated in Peter Cardy's big review of the MCA, and Peter found himself moved to Southampton Marine Office where his big contribution - again highly appreciated - was as an examiner and auditor, his education and safety background being very useful here too. He remained there until his retirement in 2011.

As well as being a Cachalot and a regular organiser of the Chandler's Ford charabanc to the Sea Pie Supper he helped out with the Missions to Seafarers, delivering goodie bags to ships in Southampton. It is so ironic that he was working to help seafarers trapped on board ship by fear of Covid, and yet in the end he became a casualty himself.

Peter was admitted to Winchester ICU in early October with severe Covid on his lungs then suffered two massive strokes, brought on by Covid, the following week.

Our condolences to his wife Debbie, his son Richard, also a marine engineer, and his daughter Louise, a master mariner and fellow Cachalot.

*The Funeral will take place at the Wessex Vale Crematorium, Bubb Lane, West End, SO30 2HL at 1130 on **Thursday 4th November** and those wishing to attend should contact Louise at Louise.sara79@gmail.com so they have an idea of numbers.*

There will be a live Webcast of the Service on

<https://watch.obitus.com> Username: yuso5211 Password: 357500

Rough seas ahead

Baird Maritime Workboat World October 27th 2021

Grey Power

It didn't take long after the autumn equinox before the storms in the northern oceans were racking up their first substantial container losses, something of a portent of far worse to come as winter extends its grip on the sealanes. The 4526teu *Zim Kingston* was inbound to Vancouver when some 30-40 boxes were lost in the sea or damaged as the fourth bay from forward disappeared in heavy weather. Then to compound their misery, the wreckage of the residual boxes in that stack caught fire, with a dangerous chemical that reacts with water causing the evacuation of three quarters of her crew for their own safety. Meanwhile the respective coastguards were attempting to track those boxes which remained afloat.

In the grand scheme of container shipping, this is a small loss aboard a relative minnow in oceanic trade, but it is worth asking whether anything very much has been learned from the record losses of the previous winter, with their several spectacular stack collapses. With more bigger ships being commissioned practically every month, it doesn't take a seer to suggest that the coming winter could see many more containers coming to grief as the storms track over the northern oceans.

Just a couple of years ago, it seems, we were marvelling at 19,000teu ships with nine high boxes on deck. There was a 24,000teu monster arrived on her maiden voyage to north Europe with eleven high stacked abaft the bridge and with the desperate efforts to move the creaking logistics chain up a gear, we will surely see full loads being carried on virtually every sailing. Admittedly, many of those on top will be empties, as the carriers struggle to get the boxes back where they ought to be, but the heights, and windage, will remain spectacular. It is also worth remembering that the technology that secures these monstrous loads to the ship is fundamentally the same as was found aboard the first container ships - fifty years ago.

I'm afraid it rather gives away my age, but I remember attending a new Dart Containerline ship in the early 1970s as she set off across the North Atlantic on her first voyage with the boxes two high on the hatches, which was seen to be very brave. They were anxious to show us the lashing arrangements – the “state of the art” rods and turnbuckles, which I'm afraid are largely replicated – slightly scaled up – aboard today's monsters more than ten times the carrying capacity of those old ships, which were specifically built for North Atlantic conditions.

We might have automatic and semi-automatic twistlocks (which sometimes bring their own problems), and some designers incorporate lashing bridges that enable up to the first six tiers to be “rodded”, but the problems which afflicted the first container ships have never been wholly solved. Ships still “work” in a seaway, the hatchcovers under the towering stacks move independently on their seals and the lashings flex with the movement. The wretched crews of the ships, scaled back in numbers, are supposed to check the lashings, but their small complements and heavy weather make this almost wishful thinking, as reality kicks in on a stormy passage. Then we have to consider the vulnerabilities of the boxes within the stack, which might be structurally weakened, may have been loaded by somebody unable to comprehend the motions of a truck on the road, let alone a ship on the high seas. And despite heightened regulations (which took years to bring into effect) the chances are that there may be serious errors in declared weights, if not contents. There is a great deal that can go wrong, without the present logistic crisis.

Ports, straining to cope with the ships and the boxes on their terminals, are struggling and will be even more desperate to rush ships off the berth. It is optimistic to believe that in all this haste, short cuts in container inspection or lashing procedures will not take place as the queues of waiting ships lengthen.

Doubtless the precautionary notices to the masters of container ships will be twice as detailed this season, as the carriers seek to deflect any blame for future weather-related losses. But it might be suggested that the lines’ strategy will remain unchanged as a sort of zero-sum game, on the basis that almost all containers will (eventually) reach their destinations safely, hoping that the stack collapses don’t happen on their ships. Doing anything more positive, like reducing the height for winter passages and longer weather diversions, are just too disruptive.

They do need to bear in mind, however, that the level of tolerance by coastal states at pollution of their waters and shores by wrecked containers and their contents, has effectively run out. The “excuse” of heavy weather no longer registers with the authorities, with prosecutions in several European states and Australia after losses. While it has usually been the master, who is probably unable to prevent the accident, who ends up in court, this is likely to change as attitudes harden.

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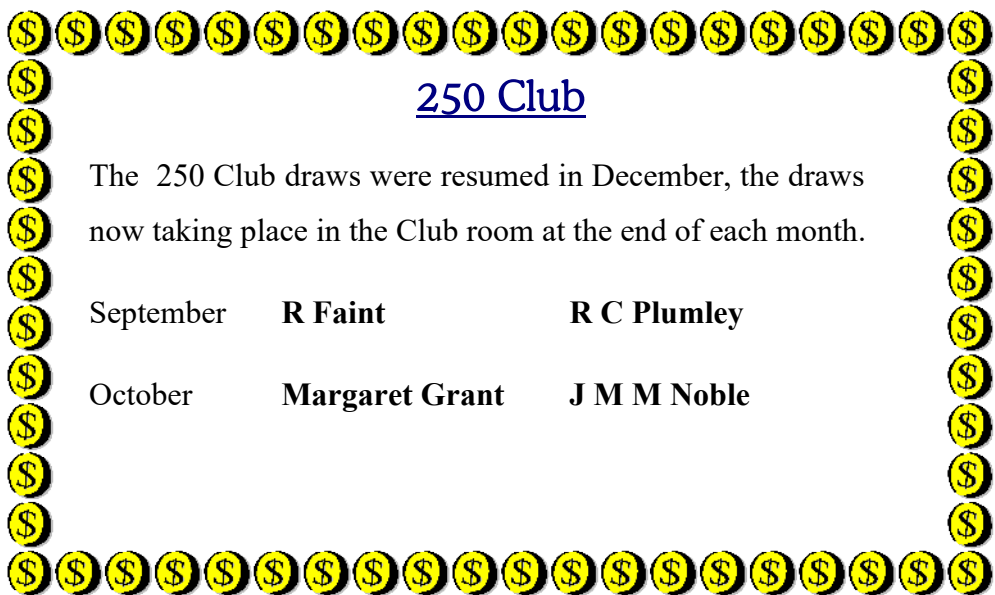
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Suggestions for events, for improvements, offers of help, articles and anecdotes for inclusion in this newsletter will all be received with pleasure.

We are even prepared to receive complaints if they are constructive.

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


250 Club

The 250 Club draws were resumed in December, the draws now taking place in the Club room at the end of each month.

September	R Faint	R C Plumley
October	Margaret Grant	J M M Noble