



The official organ of the United Kingdom Maritime Pilots' Association

## Editorial

In dealing with all the politics and legislation of pilotage it is easy to lose sight of the fact that ours is one of the few jobs left where the basics have remained relatively unchanged for centuries. We still rely on a pilot boat to get us out to the ship where we board by means of a rope ladder hanging over the side. Every day our lives depend upon the skills of cutter coxswains who hold the boat alongside the ship whilst we transfer on or off, frequently in marginal conditions. In a worst case scenario, if the ladder parts or we fall off for any reason the pilot boat is our lifeboat and our very survival in such circumstances is totally dependent upon the skill and training of the cox'n and crew effecting a speedy recovery. It was therefore with great interest that I came across a book on the pilot gigs of Cornwall whilst on holiday that detailed these remarkable pilot boats which were still used for pilot transfers up until World War 2!

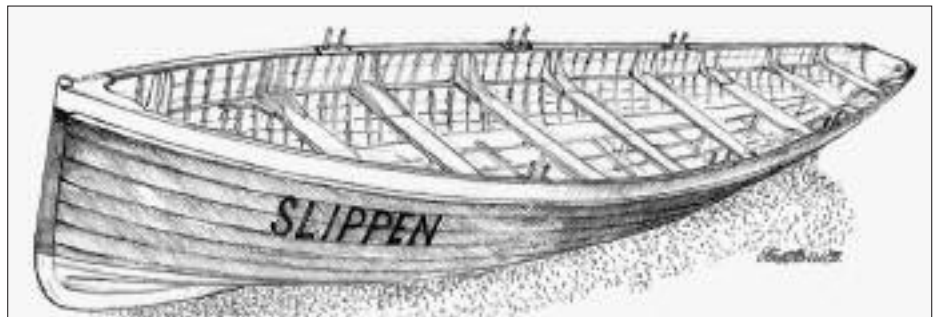
What is even more remarkable is how many of these craft have survived for over 150 years and whose design is now enjoying a revival as leisure craft. With over 120 officially classed pilot gigs now regularly racing and gaining world wide popularity I would not be surprised to see pilot gig racing become an official Olympic sport in the near future. I therefore dedicate this issue to pilot boat coxswains and crew both past and present.

On a sadder note, Monica Brown, our secretary in London, has been taken ill and has been off work for some time. This has obviously caused major problems with the administration so please note the amended contact procedures on page 14. Meanwhile, we wish Monica a speedy recovery.

John Clandillon-Baker FNI  
Email: john@pilotmag.co.uk

## The Pilot Gigs of Cornwall and The Scilly Isles

The pilot gigs of the Isles of Scilly and Cornwall are totally unique six oared open boats which were used to ship pilots onto ships arriving of the South West approaches to the United Kingdom. This feature actually started as a review of a fascinating book that I found in the bookshelf of a holiday let in Cornwall. Titled: "Azook: The Story of the Pilot Gigs of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly 1666 - 1994". The book, written in a lively manner by Keith Harris, not only goes into great detail as to how these craft were built specifically for the role of getting pilots out to ships as fast as possible but also explains how they were also ideally suited for many other roles especially as lifeboats, salvage and for smuggling! Unfortunately, the book is out of print and the publishers: Dyllansow Truran were bought by Tor Mark Press following the death of founder Len Truran some years ago. Tor Mark Press advise me that there are currently no plans to re-publish this important record of these remarkable craft. Fortunately I have been able to contact Keith Harris, who not only gave me permission to use content and diagrams from the book for this article but also provided me with valuable additional information.



St Mary's gig Slippen (1830) showing construction detail. (Azook)

### Early History

The earliest detailed record of the gig dates from 1666 when gigs from St Mary's on the Scilly Isles rescued the crew of the Royal Oak which had been wrecked on the Bishop Rock and although there is little other documentation regarding early gigs it is evident that the craft evolved over the centuries into the remarkable craft whose construction and design was perfected in the early 19th century.

To us today, used as we are to the relative

comfort of enclosed and heated cutters (but who still suffer some discomfort in bad weather!), an open rowing boat does seem to be a somewhat masochistic craft for the notoriously rough, wet and windy conditions experienced in the Atlantic off the South West approaches. However, history has proven that although competition in pilotage was frequently disastrous for pilots and pilotage it did result in some of the fastest and most seaworthy craft ever constructed, a fact

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that is borne out by the remarkable numbers of pilot vessels around the world that have not only been preserved but whose plans are still sought out for replicas in the 21st century. The fastest and most seaworthy boats got their pilots out to the ships first and so the boat designers and builders were also in competition to produce fast and seaworthy craft. The comfort of the pilot was not an issue because if he didn't find a ship or beat his rivals to board it, he didn't get paid. These were tough times, as indeed it still is for those unfortunate enough to have to earn a living under a competitive pilotage regime!

**Why an open rowing boat?**

With sailing craft becoming faster and being able to sail closer to the wind it does initially seem strange that the Cornish pilots continued to use rowing gigs but with the prevailing winds being South Westerly the fastest route to incoming shipping was directly into the wind so if a boat could be designed to get to windward faster using oarsmen than a sailing craft tacking then the rowing boat's pilot would get the job. The gigs did carry masts and sails which could be rigged when conditions were favourable but their design was primarily as a pulling boat since without either a deep keel or centreboard they only sail well off the wind. They were also used in different ways for which the design was ideal. For example, some were towed by larger sailing cruising pilot cutters and just used for the pilot transfer and because many of the vessels that were served were the coastal traders the gigs were used to take several pilots at a time on a short pull out to the local boarding ground. Whether by oar or sail the pilots must have frequently arrived on board extremely wet and bedraggled but in those days hardship was a fact of life for most people and it obviously didn't do them too much harm because many pilots lived to a ripe old age! As for the gigs themselves it would be natural to assume that these were very solid, heavily built craft in order to withstand the rigours of not just the frequently adverse weather but also the potential for impact damage whilst



*The world's oldest gig. The Newquay, built 1812 (Newquay Rowing Club website)*

alongside the ship transferring the pilot. Not so, these remarkable craft were built for speed and were therefore constructed from the lightest materials with many of the traditional strengthening features reduced or eliminated altogether!

The lightweight design evolved as a result of experience that too rigid a hull was prone to having the seams open up in a seaway and when alongside a ship a certain amount of thwartship flexibility was also necessary to reduce the possibility of cracking due to impact damage. The construction obviously worked well in practice since there are very few recorded incidents of losses and the fact that so many of the early craft still survive bears testimony to the success of the design.

**The Peters Family**

As previously mentioned, records of the early gigs are scanty but in the early 19th century a boat builder called William Peters designed a boat that was so efficient that all pilot gigs were subsequently built to that design, either by his descendents or others trained by the Peters family and this design still forms the criteria for the official racing gig specification used today.

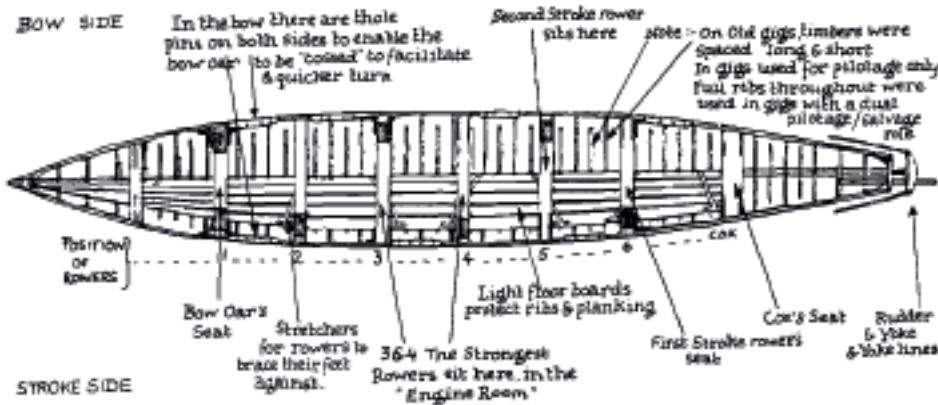
William Peters originally established the Peters boat building yard at Polvarth near St. Mawes in 1790 and gained a reputation for building high quality vessels from gigs to schooners. However, at the turn of the century he decided to concentrate solely on gig construction. The reputation of the Peters gigs rapidly gained the attention of the pilotage world and in addition to Cornwall and the Scillies other services ordered them and in 1812 three gigs were ordered for Bassein, in Burma! Of the three

gigs ordered, only two were actually despatched to Burma due to lack of space on the ship taking them and the third was subsequently sold to the Newquay pilots who named her the *Newquay*. The *Newquay* gained the reputation as being a fast and seaworthy boat and thus established the basic design criteria for future gigs.

The *Newquay* still exists today and is regularly raced by the Newquay Rowing Club and she is believed to be the oldest craft in the world still afloat and being used. Interestingly the other two boats built for Burma were still reported as being in service in 1937 and it is possible that they are also still afloat and working.

The last record of a pilot to be shipped by a gig was Jack Hicks of St. Agnes who was put on board the SS *Foremost* on December 1938 by the gig *Gipsy*. *Gipsy* (or *Gypsy* as she was subsequently named) was built for St. Agnes pilots in 1858. After World War 2, in common with many gigs, she was left to rot and in 1955 was purchased by the Padstow Regatta Committee.

The *Gipsy* along with another St Agnes gig, the *O&M* had an interesting history, having been involved in the rescue of passengers and crew of the steamer *Castleford* that grounded in fog on rocks off St Agnes in 1887. Following the successful rescue of personnel, the *Gipsy* and *O&M* returned to salvage the cargo from the ship which included 450 cattle. All 450 cattle were saved and transferred to a small island whilst the salvage was sorted out and a new ship arranged to collect



*Gig Layout Plan (Keith Harris)*



*Pilot Jack Hicks. (Azook)*

them. During this rescue a bullock's horn had pierced the hull of the *Gipsy* which was plugged by a crewman's sock! When Padstow took delivery of the *Gipsy* in 1955 they discovered that this hole was still in the planking covered by an original repair patch!

**The construction**

The early gigs were subject to Government anti smuggling restrictions which limited them to four oarsmen in order that they couldn't outrun the revenue boats. Four oared boats were obviously inefficient for the pilotage role and in 1829 a group of gig masters successfully petitioned the wonderfully titled Honourable Commissioners of His Majesty King George 1V's Customs London to repeal the law. Although some pilots and

designers felt that an eight oared boat would be ideal, the limit was raised to 6 because no revenue craft would ever be able to catch an 8 oared gig! The "official" pilot gig now used for racing, as classed by the Cornish Pilot Gig Association, is based on Peters' 1838 gig *Treffry* which has also survived and again is owned by the Newquay club and is still raced.

Peters' *Treffry* is a six oared, clinker built craft constructed from Cornish small leaf elm. The length is 32 feet (9.75m) in length with a 4' 10" (1.47m) beam. The thwarts are also lightweight 3/4 inch (19mm) thick and being supported by a central pillar to the keel had a slight upward curve. This was a practical design feature that in addition to tensioning the hull also prevented the thwart from piercing the hull if the boat came alongside slightly heavily.

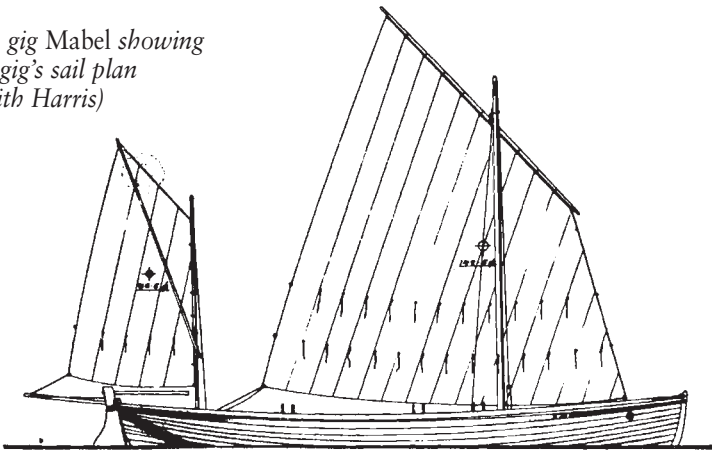
Instead, the thwart would spring upward or, in heavy impacts spring out altogether since they were only lightly secured. The boats are steered by a cox'n using a yoke to the rudder. The depth of the hull from keel to gunwales is around 2 feet (60 cms) and with the crew in place it has a draft of around 12 inches (30cm). The planking is a mere 1/4 inch (6mm) thick and this light construction results in a boat which weighs less than 7 cwt (approx 350 kgs) and thus enables it to be carried and launched by its crew (six oarsmen plus a cox'n) and also makes it very fast. Gig oars are called "paddles" and when working as pilot boats these were "long and strong" up to 18ft (5.4m) but for racing they are around 14ft (4.2m) and spooned. A good crew can sustain speeds of around 7kts but speeds of nearly 10kts have been recorded over a measured mile with racing crews rowing at 40 strokes per minute. Under sail, speeds of 12kts have been achieved. When looking at the construction plan a question arose in my mind as to where the pilot sat in the gig? Keith Harris has advised me that the pilot wasn't a passenger who lorded over his sweating crew from the stern but would take an oar himself. It was also not uncommon for some pilots, especially the "hovellers" to share a gig and since they can be easily rowed / sailed by two oarsmen, up to five pilots could share the gig in this manner.

Under sail the rig was very simple consisting of a dipping lug mainsail on an unstayed mast with the halyard on the weather side acting as the stay. The mizzen sail was also usually a dipping lug sail where the clew was attached to an outrigger protruding beyond the stern through a hole in the transom (see diagram).

**Salvage**

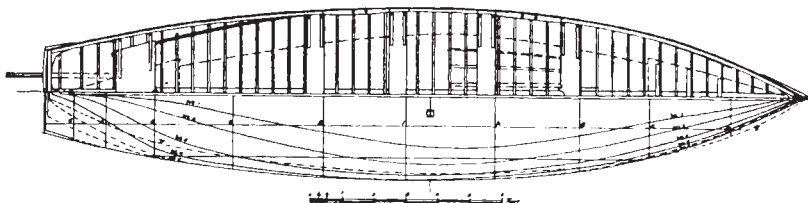
Common legend mentions the Cornish and Scillians as "wreckers" who lured vessels onto the rocky shores in order to make a living from the salvaged cargo. Whilst it is possible that some may have indulged in this dubious practice, the nature of the coastline, the storms, strong tides and currents combined with the difficulties in navigating with accuracy unfortunately resulted in plenty of wrecks occurring without the need to resort to "wrecking" practices. However, there is a local Scillian prayer attributed to the Reverend John Troutbeck from the 1790's which reveals a somewhat irreverent attitude to wrecks which reads: "We pray Lord, Not that wrecks should happen BUT, that if any wrecks should happen, Thou shalt guide them into the Scilly Isles for the benefit of the inhabitants"! It doesn't come as too much surprise to learn that the Rev'd Troutbridge was later forced to resign for handling contraband!

*The gig Mabel showing the gig's sail plan (Keith Harris)*

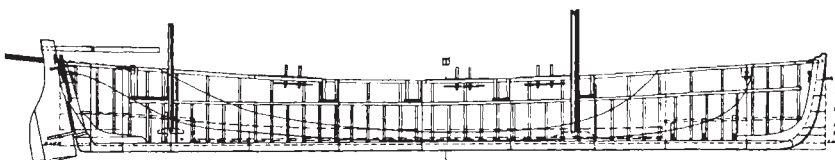
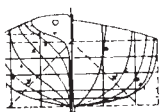


*The St. Michaels Mount Gig "Mabel"*

*Mabel* was built on the Mount by Burt in 1867. She was built for Lord St. Levan. Dimensions:- 24'0" x 5'5" x 1'1 1/2" (inside). Mast Dimensions:- Foremast 16'-18" x 3" dia. Foreyard 12' x 1 1/2" - 2" dia. Mizzenmast 11'-12' x 1 1/2" dia. Sprit boom 10' x 1 1/2" dia. Mizzenboom 4' x 1 1/2" dia. Sail Areas ~ Fore-sail 142.5 square feet. Mizzen sail 36.5 square feet. Total Sail Area 179 square feet. P.J. Oke who took the original drawings noted that the sails in this drawing of the *Mabel* were drawn proportionately from the larger sails of the 28'0" gig *Silly*.



The dimensions and position of the bottom boards were not available when P.J. Oke took his lines but they are indicated in the above drawing by the dotted lines. The hull colour is given as white, with one red stripe below the rubbing band. Inside the gig is painted white from gunwale to the thwarts and red below. When measured by Oke in 1937 the *Mabel* had been found to have twisted out of shape longitudinally. The stern was found to be approximately 3" out of centre.



Another story recounts an old pilot being asked his opinion as to how the number of wrecks could be reduced. His reply was that if they closed the Lloyd's signal station on the Lizard Head, Captains' would give it a wide berth rather than navigating towards it to report their arrival! Regardless of the cause, it was the pilot gigs which usually acted as lifeboats and salvage craft attending these wrecks.

There are over 150 detailed documented cases where gigs were engaged in rescue and salvage operations, usually in appalling conditions and at great risk to the crews. Hundreds more would have been considered routine and gone unreported. In many instances the pilots were able to get vessels in distress clear of danger or to salvage vessels after the crews had been rescued and the conditions had improved.

The last rescue by a gig was in 1955 when the gig *Sussex*, from Bryher In the Scilly Isles, assisted in the rescue of the crew of the Panamanian steamship *Mando* that had gone aground in thick fog. At that time the *Sussex* was 69 years old and had not been used for 26 years! She was brought into service for this rescue as a result of her shallow draft and the fact that she didn't have a propeller to become fouled in the weed around the wreck. Reports from the gig crew state that the hull was sound and she took no water in through the seams. The *Sussex* has had an interesting and varied career since she was constructed from the salvage proceeds of a ship bearing the same name in 1886. Originally built for the men of Bryher, in addition to pilotage duties, the gig was also used for general purpose work such as ferrying between the islands and in 1929 was used as a wedding barge to transport the bride to Tresco. The boat was also involved in many rescues including that of the *T. W. Lawson* and the *Minihaha*. The *Minihaha* was carrying a cargo of livestock and the salvage involved tying the horns of the cattle onto the thole pins of the Gig so that they could be rowed ashore.

In 1968 restoration work was undertaken by a boat builder and gig enthusiast, Ralph Bird, who fitted a new keel. Following this restoration in 1969 the *Sussex* was rowed from Scilly to Penzance in the record time of 9 hours and 17 minutes. In 1971 she was badly damaged in a gale and Ralph Bird brought the wreckage and fully restored the boat which he still owns and occasionally loans out to clubs.

#### Augustus Smith and the Scilly Pilots

The inhabitants of the Scilly Isles in the early 19th century suffered much mismanagement by those in charge of the islands but had survived by running what would probably now be referred to as a "black Economy"! A major upheaval to



*A gig engaged in salvage (Azook)*

their lives and lifestyle occurred in 1834 when Augustus John Smith, described as a "gentleman from Hertfordshire", took up the lease of all the Scilly Isles and set about establishing order through organisation, underpinned by rules and regulations. By making himself Justice of the Peace and Chairman of the Council he became known as "Lord of the Isles". His form of rule by dictatorship initially made him unpopular but he introduced many reforms such as the introduction of compulsory education for children (the boys studied navigation and the girls net making) which eventually led to successfully raising the living standards of the population. One of his interests was pilots and pilotage.

The history of the Isles of Scilly pilotage is interesting since the position of the islands resulted in a high demand for pilots in the days of sail with three hundred ships recorded as having visited the islands in one day in the early 1800's. Until 1808 pilots were chosen by the "Court of Twelve" respected citizens who governed the Islands. In 1808 a new law placed pilots and pilotage under the jurisdiction of Trinity House. Unfortunately Trinity House had no comprehension of the Scilly pilotage operation and only granted 11 pilot authorisations, all of whom were chosen from St Mary's. At that time there were 77 working pilots around the islands so it was hardly surprising that riots broke out. Trinity House relented but still only increased the number of authorised pilots to 37!

The predictable outcome was a free for all, whereby pilots continued to work regardless of whether or not they were authorised by Trinity House and the unlicensed pilots became known as "hovellers". This competition caused disputes and severe hardships for some since the Trinity House pilots had priority and could supersede the hovellers.

Augustus Smith saw the injustice of this illogical system and authorised the

unlicensed pilots to continue to work and threatened the Trinity House pilots with eviction from the Islands if they challenged the order. He thus created a fair regime and by the mid 19th century it is estimated that 200 pilots were working out of the islands under his protection. Indeed, such was his concern for some pilots' welfare that he left one pilot, James Jenkins of Bryher, £300 in his will for "his great distress caused by trinity House refusing to grant a renewal of licenses". I propose a toast in his memory!

It is of interest to note here that the only Trinity House Pilotage Certificate to cover the whole of the British Isles was issued to a Scillonian pilot called Captain Ashford.

#### Smuggling

Since time immemorial anybody who had a boat traditionally engaged in a bit of smuggling and the gig men of SW England were no exception! Whilst the legitimate salvage of cargoes provided valuable additional income for the pilots and boat crews, the temptation to engage in a bit of free trade between salvage and pilot jobs was difficult to resist especially since it was enthusiastically supported by the local community and playing cat and mouse with the revenue men was probably as much a part of the off duty entertainment as the regattas! The gigs were not merely confined to working close to shore, they hunted out ships well into the Atlantic and up the channel. The hardships of rowing and living on an open boat for a couple of days doesn't seem to have deterred them and this endurance would obviously be more bearable if the crew could engage in a bit of smuggling. Consequently gigs made frequent trips across the channel to France. Naturally not many records of these voyages were made but some detail has emerged from those who were caught and fined. One Scillonian pilot, John Nance, made 25 by 250 mile round trips to Roscoff in Brittany in the gig *Bonnet* and on one occasion rode out a storm for 30 hours by



*Bonnet arriving in Newquay 2006. Photo: Andrew King (sports.webshots.com)*



*The 3 oldest gigs (Newquay Rowing Club)*

keeping the gig's head to wind. *Bonnet* was built in 1830 and was named after an old lady waved her bonnet at the launch imparting her good luck magic on the boat. It certainly didn't do any harm since *Bonnet* is still owned by the St Mary's Gig Club and races regularly. In 2006 she was rowed the 60 miles from St Mary's to Newquay for a reunion.

#### Gigs as Lifeboats

There are many stories, particularly in the Isles of Scilly, where the Gig has been used in preference to the established lifeboat, due to conditions prevailing at the time. A classic example is the wreck of the *Isabo*, an Italian grain ship that foundered on the Scilly Rock in 1927. Grain, floating around the wreck to a depth of two inches, caused the intakes of the Lifeboat to become clogged, and the gig *Czar*, was sent in and successfully rescued all the crew.

#### Racing

During the past 20 years gig racing has been one of the fastest growing sports in Cornwall and most waterfront villages and towns now regularly race one or more gigs. Such has been the popularity of the sport that pilot gig clubs are being formed outside the Cornish boundaries, not just in the UK, but all over the world with clubs now established in France, Holland, Ireland, the Faeroes, USA and Australia. The sport is governed by the Cornish Pilot Gig Association which monitors all racing gigs during the construction phase. Every year in May the population of the Scilly Isles doubles as teams from all over the world congregate in St Mary's for the World Pilot Gig Championships and this year saw nearly 2,000 rowers and supporters participating in the event. The contest was the biggest yet, with a record 103 gigs lining up for the first men's race and 95 took part in the ladies' event.

It is fairly natural to believe that pilot gig racing is a recent leisure event and that in the days when these craft were working, boats that the pilots and crews wouldn't have had the time or inclination to engage in racing. Nothing could be further from

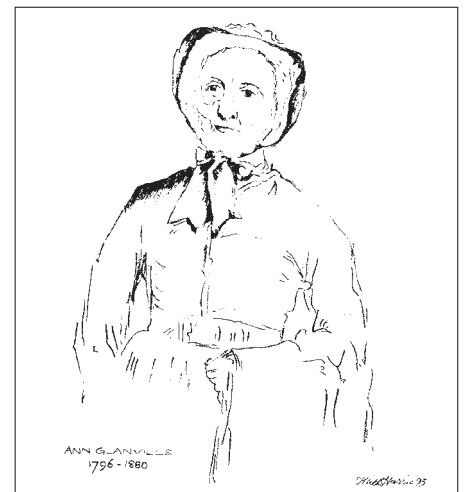
the truth. To quote directly from Azook, *"The life of a the pilot was a dog eat dog existence, the first pilot to get to a ship got the job, inevitably when more than one pilot gig spotted a potential job, a race would ensue in order to get the piloting contract."*

The whole concept of the gig design was to beat the competition in this race to get pilots to ships and it was only natural that when a new gig was delivered it would be raced against the existing boats and this, in turn, progressed the development of the design into the ideal boat for all the conditions likely to be encountered. In addition to this practical need for speed, the competition between the boat crews was such that regattas were organised to formalise the races and records of such regattas go back to the earliest days of the 19th century. The whole of the local community would be involved and serious money could be won. In the larger ports the prize money was such that boats would come from all around the coast to participate. Gig crews frequently came from the same families and started rowing almost as soon as they could walk. A remarkable account of a unique regatta race at St Mawes is recorded in the 1887 issue of *The Graphic* magazine. At the 1887 regatta someone came up with the idea of a race between veterans and boys where the total age difference was 500 years. They actually managed to find crews with an age difference of 501 years with the boys' crew having a total age of 79 and the veterans with a total age of 580. Two of the veterans were 90 years old! *The Graphic* recounts the race thus: *"At the firing of a gun the youngsters dashed off and by a little clever steering and frequent spurts managed to round the first mark about a length ahead, but on coming up the straight, the Old Boys steadied down to a long powerful stroke, soon collared them, then drew ahead and were never caught again."* *The Graphic* also reports that when the veterans were told that their exploits would appear in the magazine they said that *"it would be something to talk about when they were old"*.

The Newquay Rowing Club owns three of the oldest pilot gigs, namely the *Newquay* (1812), *Dove* (1820) and the *Treffry* (1838). There is a special race dedicated to just these three boats, crewed by the 18 best club rowers and competition is fierce to gain the honour of being chosen as their rew. The trophy is a 7 inch long silver gig which was given to the club in 1922 by Mr TA Reed, a Newquay businessman and great supporter of the Club.

#### Ladies gig racing

Nowadays there are almost as many women involved in gig racing as men and again most people would consider female participation in such events as being something that occurred in the late 20th century. In fact ladies gig racing is almost as old as that of the men having been firmly established in 1830 by a remarkable woman called Ann Glanville, who contemporary records describe as "longshoremoman and oarswoman extraordinaire". Born in 1796 Ann Glanville was part of a large family of "riversiders" from Saltash on the Cornish side of the river Tamar and would have grown up with boats on the river. There are records of women's races from early in the 19th century and one account states that *"Women's racing in Plymouth Regattas moved from being an object of mirth in*



*Ann Glanville. (Azook)*

1831 to becoming the chief attraction in 1841. *Saltash women led this change and Ann Glanville led these women*".

These womens' races were not just novelty events because again serious money was at stake and in 1834 Ann Glanville's crew won £20, a considerable fortune at that time. Amongst the crew was one of Ann's daughters since by this time she had 14 children! Two of her sons are recorded as being big men who apparently used their power and skills in naval boat races for wagers that sometimes totalled hundreds of pounds. After the publicity gained by her wins at Plymouth, Ann and her crew, known as the "Saltash Amazons", became early celebrities and toured Britain and Europe as professional sportswomen at events organised by entertainment promoters. However, their fame was not shallow since they trained hard and when they took on male crews they achieved wins as a result of technique, although they rarely beat experienced watermen accustomed to racing. As well as bringing rowing into the public domain they were early pioneers of women's rights and having started competitive racing at the age of 27, Ann was still racing at the age of 51. She died in 1880 at the age of 84.

Naturally there is a gig named *Ann Glanville* which was built by Ralph Bird in 1989 and is, of course, based at the Caradon pilot gig club at Saltash who were this years men's and veterans' world champions.

### The latest information

As previously mentioned the world of gig racing is undergoing an explosion in popularity and a very positive aspect of all this is that the building of Cornish gigs is keeping traditional boat building skills alive and order books are full. Should you wish to own one then a new gig with a professional paint finish for racing currently costs around £25,000. A good second hand one will cost around £15,000. I'm actually a bit reluctant to reveal the cost because in my district the pilotage operation is currently being subjected to an "end to end" review and our pilotage manager is looking at new pilot boats to replace a couple of the older boats! Whilst the accountants would love the gig concept, perhaps fortunately for us, these gigs wouldn't conform to modern regulations but as the price of oil rockets, their green credentials may once again make them the ideal boat for the future!

### Azook

In conclusion you are no doubt wondering what the title of the book "Azook" stands for?

Apparently it is an old gig term used by the Newquay gigs and when the coxswain of a Newquay gig wants his

crew to pull he calls "Hevva" and when he wants them to pull even harder he shouts "Azook". Is that my pilotage manager I hear shouting?

As mentioned in the introduction, this feature has been based on the book by Keith Harris and most of the photographs and diagrams are from that book. Obviously this is a very abridged version of the original which contains a vast wealth of not just general information but also detailed histories of many of the individual gigs. If by any chance you are lucky enough to come across a copy in a second hand book shop, snap it up, because I'm sure that you will become as engrossed as I was within its pages.

*Many thanks to Keith Harris, Ann Curnow-Care, Ralph Bird and Mr and Mrs Bellingham for their valuable help in preparing this article.*

JCB

**"Azook: The Story of the Pilot Gigs of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly 1666 – 1994".** Originally published by: Dyllansow Truran. Weblink: [Cornish Pilot Gig Association: www.cpga.co.uk/](http://www.cpga.co.uk/)

### Ralph Bird

As mentioned in the article Ralph Bird restores and builds gigs and it was Ralph, along with a few other enthusiasts, who are responsible for the revival of gigs and racing during the last 20 years and he was also a founder member of the Cornish Pilot gig Association. As I was writing this article he was building his last gig prior to retirement and just as I was concluding this feature I learned that a retirement event was organised in Newquay which saw all twenty nine gigs that he has built over the years brought to Newquay on the 6th October for a retirement tribute. A full pictorial of this event is on page 8.

## EMPA CONFERENCE BREMEN 20th June

Dave Williamson, SC representative Region 5 and Graham Langley attended the 41st EMPA conference as UKMPA representatives. The full proceedings are available on the EMPA website but the key topic for discussion was competition in pilotage.

German Minister for Transport, Elfriede Reif, spoke about piloting in Germany and recognised the low accident rate associated with piloted ships. She supported EMPA's policy that a pilot should not be under any commercial pressure whatsoever and confirmed that Germany is publicly against competition in Pilotage.

Other delegates provided examples that proved that safety was being compromised by competition. Concern was expressed that Denmark State was supporting competition but hoped that the example of Florida, which had recently scrapped competitive pilotage, might be used to oppose the Danish de-regulation. It was also the case that competitive pilotage had produced no economic benefits to the commercial shipping market with any cost savings generally being swallowed up by a top heavy administration. The case of the Great Barrier Reef pilotage was an example, where 4000 movements were undertaken by 75 pilots. This operation is supported by 50 shore personnel!

Unfortunately, despite two major defeats, EU policy was still being directed towards competition in pilotage and a third maritime and ports policy document was reviving the competition issue. (Since this report was submitted this document has been released. [http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/subpage\\_mpa\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/subpage_mpa_en.html)).

### Pilotage statement Section 4.4

[http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/pdf/Ports\\_policy\\_EN\\_COM\\_2007\\_616.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/pdf/Ports_policy_EN_COM_2007_616.pdf)) JCB

Chris Hughes, addressed the delegates and explained the role of deep sea pilots who work in a competitive environment. There are five different agencies competing against each other which results in rates being cut in order to get business. Pilots' salaries are being compromised with a lot of pilots returning to sea as masters where they can earn more money. Chris stated that the pilots feel that, in particular, all vessels using the deep water routes (16 metres) should be subject to compulsory pilotage and he asked EMPA to support the Europilots campaign on this issue..

### General:

EMPA are considering the best policy to campaign against any revival of the competition policy.

The MarNIS and POADSS developments are covered in Gareth Rees' report on page 11. There were demonstrations of other portable pilot units by various manufacturers.

Ukraine were accepted as a new participating member of EMPA.

A smoking policy was defined

Reports from member countries were presented.

Dave Williamson was elected as an EMPA Vice president.

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

*Edited from a report by Graham Langley*

# PENSION NEWS

## THE SECRETARIAT

### Buckhurst House

In August of this year the lease on Buckhurst House came up for renewal and I am very pleased to say that the Trustees agreed to the new terms and that the upheaval of another move has been avoided for the foreseeable future.

### Alternate Trustees

The last quarter has seen the resignation of Jon Armstrong and John Lorking, two Alternate Trustees appointed by the Association of Participating Bodies. The increasing complexity of pensions' legislation, as well as the Regulator's Trustee Knowledge & Understanding requirements may, in the future, make it more difficult to find volunteers to act as trustees, be they alternates or otherwise.

Continuing on the theme of Trustee Knowledge and Understanding, I am pleased to announce that three of our Trustees have successfully completed The Pension Regulator's e-learning Toolkit.

### Scheme Funding Statements

The annual Scheme Funding Statement was sent out to all PNPf members in September. The details contained therein were not much different from the 2006 Statement and I really cannot envisage too much change in the information until after the 2007 triennial valuation has been finalised.

### Triennial Valuation 2007

Although not due until the end of the year the Trustees have already turned their thoughts to the 2007 valuation. For the first time the Trustees will have to determine the assumptions to be used in calculating the valuation results, with advice from the Fund's Actuary. According to Regulations the assumptions used must be prudent, but unhelpfully they do not go on to define prudence. To assist the Trustees in determining the assumptions the Actuary will be preparing a funding advice report in early 2008.

### Change of Address

Research carried out in 2007 shows that since 1996 almost 36% of employees in the private sector failed to notify their pension schemes of their change of address. Locating missing deferred

members and pensioners affects most schemes. Which is the reason for this gentle reminder to let us know when you change your address. This is particularly important if you intend to move overseas.

## HEDGE FUNDS

### - A very brief history

Hedge funds have received a lot of attention in the press over the last year or two and as you know the Trustees are currently following an investment strategy that diversifies risk and return by investing in alternative assets, ie hedge funds. As hedge funds seemed to have the reputation of being a bit of a chimera I thought I would share with you this brief history of hedge funds that I recently came across.

It may be hard to believe but essentially hedge funds have been around for a number of years and goes back to a well known gentleman by the name of Alfred Winslow Jones. In the late 1940s, Mr. Jones who had been to Harvard and had been a writer at Fortune magazine wanted to offset the risk that was in the market by buying stocks that he liked and finding a means to sell the stocks he did not like. This coined the first phrase of hedge fund. The word "hedge" means to mitigate a possible loss by counterbalancing or offsetting. Over the years it has evolved and various strategies have been developed. But it was in the 1980s and 1990s that it really picked up with "specialist managers" running small unconstrained firms and manufacturing different sources of alpha and beta which is then passed on to the investors.

### Quellos

As you know Quellos is one of the Fund's fund of hedge fund providers. On 1 October 2007 Quellos was acquired by BlackRock, best known for its acquisition of Merrill Lynch. Whereas Merrill Lynch is best known for its acquisition of Mercury Asset Management (MAMs). Those of you with memories that go as far back as mine will remember that up until January 1998 MAMs was one of our investment managers. A real example of what goes around comes around.

## PENSIONS ACT 2007

The 2007 Act received Royal Assent on 26 July 2007. It introduces reforms to the state pension system, including proposals to simplify the administration of occupational and personal pension schemes. The changes made by the Act are good news to many, particularly those on low earnings, but also to those people, such as carers, who have no earnings at all.

The general thrust behind the proposals is to ensure that most people receive a suitable level of retirement income by:-

- Improving the level of the basic state pension and at the same time easing the qualifying conditions.
- Making it easier to save for retirement by introducing personal accounts.
- Streamlining the regulatory environment to try and ensure employers retain their occupational pension schemes.

## An Overview

The number of years required to qualify for a full Basic State Pension will fall to 30 years for both men and women attaining state pension age after 6 April 2010.

Annual increases to the Basic State Pension will be linked to earnings rather than price inflation.

The State Pension Age will gradually increase between 2024 and 2046 to 68 for both men and women reflecting increased longevity.

Schemes will be allowed to convert Guaranteed Minimum Pensions (GMPs) into scheme benefits so that they can ultimately make savings on benefit administration.

The introduction of a Personal Accounts Delivery Authority which will make preparations for the introduction of Personal Accounts from 2012.

Improvements to the level of payments made under the Government's Financial Assistance Scheme.

Debbie Marten  
Debbie@pnpf.co.uk

## Retirements

May to July 2007

<b>GW Anderson</b>	<b>Harwich</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>JH Bryant</b>	<b>PLA</b>	<b>May</b>
<b>MC Magill</b>	<b>Forth</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>R Mountney</b>	<b>Lowestoft</b>	<b>April</b>
<b>G Rafferty</b>	<b>Liverpool</b>	<b>July</b>
<b>P Vile</b>	<b>Wisbech</b>	<b>May</b>
<b>P White</b>	<b>Sunderland</b>	<b>May</b>

## Pensioners Deceased

May 2007 to July 2007

<b>GC Newman</b>	<b>Medway</b>
<b>GW Smith</b>	<b>London-Thames</b>

# RALPH BIRD

It is generally acknowledged that the renaissance of the Cornish Pilot Gigs was driven by the enthusiasm and dedication of one man, boat builder Ralph Bird. After World War 2, many of the surviving pilot gigs, which had served a useful training role during the war, were abandoned and although a few local enthusiasts kept some craft maintained there were no real organised regattas and these historic craft were on the verge of rotting into oblivion. However, in 1981, Ralph, with a handful of other enthusiasts, borrowed a few historic gigs and set up the Truro Three Rivers Race. Within five years, four pilot gig clubs had been formed and as a result of a meeting at Mr Bird's cottage in 1986, the Cornish Pilot Gig Association was formed two years later in 1988.

The Association agreed from the outset that there should be a standard design for all racing gigs and it was decided that the William Peters 1838 built *Treffry* should be the model for the racing gig and all racing gigs are still strictly built to this design. Indeed to ensure compliance with the construction rules new gigs are inspected three times during construction by a member of the CPGA committee.

Next year will therefore mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the CPGA and the sport has never looked stronger with 124 gigs now registered.

As part of my research into the feature on the pilot gigs I managed to contact Ralph who was able to clarify several points on the



*Ralph Bird (2nd from right in the sunglasses) rowing the Ralph Bird*

construction and working of the boats and he told me that, although semi retired, he was currently building a new gig for Pembroke. What he didn't tell me was that this was actually the last gig that he would build and it was only by chance, that just as I was finalising this issue, that I learned that there had been a major launch celebration for this gig in Newquay on the 6th October, where this Pembroke gig was named *Ralph Bird* in his honour. What was even more remarkable was that the CPGA had managed to get all 29 gigs that Ralph has built over the years to Newquay for the celebration. This was no mean feat since some had come from Wales and the Scilly Isles but as Anne Curnow-Care, Secretary of the CPGA, says, "that is the wonderful thing about the sport of gig rowing".

The local priest from Porthgain blessed

the *Ralph Bird* ashore in both Welsh and English before she was carried down to the beach and launched for her first outing on the water. The weather was apparently perfect for the event and hundreds of people enjoyed the event. Ralph, along with some of his colleagues, rowed the boat out for a lap of honour round the harbour and the other crews from the assembled "Bird" fleet tossed their oars in salute and gave Ralph three cheers as he passed the assembled line up.

Afterwards, addressing the crowd Ralph said: "I never thought gig rowing would take off in the way that it did. It has been an honour and a privilege to build the gigs and meet the hundreds of people associated with the sport". The photographs are reproduced with the kind permission of Anne Curnow-Care.



*The 29 gigs constructed by Ralph Bird lined up on Newquay beach*



## NEW PILOT CUTTER DESIGN

This quarter's feature on pilot gigs illustrates how a successful design can survive unchanged for generations. The modern pilot boat is a similar example since it is still possible to order a pilot cutter whose design is basically unchanged from the first high speed cutters introduced in the 1960's.

It was therefore with interest that earlier this year I visited the Southampton workboat show to have a look at a radical new design of pilot boat which had been brought over to the show by the St Nazaire pilots. Called "ORC" the craft are constructed by the Bernard shipyard at Locmiquelic, near Lorient in Brittany, France. The unique feature of this boat is the beak protruding from the hull above the water line. The idea behind the beak is to improve bad weather high speed capability. With a traditional bow form, as the boat encounters a large wave, the flare of the bow causes the bow to rise up and then when the boat drops off the back of the wave the bow slams into the next one. As well as being extremely uncomfortable for the occupants, this effect obviously has the potential to cause hull damage and consequently in rough conditions speed capability is seriously reduced which in turn results in a slow slog over the waves out to the pilot transfer area. The ORC beak acts as a form of wave piercing extension to the hull which, as it enters the front of a wave reduces the tendency for the bow to rise rapidly as a result of the bow flare. With the vertical movement of the bow stabilised, the fall off the back of the wave is lessened and the "angle of attack" into the front of the next wave is reduced and the process is repeated. The design has also enhanced sea keeping properties in following and cross seas. The boats are also designed to be self righting.

St Nazaire pilots have been operating an ORC 180 since 2001 and the boat has dramatically enhanced bad weather performance over their traditional pilot boats. Pilot Michel Catho, who

attended the show with the boat, informed me that they are usually able to maintain the boat's design speed of 27 knots in sea conditions of force 6-7 and they can even maintain full speed through the larger waves / swells encountered at the sand bar on their approach channel. The Coxswain informed me that he had actually motored through a wave at speed and apart from the bow fendering being peeled back the boat suffered no damage.

Of equal importance for a pilot boat is how the boat handles whilst alongside a ship during the pilot transfer. The hydrodynamics of some modern pilot boat hull designs have resulted in their becoming "stuck" alongside a ship which has necessitated requesting slower ships speeds during pilot transfer. In bad weather this increases the likelihood of heavy rolling developing whilst making a lee. Michel advises me that these hulls are very stable alongside and they normally transfer at speeds of around 10 - 12 kts. In good weather they have safely undertaken transfers at 15 kts which means that the majority of ships don't have to reduce speed whilst boarding / landing their pilot.

### General information

The ORC hull is available in lengths from 10 - 25 metres and the interior layout can be tailored to individual user needs. The pilots of six French ports are now using ORC boats and this year the Norwegian pilots at Hammerfest took delivery of an ORC 140. The ORC hull is not just used for pilot boats. The French lifeboat Service the Societe Nationale de Sauvetage en Mer (SNSM) are now operating 22 such craft around the French coast and the design is becoming increasingly popular in France with many other small craft sectors.

[www.bernard-naval.com/](http://www.bernard-naval.com/)

JCB



St Nazaire's ORC 180 pilot boat, Loire  
Photos: Michel Catho, St Nazaire Pilots and JCB

## Chairman's Report

For those that don't as yet know, our secretary, Monica, has been seriously ill recently, and has spent some time in hospital. She is now at home convalescing, and I'm sure that you will all want to wish her a speedy recovery. For the time being the T&G have provided a temporary secretary but my advice to everyone is that if you wish to contact the section committee you should use their home details. Also, that any financial matters to be dealt with should be addressed directly with the treasurer and here I must congratulate John Pretswell for his efforts.

The IDM went ahead in September, although was in jeopardy at one stage due to lack of members. There was general debate about apathy within the membership, status of a pilot, affiliation to T&G, ABP Humber Pilots, MarNIS, ETCS. I shall forward a copy of the final notes to each local secretary in the near future,

The IMPA/EMPA safety week was from 8th to 14th October. Completed forms will be sent to IMPA, who are compiling a report.

MAIB have recently released its report into the collision between Alaska Rainbow (pilot onboard and 2 tugs connected) and Sea Express 1 (PEC holder) on the River Mersey. For those that haven't seen it, it is available from MAIB's web site. Two factors mentioned in the Conclusions are that the pilot was not proactive in requiring support, which increased his workload; and that neither the pilot nor the master had ordered the fog signals to be sounded (although VHF communication had taken place).

A quick survey of some districts has shown that it is not uncommon for fog signals not to be sounded in narrow rivers, especially whilst manoeuvring with tugs fast. In this case Alaska Rainbow would have needed to sound one long and three short blasts every two minutes, and each tug one long and two short every two minutes. Clearly this could be seen as causing a significant distraction. Perhaps each district should look at its own procedures for fog. We are all seamen, and know that the rules apply to all waters, however, there is provision for "local rules" to apply. In this "blame culture society" that we live in we should all remember that in the event of an "incident", bodies like MAIB will look at every detail.

Several other conversations have made me look into what a pilot's status is whilst on the bridge of a ship. We know from the Cavendish Report that a Pilot becomes the employee of the shipowner. Law defines a pilot as "any person not belonging to a ship who has the conduct thereof". All the case law we have says that the pilot has the conduct of the ship, and is entitled to all assistance he can get from the Master and

crew. The Master should only intervene where he has misgivings as to the wisdom of the pilot's proposed course of action, or if in immediate peril. This is a very important point. There is a wide held misconception that pilots are not in control of the manoeuvring, and are merely advisers to the Master. Yes, we do advise, but we should also have the con of the vessel.

Two cases were mentioned to me recently; one where the Master took control off the pilot approaching the berth – then hit a berthed ship, and another where the Master took control, then ignored the pilot's advice, and took a long time to berth the ship. The ship was sent an invoice for the extra time that the labour was standing by, and the pilot was asked by his CHA to explain why it took so long for HIM to berth the ship.

My advice, and the advice of our solicitor, is, in cases where the Master takes "control" of the vessel, that you inform your VTS/CHA by VHF – if only to protect yourself. You may be thankful that you did if there is an incident. Having taken the control, I would also suggest that pilots continue to offer advice – it is up to the Master whether he continues to disregard it.

I have raised my concerns on this subject with DfT – mainly as a result of the P&I Club findings into "pilot related claims".

Conference 2008 will take place at the Crown Hotel, Harrogate, on May 15th and

16th. We are working on final details and will send out information in the near future. I hope that changing the venue and date will entice a few more people to attend. Harrogate is a great place for shopping, and has many attractions. There will be a golf day on the 14th prior to Conference.

It would be remiss of me not to mention insurance! The process for renewing has not been without its complications, although for the majority, a smooth process. We have been assured that it will be better next year. Unfortunately a small number of pilots have chosen not to renew their insurance, and it has been my regrettable duty to cancel their UKMPA membership; this at a time when we can do without losing members.

Section committee continue to serve all pilots to the best of their abilities, and we have each taken on extra work with Monica being ill. However, technology is an aid, and we move more information by e-mail and the web site. It would be useful to have each local secretary's e-mail so that we can cut down on paperwork in the post.

There will be some changes to payments for *The Pilot*, to be introduced next year. These mainly affect retired pilots, but also pilots who retire between the annual renewal date (July). A separate note is included in this magazine on page 14.

Best wishes to all.

Joe Wilson

<b>WARSASH MARITIME CENTRE</b> <i>over 50 years serving the maritime industry</i>		 WARSASH MARITIME CENTRE
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<b>SHIP HANDLING COURSES</b> Utilising the 7 scaled manned models, we offer specialised courses designed to develop the skills and understanding of ship handling techniques. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scaled models of up to 300,000 Dwt</li> <li>• Radio controlled model tug</li> <li>• 10 acre lake with many miles of channels and 30 berths</li> </ul>	 SOUTHAMPTON INSTITUTE	
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<h2>www.solent.ac.uk/wmc</h2>		

# TECHNICAL & TRAINING

Since our last report to *The Pilot* we have seen the launch of the revised Boarding & Landing Code for Pilots on the 28th June. This prompted one Pilot to write expressing his concerns as the Code did not mention the dangers inherent in the carriage of bags (rucksacks or whatever) by Pilots on their backs while boarding albeit that a brief mention is made of the Pilot's bag in sect. 8.9 under the heading of Pilot Disembarkation Operation but not of the danger of carrying it. Bags carried with shoulder straps can impair the inflation of ALL types of lifejacket and the current EMPA Recommendation on Safety Awareness Amongst Pilots suggests that Pilots should never wear a bag or portable radio over their neck or arm while embarking/disembarking.



POADSS Mk I

After being stalled for a few months work is now progressing at a pace on the development of the POADSS unit under the MarNIS project. The first trials of the

hardware in Venice are shown in the picture above (Sept 2007).

Full scale trials are expected to take place in Lisbon culminating in a demonstration planned for June 2008

The bid for funding for the Azipilot project has been submitted by Newcastle University and a decision will be made by the EU in early December.

On the issue of training the demise of PSSL has once again left the National Qualification for Pilots hanging in the air, perhaps there is an opportunity here for ETCS to be promoted as the standard and Section Committee will be bringing this to the attention of the MCA at the first available opportunity. The Nautical Institute are revamping their Diploma Schemes and Peter Aylott, the newly appointed NI Education & Training Manager, will be invited along to our next meeting to see if there is merit in incorporating ETCS into the NI Pilotage Diploma. This Diploma will be linked to Middlesex University and could then form part of training and career progression of a Pilot. Credits towards a MSc would then be accrued.

We have been fortunate enough to have found a place on a recently formed PIANC Working Group (PIANC is a professional organisation offering access to worldwide trends and challenges in port and waterway development and management) which will be looking at the use of hydro/meteo information to optimise safe port access. See page 13.

Following discussion at the April meeting we have extended an invitation to the Irish Pilots (AMPI) for one of their members to join us and I am pleased to say they have accepted and we look forward to greeting Liam Dempster at our next meeting on the 8th November.

Gareth Rees,  
Chairman T&T Committee

JMU Lairdside Maritime Centre

## ESCORT TOWING & PILOT TRAINING

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Voith Schneider and Azimuth propulsion systems for Tug Operators  
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# OBITUARY

## Captain Colin Vine DSC RD RNR FNI



Colin Frank Vine was born in November 1915 and died in May 2007.

After prep school he went to HMS Worcester from 1928 to 1932 and joined BP Tankers as a cadet, reaching 2nd Officer by 1939.

He had joined the RNR and was mobilized in 1939, being appointed to command HMS *Crescent Moon* and as

Senior Officer 400th Minesweeping flotilla, serving overseas until 1943.

In 1943 he was appointed First Lieutenant in HMS *Chelmer*, a new-build frigate commanded by (then) Commander Peter Gretton (later Vice Admiral Sir Peter Gretton KCB DSO OBE DSC) of the 37th Escort Group. In a full North Atlantic gale he took a whaler with the surgeon from *Chelmer* to a merchant ship to attend an injured seaman, being awarded the DSC shortly after.

Released from RN service in 1944 he became a Suez Canal pilot, where he remained until it was nationalised in 1956.

Colin then completed the Long Naval Course, becoming a North Sea pilot from 1958 to 1964. Promoted to Captain RNR. From 1964 to 1975 he was Captain Superintendent of the Prince of Wales Sea Training School and returned to piloting when that school closed down in 1975. He was elected an underwriting member of Lloyds in 1964.

Colin was elected to The Honourable Company in 1955, admitted to Livery in 1969 and served on the Court from 1971, as a Warden from 1985 and was Master 1985/86. He was a Founder Member of The Nautical Institute and became a

Fellow in 1985.

Colin married in 1959, Elizabeth Jo Colpoys, daughter of a well known submariner and was widowed in 1986. There were two sons, Michael, an Oxford MA who took Holy Orders and is a Vicar in Newcastle area and Christopher who qualified as a mechanical engineer at Bristol and now works for Rolls Royce Aero Engines.

Always my "choice pilot", Colin's last ship was with me in *World Truth*, an OBO VLCC and the younger officers were fascinated to look at this 'grand-dad figure' and think of him at sea in a whaler in a convoy under attack in an Atlantic gale.

On that last trip, Colin's sandwiches had been put in the fridge in the pilot cabin, but I had forgotten to tell him. Late in the first watch he asked my Chinese 3rd Mate, Robert Wong, if there was any chance of a sandwich. Robert led Colin to a quiet corner of the wheelhouse and said "Mr Pilot, I've been here for three months and I have never had a sandwich. You only came today and have no chance." Never mind all the packets of instant noodles.

*Captain Eric Beetham*

## Status of a Pilot

*As mentioned in Joe's Chairman's report on page 7, there is increasing concern over how some maritime sectors such as P&I Clubs and investigators are referring to pilots as "advisors" and giving the impression that the pilots' role is going on board a ship and monitoring the ship's bridge team executing the ship's berth to berth passage plan. We of course know this to be nonsense but to outsiders, who visualise every bridge to be equipped with the latest navigational equipment and manned by a highly trained bridge team fully integrated into the systems, it is inevitably how we are perceived. This misconception, in turn, naturally leads to questions as to why on earth we are there at all!*

*Fortunately the status of the pilot has been defined by law and the following is edited from an opinion on the issues involved by Barrie Youde which establishes that a pilot is far more than a mere advisor.*

JCB

Statute law defines a pilot as "any person not belonging to a ship who has the conduct thereof": see Section 742 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1894. The interpretation provisions of the Pilotage Act 1987 specifically prescribe this

definition (Section 3L) and the important phrase is "has the conduct thereof".

Apart from this basic explanation, Parliament has not laid down with any precision what the status of a pilot is. However, inferences may be drawn from the wording of statute law and regulations, and the judges have left no doubt that the pilot is in charge of the ship's navigation, not the master and the following court cases confirm this.

**The Tactician (1971):** In this case the judge considered the meaning of the word "conduct". And stated: "it is a cardinal principle that the Pilot is in sole charge of the ship, and that all directions as to speed, course, stopping, and reversing, and everything of that land, are for the Pilot".

**The Mickleham (1918):** This case also considered the meaning of the word "conduct" and again concluded that if a ship is to be conducted by a pilot it "does not mean that she is to be navigated under his advice: it means that she must be conducted by him".

Another case **Babbs v Press (1971)** examined the pilot's status should a Master decide to take over the conduct of the vessel from him and the judge decided that "a pilot can only act in such a capacity when

*he personally has the conduct of the ship, i.e. the control of its navigation and handling. Hence if the Master supersedes the Pilot for whatever reason the Pilot ceases to be a pilot and is not responsible for the actions of the Master".*

This aspect of the Master relieving the pilot of conduct also requires legal clarification because although by statute the Pilot has the conduct, under common law, the Master may still intervene to express his misgivings as to the wisdom of the Pilot's proposed course of action, and in a situation of immediate peril he is entitled to take the navigation out of the hands of the Pilot provided he can show justification. Therefore if there is any implication to be read into the written law of pilotage, it is the simple and natural rule that pilots should generally be trusted to exercise the qualifications granted to them; and that intervention by the shipmaster should only happen if and when trust in the pilot has broken down. As to whether a pilot should report by VHF to the CHA whenever a shipmaster supersedes him, it is entirely proper that he should do so; and it might well be a sensible precaution.

*Edited from a legal opinion by  
Barrie Youde*

## PIANC: Permanent International Association of Navigation Congresses

**What's this?** - A new Day, another acronym! The title gives the impression that PIANC is a just another navigation forum but it is actually a highly specialised group of experts that looks at channels and how ships behave within them. The vast majority of PIANC's work is undertaken by the boffins who have produced wonderfully complex formulae to cover the infinite variety of vertical and horizontal parameters with respect to block coefficients of ships, speeds and under keel clearances etc. Obviously this work is of great relevance to pilots and pilotage so fortunately, London pilot and Section Committee member, Don Cockrill has been made a full member of the "horizontal" working group, as part of his UKMPA IMPA portfolio. The following is edited from Don's report and the minutes from the meeting.

JCB

### Working Group 49 meeting, October 2007

The working group is undertaking a revision of the WG 30 report published in 1997 which is basically the industry design bible for fairway and channel design. WG 30 had input from IMPA via Tony Boddy (retired Trinity House, London North).

One new aspect has been the introduction of risk assessment methodology and one member has produced a paper on risk and published studies that presented accident frequency and concepts of acceptable risk levels and all were agreed that this needs to be incorporated into the report.

IALA have been invited to join the group since they have expertise in information systems on positioning and navigation but it was decided that WG49 should not consider the design and implementation of fairway navigation aids because it was such a large and complex subject and a separate sub group may be formed to examine this aspect. However it was agreed that the relationship between nav aids and fairway dimensions must be mentioned in the WG49 final report with reference to relevant IALA guidelines.

It was also agreed that the WG had a professional responsibility to ensure that any guidance given would result in safe channel dimensions, which, consequently, would be likely to be conservative (greater than the actual minimum required). It was also noted that in most cases, the existing WG30 guidance provides good conceptual design estimates of channel width requirements when the method is applied correctly but it needed to be made clear that the guidelines only provide a preliminary indication of fairway dimensions and that a detailed design process is required to optimise the fairway for the specific site/purpose. Don Cockrill raised the issue of skill levels of the mariners handling vessels in confined waterways because whilst pilots were experienced in such navigation, narrow channel navigation was outside the experience of the non piloted "bridge team". It was therefore agreed that there may be some merit to including some parameters related to the skill of the vessel operator in the guidance. Other factors, including the use of escort towage may result in a modification of the existing method using the ship's beam. Practical

tests involving those experienced in narrow channel navigation should also be used to test the concepts.

### Don's report:-

The involvement of a pilot in this project is essential in that the WG is made up entirely of erudite hydrodynamic scientists, designers and engineers who by their own admission have very limited knowledge and understanding of the realities and practical aspects of ship navigation, handling and pilotage which are all directly impacted by the results of their work. IMPA therefore had great impact in the document by introducing the concept of the human factors aspect of shipping and pilotage in its many forms and a reference to the need for channel design to take into account the skill of the ship navigator in confined waters etc.

I have a short work list of specialist paragraphs to write and or contribute to on a variety of subjects. Any references, views, opinions, local experiences or other relevant input you may have which would possibly be of assistance to me in compiling concise and useful contributions to the project would be most gratefully received, preferably by the end of December.

Subjects I am specifically covering are:

1. The size and location of Pilot Boarding areas.
2. Helicopter pilot boarding operations with particular regard to ship manoeuvring space required.
3. Escort towage – how the use of escort tugs may impact on the design width of a channel.
4. Manoeuvring areas – Impact on required size of area in relation to tug use.
5. Tug operational rules and how they may affect channel design widths.
6. VTS & VTMS -what impact they may have on the design width and depth of a channel.
7. Inboard vessel navigation systems – descriptions, myths and realities!

Note that each item is generally only allocated space for a few hundred words maximum so I am only required to write broad outline descriptions on each with references for detailed information where appropriate.

The next meeting is to be held at MARIN, Wargeningen in April 2008.

Don Cockrill,

Email: don.cockrill@tesco.net

## PILOTS' GOLFING SOCIETY

Twenty seven pilots from six ports Forth, Tees, Humber, Manchester, Bristol & Milford Haven took part in the 32nd playing of their annual event at the Bells Hotel & Golf Club in the forest of Dean. After this dreadful summer we were blessed with great weather. Paul Pullen of Milford Haven dominated the winning circle on all three days. Here are the results:

Manchester Salver	R Smith (Tees)
Wilmslow Cup	P Pullen (M Haven) D Fortnum (Humber)
Hawkestone Cup	P Pullen (M Haven)
Pilots' Cup	J Cracknell (Sullom Voe)
Milford Cup	P Pullen (M Haven)
Jim Purvis Memorial	P Pullen (M Haven)
Nearest Pin	W Kitching (Forth)

Next year we are meeting in spring at St Mary's, Bridgend, South Wales on Sunday 27th April for one night. Our annual meeting on September 7th, 8th & 9th is at Langbank, Glasgow Scotland.

Contact Peter Ryder on 01646 600711 or email: [pilotlight10@hotmail.com](mailto:pilotlight10@hotmail.com) for details.



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