

# THE PILOT



The magazine of the United Kingdom Maritime Pilots' Association

SPRING 2011

Editor: John Clandillon-Baker FNI (JCB)

No.304



*Dredging in the Sea Reach on board HAM 310. Cymbeline inward bound with dredger Brabo in background.*

*Photo: JCB*

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### UKMPA 1 DAY CONFERENCE

11th May: HQS WELLINGTON.  
Email: [ukmpaoffice@yahoo.com](mailto:ukmpaoffice@yahoo.com)

### ECDIS & PPU SEMINAR

May 12<sup>th</sup> Solent University Conference Centre Southampton  
A UKMPA sponsored ECDIS and PPU seminar specifically for pilots.  
<http://bit.ly/eRxSZ2>

### 45TH EMPA GENERAL MEETING

24th - 27th May: AMSTERDAM "Westerkerk"  
Details & Registration: [www.empa2011.nl/empa2011](http://www.empa2011.nl/empa2011)

### IMPA CONGRESS 2012

LONDON

24th - 28th September 2012: Grange Hotel, St. Paul's, London  
[www.impa2012.com](http://www.impa2012.com)



## LONDON OFFICE

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## INVINCIBLE?

The annual insurance renewal demand in January saw a few more pilots deciding to withdraw from the UKMPA. What is it about our insurance that these pilots don't understand?

Whilst it is true that the Limitation of Liability clause in the Pilotage Act means that it isn't worth pursuing pilots for recovery of physical damage costs to vessels or structures, these incidents, although stressful, aren't what pilots need to fear. There have been many articles in this magazine highlighting the fact that one of the greatest risks to pilots is the trend of criminalising seafarers for any maritime incident.

For example, tankers now have double hulls to reduce the chance of pollution but ship's bunker tanks are not so protected and are easily punctured. Pollution in the UK is a criminal offence and, as the one with the conduct of a vessel, a pilot is therefore open to criminal charges. A CHA has no obligation to support even employed pilots in such cases, indeed, they may come under extreme pressure to suspend the pilot involved. The UKMPA insurance provides legal representation cover for both these eventualities as well as for many more.

As Don Cockrill mentions in his Chairman's report there are several reasons why legal support cases are not fully reported in this magazine but I can mention that in the last year the cover has resulted in a suspended pilot being re-instated and there are currently other cases in progress, one of which is particularly serious.

The UKMPA insurance scheme was originally introduced because the limitation of liability clause didn't cover many of the cases brought against pilots. None of the pilots who have benefited from the cover ever expected to need to make a claim but were extremely relieved that it was there when they needed it which really does beg the question as to why some pilots consider themselves to be so invincible as to consider the UKMPA insurance an affordable luxury!

John Clandillon-Baker : Editor

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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It has been a busy few months with a number of serious issues coming to a head for colleagues in ports around the country. Some have concluded satisfactorily, others are still ongoing. The wide ranging readership of this magazine makes it inappropriate to publish details here but I will be able to explain more at conference in May.

The government's spending review is hitting all sectors of our society and shipping is no exception. Of particular concern is the impact on navigational safety risk mitigation measures and associated facilities. You will be aware of the recent extensive consultation on modernisation of the Coastguard to which the UKMPA made a submission. I recently attended an MCA meeting on the removal of Emergency Towing Vessels which it would appear a was a summary decision by the Minister, with the MCA playing no part. The Maritime Incident Response Group (<http://bit.ly/flh7SQ>) is under real threat of disbandment and funding has been terminated for maritime CHIRP. The latter is actively seeking alternative funding.

Members of Section Committee have attended and participated proactively at various meetings over the period. All are important but a few points are worthy of particular mention. Martin James attended a HSE event in Liverpool in January. The MCA made a presentation which contained reference to PMSC compliance and verification visits. One particular slide indicated that of the 5 ports subject to PMSC revalidation visits over the last 3 years all rated a 100% failure / non compliance for "pilotage and passage planning". This was a shock to say the least.

It will be no surprise that I followed this up immediately. On discussing it at Spring Place it transpires that the section in question includes all matters to do with pilotage including administration and all the points noted actually had nothing to do with Passage Planning as such but were related to risk assessments for 2 pilots, lack of formal disciplinary procedures, inadequate planning time in standoff notice,



fatigue management regimes, PEC tripping requirements and revalidation procedures. It may be worth considering if any of these issues are applicable to your own operations.

John Pearn, Mike Morris and I attended the UK ports policy conference in January which gave an interesting insight into the government's and others perspective on the years ahead for UK ports and of course the ability to "network" for the Association. Proving that we need to "be at the table if we don't want to be on the menu". One of the last presentations was by the Office of Fair Trading giving a summary of a study into the ownership of UK ports infrastructure which raised issues of competition in port service provision.

I subsequently wrote to the OFT explaining the dangers of competition in pilotage and received an appropriate reassurance that currently "*Competition in pilotage is not a subject we are pursuing on the back of the Infrastructure Ownership and Control study*".

Also in January, I met with the Head of Maritime Policy of the Transport Security and Contingencies Directorate (Transec) to discuss the role of pilots in UK border security. No decisions or actions arose but it is a matter which is sure to develop.

We have been significantly involved with Videotel in the updating of their Bridge Procedures training videos. Matt Easton from Liverpool has been attending scripting meetings to ensure that no unrealistic assumptions are made by the producers.

In addition there has been attendance at EMPA meetings, the IMO, parliamentary meetings, and continuous communication with numerous parties not least our accountants and insurance advisers.

There are several important diary dates coming up for you to consider:

May 11<sup>th</sup> is the Annual UKMPA conference. Details have been well promulgated on our web site and by your local secretaries. The timing and delegate fee are both devised in order to make it as cheap as possible for all members to attend. This is not just for

your representatives, this is for you to participate in as an Association member, a chance to meet colleagues, discuss issues and quiz your executive committee - me included!

Communication is the key to any successful organisation and our Association is no exception. I hope that you have noticed the increase in information flow by email through you Local Secretary and we are also working on upgrading the web site with a view to presenting and providing even more information in this already comprehensive resource. If you do not yet have a password (or have forgotten it) do not hesitate to email [UKMPAoffice@yahoo.com](mailto:UKMPAoffice@yahoo.com) and one will be provided. Any ideas that you have for improvements to the site are also welcome at the same address.

Finally, remember that this is your Association, working on your behalf for the benefit of us all and our profession. It can only work effectively with input great or small from members. So don't be shy, get involved. Any Section Committee member can give you details.

I look forward to seeing you aboard the *Wellington* in May. Meanwhile, be safe.

Don Cockrill

[chairman@ukmpa.org](mailto:chairman@ukmpa.org)

# EMPA REPORT

## Peter Wylie (Tees)



I have represented the UK as Director on the EMPA board since their General Meeting in May last year. My main duties have been on the E-Nav working group with Kevin Valance, and writing the 2010 safety campaign report.

### E-Navigation

This is a massive subject which seems to be growing all of the time as the different manufacturers attempt to get their particular bits of kit onto ships. Some of this equipment has not even been invented yet.


EMPA's position has always been that E-Nav should be user driven. Kevin brings a great deal of experience to the table as he uses much of the ships navigation equipment every day as a Deep sea pilot. He experiences the problems with different types of electronic charts and sees firsthand how ships crews struggle with them. His experience is well received at EMPA. We tend to have the E-Nav meetings on the day before the Board of Directors meetings at EMPA to save costs.

At the last meeting Nick Cutmore from IMPA attended with Simon Pelletier (Canadian Pilot). This was to cement the relationship between EMPA and IMPA after a misunderstanding caused by an EMPA submission to IMO. IMPA and EMPA will now work more closely together providing one voice from pilots. The EMPA E-Nav working group lost its co-ordinator when Martin Betlaam (NLC) resigned, however the group will continue as it is felt that the end users must have a voice at IMO.

I volunteered to write the 2010 EMPA **Safety Campaign Report** which will replace the 2007 report on the EMPA website. If anyone wants an electronic copy let me know, although I did send it to all local secretaries. Thank you to all of the pilots who sent in reports since for numbers of reports received the UK did very well. I have added the conclusions to the end of this report.

### EMPA General Meeting

This year's GM will be held in Amsterdam between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>

<p>A Division of</p> 	<p>Liverpool Pilots 2 day Maritime Resource Management course. Designed and delivered by pilots specifically for pilots.</p> <p><b>Accredited Training Providers for the Swedish P&amp;I Club</b>  <b>UKMPA endorsed</b>  <b>ICM Accreditation - which will allow the allocation of CPD Points</b></p>
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## IMPA & EMPA

It is often forgotten that all UKMPA members are also members of IMPA & EMPA and membership of both these associations is of great importance to all pilots. UKMPA members are welcome to attend the IMPA & EMPA conferences. The next dates and venues are:

**EMPA**

**Amsterdam**

23rd – 27th May 2011

Details: [www.empa-pilots.org](http://www.empa-pilots.org)

**IMPA**

**London**

24th – 28th September 2012

Grange Hotel, St. Paul's

Details: [www.impa2012.com/](http://www.impa2012.com/)

of May. Mike Morris is standing for election to the Board of Directors and I'm sure we all wish him luck. There are 7 candidates for 3 posts so hopefully the voting will not be in the same manner as at the Eurovision song Contest.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year in Europe and would urge everyone to try to attend an EMPA GM at some time as the speakers are very good and it's amazing how similar the problems are in pilotage are throughout Europe.

## Conclusions

The number of returned safety campaign forms was disappointing from the European countries and even more so worldwide. There was a 53% drop worldwide and 59% from Europe, this is quite surprising as all returns were made online which, certainly in most European countries, should be a relatively easy method of reporting.

The pilot ladder is the most common method of transfer used and the most common defects are still related to pilot access arrangements. For example the survey revealed 59 ladders with no lifebuoy self-igniting light. This is a vital piece of equipment should a pilot fall into the sea.

The reporting of faults to authorities is improving slowly but is still not good enough to enhance pilot safety. Pilots have a duty to report Pilot ladder faults to the Authority under Article 23 of Directive 2009/16/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to the format applicable to reporting of apparent anomalies by pilots and port authorities. There has been no significant improvement to safety figures over the last five surveys, covering fourteen years and the advice found at the end of the 2002 report still holds true:

*"It should be remembered that the next pilot who boards may not be so lucky and an accident could result which could have been avoided had the defect been corrected immediately"*

Peter Wylie

[vice.chairman@ukmpa.org](mailto:vice.chairman@ukmpa.org)

## THE 2010 EMPA FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

Ten teams attended the 46<sup>th</sup> annual European Pilots' football tournament which was held at the Yuri Gagarin sports field in Le Havre on May 14 last year. The UK was drawn with Flushing, Hamburg, Amsterdam and the Belgian pilots.

In the first game of Group B the UK drew 0-0 with Flushing. There was a disjointed feel to the game, which was hardly surprising as our squad was drawn from far-flung districts and the players rarely get the chance to play together other than at this annual tournament. As ever, Liverpool pilots made up the largest contingent (6), with four from the Thames, two from the Tees, two from the Forth and one from the Manchester Ship Canal.

Our second match was against Amsterdam. Our captain, Kevin Walsh, had watched the opposition defeat Hamburg 1-0 and his tactics paid off, with Amsterdam's playmaker well-marked and the UK producing a much more cohesive effort, to win 1-0 with a fine goal from Stefan Looj. The UK then kept another clean sheet against the Belgians but sustained pressure failed to find the net. This was repeated in the final group game, against Hamburg, to leave the UK joint top with the same points and goal difference as the Belgians but fewer goals scored. After lunch, and a break from the strong sunshine, we had a semi-final against France, winners of the other group. The UK played so well that our opponents soon gave up trying to attack, content that they had a spectacularly good goalkeeper. He did indeed thwart the plucky Brits so, yet again, we finished goalless. The match went to penalties and it was no surprise when the French keeper made the difference.

That left the UK to face the Belgians in a 3<sup>rd</sup> place play-off but, with tired legs and a fierce sun, we agreed on a penalty shoot-out, rather than another half hour on a big, hard pitch. The British weakness of losing on penalties held true but both teams were so tired that the competitive spirit was wilting, and thoughts were turning to replenishing fluids with a few cold beers. Still, fourth out of ten is an improvement on last year's 8<sup>th</sup> from 12 and we finished this year as the only team not to concede a goal in play. Rotterdam defeated France in the final to retain their title and begin a very congenial happy hour.

Our hosts organised a very good dinner dance, with a fine band, to round off a long and highly enjoyable day. As in previous years, thanks are due to the Liverpool contingent - in particular Simon Wood and Dave Roberts - for organising so well and bringing the kit. This year's tournament is only weeks away, in Flushing, and will be played on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May. The UK squad is already in place but there is always room for late additions so get in touch with Simon if you would like a memorable weekend and the chance to meet colleagues from around Europe.

Simon Wood

[swoodpilot@gmail.com](mailto:swoodpilot@gmail.com)



(back row left to right) Jo Looj (cheerleader), Charlie Bull (London), Matt Easton (Liverpool), Terry Crowe (Ex-Liverpool & Cheerleader), Peter Flanagan (London), Willie Terry (Forth), Kevin Walsh (Liverpool & Captain), Stefan Looj (Liverpool), Simon Wood (Liverpool)

(front row left to right) Andy Bissaker (Liverpool), David Roberts (Liverpool), Michele Pulizzi (London), Giorgio Pirodami (London), Kenneth Macinnes (Forth), Steve Swanick (Manchester), Steve Blake (Tees) and one missing camera shy Zane Joachim (Tees).

## PENSIONS NEWS

### The Secretariat

On 31 March 2011, Richard Williamson, Boston pilot, stepped down as Deputy Chairman of the P.N.P.F. and Joe Wilson, Tees pilot, will be replacing him in this role. Richard will continue in his role as a Trustee Director until his retirement from pilotage later this year.

### Independent Trustee/Chairman

At the end of March 2011 the Chairman's, Heather McGuire, consultancy contract was terminated by Associated British Ports. In order to retain Heather on the Board, the trustees resolved to amend the Company's articles of association to allow the appointment of an independent trustee/chairman. At an Extraordinary General Meeting held on 24 March 2011 the shareholders of the P.N.P.F. Trust Company limited unanimously adopted the trustees' proposal and Heather McGuire was appointed to the role of independent professional trustee and chairman with effect from 1 April 2011.

### Rule Changes

At their February 2011 quarterly meeting the trustees agreed to adopt a new Rule 9(4) which authorises the trustees to seek information from the Participating Bodies to assist in the formulation of a recovery plan when the results of the 2010 annual valuation are finalised.

### Retail Price Index/Consumer Price Index (RPI/CPI)

The government has implemented legislation that changes the index used for statutory pension increases from RPI to CPI. Although this will not affect increases awarded to pensions in payment it does affect increases awarded to deferred pensions from 2011.

### Annual Allowance

From 6 April 2011 the government has substantially reduced the annual allowance (the amount you can build up in a pension scheme without paying tax on it). It has been reduced from £255,000 to £50,000. This allowance applies to benefits earned under all registered pension schemes. To

administer the new requirements the trustees have decided to set up a uniform Pensions Input Period (PIP), which will run from 6 April to 5 April. This will have an impact on the annual benefit statements you will receive from 2012. The benefit statement will include a figure for the annual gross pension accrued to 5 April, as well as the amount of annual allowance used during the PIP. This information should help you complete your tax returns.

### Legal Proceedings

Justice Warren presided over the hearing, during January and February 2010 and a judgment was handed down on 28 June 2010. Various parties have now commenced appeals on certain issues and the hearing of these appeals is due to commence on 16 May for 5 days. All through the course of these proceedings and subsequent appeals the trustees have kept the Pensions Regulator informed.

### 2010 Benefit Statements

We are currently in the process of running off the 2010 benefit statements and these will still be in the old format, ie as at 31 December 2010. The new format will take effect from 2012. The 2010 statements should be sent out in the next week or two.

### Budget 2011

On 23 March 2011 the Chancellor presented his budget for the year and listed below are what happened on the pensions from.

### Contracting-out

For defined benefit (final salary) pension schemes contracting-out will be scrapped as part of the move to a single-tier state pension. There are concerns within the industry that the abolition of contracting-out may lead to more employers closing their schemes to existing members.

### State Pension Reform

The Chancellor confirmed that the government would implement a single-tier state pension. The proposed system would still be flat-rate and would continue to be based on contributions. The pension would be about £140 pw, but would not apply to people who retire before the reforms are implemented.

### Merger of Income Tax and National Insurance

It was announced that the government would consult on the merger of income tax and national insurance contributions to make it "fit for the modern age." Pensioners will not pay more tax as a result of the merger. Within the industry there are concerns that the merger will lead to an end to the current procedure for obtaining tax relief on contributions.

### State Pension Age

The Chancellor confirmed that the government wants to put in place a more automatic method of increasing the state pension age based on regular reviews of longevity. It will reach 66 in 2020 and 68 by 2048.

### Pensions Tax Relief on Contributions

The Budget confirmed the move to reduce the annual allowance for tax-free pension contributions to £50,000 and confirmed the lifetime allowance would be reduced to £1.5m from the 2012/13 tax year.

### Public Service Commission

The Treasury has backed Lord Hutton's recommendations for public sector pension reform and the Chancellor confirmed there would be no "cherry picking" of his proposals. He said there should be similar changes to the pensions of MPs. Lord Hutton recommended the phasing out of final salary schemes in favour of cheaper career average schemes by 2015.

Debbie Marten  
debbie@pnpf.co.uk

### RETIREMENTS

#### November 2010 to January 2011

D. A. White	Dart
D. McLindon	Plymouth

## REMEMBER

If you are involved in any incident it is essential that you notify the insurers as soon as possible.

See page 17 for contact details



## ECDIS TRAINING FOR UK PILOTS

### MIN 405

The publication of MIN 405 which details the MCA's requirements for ECDIS training for Masters and Deck Officers of UK flagged vessels has raised questions as to the training requirements for UK pilots. Consequently the UKMPA have sought clarification from the MCA.

Basically, because the requirements are for serving Masters and Deck Officers there is no formal requirement for pilots to undertake either generic or type specific ECDIS training. Despite this the UKMPA recommend that all pilots should undertake the generic training based on the IMO model course 1.27.

However, there is a requirement for pilots to undertake the generic ECDIS course if their CHA requires a valid Certificate of Competency (CoC) for authorisation to pilot or they personally wish to maintain a valid CoC.

The STCW amendments agreed at the Manila conference last year will require Certificate holders to have completed ECDIS training. Once this requirement comes into force on the 1st January 2012, those who revalidate their CoC without having completed such training will have their Certificate endorsed:

**"Not for use on ECDIS equipped ships"**

JCB (See page 9)

### MIN 406

#### Reporting Operating Anomalies Identified within ECDIS

MIN 406 encourages mariners to report ECDIS anomalies such as:

- A failure to display a navigational feature correctly.
- A failure to alarm correctly
- A failure to manage a number of alarms correctly.

Reports should be sent to:

[ECDISreport@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:ECDISreport@mcga.gov.uk)

### THE GENERIC COURSE



*Your editor getting to grips with ECDIS!*

The majority of nautical colleges are now offering generic ECDIS courses and most manufacturers run type specific courses although these latter courses don't comply with IMO requirements. Reports from those who have attended these courses seem to vary with some being rated poor.

My employers, the Port of London Authority, require their pilots to hold a valid Class 1 Certificate of Competency and also consider it important that if a pilot has the conduct of a vessel they should be able to understand the essential features of ECDIS so they are arranging for all of the pilots to undergo generic ECDIS training.

Following some less than positive feedback from those who had attended a course run by a nautical college I, along with three of my colleagues, was sent for the full length course run by the private company, ECDIS Ltd, at their modern facility at the Solent Business Park near Fareham in Hampshire.

Our initial thoughts upon receiving details of the course were "How on earth would we fill 5 days without getting bored?", but we all ended up with an understanding that anything less is inadequate for most navigators.

Having written three articles on ECDIS, I already had a basic comprehension of ECDIS but it was only once I started to put the theory into practice with a fully operational ECDIS unit (Transas Navi-Sailor 4000) that I realised just how dangerous it could be if

a navigator hadn't attended a comprehensive training course. The fact is that ECDIS isn't just another aid to navigation such as radar or AIS, rather it is the fundamental element underpinning the navigational safety of a vessel.

The paper chart has evolved over many centuries and clearly displays all the information that a navigator requires. In contrast, ECDIS has been developed in a haphazard way over the last 15 years by technicians and manufacturers with little knowledge of the requirements of the end user. Consequently much essential information is only obtained by selecting "layers" or by "interrogating" the chart display which must be tailored to the ship's draft and under keel clearance parameters. Unfamiliarity with any of these functions can (and has) result in disaster.

I can recommend the ECDIS Ltd course which for me struck the right balance between classroom instruction and hands on practical experience. Although not a requirement of the IMO course, there were regular informal tests throughout the course which certainly helped me to remember the relevant facts. At the end of the course there is a more formal test incorporating all the week's elements and although there is no pass or fail, the highest scoring student every month gets their name placed on a ship's wheel and also receives a small prize.



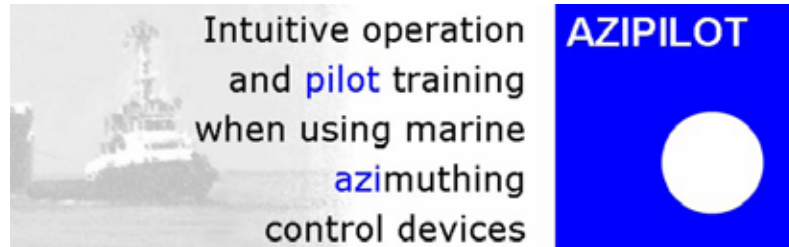
By the end of the course, I had a good understanding of the ECDIS concept and am now confident enough to be able to use an ECDIS during pilotage.

However, I still believe that until all navigators have received good quality training and the manufacturers have taken note of user feedback to provide an interface that reflects the needs of the navigator, there is a high risk of more ECDIS related disasters.

JCB

ECDIS Ltd,  
Solent business Park  
Fareham PO15 7FH  
[www.ecdis.org](http://www.ecdis.org)  
01489 611665





***On 24<sup>th</sup> February STC hosted an Azipilot workshop/conference at their premises in Rotterdam.***

This was the latest in a series of meetings held by the 15 partners of the Azipilot project, to improve awareness of Azimuthing Control Devices (ACDs) and their growing use in some sectors of shipping, particularly on cruise ships. Forth Pilots attended because at Grangemouth we get the Bro 'D' class of tanker, which has ACDs, and also large cruise vessels with ACDs anchoring in the Forth, so we wanted to assess the need for training and the options available.

Those attending included pilots from Hamburg, Rotterdam, Belgium, Dublin and Cork, plus Peter Liley of the Australasian Marine Pilots Institute, and UK pilotage was represented by Ian Simpson from Harwich, Donald Lucas and Kenneth MacInnes from the Forth as well as Gareth Rees and Nigel Allen from Southampton who are partners in the project on behalf of the UKMPA.



*Azipod ABB*

The morning session consisted of four talks, after an introduction by the coordinator of the project Professor Michael Woodward of Newcastle University. Erland Wilske, of Swedish partner SSPA, spoke on hydrodynamic modelling and then we had a session on marine simulation by Marielle Labrosse, of French partner Mettle.

Jakob Pinkster, our genial host for the day, had maritime training as his theme before Gareth Rees spoke on operational practice.



*Rolls Royce and Alstom (Mermaid)*

The lunch break gave the opportunity to sample STC's simulator. The afternoon session began with Michael Woodward introducing a discussion based on tape of an interview with the Master of the Independence of the Seas conducted by Gareth Rees and Nigel Allen on board that vessel. We had a panel of experts comprising Cork Deputy Harbour Master Paul O'Regan, Cork Pilot Aidan Fleming, Brostroms Superintendent Leif Carlsson and Hamburg Pilot/Trainer Thomas Lindler who answered questions from the audience.

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The afternoon continued with questions and some in depth discussions arising from further excerpts from an interview with another Master of the Independence of the Seas (as described in the Winter 2010 issue of The Pilot).

It was very valuable to hear the experiences and opinions of so many sectors of the industry and we plan, initially at least, to focus on simulator

training on the Bro 'D' class and we have arranged for Leif Carlsson to supply better details of these ships to the Simulator that we attend for our training needs.

The day was rounded off with drinks and, for those not needing to catch flights, an evening meal where discussions about ACDs continued.

We have exchanged some emails since the workshop and received the following comment from Chris Lefevere, Secretary General of EMPA who also attended the Workshop:

*I think that an extended ACD training for pilots can be very useful for specialised pilots who handle these ships regularly allowing them to gain the necessary experience.*

*For other pilots who will only work occasionally with ACDs a basic pilot training for ACD is absolutely necessary to understand the terminology, the principles, the limitations, the do's and don'ts.*

*Moreover accidents have happened with Masters that don't have experience with ACD's or have lost awareness during the manoeuvre. A pilot has to be able to intervene if the Master does not manage to make the desired manoeuvre, to adjust speed, etc.*

Based on the views expressed in the discussions, the final months of the project will be spent assimilating the knowledge and drawing up some recommendations.

*Kenneth MacInnes (Forth)*



*Queen Mary 2 :  
4 x 21.5 MW Mermaid pods*

## STCW REVISION CONFERENCE

### Manila : July 2010

The ECDIS Revolution conference last November ( see page 11) included a comprehensive review of the Manila STCW Conference.

At this conference amendments were made which make specific reference to training for Electronic Chart Display & Information System (ECDIS). After January 1<sup>st</sup> 2012, all watchkeepers renewing their Certificates of Competency (CoC) will need to have completed an approved IMO 1.27 generic course. A candidate for revalidation who does not have ECDIS training will be issued with an endorsed certificate restricting them to non ECDIS vessels.

Compulsory carriage of ECDIS starts in 2012 and by 2020, all SOLAS vessels will be navigating with ECDIS as the primary navigational system.

The situation is complicated by the proliferation of different types of ECDIS equipment currently approved by IMO since the ISM code requires all navigators to have been on type specific training courses for the equipment they are using!

This raises the question as to whether the pilot take conduct of the vessel where he has not been trained to use the specific ECDIS in use and whilst this has been clarified for UK pilots ( see page 7) courts may flag this as an issue in other countries following an incident.

Following the conference a summing up of the major points was carried out.

**Standardisation:** This is looking at such things as generating a commonality between the ECDIS manufacturers with respect to terminology and symbology while also attempting to get the various regulatory bodies around the world to find a common ground in their regulations for training and standards. This is also relevant in trying to ensure that Port State Inspectors are all working to the same rules and regulations in order that Captains don't have to try and explain things continuously.

**Training:** This will be looking at a number of areas including the generic and type specific training and, in particular, a plan to develop a means of auditing such training if this is to be conducted on board by other members of the bridge team. Continual training of the bridge

teams by means of external assessment and the generation and integration of company working procedures will be worked on. Those shipping companies who were present at the conference and have already gone down this path will be asked to contribute more significantly on this.

**Pilots:** It was evident from the number of questions, comments and concerns that the Pilots and their organisations were concerned at where they stand from a legal and operational point of view. Therefore it is hoped to be able to engage with them and try to find a common ground that clarifies procedures to satisfy shipping companies, flag states and the legal organisations.

Out of these there is the belief that the ECDIS issues concerning pilots might warrant a separate conference session and this will be looked into as the

discussions continue.

My own thoughts at the close of the conference are that proper and appropriate training can alleviate many of the fears and potential problems. The IMO standard course 1.27 calls for 40 hours training over 5 days. Many training providers are not carrying out this full course. It is my belief that pilots will need to be fully aware of how to use the ECDIS equipment when things go wrong because when things do go wrong in pilotage waters they go wrong very quickly without the time to be asking how to operate a piece of equipment! The challenge for pilots is that in embracing fully the benefits to safety of navigation that ECDIS can give us we must also be wary of any problems either foreseen or unforeseen which can occur.

Kevin Vallance ( *Europilots* )



Lairdside Maritime Centre

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## Britain's Largest Crane Passes Under The Forth Road Bridge

The UK's largest crane passed under the famous Forth bridges in Scotland on the morning of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011, following a 14,000 nautical mile voyage via the Cape of Good Hope, bound for Rosyth Dockyard in Fife.

Once commissioned, the "Goliath" crane will be used to assemble the Royal Navy's Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers at Rosyth Dockyard. It cost \$20 million, has height of 68 metres to the underside of the main beams, and a span of 120 metres to cover the construction area of the carriers. Lifting capacity is 1,000 tonnes and it was two years under construction in Shanghai by the Zhenhua Port Machinery Co. (ZPMC).

The Goliath crane left its construction site in Shanghai, China, on 17 December 2010 on the deck of the specialist crane transport vessel "Zhen Hua 13". At a length of 243m, beam of 39.3m and 88,000 tonnes displacement it is believed that she is the largest vessel ever to pass under the 121 year old Forth Rail Bridge or enter Rosyth Dockyard.

The Zhen Hua 13's transit of the River Forth, passing under the Forth Bridges and docking at Rosyth was the result of several months planning and co-operation between Forth Pilots, the Port Authority, Babcocks (who own the crane and dockyard), Network Rail and the Forth Estuary Transport Authority.

The actual operation took place over several days, with the vessel arriving at the outer anchorage in the river on 1<sup>st</sup> March. She then ballasted down to 11.5m draft, leaving a freeboard of only 1.5m for the 18 mile river passage. The air draft was then verified by the dockyard, using laser equipment.

Passage upriver began at 0515 on 3<sup>rd</sup> March and "Zhen Hua 13" passed underneath the Forth bridges at exactly 0730 as planned, during the low water period, dropping anchor just off Babcock's Rosyth Dockyard shortly thereafter.



"Zhen Hua 13" squeezes under the Forth Rail Bridge

Photo: Jerry Purvis

The final stage of the operation was entry into the dockyard itself during high water on 4<sup>th</sup> March. At the inner anchorage the vessel de-ballasted to a draft of 8.1m. The entrance to the dockyard has recently been widened to allow the new aircraft carriers to depart after construction. However, even with the widened entrance there was only 1.4m clearance on either side of the vessel. A total of six tugs were involved in the docking.

This fairly unusual act of pilotage presented several challenges for the pilots involved.



The crane structure on deck meant that the view forward from the wheelhouse was very limited and also gave a very large wind area. With her large air draft the clearance under the Forth Rail Bridge was just over 2m, and it was therefore essential that she pass exactly under the centre of the bridge span.

Three pilots were utilised for both operations – one on the bridge wing, one in the wheelhouse and one on the fo'c'sle. The pilots for the river / bridge transit were Keith McLean, David

Kelley and Graeme Hutchison and for the docking they were Keith McLean, David Kelley and Donald Lucas. Both the bridge transit and dockyard entry were trialled by on the ship simulator at South Tyneside College. The simulations proved invaluable, allowing the best approach to the task to be confirmed and the building of confidence that such an unusual vessel could be safely handled at the port.

Keith McLean (Forth)

## I thought that the Agents did it!

Coinciding with the above excellent report from Keith, I also received a gushing press release from the GAC shipping agency which opened with the following:

*It took meticulous handling and perfect timing to sail the Goliath crane beneath the Forth Bridge on its way to Rosyth shipyard in late February/early March. With careful coordination by GAC Shipping UK's Leith office acting as port agent with all the parties involved, the massive load arrived safe and sound.*

The release concluded:

*Since we first learned of this project in November 2008 and the intended shipment of the Goliath crane in April 2010, there's been a hive of activity to coordinate and plan for the vessel's arrival ...the meticulous planning has now paid off, effecting a very smooth, very safe operation from transit of the bridges to the vessel's final berthing in Rosyth.*

So now you know!!

JCB

# ECDIS: The Challenge for Pilots by Kevin Vallance

*The inaugural Electronic Chart Display & Information System Revolution (ECDIS) Conference was held in London on November 24<sup>th</sup> & “25<sup>th</sup> at the South Kensington Forum Hotel, London.*

My attendance at the conference was sponsored by Trinity House, London who asked me to give a presentation about the “*Current standards and experiences witnessed*” on vessels that I have piloted.

The speakers and the delegates at the conference represented a wide spectrum from across the industry. There were representatives from manufacturing companies trying to sell their equipment, training providers trying to sell their training but there were also some forward thinking Shipping Companies who had bitten the bullet and taken the massive step to embrace the ECDIS Revolution and fitted out their vessels with approved ECDIS systems and removed all paper charts.

The only hands-on operators were from within the pilotage community and during the two days it became obvious that there were major issues outstanding that would not easily be solved. In fact it is fair to summarise that the conference provided very few answers but did lead to the raising of many new questions.

It has been said on more than one occasion that ECDIS implementation is progressing too fast but this idea was queried by the MCA representative who reminded us that ECDIS has already been around since 1995. ECDIS will in future be a cornerstone element of e-navigation, which itself is a concept that has been around for over 10 years.

My personal major concern about the use of any electronic systems remains the over reliance on GPS. All ECDIS, GMDSS and AIS systems rely totally on GPS input and the only back up for ECDIS in the event of GPS loss, either intentional or unintentional, remains traditional navigation methodology and even the government recognises the risk of cyber terrorism to the GPS network.

Given the risks, it should be a simple procedure to manually plot position lines onto an ECDIS but I still have not found a single ships officer who can show me how to do it, despite the fact that many of them have completed the IMO 1.27

standard course. A representative of the Research and Radio Navigation Group of the GLA pointed out that during 2013 there will be high levels of sun spot activity which has the potential to disrupt GPS signals and although it had been widely anticipated that e-Loran would be available in 2013 to provide a terrestrial electronic system due to budgetary constraints this development of e-Loran has not so far taken place.

Following GPS jamming trials that were carried out in 2009 it was reported that “*vessels may react differently and so it may be difficult to predict what will happen to one when it is affected by jamming, and also how this will be observed from afar*”. In fact, what was proven was that the effects of jamming will vary from manufacturer to manufacturer and from model to model.

When talking to various Pilots about ECDIS one common complaint is the size of the monitor provided. The IMO minimum size is 270mm x 270mm which doesn't compare favourably with the normal size of a paper chart. Apparently one manufacturer does provide a type approved horizontal 1metre x 1.25 metre monitor but all it does is magnify the image, it does not show a larger area.

A number of manufacturers spoke of future developments where the ECDIS monitor becomes a hub of all information on the bridge with overlays providing meteorological information,

piracy and security, temporary and permanent navigation information along with many other “exciting” concepts! What they don't appreciate is that we want clarity of display which shows only the necessary information. All the information provided would also have its own alarms which could just provide further distractions to the bridge team.

One body, which has totally embraced the electronic age, is the Royal Navy who converted to ECDIS and electronic navigation systems in a period of around 18 months. Their representative spoke in glowing terms about the great success in the changeover although he did accept and acknowledge the advantages of being government funded.

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch gave a very good presentation about incidents where ECDIS navigation was considered by them to be a major contributory factor and we were shown video displays of the *LT Cortesia* running aground on the Varne Bank and the *CFL Performer* grounding on the Haisborough Sands. Having now seen these in real time it is obvious that these accidents did not occur because of ECDIS but they happened in spite of ECDIS. Lack of adequate training, fatigue, poor bridge management and many other human errors can be quoted as factors leading to these incidents.

*Kevin Vallance (Europilots)*

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## OBITUARIES

William Hedley Young  
1915 - 2010

William Hedley Young (Bill) came from a seafaring and piloting family and it was always his plan to follow in those family footsteps. He became apprenticed to the Tees Pilot Service in 1932 and in 1935 went to sea, serving as a quartermaster with B&I and Brocklebanks. In 1938 he obtained his Mates Home Trade Passenger certificate in Hull and he was Quartermaster aboard the S.S. *Malabar* when, in October 1939, it was sunk in the Western Approaches by U34. Picked up by the destroyer H.M.S. *Grafton* he was landed at Plymouth 36 hours later. In 1940 William was called back to the Tees to become a skipper on the pilot cutters and in June 1940 he was involved in the rescue of survivors from the French corvette "*La Bastiase*" which was mined whilst on trials in Tees Bay. The Master and the Pilot were among those lost and only 16 were saved out of a total of 80. In January 1942 Bill was able to exhibit his seamanship skills when he went to the aid of the "*Empire Bay*" which had been bombed at anchor off Hartlepool whilst awaiting a southbound convoy. Weather conditions were very bad and the Tees and Hartlepool Examination Vessel, the only other craft in the vicinity, was unable to launch boats. The "*Empire Bay*" was located with difficulty in the dark and found to be sinking by the stern and listing heavily. Despite flailing boat falls, broken lifeboats and other obstructions, he was eventually able to rescue all 15 crew members. Bill obtained his 4<sup>th</sup>. Class pilot's licence in 1943 and he immediately became involved in all aspects of the service. He became a long serving member of the Pilots Committee,

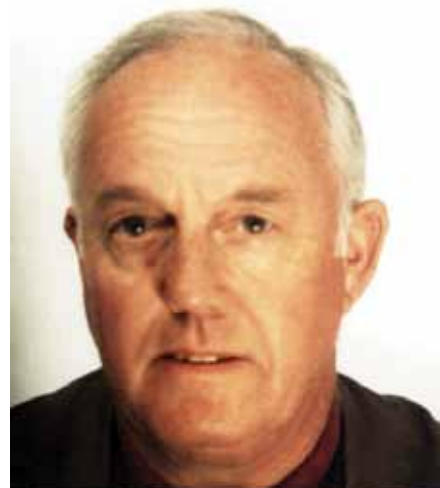
chaired the Examination Committee and was a regular Tees representative at Conference. Finally he was appointed to the board of the Tees Pilotage Authority. He was also a close friend, confidant and supporter of Tees Pilot Dan Tate, who was a prominent member of the UKPA and a prime mover of the Pilots' National Pension Fund. A great one with words he was a prolific and often controversial contributor to the press on many topics.

His boat handling skills seemed easily to transfer to ship handling. One could say his piloting was carried out with great élan and dead slow was never his favourite speed. This caused many a Master and trainee Pilot to experience white knuckles until they came to realise he really could safely manoeuvre ships in his unique style.

A lovely anecdote worth repeating was when he had the privilege of piloting the Royal Yacht *Britannia* into the Tees with the Queen aboard. On the way up the river the cheers and waves of the dockers atop the unloaders at the ore terminal attracted Bill's attention. He walked to the bridge wing and waved in return. An officer quickly advised him that the Bridge did not acknowledge the adulation of the populace- that was left to the Queen on the promenade deck. Bill, suitably chastened, retired to the wheelhouse!

Maybe it was a desire to pilot even faster that inspired him to take up flying. He obtained his other pilot's licence and, for several years, had a share in a Miles Messenger and the stories of his escapades are legion. Bill kept himself extremely fit and, even on the day of his retirement in 1980, there were few younger colleagues who were more nimble on a ladder. He had no desire to retire at 65 and expressed envy that pilots now have the opportunity to continue beyond that age. He was always modest about his achievements but he did claim that his greatest was discovering and marrying his wife Joan, a view which many of his friends would agree with. They were together for 67 years, Joan having passed away in 2007, an event from which Bill never recovered. After a short illness he died at the grand old age of 95. A great colleague, a great character and a great friend.

Gary Salter

Anthony Norman Anderson  
1943 - 2010

Tony Anderson died after a short illness and was cremated at a well attended funeral at Morryston (Swansea) Crematorium last November.

Tony did pre-sea training at HMS *Conway* and attended the Old Conways Association 50th anniversary reunion only last summer. He served his cadetship with Furness Withy.

After obtaining his Masters Certificate of Competency (Foreign Going) at Cardiff, Tony served as Mate/relief Master on the research vessels of the Natural Environment Research Council based in Barry. He also served as Master with Crescent and Metcalfe Shipping Lines and managed to fit in a spell as Coastguard Watch Officer at Swansea MRCC.

Tony rounded off his career by joining ABP as an Assistant Dock Master at Swansea and subsequently qualified as a pilot for Swansea and Port Talbot where he served from 1984 until retirement in 1996.

Tony was a keen supporter of the RNLI and served as deputy launching authority for the Mumbles lifeboat. He also sang with the Cambrian Choir and was an active member of Pennard Golf Club.

*Gordon Harries (Swansea and Port Talbot)*

**Erratum: William Hedley Young**

*In the last issue I incorrectly titled William Hedley Young's obituary as William Henry Young and I have therefore repeated the obituary in this issue with the correct name. My sincere apologies are offered for any distress that this error may have caused.*

JCB

## Captain Derek Ivor Parsons 1923 – 2010



Derek Parsons was born on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1923 and at the outbreak of war, was accepted as a cadet by the Department of Navigation, University College, Southampton where he had to endure the nightly air-raids on Southampton Docks. Upon completion of his pre sea training Derek joined the Canadian Pacific Line.

His first ship was the *Prome* which he joined in March 1941, making one trip to Rangoon before the ship went to the Clyde to be stripped out and made ready for war. He joined the *Empire Union* in September 1941, sailing in the Atlantic Convoys and braving enemy fire on a number of occasions. Although he never talked about it, we know that the *Empire Union* was eventually sunk by an enemy torpedo on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1942. This convoy, ONS 154, was described by Henry Revely in his book *The Convoy That Nearly Died*. After four days afloat in an open lifeboat in the freezing North Atlantic, he and his companions were eventually rescued by the *RS Toward* and taken to Halifax, Nova Scotia. He then served on the *Empire Yukon* between 1943 and 1944.

In 1944 he joined the P&O Company sailing mainly to the Far East. With the war coming to an end this was a much happier time and he remained with P&O until 1952 when he obtained his Master's Certificate. During his time with P&O Derek served on the *Strathnaver*, *Chitral*, *Strathaird*, *Carthage*, *Somali* and the *Corfu*.

He recalled the *Strathnaver* as being a particularly happy ship on board of which he met his wife to be, a Wren Officer, Nina Wilkin, when she was

on her way to a posting in Ceylon. They were married in 1947 and spent the first few years of their married life seeing each other for a day or two at a time at various British ports when Derek was allowed shore leave. Upon gaining his Master's Certificate he became a Trinity House Southampton Pilot and they were able to settle down in the Isle of Wight with their two daughters, Wendy and Michelle.

In 1961, on account of Nina's poor health, Derek declined to move from the Isle of Wight to Southampton as Trinity House requested. When Trinity House refused to renew his licence, a court case ensued which resulted in a victory for Isle of Wight pilots who did not wish to relocate to Southampton. Derek then rose to become the Chief Inward Pilot and Pilot of Choice for the United States Line - the *United States* being the fastest liner in the world at the time.

Holidays, since childhood, were always in Cornwall where he eventually bought an apartment in a Victorian fort overlooking Plymouth Sound where he could gaze out to sea and keep an eye on the shipping. In 2006, the onset of Parkinson's disease and a bad fall necessitated nursing home care but he was determined to end his days on Cornish soil and died peacefully on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2010 with his daughters at his side.

Wendy Cole

### Pensioners Deceased

November 2010 to January 2011

A. N. Anderson	Swansea & PT
A. T. Briggs	Bristol
T. Card	Southampton
J. A. Congdon	Harwich
G. F. Davies	Liverpool
J. D. Evans	Swansea & PT
M. Gleghorn	Blyth
R. J. Hopkins	Taw&Torrige
S. W. Lunn	River Thames
D. I. Parson	Southampton
A. A. Robinson	Harwich
L. M. Smith	Forth
L. C. Sutherland	Harwich
J. T. Walton	Humber
J. C. Whatcoat	Harwich
W. H. Young	Tyne

## Lewis M Smith

23/10/1916 - 16/11/ 2010



Lewis Smith was born in Aberdeen in 1916 and at the age of 15 he signed on at Leith Nautical College.

After college he joined the Christian Salvesen & Co. shipping company as a deck cadet and he stayed with the company until 1955 when he left to join the Forth Pilotage Service.

Although he rarely talked about his wartime experiences, Lewis served continuously throughout the war, obtaining his 1st Mate's Certificate in 1941 and his Master's Foreign Going Certificate in 1943. He was serving on board the *SS Glen Tilt*, moored at Carron's Wharf in the London docks during the blitz when the warehouses were set alight by incendiary bombs. The ship's crew assisted the firefighters to extinguish the fires and their actions, which helped to prevent the fires from spreading, were commended by Carron & Co. Ltd.

Lewis later received another commendation certificate for Meritorious Service whilst serving on the *SS Empire Norse*. In 1942, this vessel became separated from its convoy when the rudder and stern frame were lost in hurricane force winds during a westbound North Atlantic passage. Skilful seamanship and navigation resulted in the ship eventually arriving safely in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where, following discharge of the cargo, it was towed to Boston for repairs.

In 1942, during a stay in hospital for a hernia operation, Lewis met his wife to be, Margaret Anne, and they married in 1945.

After the war, Lewis served with the company's whaling fleet based in South Georgia and on the North Sea trade. It was on this latter trade that Lewis was promoted Master of the *M.V. Marna* trading between Leith & Bergen where he served until joining the Forth Pilotage Service.



*MV Marna*

Lewis was a natural pilot and it was with reluctance that he retired in 1981 on his 65th birthday. Two events of particular interest during his pilotage career were piloting the *Royal Yacht Britannia* with the Queen on board during her round Britain tour and piloting the *Mauritania* to the breakers yard in Fife.

Following retirement, Lewis was able to fully enjoy family life and will be sorely missed by his wife, Anne Margaret and fondly remembered by his three daughters and son along with his nine grand children and three great grand children.

*Malcolm Rose (Forth pilot: retired)  
Additional information from Lewis' daughter, Anne-Louise.*

## REMEMBER

If you are involved in any incident it is essential that you notify the insurers as soon as possible.

*See page 17 for contact details*

# Certificate of Competency (CoC) For Pilots Peter Wylie ( Tees)

Work towards a national qualification for pilots has recently resumed and John Pearn and I attended a meeting at Port Skills and Safety (PSS) in January this year to restart the project. The Dft, MCA, Port Organisations, Harbour Masters and ourselves are all working towards the establishment of the qualification.

The Harbour Masters are already well on the way to having a national qualification and we are working towards a similar qualification for UK pilots.

The first task will be to update our National Occupational Standards (NOS) which are over 10 years old. PSS has asked for our help with this. I would like to thank our Technical and Training committee for their prompt response to the update request as we want to keep the momentum going. PSS were very impressed with the speed of the response and this has enabled us to plan the next meeting for the 20<sup>th</sup> April. I will update conference with how that meeting went and a likely timescale for the certificate.

During the first meeting PSS gave a power point presentation on the principles of our qualification and I have included some of those principles below which sum up how the Ports want to proceed. A positive outcome was achieved in that we all agreed with the following draft principles:

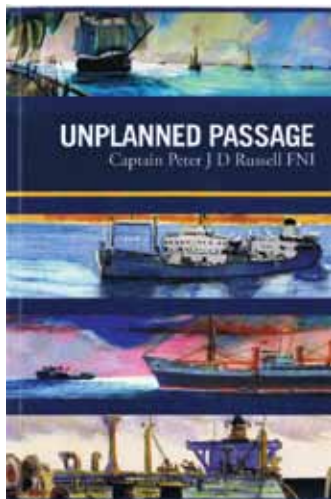
- The process for obtaining a CoC must be robust, consistent, fair, balanced, transparent and well documented, it must be based on evidence and have independent layers of quality assurance; A CoC must be validated and issued by the MCA and re validated at intervals of not less than 5yrs. Revalidation should be based on evidence of continued competence/professional development. A CoC must be underpinned by the NOS.
- Individuals who fail to meet the standard will not be issued or reissued with a CoC .
- Training and development opportunities should exist to allow individuals to meet the required standard
- CoC holders must feel confident that the CoC is 'worth having' in that it is of value to them personally because it enhances their professional recognition/status within the ports industry
- Employers, duty holders, DfT and MCA must be able to express confidence in the appointment of an individual with a CoC. This means that a CoC must encompass more than technical maritime knowledge and may include for example: safety, personal and interpersonal, operational management, commercial, environmental and security skills and knowledge, as appropriate;
- It must be possible to recognise existing competence of individuals through recognition of existing qualifications and accreditation of prior learning and experience (APL & APEL). Individuals must not be made to attend unnecessary training for skills in which they are demonstrably competent;
- The CoC process must be flexible enough to allow certification of individuals across the full range of ports with different operations i.e. must not be limited to a small number of harbour masters and/or pilots at large commercial cargo ports

Further details of progress as well as copies of the various NOS are available on the PSS website [www.portskillsandsafety.co.uk](http://www.portskillsandsafety.co.uk)

I would advise all pilots to have a look at this and give comments either to section committee or the technical and training committee as this is going to affect us all, but will hopefully be a positive step for pilotage in the UK.

Please send any comments to:

[vice.chairman@ukmpa.org](mailto:vice.chairman@ukmpa.org)



### BOOK REVIEW : UNPLANNED PASSAGE BY PETER RUSSELL FNI

Having been a colleague of Peter's for many years before he retired I was slightly apprehensive when he proudly handed me a dedicated copy of *Unplanned Passage* to review for the magazine. What if I didn't enjoy it?

Fortunately, I needn't have worried because not only has Peter had a very interesting career but his writing style is relaxed and conversational so this autobiography is an enjoyable read.

Starting with his childhood in Folkestone Peter describes the experience of growing up in the shadow of war where the regular bombing and shelling resulted in his moving around the country before returning to Kent to finish his schooling. Leaving school and joining the Merchant Navy, Peter's early sea time was gained serving on heavy lift tramp ships on world wide trades which provided some fascinating experiences such as working with the US carrying supplies during the Korean War.

Upon obtaining his Second Mate's Certificate, Peter joined the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) and this section again provides an interesting account of his time in that service which included living in Singapore with his wife and young family. A chance encounter resulted in Peter applying for and being accepted as a Trinity House "Cinque Ports" pilot bringing ships into the Thames from the Southern

approach channels from the boarding point off Folkestone. The second half of the book details Peter's experiences over the 32 years he served as a pilot which of course included the upheaval of the transfer from self employment under Trinity House to employed status with the Port of London Authority. A founder member, and a past President of the Nautical Institute, Peter was also Chairman of the UKPA T&T Committee for many years and he recounts how he drafted the original pilot boarding and landing code and, along with other dedicated pilots saddened by the unnecessary loss of colleagues, addressed the issue of pilot ladder safety and produced the first SeaSafe high visibility inflatable pilot jacket which makes the book a valuable reference for all serving pilots. Although much of the book is specific to the Thames, Peter's experiences, including some honest accounts of near misses, will be familiar to all pilots and educational to non pilots and the many lively anecdotes mean that this account of a fascinating career is never dull for non mariners either. A final bonus is that *Unplanned Passage* is well illustrated throughout with Peter's own paintings. JCB

**Unplanned Passage: Price £16.99**

**ISBN: 798-1-78003-058-6. Pen Press Publications: [www.penpress.co.uk](http://www.penpress.co.uk)**

### DVD REVIEW: THE WORST JOURNEY IN THE WORLD SNOWBOW PRODUCTIONS

As regular readers will know, I have occasionally reviewed the excellent series of DVD's produced by Des Cox of Snowbow Productions who has collated and preserved old film footage from the British Merchant Navy. As a result of the positive response to these DVD's, Des has also arranged several Maritime Memory Voyages which, having started as a one-off, have now become a popular annual event! The Worst Journey In the World documents a cruise of a different nature which grew out of a chance meeting with an Arctic Convoy veteran. In 2009, having located a few of the last remaining survivors of those horrendous days, Des with the co-operation of the Russian, Norwegian and Royal Navies, organised a cruise to Murmansk on board the *MV Discovery* which re-traced the convoy route. This documentary of the voyage which features interviews with veterans interspersed with rare footage of the convoys is a unique and fitting tribute to those who risked their lives in order to deliver essential supplies to the beleaguered Russians. Many of the ships were old and ill equipped and in addition to experiencing some of the worst seas on the planet these convoys

were subjected to almost continuous merciless attacks from sea and air. All knew that if their ship was sunk their chances of survival were negligible. Although the stuffy protocols of British medal allocation resulted in no Merchant Navy personnel ever receiving any formal recognition for their wartime service in any sphere, the Russians have never forgotten the debt owed and this is revealed by the warm and emotional reception granted to the veterans witnessed during their stay in Murmansk\*. *The Worst Journey in the World*, which also documents some remarkable coincidences, therefore provides a valuable and lasting testament to the bravery of the Merchant Navy officers and crew and a fitting memorial for those who were tragically lost.

JCB

The Worst Journey in the World Price £17.99

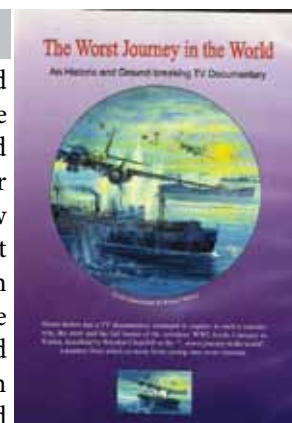
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\* The Russians first offered a medal for the Arctic convoy veterans for the 40th anniversary of the end of the war in 1985 but it was not permitted to be accepted or worn. In 1994 the Queen granted permission for this Great Patriotic War Medal more commonly known as the Russian Convoy Medal to be accepted and worn. Last year the Russians presented a further medal to surviving veterans at a special ceremony marking the 65th anniversary on board HMS Belfast which took part in the campaign. This January David Cameron agreed that these veterans should receive a British medal but since then there has been no news!! JCB



# COASTLINES

## ON TOP OF THE WORLD

Last November, Liverpool pilot Andy Bissaker made the trek to the mount Everest base camp for charity and the following is his account of the adventure.

After a successful ascent of Jbel Toubkal in Morocco in 2009, I decided that it was time to ask the family for a “high altitude shore pass” for last November. This came quite easily especially as I could raise money for a friend who had just passed away due to pancreatic cancer. So last November I found myself in the Hotel Tibet in Kathmandu listening to stories from “old salts” of dreadful altitude sicknesses such as Pulmonary Oedemas, Cerebral Oedemas, Frostbite, Hypothermia and worse the Khumbu two-step that would assault various bodily organs and functions. Then there was the flight to the start at Lukla which was named the world’s most dangerous airport just before I departed.

The path up to Base camp was a ten day trek of absolute wonder, joy was in the journey rather than the getting there. On the way we passed the Sherpa capital of Namche Bazaar, the Dalai Lama’s palace in Tengboche, drank the really very good Everest beer in tea-houses. Everywhere was built by hand with no vehicles other than yak trains and the porters whose carrying ability was phenomenal. Daytime temperatures meant shorts and t-shirt, while the nights were spent standing next to stoves wearing down jackets. We crossed the glacial “River of Milk” on rope bridges more times than I can remember, climbed and descended endlessly, drank foul iodine water in gallons. However any hardships were more than outweighed by the magnificent Himalayan views and the local people.

Although I did succumb to the two step for a very short while, altitude sickness passed me by and on the 29th November we arrived at the Everest base camp at 18,000ft on the Khumbu glacier where the oxygen content is half that of my favoured sea level and thanks to friends and colleagues I managed to raise more than £1600 for a worthwhile cause.

Andy Bissaker

To make a donation to Andy’s charity, please visit: <http://www.justgiving.com/AndyBissaker>



## RETIREMENT

Retired Fowey pilot, Sam Guy, sent me this delightful photo of his dog “Chinks” (named after the rocks off the Scillies) keeping a sharp lookout whilst at anchor during “beer o’clock”! However, Sam still continues to keep his hand in professionally and sent the following report:

Since ‘retiring’ from pilotage I have done the odd relief job on the local ferry and also on a small dredger belonging to Padstow harbour in North Cornwall. We have had a few interesting jobs with the dredger one of which was recovering broken containers from the seabed at the grounding sight of the Napoli in Lyme Bay. Although at present we are doing what a dredger is supposed to do ie. dredge, we had an interesting little job removing a derelict dredger from the upper reaches of the Taw estuary near Barnstable, in Devon late last year. We had to get it off a bank and tow it 3 miles down river to be beached and cut up. It was not the easiest of jobs especially as we had very little water, no bowthruster and single screw.



## QUEEN OF THE MAY

(NOT THE ROYAL WEDDING)



This photograph of the Tyne pilot cutter “Queen of the May” was sent to me by Bill Young who discovered it whilst sorting out some family documents. The photograph was taken in 1933 by his father William Mould Young who was a Tyne pilot.

The Queen of the May was bought by the Tyne Pilotage Authority in 1921 from the Coats cotton family.

Built in 1895 by A & J Inglis of Glasgow as a pleasure yacht she was 127 feet (38.7m) long and was powered by a 39HP triple expansion steam reciprocating engine.

In 1943 she was acquired by the Royal Navy for use as a calibrating vessel and was eventually disposed of in 1946.

JCB, with historical information supplied by retired Hawich pilot Andy Adams



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