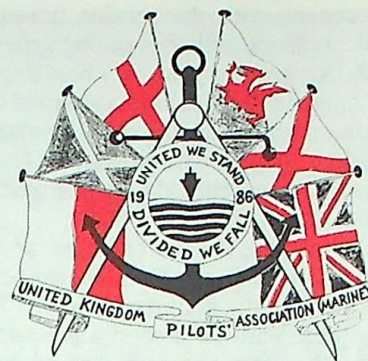


# THE PILOT

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The official organ of the United Kingdom Pilot's Association (Marine)



## Editorial Gentlemen

The 1990 Annual Conference is fully reported on our centre pages. To the Editor this means it is 1991. It also means that I should like to wish all my readers a very Happy New Year.

The costs of *The Pilot* magazine achieved eighth place out of the twenty four items of listed expenditure in the Treasurer's Report. At £4,500 per annum the magazine must ensure it is good value for money. UKPA(M) members can help the Editor in this aim by continually submitting articles and letters to enable me to maintain a balance between the technical, the business and the light-hearted aspects of our profession.

Conference decided to charge retired pilots £5 per year to be an Association member, some of this charge is to offset the costs of producing and sending them the magazine. I would appeal to retired pilots to continue to receive your only pilotage literature. Davina Connor, the UKPA(M) Secretary will be sending out an acceptance form to keep her records straight. Not all retired pilots are on an adequate income, and certainly many pilots' widows are not. I am sure if you tell Davina of your circumstances suitable arrangements can be made. I had a fascinating letter from a pilot widow in New Zealand recently, there is no way she will not get her copy, she reads it more avidly than most of my more highly paid colleagues!

In order to get the 'new' *Pilot* off the ground I originally had to write a lot of the copy. Now that I have more material the *Pilot* can gradually revert back to being the members publication. After this issue I have decided to give 'Jim' a rest for a while, assuring you he will be back if I'm short or if my post-bag demands it!

Meanwhile I hope you enjoy the fare we have lined up for you in 1991.

J D Godden

140 Dover Road, Sandwich, Kent  
CT13 0DD. Telephone: 0304 612752

## Feature

# SOUTHAMPTON PILOTAGE

## from Trinity House to ABP

We have all come a long way since the 1st October 1988. Of the thirty-eight Trinity House pilots serving in the Isle of Wight District on the 30th September, 1988, only sixteen remain today. Three opted to go to Portsmouth on a promise of early release, whilst three more felt unable to join the new regime and retired on the 30th September 1988. They, and our subsequent losses, have been replaced to a current total of thirty-three from a variety of sources.

Seven Liverpool pilots emigrated to the balmy south, two other transferees came from Shoreham, only sixty-odd miles away, while a tenth had held a licence for Rye in Sussex, although his main occupation there had been as assistant harbour master. In addition to transferees we have recruited three ex-pilot apprentices, two of whom had served their time in Liverpool and the other in Bristol. Three more of our new colleagues had already been in the employ of Associated British Ports, now our CHA, before 'A' Day. Two of these had been marine officers in charge of the harbour patrol launches and the third had been the Deputy Dock & Harbour Master. The last category of new pilot consists of a master mariner recruited from sea simply as a result of advertisements in the press, but who was subsequently required to spend some months as a marine officer commanding a patrol launch before a vacancy arose. At the time of writing there is still one more pilot undertaking training recruited from a sea-going command.

Before the Appointed Day the Isle of Wight District Pilots covered the whole area around the inside of the Island with the exception of Cowes and the naval dockyard. Outer boarding stations were situated at both the Nab in the east and the Needles in the west. In addition to

traffic for Fawley and Southampton, the IoW District Pilots were responsible for commercial shipping using Portsmouth Harbour. There were pilot offices with accommodation in Portsmouth and Southampton and further accommodation at the end of Ryde Pier and in Yarmouth, both on the Island. Nearly half the pilots lived on the Isle of Wight; a relic of the old days when there were separate inward and outward services. The whole operation was conducted by a duty pilot stationed in Southampton and managed by a Pilots' Committee under the supervision of a Board of Sub-Commissioners appointed by Trinity House. The Sub-Commissioners also included two pilot representatives. Every pilot undertook his own invoicing and also kept an

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account with the service treasurer in accordance with the pooling agreement. A lady secretary actually held the whole thing together for us. A system of choice or appropriated pilotage operated for certain larger vessels over 12000 grt and the retainers earned therefrom remained outside the pool.

When the 1987 Act reached the statute book serious negotiations began between ABP (Southampton) and the IoW Pilots' representatives. It soon was made clear by the Port Director that he had no intention of allowing the retention of a self-employed pilot service. The Pilot Service had always enjoyed great independence, influence and prestige among the local shipping community, at least partly at the expense of the ABPs marine department. Henceforth the pilots were to be made subject to the harbour master's overall control and placed under the daily direction of a duty VTS officer. Both the carrot and the stick were applied in equal measure. Certainly, any attempt to resist his offer of management staff status would have met with heavy financial penalties. The eventual agreement which came into operation was for 34 pilots to be directly employed within the harbour master's department. The duty pilot's control would be transferred to the VTS officer and actually exercised by the old Trinity House duty pilots' assistants who now became VTS Assistants (Pilotage). Administration was transferred to a new Pilotage Administration Manager and his staff. The harbour master assumed disciplinary control for any navigational incidents, assisted by a pilotage co-ordinator who was to be a pilot seconded from the working strength on a six monthly basis. The pay agreement was for a straight salary; no bonuses, no travel expenses. Uniforms, radios & safety gear were provided. Six Ford Escort cars were leased for the pilots to drive between Southampton and the one remaining outstation at Gosport. Needles

pilotage was closed down on cost grounds, now that all large vessels were to be directed around the Nab, while smaller ships were left to conduct themselves on the west side of the Island. Portsmouth did not feature since it immediately became a CHA in its own right. At first, choice pilotage was to be abandoned, but, when the big ship operators got wind of the move, they forced a retraction and the practice was reinstated. Ships under 61 metres loa were to be exempt. Those between 61 and 150 metres would be compulsory only from a point seven miles inside the outer limit for large ships. Any shipmaster of a compulsory ship could apply for a pilotage exemption certificate on production of evidence of the requisite tripping experience. If his ship was less than 100 metres loa and not a passenger vessel the certificate would be granted without examination. There was just one snag. Apart from certificate and examination fees, one third pilotage would be payable on all certificated passages.

Needless-to-say, implementation of the new regime did not immediately proceed with an overabundance of sweetness and light. Many shipmasters and agents were incensed at the withdrawal of the Needles pilotage. The VTS officers found it very difficult to administer pilotage with sympathy, partly because nobody thought to offer them more money for the extra work. The pilots bitterly resented the initial heavy handedness with which they were despatched to, or retrieved from, ships. They also felt that their status had been reduced to that of mere operatives through lack of perception of their wider professional and business expertise. A major redeeming feature of the ex-Trinity House pilots' position was that they were by far the highest paid employees within the whole of ABP, apart from Board Members. This latter point gradually made itself felt around the Company, as it eventually occurred to people that the

pilots' salary level must in some way reflect superior skill, influence or just plain muscle. Quite apart from pay, the pilots were able to demonstrate negotiating and advisory skills of a higher order. When it became necessary to recruit new pilots, the popularity of the vacancies ensured candidates of the highest calibre. Even those who were sourced from within ABP were immediately assimilated and became loyal members of the Southampton Pilots' Association, the avenue through which pilot opinion is expressed.

Over the ensuing two years the local situation has evolved slightly, with the ABP administration assuming a fairly low profile. Pilots' opinions on a number of technical matters have been sought, where originally that would have been considered to be damaging to management's dignity. Private health care has now been added to the list of employment benefits. The VTS control of pilotage has been more delicately applied so as to avoid antagonising pilots' sensitivities. There is, nevertheless, still a certain underlying tension between ABP Southampton and its pilot employees. The management have recognised that a problem exists and have indicated that they are about to address it with some proposals. So we are currently in a 'Watch this space' situation! One of the worrying features of the present position lies in the exercise of disciplinary sanctions by the Harbour Master with respect to pilotage mishaps, using his authority under the 1987 Act Section 3, Paragraph 5a. There is a strong probability that a pilot involved in an expensive accident will be placed under suspension of his authorisation, and off pay for a period ranging between a few days and six months. This equates to a fine of possibly many thousands of pounds. There is no requirement for proof of incompetence in the Act, nor is there any right of appeal, only of making representations. At the moment such punishment may be meted out, with or without the advice of a pilot representative. This seems to be the recipe for a miscarriage of justice, particularly when one realises that the dispenser could have been shore based for the greater part of his working life. The Southampton pilots hope to ensure that, for the future, such sanctions are only invoked by a panel which includes a skilled shiphandler and an independent chairman. Furthermore, the scale of punishment needs to be addressed. There has been an alarming trend lately in all walks of life to relate that scale to the cost of the accident, rather than to the degree of incompetence, and this trend

has become discernible in ABP Southampton.

The basis of our self-governing working system is 24 hours of duty followed by 48 hours of rest, arranged in such a manner as to achieve an approximation of the 1848 hour year. Our proper number has been renegotiated this year to 33 pilots for 6600 acts per annum instead of the previous 34 pilots for 6000 acts. This concession was surrendered to the employer in order to achieve a steady progression to a one class service, instead of leaving promotion from second class by selection through a perceived requirement of the management. In fact, the workload is ahead of our numbers, so recruitment looms again. Not only is trade increasing, but the uptake and maintenance of pilotage certificates is well below management anticipation.

We think that exciting times lie ahead



for the pilots of Southampton. Our new members are clearly full of enthusiasm, talented, and the best trained employees in the port. So far, they have just been getting their feet under the table. Shortly, they will also prove to be vociferous,

demanding a management function - from whatever direction it may come.

We geriatrics should look forward to that day with interest.

I W Stirling

## Southampton and the Isle of Wight Pilotage District

### The Port of Southampton

The first known port in the area was constructed by the Romans at Bitterne, on the east bank of the River Itchen. Later developments were made by the Saxons on the west bank of the same river in the vicinity of St. Marys, and were formed around a natural lagoon, which over the years was to silt up. In the 9th and 10th Century the new town of Hamtun was constructed, on the east bank of the River Test. A quay known as Castle Quay was in existence by 1214, and a quay called Platform was constructed at the end of the 13th century. Later additions to the port comprised the West Quay c1132, and the Water Gate Quay c1400, the forerunner of the present Town Quay.

Little is known of the early history of pilotage in Southampton. That a pilot service existed there can be little doubt, as during the Middle Ages Southampton carried on a substantial trade with the export of wool and English metal goods. As well as wool, Southampton was also involved in the pilgrim traffic to the shrine at Santiago de Compostella in Spain, pilgrims being usually conveyed by ship to Bordeaux before continuing their journey overland, these ships returned with French wine, as well as returning pilgrims. No evidence exists of a Shipmens Guild at Southampton which may have exercised some control over pilotage in the same manner as those on the East Coast. That is not to say that one did not exist, as other craft guilds were particularly prominent in Southampton during this period.

After the 16th century Southampton went into slow decline, although a flourishing trade continued with the Channel Islands, conducted both by English merchants and those of Jersey and Guernsey, when peace allowed the opportunity to trade with France.

In the 17th century Southampton was to be one of the embarkation points for the Pilgrim Fathers voyage to New England in the Mayflower. Southampton claims, along with other ports, namely Boston, Harwich and Plymouth, as well as Leijden in Holland, to have been the starting point of the expedition. Whilst Southampton certainly was a port from which some of those pioneers embarked, it could in no way claim exclusivity in the venture.

By the turn of the 19th century Southampton had a population of some 8,000 and, though no longer engaged in the great commerce of its past, was extremely active in the coasting trade, as well as in extensive shipbuilding along the banks of the River Itchen. In addition, the town achieved some prominence as a Spa.

The construction of enclosed docks had first been proposed in 1803, but it was not until 1836, in anticipation of the arrival of the railway, that the Southampton Dock Company was formed, having as its chairman Joseph Liggins, a prominent West India merchant. This dock was constructed on a site at the mouth of the River Itchen. Work commenced in 1838 and was completed in 1842, a year after the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company had been

awarded the mail contract to the West Indies, previously undertaken by Government vessels from Falmouth. In the same year that the dock was completed, the P&O transferred their contract mail steamers from Falmouth. By this time the population was 27,103, and by 1861 had increased to 46,960, when further liners of the North German Lloyd, Inman, Collins Line and the Union Line, as well as many others, had made the port their terminus or principal UK port of call. The port was also host on occasions to the *Great Eastern* when she was engaged in cable laying. Further expansion of the docks and quays have continued up to modern times.

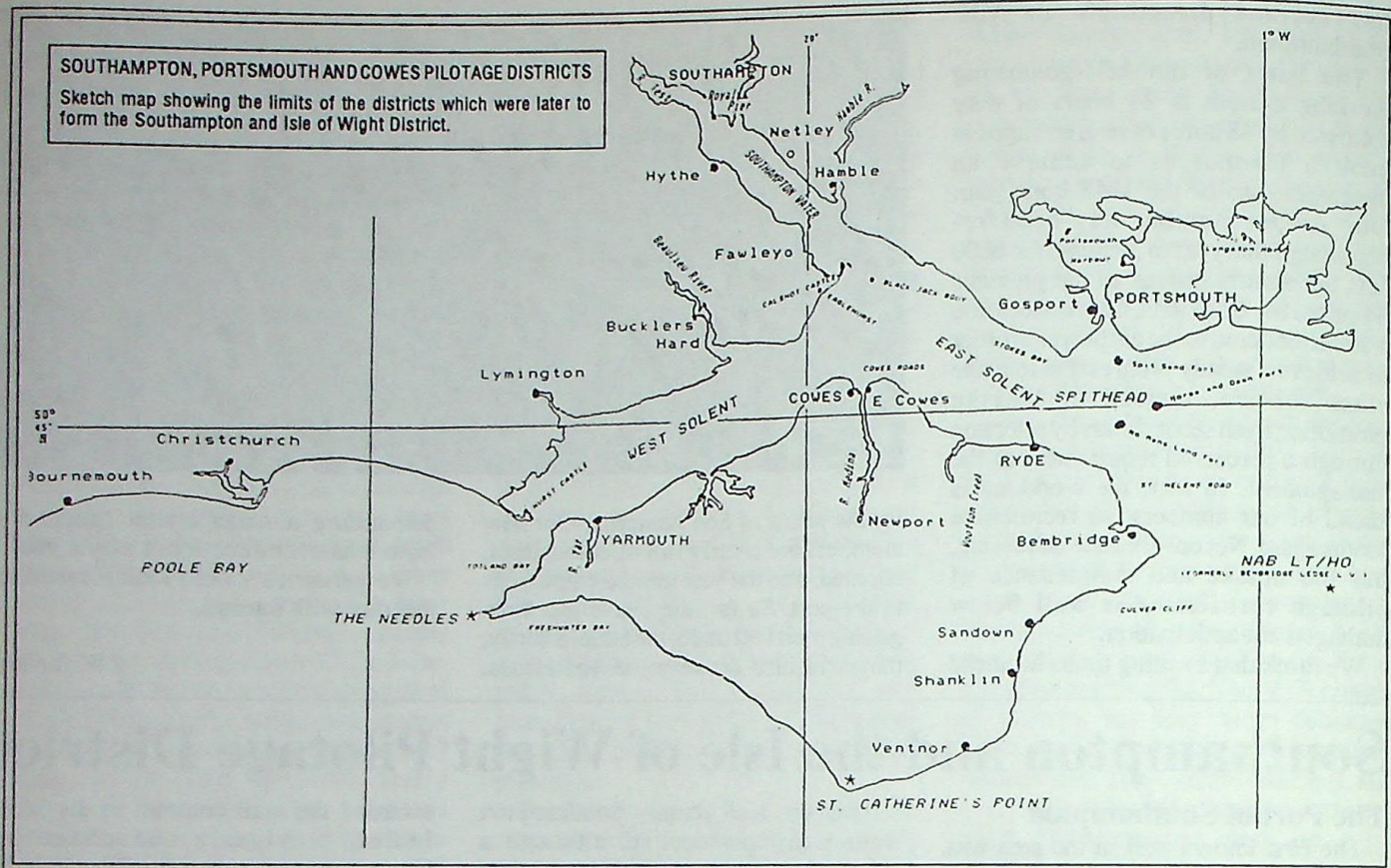
The Post Office packet service to the Channel Islands had operated from Weymouth since 1794 and several attempts were made by various parties to have the terminal port switched to Southampton. This change did not take place until 1845, when the superior facilities offered by Southampton, coupled with the arrival of the railway, led the Post Office and Admiralty to transfer the service to contract steamers of the South Western Steam Packet Company.

### Pilots and the 'Seeking System'

By the end of the 18th century a well organised and efficient service, having its base at Cowes and Portsmouth, existed for the purpose of conducting individual ships, as well as those arriving in convoy from the English Channel to the assembly points at Bembridge (St Helens Road) and Spithead, and to the entrance of







Southampton Water. Boats belonging to those pilots ranged down Channel, sometimes as far as Dartmouth or Brighton.

In terms of the number of pilots and boats employed, Cowes and Portsmouth were to dominate the pilotage service until the mid 19th century, when the resurgence of Southampton due to the transfer of the mail services, and the decline of the sailing ship, made the practice of 'seeking' less important. This change from the business of 'seeking' far down Channel to one of operating closer to the Island was to have an effect on the size of boat employed, typical sizes in the early 18th century of between 40 and 70 tons being reduced to between 20 and 35 tons by the middle of the century. One of the larger 40 ton cutters, the Cowes pilot vessel *Lively*, was sold to Messrs Enderby & Co in 1831 for use as a tender to whaling vessels operating from Port Philip, and made the passage via the Falkland Islands and Cape Horn in five months, amply illustrating the sound seakeeping qualities of these vessels.

Only two boats from Cowes and two from Portsmouth were capable of making extended cruises to Lands End and the Scillies by 1843, and the practice had all but died out by the mid 1850s. Pilots continued to 'seek' off Anvil Point and the Western Solent for Southampton bound ships, although occasionally

according to Mr Bowyer, cutters would still venture as far as Dartmouth or Brighton.

A Trinity House Order, made in February 1849, required pilot boats licensed by the Corporation to display a distinguishing signal viz.: A green light at the masthead and in addition thereto a turpentine flare up light shown at intervals of fifteen minutes. This applied to pilot vessels in the English Channel, The East Coast of England and the River Thames, and was also adopted by the Cinque Ports pilots. Pilot vessels in St George's Channel and the Irish Sea displayed a white light at the masthead instead of green.

It is interesting to note that in the 19th century, pilot cutters belonging to the Schelde pilots were in the habit of cruising off the Isle of Wight for the purpose of boarding and landing pilots from Antwerp.

### The Coming of the Steamships

Steamships began operating between Southampton and Cowes as early as 1820 and cross channel steamship services commenced in 1824, but these events had little effect on the pilot service as a whole, which was still geared to the needs of the sailing ship. The advent of the railway from London in 1840 led to an increasing importance for the port of Southampton. The contract for the carriage of the West Indies Mails was

awarded to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co in 1841, and Southampton was chosen as the terminal port instead of Falmouth. Other steamship lines were to follow, including P&O, who transferred their Lisbon and Gibraltar mail service from Falmouth in 1842, and the Channel Island mail packet service transferred from Weymouth in April 1845.

Changes were needed in the organisation of pilotage and, taking up powers given in the Pilotage Act of 1812 and 1825, the pilotage at Southampton, Cowes and Portsmouth was placed under the direction of Trinity House Sub-Commissioners. At this time Southampton's importance was not as great as that of Cowes. In March 1844, three new Sub-Commissioners were appointed for Southampton, these being Capt. David Corke son of Edward Corke the chief harbour pilot for Cowes, Mr Samuel Price Edwards, Collector of Customs for Southampton and Capt. John Love the Trinity agent at Yarmouth IoW and lately master of the Earl of Malmesbury's yacht *Medina*. Corke had been the landlord of the 'Red Lion Inn' in High Street, Cowes, before being appointed Master of the IoW Steamer *George IV*, and latterly was Superintendent for the New South Western Steam Packet Co. Similar new appointments were made to the Sub-Commissioners at Cowes and Portsmouth.

The first action of the Southampton Sub-Commissioners was to examine the fourteen existing Southampton pilots and licence a further four, making the complement eighteen. Six of these pilots were stationed at Calshot with powers to supersede any other pilot. The 'other pilots', Portsmouth or Cowes men, were apparently not held in high regard. A local newspaper reported those pilots were:-

"... never bringing a large vessel up Southampton Water without running her aground somewhere or other. This does not arise from ignorance but with a view to damage the port. They know that no danger can take place, let the vessel ground where she will, and as a loss of time is likely to occur, which in the case of the steamships is highly vexatious and harassing, they hope by such courses to get vessels removed to another port.."

I suspect that this report was made out of a desire to improve the case of the Southampton pilots for exclusivity of employment, rather than any want of skill on the part of the other pilots, and is similar to the tactics used by various bodies down to the present time when seeking to reduce pilot numbers to an exclusive few. New regulations were made which provided that Portsmouth and Cowes pilots were not to take charge of any vessel from Southampton or any part of Southampton Water to sea unless, 'there shall not be any Southampton pilot available'. The regulations gave exclusivity of pilotage to Southampton to the Southampton pilots, any Cowes or Portsmouth pilot conducting a vessel to Southampton being required to hand over when passing a line drawn from the Eagle Hurst to the NW Bramble buoy. The regulations allowed that if they had not been superseded, they would be allowed to continue to pilot the ship to her moorings at Southampton.

### The Organization of the Pilots

The pilots who undertook pilotage from sea were called 'Cowes pilots' and 'Portsmouth pilots' respectively, being so styled from the port of registry of their boats. The Southampton men were a separate and distinct body having their own district. From fourteen pilots in the early years of the 19th century the Southampton pilots had increased to 23 in 1853 operating with five boats, whilst the Cowes pilots had 53 pilots with 19 boats and Portsmouth 43 pilots with 13 boats. Earnings were roughly comparable, with average annual earnings for Southampton being £58, Cowes £53 and Portsmouth £57. In addition to the Cowes and Portsmouth pilots, Trinity House London and Cinque

Ports pilots were also licensed to conduct vessels to the Isle of Wight, being licensed for what was known as the English Channel District, from Dungeness to the Isle of Wight. These pilots were liable to be superseded when the vessels they were conducting came within five miles of Bembridge Ledge, or three miles from Dunnose, St Catherine's or the Needles. The London Trinity House and Cinque Ports pilots, if not challenged by a pilot cutter, were allowed to conduct their vessels to St. Helens Road. If no Cowes or Portsmouth pilot was to offer his services, he was then entitled to proceed to his destination, but was only permitted to charge half the rate from St. Helens Road, this presumably to encourage him to fall in with a Cowes or Portsmouth cutter at the first opportunity.

After the rationalisation of the cutters in 1907, the pilots were organised into two groups, the Inwards Pilots based on the Isle of Wight, and consisting almost entirely of the former Portsmouth and Cowes men, responsible for piloting from sea to the pilot cutter at Netley, and the Outwards Pilots based at Southampton, in the main former Southampton men, who boarded ships at Netley to berth them at Southampton, and who conducted them from Southampton to sea. Portsmouth now became a separate entity, and a small number of pilots, seldom more than four, were retained. Besides the Inward and Outward Pilots other pilots were licensed as harbour pilots within the district.

Prior to 1907, entry to the service had been by an apprenticeship system, a young man joining his father's or uncle's cutter at 12 or 14 years of age and working his way through to become a pilot. With the pooling of resources, and the subsequent takeover of the cutters by Trinity House, the apprenticeship system came to an end. Pilots were then recruited from sea, the prerequisite being a Masters Certificate. Many pilot apprentices continued in service until the 1920s and one family, the Bowyer's, have been involved in pilotage at Southampton for almost 150 years.

During the 1920s and 1930s, apart from the four pilots at Portsmouth, there were two at Cowes, three at Chichester, one at Bembridge and two for the River Hamble. During the Second World War the pilots of the Isle of Wight District were augmented by a number of pilots from other districts, a large number being from Dover, especially during the build up to the invasion of Normandy. In the 1950s a considerable development took place in Southampton Water, with the building of the Esso Refinery at Fawley and this led to the regular berthing and

unberthing of some of the largest tankers in the world. Rationalisation of the service in the 1970s led to the amalgamation of the Inwards and Outwards pilots, as well as the inclusion of the Portsmouth pilots within the main roster, and it was in this form that the service remained when responsibility was transferred to the Associated British Ports at Southampton and the City of Portsmouth. Both organisations were anxious to operate their own separate services and the pilots who had progressed through a steady process of amalgamation were now split up into two separate groups of which two Southampton was by far the largest.

### Fixed Cruising Stations

The Southampton and Isle of Wight cutters had been owned by individual pilots, who would race to beat other pilots to be the first to board a vessel. Consequently there was much keen competition with all classes of pilot cutter, frequently venturing down as far as Dartmouth and as far east as Brighton in the hope of falling in with a ship.

About 1885 the system of racing was superseded by new rules, which stated that a Southampton cutter could claim a particular cruising station, either east or west, but only after they had passed a line with Black Jack buoy and Eaglehurst in line. This did not entirely end the racing, as pilots were still keen to be first to a job, and would race to the line to claim the most advantageous station, and the sea cutters of the Cowes and Portsmouth pilots still cruised off the Island in the vicinity of the Nab and Needles.

When conducting vessels outwards from Southampton, it was common practice for the pilot to have his skiff or punt hauled up on a steamer falls or towed astern, and use would be made of the skiff to land from the ship at the Needles. The pilot and his assistant would then commence the long pull back to Southampton, or, if they were lucky, obtain a tow from a passing steamer.

In 1907 arrangements were made for fixed cruising grounds at the Nab and Needles, and a boarding station at Netley for the Outwards Pilots, who undertook the berthing of vessels at Southampton. A small number of Portsmouth cutters were retained for the use of the Portsmouth harbour pilots who now became a separate entity within the newly established Isle of Wight District, however Inwards Pilots would conduct vessels from the cruising cutters to Portsmouth prior to handing over to a Portsmouth harbour pilot.

At the outbreak of the Great War the





pilotage service came under the orders of the Admiralty. On the 4th August 1914, entry via the Needles station was restricted to certain classes of ship, boarding and landing being undertaken by an Examination steamer at Yarmouth. An Examination anchorage was set up at St Helens Road, and in Sandown Bay, the pilot cutters being anchored close by the Examination steamers, which were chartered tugs. The pilot cutters were used purely as accommodation ships, and a Portsmouth harbour steam ferry was used to board and land ships. Tugs and other Admiralty craft were used as well, including destroyer's sea boats. Later, when German submarine activity increased, the Examination station was withdrawn entirely to St Helens Road.

The pilots, both Inward and Outward, were issued with vice versa licences, being additionally licensed for Portsmouth. They were frequently sent to various places including Falmouth, Plymouth, Liverpool, London and Le Havre for the purpose of joining or leaving ships, especially the large liners used for trooping. In extreme cases they were overcarried to New York. As a result of the changed conditions the pilots agreed to the pooling of their earnings and at the end of the war continued with this 'sharing' arrangement, although confining the sharing within the two separate groups, the service returning to its peacetime arrangements in 1919.

The Second World War saw similar arrangements as the First, with an Examination anchorage at St Helens and Yarmouth. In 1941 the three cutters were painted grey and fitted with defensive armament against air attack. After the fall of France, activity in the port declined substantially, with the principal shipping

being coastal convoys. With the build up to the Normandy landings it was necessary to recall pilots from the RNR, transfer some from other districts, and even take some out of retirement to cope with the massive amount of shipping that assembled for the invasion.

#### The Advent of the Pilot Launches

It was apparent to Trinity House after the construction of the *Penlee* and *Pelorus* and the newer *Pathfinder* in 1954 for the London District that the cruising cutter system was expensive, both in terms of capital cost and day to day running. Faced with the impending renewal of the *Brook* and *Gurnard* another means of pilot supply needed to be examined. A decision was made by Trinity House in 1857 to experiment with the replacement of the cutter at the Needles by a fast motor launch, and the pilot launch *Leader* was constructed for the purposes of evaluation. The experiment having proved successful two more launches, *Link* and *Landward*, were ordered and the Needles station was served from a shore base located at Totland with berthing facilities at Yarmouth. The introduction of these craft resulted in the removal of the cutter *Brook* in 1960.

The Nab station was to continue to be served by a cutter until 1970, reliefs where necessary being undertaken by the spare cutter at Dover, and on occasions Dungeness tender *Patrol*. In 1969, faced with the now imminent replacement of the *Gurnard* and *Penda*, Trinity House set up an experiment to replace the Nab cutter with fast launches in the same manner as the Needles. A temporary pilot station was established off Ryde Pier in 1970 using the

*Bembridge* as a base and communication ship, a role she had recently fulfilled at Folkestone prior to the building of a shore station there. The success of this experiment led to the establishment of a suitable shore pilot station at Ryde and the provision of new pilot launches. A fleet of the very successful 40' Keith Nelson launches was built to serve the stations at the Nab and Needles, the earlier 70' boats having proved to be unsuitable. The smaller boats were more suited for working alongside ships than the larger craft, further 40' launches being added to the fleet from time to time. At Cowes use was made of hired or chartered launches belonging to Messrs. Thomas Bros for transport at Cowes across to Fawley etc. This system remained in force until the takeover of the pilotage system by the ports in October 1988, when the ABP at Southampton inherited the fleet of pilot vessels, except for two which were transferred to the city of Portsmouth.

#### Associated British Ports and the City of Portsmouth

One of the first actions of the ABP was to rationalise the boarding and landing arrangements. The base at Ryde continued in operation, with a boarding point between the Forts and the Nab, depending on the size of ship. The Needles station and the base at Yarmouth were discontinued and ships entering the West Solent were now to obtain their pilots off Cowes by craft from the Ryde base. The contract with Messrs. Thomas Bros was terminated, and all service was now undertaken by craft belonging to the authority. The City of Portsmouth, who now had jurisdiction over pilotage at Portsmouth, operated a boarding and landing service at the forts with two of the craft inherited under the Pilotage Commission proposals.

Andrew Adams

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## ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM PILOT'S ASSOCIATION

Held at the Waldorf Hotel,  
London. 21st and 22nd  
November 1990.

- 1) The Chairman Paul Hames opened the Conference in the absence of the President, Lord Strathcona, who was abroad. Apologies were received from John Connelly who was on compassionate leave.
- 2) **Annual Report**  
Presented by the Chairman
- 3) The Report was commended and accepted.
- 4) **Resolutions**  
Two resolutions were tabled, both concerning the PNPf.

#### Resolution 1

"That this conference instructs the Section Committee to press vigorously for the immediate introduction of Commutation tables consistent with those applicable in the public sector and as worked out by Government actuaries."

The original resolution from A R Boddy was withdrawn in deference to the amended resolution above, proposed by A McInnes and seconded by H Marshman.

Both proposer and seconder emphasized that the Commutation Rate was very important within a pension fund. The new agreed PNPf rate of £10 for every £1 of pension was welcomed. However it was felt that a Rate more in line with Government funded schemes, as high as £15 to £1 in some cases, would be a vast improvement. Discussion took place on a possible grading of the Rate. It was pointed out from the Chair and from pensions trustee Harry Frith that the surplus for 1990 had already been apportioned and no further surplus would be available for two to three years, assuming there was a surplus at that time. It was said from the floor that high Commutation Rate pensions were normally non-contributory and funded by the State. The resolution was amended to read "for the introduction, as and when funds are available", in place of "the immediate introduction", and was carried by 69 votes to 3.

#### Resolution 2

"That this conference, having regard to the excess of funds available, ask the Section Committee to give serious

consideration to having the term 'sixtieths' as applied to the Pilot's Pension Fund Rules, substituted by the term 'fortieths'."

The proposer A McInnes explained how, as the pilotage service was usually manned by older men, there were not sufficient years in a pilot's working life to achieve a dynamic pension using the 'sixtieths' concept. The 'fortieths' proposed overcame the problem in, say, a 20 year working lifetime. After discussion about the non-attainment of promised pension levels in the past, the Chairman pointed out this resolution had to be seen as a long term, i.e. 10 to 15 years, aim and as such would become the mandate for the Association.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

#### 6) Technical Committee

Mike Irving presented his annual Technical Committee Report stressing the increased workload his team had encountered mainly due to the improved liaison enjoyed with CHAs, Pilots and the Department of Transport on many subjects, especially life saving coats and jackets. Mike gave a comprehensive talk on the up-to-date position as regards these appliances which will appear in full in the next issue of *The Pilot*. Mike is available to discuss the matter with any interested pilot.

The question of boarding and landing from forward facing accommodation ladders was raised. Apparently these will contravene the SOLAS regulations from late 1991 or early 1992. Meanwhile the advice is, if the coxswain does not like it, or conversely the pilot, don't use it. The UKPA(M) will support you.

#### 7) Pilot Boats

John Burn, Section Committee, explained the position on the long awaited Pilot Boat Regulations. A hiccup had occurred due to the Ports as CHAs objecting to the need for recovery apparatus on each side of a cutter. Experiments had shown the rear recovery position to be preferable. The UKPA(M) had decided not to oppose the new DOT wording which requires the recovery operation to be 'proved by appropriate practical tests'. This puts the onus on the Pilot Boat owner and the DOT surveyor to ensure the recovery apparatus is foolproof. Pilots were advised to be there when the DOT surveyor is making his assessment.

#### 8) Pensions

a. PNPf Harry Frith gave an excellent report of the surplus and how it was apportioned. The main uses were:-

To allow for 5% future indexing (1992)	£4.5m
To allow for 10% graded increases (1991)	£5.7m
To achieve 4% increasing instead of 3% p.a.	£13.0m
To bring self-employed members into line	£3.3m
To fund notional service to 65 for 60 NRAs	£0.6m
To fund ill-health retirees	£0.25m
To fund commutation rate from 9% to 10%	£2.1m
To fund early retirement scheme	£1.9m

Reserved for future increases  
£4.05m

For these added benefits the Ports have been granted a 2% reduction in contributions.

The Pilot Trustees failed on only two counts. They were unable to achieve an increase in the granting of service credits and could not get agreement for year for year service.

Discussion took place on the future of the Fund, during which it was stated that the average pensionable earnings in 1989 were up by £5,500 in comparison with 1987. At December 1989 the average pension paid was £8360 and the average widows pension was £2960. 310 pilots had retired on the early retirement scheme, 232 being surplus to requirements and 78 on medical grounds.

Harry Frith said he did not believe the Ports were totally opposed to a continuing early retirement scheme, but that this was still a subject for negotiation.

b. Jan Lemon, who was generally acclaimed, together with her staff, for her assistance and in-depth knowledge of pilots' pensions, spoke of the possibility of switching AVC funds for a better return. She said MNOPf benefits could be transferred to the PNPf if desired.

c. Mike Kitchen reported on the activities of the PNCP, expanding on his tabled paper.

#### 9) The Pilot Magazine

The Editor spoke of the apparent satisfaction in the revised format and content. He promised to keep costs down and the circulation up. He thanked all



those who had contributed to the magazine and urged members to continue to submit articles and letters of interest.

a. Conference decided to charge retired pilots a £5 annual subscription to the Association which would help defray the expense of their receiving *The Pilot*.

#### 10) Treasurer's Report

John Burn gave an excellent analysis of his annual figures. He explained that the TGWU had just reduced the Local Administration Allowance from 15% to 10% of subscription due to tax difficulties.

Notice was given of changing the accounts to a calendar year basis and to investigate excessive auditing costs.

The report was accepted and the Quarterly Subscription from January 1991 was set at £47.

#### 11) Insurances

It was reported that the Indemnity Insurance with the Navigators and General was in good shape and benefit was to be increased to £25000.

The Accident Insurance increased benefits mentioned in Circular 33/90 had fallen through and would be further investigated.

The Loss of Authorisation insurance

was addressed by Mr Roy Greaves, an Insurance Broker. Mr Greaves' apparent lack of enthusiasm for the policy was only outdone by that of the pilots! The proposal was dropped. This type of insurance is unlikely to be effected.

#### 12) Reports from District Delegates

Conference heard station reports from SE Wales, Tees and Hartlepool, Belfast, Southampton, Clyde, Manchester, Liverpool, London, Humber and Harwich.

Owing to the confidentiality of the reports the Section Committee has advised against publication. Anyone specifically requesting this information may contact UKPA(M).

#### 15) VTS

Geoff Topp spoke to his tabled paper on the UKPA(M)'s policy towards VTS. Such policy was endorsed by Conference.

#### 16) Deep Sea Pilots

Satisfactory liaison on the needs and conditions for Deep Sea Pilots had continued.

#### 17) International Pilotage

a. IMPA. Tony Boddy gave a review of the years work, covering VTS, SOLAS regulations and rescue boat qual-

ifications. He thanked his CHA, the Port of London, for granting him the time to attend to these duties.

b. EMPA. Norman McKinney and others spoke of the impact 1992 may have on the free movement of labour within the EC, which could include EC nationals piloting in member states.

He stressed the need for UK pilot support attending the 1991 EMPA Conference in Liverpool, especially the Grand Ball on Friday 24th May.

#### 18) Elections

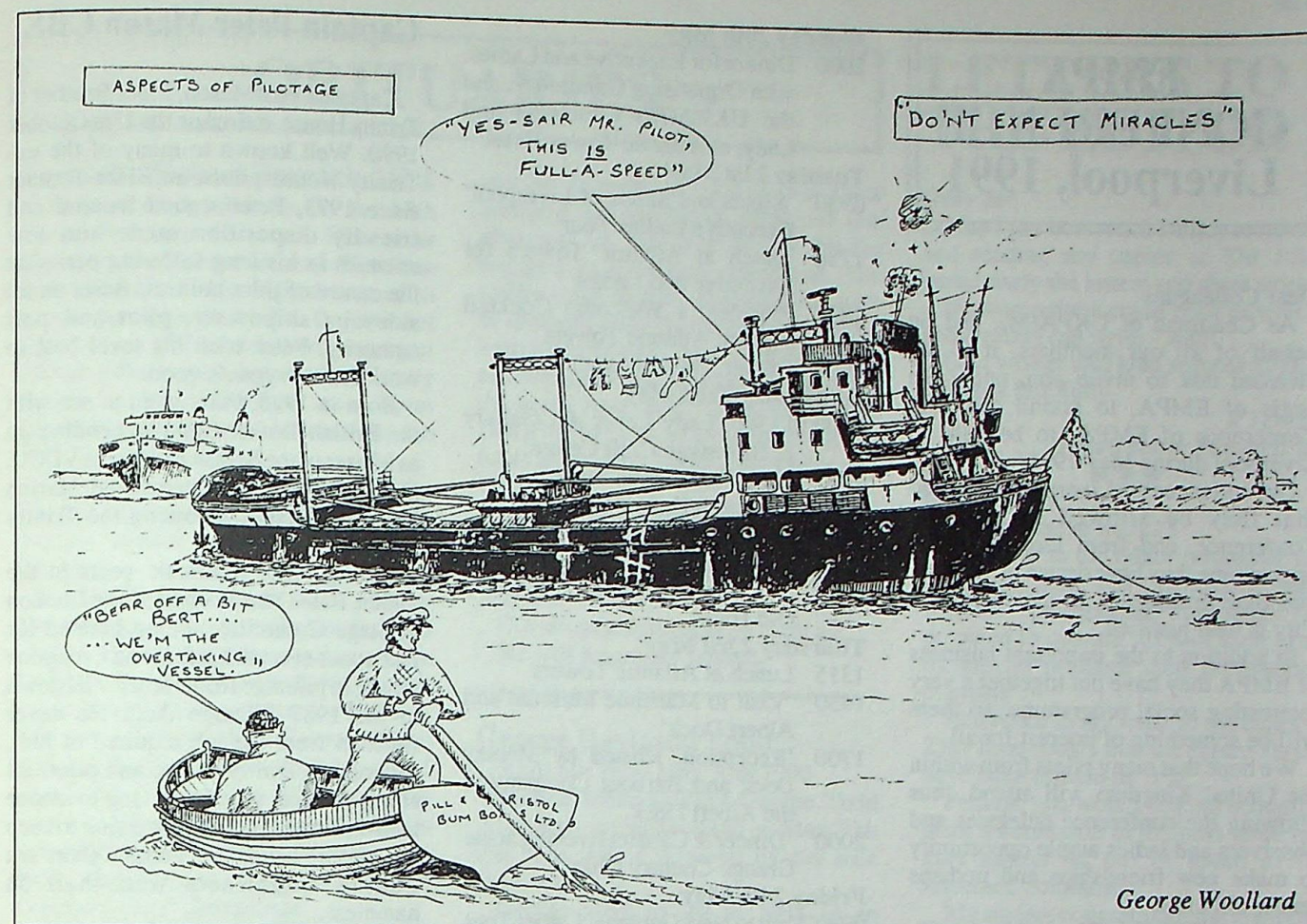
The President, Chairman and Vice-Chairman were re-elected unopposed, and Mike Battrick of the Port of London was elected as Region 1 Section Committee member.

#### 19) Annual Conference 1991

Conference agreed that the 1991 Annual Conference would take place in Edinburgh on dates to be arranged.

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At the close, thanks were recorded to Harry Frith, retiring in 1991, for his continued pension work, and to Paul Hames, Chairman, and Davina Connor, UKPA(M) Secretary, for their sterling efforts.



## PENSION NEWS

#### Distribution of Surplus arising as at 31 December 1989

As many of you will be aware, in November 1990 the National Negotiating Forum reached agreement upon the use of the surplus arising from the latest Actuarial Valuation of the Fund. It included a provision for raising the guaranteed rate of increase in pensions in payment from 3% to 4%. However, in actual fact, additional discretionary increases were awarded to provide an overall average increment of 10% on 1st January 1991 (for all beneficiaries as at 31st December 1990). Pilots who retired between 30th June 1990 and 30th December 1990 (whose pensions were based on final pensionable earnings as at 30th June 1990) received 5%, and pilots, or their widows, where retirement from PNPf took place before 1975, received 15%. On average, the pensions of beneficiaries of the Fund since 1975 have not yet achieved this position, hence the higher rate of increases awarded to this group.

Other changes to benefits included the following:-

- i) an improvement in the commutation factor used in converting pension upon retirement into a tax free cash sum;
- ii) the inclusion in pensionable earnings of a proportion of the contributions made by self-employed members to provide parity between employed and self-employed pilots;
- iii) an increase in ill-health pension benefits and death-in-service widows' pensions for all pilots who are not classed as Special Members under the Rules of the Fund;
- iv) continuing death-in-service lump sum cover our pilots who retire for ill health reasons;
- v) a reduction in contributions: the rate of contribution payable by self-employed pilots now amounts to 12.59% of Gross Contribution Earnings (net [pensionable] earnings plus 14.4%), and for employed pilots the contribution rates are 5.76% for the employee and 8.64% for the employer.

The changes mentioned above apply to current, contributing members of the Fund.

#### Transfers of Previous Pension Benefits to the PNPf

Following last quarter's Pension News

many of you have written to the Secretariat about the possibility of transferring previous pension benefits, particularly those under the MNOPF. Although in some cases it has taken some time to receive the necessary information from the Merchant Navy Pensions Administration, it can be a worthwhile exercise. If you are interested, do write to us, giving your previous pension scheme reference number (and the name and address of the scheme if it is other than MNOPF) and we shall be pleased to help. However benefits can only be transferred before retirement takes place, not afterwards.

#### Expression of Wish Forms

In November, we wrote to the majority of members of the Fund and to recently retired pilots about the importance of completing an expression of wish form to guide the Trustees in deciding the way in which any capital sum benefit should be distributed in the event of death. Of course, we sincerely hope it will not be necessary to refer to these forms, but making such preparation can avoid delay and un-necessary worry for widows and dependants at an extremely difficult time for them. So if you did not respond to our

letter in November or if your circumstances have changed, or do so in the future, please contact us.

#### Secretarial Staff

Who's who at the PNPf Secretariat

##### Jan Lemon

Most of you will at least know my name but, for the record, I am the Company Secretary of PNPf Trust Company Limited and Secretary to the Trustees. Apart from implementing policies, monitoring the Fund's investments and having overall responsibility for the Secretariat, I deal with many of the various matters raised by pilots and ports, particularly where they relate to interpretation of Fund Rules or those which are referred to the Trustees and the National Negotiating Forum.

##### Deborah Marten

Deborah is the Assistant Secretary and manages our pensions payroll, dealing with pensioners' and widows' enquiries, transfers of members' benefits to and from the PNPf, requests for pension quotations from serving pilots, AVCs and many of the enquiries from Fund members on all aspects of pension benefits.

##### Toni Ambrose

Toni, Secretary/Administrative Assistant whose voice you would normally hear when telephoning the Secretariat, will help you with questions about expression of wish forms and contribution remittance advices or will pass on your enquiry.

##### General

Change of Address - Once again, would you please let us know when you change your home address. It was clear from our November mailing that some of you still forget to do so!

Jan Lemon

#### PILOT BOAT QUESTIONNAIRE

To all local secretaries

I wish to thank all those local secretaries who completed and returned the recently circulated Pilot Boat questionnaire. Your co-operation is appreciated.

If there are any districts who have not completed and returned the form and who wish to do so it is not too late. Please send it in, there is no 'cut off' date. Many thanks

MA Barratt

## Sealink Discounts

Sealink Stena Line has continued to offer all pilots and retired pilots a 25% discount when travelling from Dover or Folkestone to Calais or Boulogne for 1991. Over 100 pilots took advantage of this excellent arrangement last year, many pilots from northern and western British ports worked out that even allowing for extra miles travelled, the discounted fare was still much cheaper. Remember, the 25% discount is off the total amount to pay, nothing is excluded.

For the price of a stamped addressed envelope to the Editor at his home address, any pilot can save up to £100 with 5 people travelling. If we continue to use the concession we shall continue to enjoy it. If you are thinking of travelling anywhere on the Continent in 1991, do your sums, and send for a Discount Letter.

### REMEMBER

It is in your interest if involved in any accident or injury, however trivial it may seem at the time, to inform your insurers within thirty days.



## EMPA CONFERENCE Liverpool, 1991

Dear Colleagues

As Chairman of UKPA(M), and on behalf of all our members, it is my pleasant task to invite you, under the aegis of EMPA, to attend the 25th Conference of EMPA, to be held in Liverpool during May 1991.

Our colleagues in Liverpool requested that they be allowed to host the Conference, and from looking at the programme they have drawn up it seems that their confidence in their Port and City is well justified.

In addition to the important business of EMPA they have put together a very interesting social programme, so there will be something of interest for all.

We hope that many pilots from within the United Kingdom will attend, thus allowing the conference delegates and observers and ladies ample opportunity to make new friendships and perhaps renew old ones.

Liverpool is a fine City and Port, with an interesting hinterland, so please join us in May and help make the Conference a resounding success.

Sincerely yours

PP Hames  
Chairman, UKPA(Marine)

### Monday 20th May

2000 Dinner for Executive and Ladies, with Organising Committee, and the UKPA(M) Chairman and Lady, at Atlantic Tower Hotel.

### Tuesday 21st May

0930 'Sights and Shops of Liverpool' Executive Ladies Tour  
1230 Lunch at Atlantic Towers for Executive and Ladies  
1830 President's Welcome Cocktail Party at Atlantic Towers  
2000 Dinner. Own arrangements.

### Wednesday 22nd May

0900 to 1300 'Lady Lever Art Gallery & Brimstage Craft Centre'  
1315 Lunch at Atlantic Towers  
1415 'Croxth Hall' Tour  
1700 'Reception Hosted by MSCC at Boat Museum'  
2000 'A Jacobean Banquet at Worsley Old Hall'

### Thursday 23rd May

1315 Lunch at Atlantic Towers  
1430 'Visit to Maritime Museum and Albert Dock'  
1700 'Reception, Hosted by Mersey Dock and Harbour Company at the Albert Dock.'  
2000 'Dinner & Cabaret Evening at the Grange Country Club'

### Friday 24th May

0930 'Visit to Ness Gardens' Ladies Tour  
1315 Lunch at Atlantic Towers Free Afternoon  
2000 'Grand Banquet and Dance at the Adelphi Hotel'

### Saturday 25th May

1315 Luncheon: Executive, UKPA(M) Sub Ladies and Organisers

## Captain Peter Mason CBE

Captain Peter Mason, Elder Brother of Trinity House, retired on the 17th October 1990. Well known to many of the ex-Trinity House pilots, an Elder Brother since 1973, Peter's good humour and friendly disposition made him few enemies in his long suffering period at the centre of pilot politics. Beset on all sides by shipowner, pilot and port authority, Peter tried his level best to work for everyone's good.

Born in 1925, Peter went to sea with the British Tanker Company ending up as Master of the *British Pioneer*, a VLCC, prior to becoming Operational Marine Superintendent and joining the Trinity House.

During those traumatic years in the 1980s, Peter Mason chaired the London Pilotage Committee, being blamed for just about everything that had ever gone wrong in pilotage from Henry VIII down to the 1987 Pilotage Act! He never flinched from the job required of him, supporting Trinity House and pilots all along the line, whether giving evidence to ill-informed inquiries or trying to keep the pilots' hands off certain short-sea trading shipowners who shall be nameless.

A Pilotage Commissioner, Peter Mason received the CBE in 1982. He thoroughly deserved it.

Regards from all the pilots who knew him, we hope he has a nice day!

John Godden

master, rather than the ship's master or pilot.

The view from the bridge wing of a ship is undoubtedly the best available, he argues, with judgement of a closing gap much easier from above than from the side.

"If, as has been suggested, the berthing is done largely on instrumentation, the protected environment needed for the instrumentation would reduce the berthing master's visual contact even more.

"Further, it would remove him from direct contact with the wind. An instrument might be capable of telling you the wind speed and direction as it is; the pilot or ship's master is often able to see what is coming."

Tony also points to a ship master's 'intimate knowledge' of his vessel and her crew, adding: "This knowledge is essential to making informed judgements about the behaviour of each and the allowances that need to be made."

"Unfortunately, in recent years crew numbers and the quality of seamanship have both waned. Unless this problem is

tackled soon, the upgrading of fendering systems will be only one of the many prices to pay."

"When the size of the ship had increased beyond its ability to carry an effective fender for berthing purposes, the fender moved ashore as a permanent fixture to the wharf.

"Its role, however, changed once again with the increased awareness of the forces involved and it became a necessary adjunct to reducing the construction costs of new berths."

"With the aid of a hydrographic study and mathematical modelling, complete fender and mooring systems can be designed. These often eliminate the enormous costs of either a breakwater or a dredging programme.

"With an improved fendering system, the pilots may well find that they can berth ships safely in less clement conditions. This, in turn, could well lead to a more effective use of the berth, generating greater revenue for the port."

*The West Briton & Royal Cornwall Gazette*

## OBITUARIES

### Captain Michael Barwick MNI

Michael died suddenly on the 18th September aged 60 years. His career began as a midshipman with The Blue Funnel Line in 1946 and by the age of 26 he was serving with the War Department Fleet (now RFA) as their youngest master. After 9 years, he joined the Trinity House Pilotage Service as a River Thames pilot and was licensed on the 16th November 1965.

He was a founder member of the Nautical Institute, a younger brother of Trinity House and a consultant to Dioptric.

Michael's attention to detail and his knowledge of the law (he studied and passed the intermediate examination at London University) were of great service to London pilots; he represented the River Thames pilots as their liaison officer with the Port of London Authority for 5 years and after October 1988 was to the fore in representing the Port of London Authority pilots in every facet of their profession serving as chairman of the London Pilots' Committee.

Michael leaves his wife, Sue and a son John.

### Captain Daniel Rees

Capt Daniel Rees died on 28th June 1990 less than two years after retirement.

Born in 1924 Dan served his apprenticeship with the old Steam Pilot Boat Co (Cardiff & Bristol Channel Ltd) from 1939-1944. From 1944 to 1962 Dan steadily worked his way up the promotion ladder to Master, in 1960, on the *Clyde Chivalry* having sailed on various Empire ships, Court Line, Caltex



and BP Tankers, as well as two years working out of Hong Kong in the aftermath of the War in the Pacific engaged in clearance operations. His ability in all matters maritime can best be summed up by the remarks on a watch keeping certificate, "an excellent seaman and navigator, his boatwork ranks with the best I have seen." That would give Dan a big thrill as he loved yachting and boats in general. An excellent pilot and shipmate.

Dan leaves a wife Catherine and son Dan, daughter-in-law Peta and grandchildren Johanna, Nichola and Andrew.

Our deepest sympathy to them all. He will be greatly missed.

### George Davidson Todd

April 6th 1920-May 30th 1990

Retired Medway Pilot George Todd died in his native Scotland on May 30th this year. He is survived by his wife Effie.

George went to sea in 1938 as an apprentice with Eagle Oil Co and served with them until 1942. Whilst 3rd mate of the *San Florentino* in 1941 he was torpedoed in the North Atlantic and for 15 hours clung to the forecastle rails of the partly submerged bow section. He was eventually rescued by a Canadian Corvette. On leaving Eagle Oil he served with Denholms and in July 1942 was again torpedoed on the *Broompark!* Later he served in another ship which was sunk by dive-bombers in Murmansk.

After the war George served with Esso Lake Tankers, the Mosquito fleet, in Lake Maracaibo until October 1953. In November 1954 he commenced training as a Medway pilot and received his licence in May 1955. George was a well liked and popular member of the Medway Pilots and was a steady influence on their affairs. He was a member of the local golf club, a keen gardener and an accomplished cabinet maker. He was renowned for his attention to detail.

In 1975 George had an accident while boarding a small ship off Sheerness. What seemed like a minor injury to his foot almost cost him his life as one complication after another hindered his recovery. After a year on sick leave it was plain that he could not return to his career in pilotage so he surrendered his licence and retired. He returned to Scotland and lived in East Lothian until his death in May.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

May I say how much I enjoy receiving and reading my copies of *The Pilot*, particularly the letters and short stories.

If some writers could pilot as well as some pilots can write - well!

Best wishes and kind regards to all.

Yours faithfully

R Yewdall  
(Manchester Pilot-retired)  
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Dear John,

**Erratum: Issue no. 223**

My letter to the editor printed in this issue re: poor old 'Panossim' asks whether "professional individuals are prepared to commit .01% of their gross income to promote their professional interests".

Reference to my letter to the editor of 25th June shows that the figure should have been printed as '1%'.

Perhaps you would be kind enough to print a correction in the next issue or I may appear as out of touch as the esteemed columnist.

My sincere congratulations on another excellent issue, I do trust the task of editing is still proving enjoyable.

Yours aye

MR Hooper  
UKPA(M)

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Dear Sir,

I refer to the letter from Mr Malcolm D Watts in the July 1990 edition of 'The Pilot' on the subject of pensions.

Mr Watts' comments are wide ranging and contain unfortunate innuendoes, but in certain respects are also misleading and therefore should be challenged.

For example he fails to explain what has happened to any pension credits he may have accumulated in his years of service in the Merchant Navy or from his Helmsman's service. If none, or if modest compared with PNPf credits, then that is his own fault and not the responsibility of the PNPf.

He disparages the level of the improved death-in-service benefits, which has brought PNPf benefits in line with the better pension funds practice, and no doubt his personal circumstances and relationships influence his thinking. If however, he had any responsible involvement with families and dependants of deceased serving colleagues I am sure he would have placed a different value on what is a lifeline in every respect in those unfortunate circumstances; e.g. the recent demise of a young 36 year old



pilot, leaving a widow and two children.

His mischievous attempt to create division amongst members by referring to a two tier system and second class citizens ignores the fact that along with the majority of pilots he is receiving in excess of 1/60 for every year served as a pilot and contributor to the PNP. On the other hand there remains some 90 members who still fall short of 1/60 per year of service, who deserve consideration before Mr Watts.

Mr Watts' views on who has contributed to the fund are his own, but would I am sure be welcomed by other interested parties who have continually pressed for surpluses to be deployed to reduce contributions rather than improve benefits, and would give Mr Watts' claim for special consideration short shrift if it ever came before them. Fortunately UKPA(M) policy has pressed, and has succeeded in establishing, the totally opposing view, much incidentally to the benefit of Mr Watts in securing his improved earnings and a more secure future.

Yours faithfully

B Watson  
Spurn Pilot

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Gentlemen

### Ill Health Retirement

Associated British Ports has expressed doubt regarding the automatic right of a pilot to receive compensation when having his licence revoked due to ill health.

It is important therefore that every pilot, before taking any action regarding ill health retirement, contacts this office for the correct procedure to follow.

Failure to do so could result in difficulty in pursuing a successful claim on his CHA.

Yours faithfully

PP Hames  
Chairman UKPA(M)

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Dear Sir,

I take the liberty to write to you, the reason being to thank you for sending the most interesting reading *The Pilot*. I read *The Pilot* with the greatest of pleasure. There is nothing more satisfying for me than to read factual articles that I can think about.

I have had a little rest and I am now ready to continue. I think I should tell you I am a lady of 79 years, coming to NZ at 70 years in 1982 to be able to see my daughter, her husband and grandchildren.

Many thanks again. I appreciate your thought of me.

With very best wishes

Helen Purvis (Mrs)

## OPINION

I always find the Annual Conference an exciting time. For many of us a year has passed without contact from any of our colleagues in other Ports. We have little idea what has been going on during this time, only having access to the Circular File hopefully kept up to date at the Pilot Station by the local Secretary. I do not believe this is the best or most effective way of running the UKPA(M) but it has been handled this way in most pilots' living memory. If we agree that the Annual Conference is important then it naturally follows that full use should be made of the limited time available. Those who study the Hon. Treasurer's report will realize the high cost of transporting all and sundry to London, or wherever else is chosen, to run through the years business and to plan the strategy for the next twelve months.

I would guess that in most Ports it was a year of adjustment. Those of us who had still not managed agreement on the working conditions foisted upon us had access to Arbitration through the Pilotage Commission or ACAS. Yet, since 1988, *The Pilot* has not published one letter or article which purports to mention the subject. How can pilots be knowledgeable in their separate Port negotiations if they have little idea of what is happening in a Port a mere 20 miles down the coast? There should be

room in *The Pilot* for correspondence on this subject. Obviously the more we know of each other the better able we will be to advance our profession.

Perhaps the saddest event of 1990 was the demise of our excellent Group Health Scheme. Every one of the 800 or so working pilots really needs this scheme today, more than at any time during the past. It is a tragedy that a combination of the Government's inadequate 1987 Pilotage Act and some pilots' expediency has left presently fit serving pilots with no protection.

It is not usual for columnists to refer to criticism made against them as a result of what they have said, but I should like to do so in order to make a point. The remark was recorded in the last issue that Panossim was not 'well-informed'. I cannot dispute this. I can only become well-informed by taking note of what my administrators have to tell me, by reading UKPA(M) Circulars or attending Conference. Listening to younger pilots, they don't seem to be too well-informed either. Where is that long awaited 'Welcome' pack? There never used to be a choice as to which organisation one belonged to as a pilot. Now that there is, let us make sure it is the UKPA(M) which instantly springs to mind. Well-informed or not, I have been in the UKPA(M) longer than most and have a fervent wish to see it continue.

Panossim

## Coastlines

### Retirement Can Be Fun

Two retired pilots - Gordon Greenfield (ex London River and Medway) in his Sigma 36, *Cabadah* and Ian Evans (ex Milford Haven) in his wooden 33' *Musketeer II* participated in the inaugural 'Brent Walker Cup European Race' from Brighton to Puerto Sherry (near Cadiz), a distance of some 1100 miles, in July.

*Cabadah* renamed *Tio Pepe* for the race had two Spaniards in her crew and represented Spain. *Musketeer* was not asked to represent anybody but did fly the Red Dragon throughout.

Whilst neither actually won, both did reasonably well, with *Tio Pepe* coming third in the restricted flagship class. Gordon and Ian disregarded age and health problems respectively and managed to leave Ushant, Finisterre and Vincent to port despite neither having revalidated their Masters certificates!"

Ian Evans, Milford Haven

### Editor's note

It is rumoured Brent Walker's 'financial difficulties' started after promising these two free drinks if they arrived safely in Cadiz!

### The Pilot's Psalm

Dear Sir,

I refer to your 'Coastlines' article on page 16 of the October issue of the Pilot. It refers to the Pilots' psalm.

On 1.3.34 I won a Church of Scotland competition for an essay 'My Favourite Hymn'.

I have always been interested in Church music so I expect my success was influenced thereby.

As a child my mother, brother and I sailed with my father, when Master, around the UK and near Continent before he completed his voyage to points further east for the next six to eight months.

When sailing on these short cruises it seemed to me there was always a copy of 'Toilers of the Deep', the organ of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, in the Masters cabin, Chief

## Short Story

# PILOT'S PROGRESS

by JD Godden

Jim sat with his eyes half shut against the sun, letting his thoughts Kaleidoscope through the last few hours. His wife had wisely suggested she drove the family home and Jim had gratefully accepted.

There was no doubt the dinner had been a success. The food excellent and the wines well up to standard. Jim's rash promise to the hotelier that he would stand any extra expense had ensured first class service to appreciative recipients. Mariners the world over have never been known to pass up free drinks and last night had been no exception. The number of times 'The Captain' had been toasted probably qualified for the Guinness Book of Records.

Jim's fixed, acknowledging, smile had tended to become increasingly frozen as bottle after bottle emerged from the cellar, before he realised there were some things one must simply put down to experience. He promptly ordered a double for himself. His anxieties began to recede in direct proportion to the empty glasses gathering at his right elbow, his evening culminating in a brilliant, witty, albeit slightly slurred speech to the assembled company in answer to their avid request. He even got the punch line right about the Irishman who thought he was a parrot! Or was it the parrot who thought he was Irish?

Engineers cabin and Officers saloon.

It was about this time I cut-out the 'Pilots Psalm' and stuck it in the fly-leaf of my new bible, the prize I received for the essay above.

I am sure we now have a major clue to the composer of the Pilots Psalm.

Maybe 'Toilers of the Deep' can give us more information since the Psalm was a major part in the design of their booklet. The date of the psalm is 1874, its author Captain John H Roberts.

I now too am increasingly interested  
Yours sincerely

GL McComish

Trinity House Channel Pilot (Retired)

Dear Capt Godden,

I enjoyed reading the October copy of *The Pilot* and the news of my friends of TH North Sea Pilots Harwich.

The Pilots Psalm interested me. I enclose copy of the Pilots Prayer that my husband Capt NH Harris MBE (North Sea Pilots Harwich from 1949-76 when he died) always carried in his wallet. I think he was given it by Capt Capon, an

older pilot at the time he joined. I thought you would like to publish this version. It was of course read at my husband's funeral.  
Yours sincerely  
Jean Beaumont Harris

Letting the motorway world hurtle by, Jim realised he was an older, wiser, and very much poorer man. He also realised what a treasure he had in this woman at the wheel who had seemed not unduly perturbed at being addressed as 'Chere Michelle' when the gently spinning room had gradually accelerated and sucked him into its vortex. He remembered little of his departure from the pub and even less of his subsequent arrival at his in-laws, save his constantly reminding one Nellie Dean about an old mill apparently connected with some stream in the vicinity. His bubbling bonhomie was finally shattered on coming face to face with a white shrouded apparition in curlers, closely followed by an ethereal figure dressed in all over green stripes. His aroused in-laws had little trouble helping their daughter with her chosen partner.

The day dawned with a fiery sun in a cloudless sky. This worried Jim little at first, but as nature began to re-assert herself, Jim was forced into opening an eye. Unfortunately this occurred when the earth had turned just sufficiently to allow a shaft of sunlight to fall full frontal between the curtains. Jim's eye declared it no contest and tightly closed. The world would have to turn still further

### A Pilots Prayer

The Lord is my Pilot  
I shall not strand nor shall I flounder  
He steers me thro safe channells in deep  
waters and by the stars of  
righteousness  
For His names sake

Yea through the peril of fog or tempest  
I fear not for Thou art with me  
Thy care and skill encompasseth me  
Thou prearest a haven for me in the  
Land of the Mariners gone before  
me.

My courses are true, the anchorage certain  
Surely my life's voyaging will end in  
peace  
So I may shelter in the harbour of the  
Lord forever.

before life animate and life inanimate could compete on level terms.

Jim gingerly negotiated the stairs dressed in his wife's track suit, his own clothes still at the radar school. Entering the dining room against his better judgement he was greeted by three enigmatic smiles and two younger, uncontrolled, fits of the giggles. As the sympathetic mutterings began Jim vaguely wondered why, when one had disgraced oneself, caused mayhem and would no doubt be the talking point in this genteel neighbourhood for at least a month, everyone was so ruddy patronising! He was sure his head would feel much better if someone shouted at it instead of patting it. He was aware of father-in-law telling, yet again, his tale of how it had happened to him whilst in the army back in the year dot. Jim had long ago decided someone had spiked an orange juice in far away Catterick whilst father-in-law was defending his Country around 1949.

Mother-in-law's offer of sausage, bacon and fried egg he dismissed as calculated cruelty. His two daughters promptly divided the spoils into two parts measuring each portion with an exactitude usually reserved for apportioning uranium in a nuclear reactor. Jim sipped his cup of tea carefully, not wanting to induce the free surface effect which took place in his stomach on any sharp change of course.

Fresh air, he decided, would kill or cure, and so navigated successfully to the back door and beyond. The warm sun felt soothing to his forehead. To celebrate this return of feeling Jim took a deep breath. The subsequent paroxysm of coughing totally removed the top of his head, blacking out the smiling morn and causing him to subside amongst the fuchsias in the raised border. As the fog cleared Jim rose rigid, and hobbled slowly to the outside loo.

Door bolted against the too bright world, Jim sat and contemplated his future. He was certainly too old for the Michelles of this world. He would, he decided, never eat or drink to excess again. The pleasure gained paled into insignificance to the pain endured. An occasional lager only and not to believe that the mariner's role in life was to impress the landlubber. He remembered wryly his wife's family declaring they thought plumbing was a good, steady, occupation when their daughter announced she was to marry a Mate!



Food would be taken for sensible survival, fat free, organic and fibre based. He would get fit, swim with the children every Tuesday, get the bicycle down from the garage wall and on with the trainers at six, come rain or shine.

Although far removed from January, Jim felt this new resolution to be a turning point in his life. Murdering the unfortunate spider who injudiciously encountered this new man in inflexible mood, Jim rose and faced the outside

world with confidence. Feeling more secure, he lay down in a room which happily remained in equilibrium and dropped off.

Awaking painlessly, he took a shower and found his newly appreciated wife had collected his clothes and his well-earned Radar Certificate. He felt a new man, well, newish anyway. He would lead by example from now on.

The cry 'dinner's ready' had him march steadfastly to the dining room. Roast

beef, Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes, sprouts and thick brown gravy, the 1984 claret opened and at room temperature, together with father-in-law and a glass of malt extended.

Tomorrow, thought Jim, would surely be soon enough to enter such a brave new world. After all, was it not Churchill who said if one had to turn over a new leaf it was probably better to finish this page first?

## THE PILOT

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United Kingdom Pilots' Association (Marine)

(A Section of the Transport & General Workers Union)

Transport House, Smith Square, Westminster, London SW1P 3JB

Telephone: 071-828 7788

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 MC Battrick 7 Broadfield Road, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2JT  
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### Legal Defence Insurance

(Navigators & General Insurance Co Ltd  
 Policy No 20004375 UKPA(M) Indemnity)

### Notification of Incident

Pilots involved in incidents should notify the company as soon as is practical to register the case, either by telephone or in writing to:

Navigators & General Insurance Co Ltd,  
 Eagle Star House, 113 Queens road,  
 Brighton BN1 3XN. Tel: 0273 29866

In general circumstances, the company would like to discuss briefly incidents with the pilot concerned prior to allocating legal representation.

In urgent cases however, certainly in cases involving injury or pollution, telephone contact must be made straight away both in and outside office hours as listed below:

### In office hours

Mr A Thompson  
 Daytime tel: 0273-29866 x 3141

### Outside office hours

Mr A Thompson  
 Home tel: 0273-508981,  
 or Mr NS Cooper  
 Home tel: 09066-2927,  
 or Mr SS McCarthy  
 Home tel: 04446-48520

Chairman, UKPA(M)

## STOP PRESS

We are delighted to report the award of the OBE to Ian Evans ex Vice-Chairman of the UKPA(M) and long term Pilotage Commissioner, for services to pilotage.

We also report the award of the BEM to George Thompson of the Haven Pilotage Service, Harwich.

## SHIPS OF THE PAST

**Ships:- SS Beckenham  
 & MV Greenwich**  
**Requested by: Daniel I McMillan,  
 London - River, (Retd)**

The Britain Steamship Co Ltd, - Managers Watts, Watts & Co Ltd had its origins in Blyth, Northumberland, in the mid 1850s when Edmund Hannay Watts, a shipping and insurance broker became involved in partnership with others, and the firm of Watts, Milburn & Co, coal exporters and shipowners, was established. About 1869 the firm moved to London and in 1872 the original partnerships was dissolved and another, known as Watts, Ward & Co was founded in its place. The Britain Steamship Co Ltd, was established in 1884 and started with the steamer *Dunholme*, taken over from Watts, Ward & Co and by placing order for two new buildings, the *Brentford* and *Willesden*, steam trampships of about 2150 tons.

In 1896 the partnership of Watts, Ward & Co ceased and the firm of Watts, was formed. At that time, the fleet comprised 22 steamships, 18 of which were registered under the Britain Steamship Co and 4 under Watts, Watts & Co

In subsequent years the company became involved in various shipping enterprises, one of which included Durand & Renault of Nantes & St Nazaire, later to become Societe d'Importation de Charbon. A subsidiary company of Watts, Watts, the Pensacola Trading Co Ltd, was involved in the establishment of a service from the UK to the US Gulf and West Indies with two ships. There was also another vessel, the former American *Powhatan*, re-named *Rupert City*, which commenced a regular service from Seattle to Prince Rupert, BC in 1908.

Apart from shipping, the company had considerable interests in coal mining, principally in South Wales, and this



would appear to be a natural progression since many of the various cargoes carried by Watts, Watts vessels were coal.

In the first twenty years or so of this century, Watts, Watts had acquired many second-hand tramp steamers, usually of elderly origin, but in 1928 Edmund Hannay Watts (II) changed the company policy and commissioned the Caledon Co of Dundee to build three single deck 101/2 knot steamers of about 5420 Tons Gross and 9000 Tons deadweight, these becoming the *Watford*, *Wanstead* and *Wendover*.

In 1930-31 *Dartford*, *Depford* and *Dulwich*, Gross 4050, deadweight 6740, were built by Smiths Dock Co, Tyne.

The next orders went to Caledon again, this time for three ships of more up-to-date design, the *Blackheath*, *Beckenham* and *Beaconsfield*. This design was carried further with the *Teddington* and her two sisters *Tottenham* and *Twickenham* built in the same yard in 1940.

In the summer of 1943, the first motor ship to be owned by the company, *Greenwich*, a wartime standard ship, was launched at Sunderland by the Princess Royal.

The company's subsequent motor vessels, built from 1949 onwards were of very modern design. All had 'W' as the first letter of their names, superb accommodation for Officers and Crew alike, and were highly regarded by all

sectors of the shipping world.

In 1965, Britain Steamship Co Ltd was acquired by the Seabridge Consortium (Bibby Line Ltd of Liverpool). Thereafter, the company virtually disappeared, and apart from the principals possibly using the name on paper as nominal owners for a tangled web of various vessels under numerous flags, Watts, Watts and the Britain Steamship Co Ltd are no more.

### Principal Particulars:-

<b>Beckenham</b>	
Gross Tonnage	4636
Length Overall	434'5"
Speed	10 knots
Builders	Caledon, Dundee, 1938
<b>Greenwich</b>	
Gross Tonnage	7292
Length Overall	442'9"
Speed	10 knots
Builders:	Doxford, Sunderland, 1943

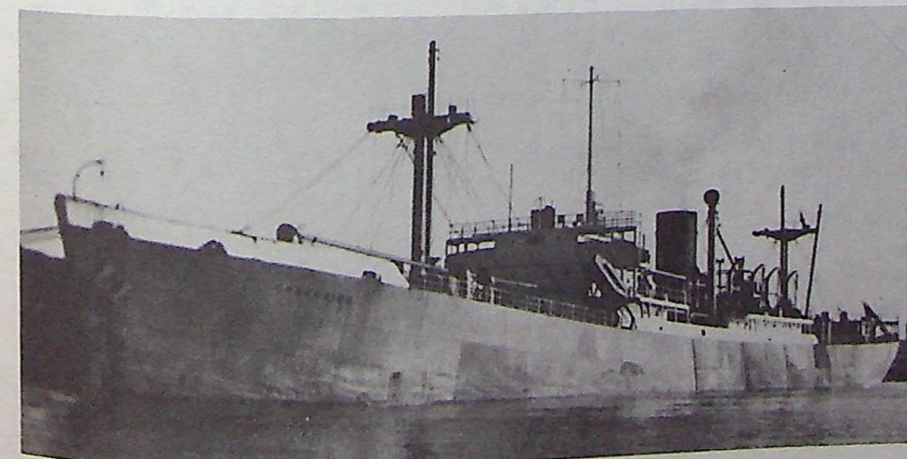
Both *Beckenham* and *Greenwich*, apart from wartime convoy duties etc., were engaged in world-wide tramping during their service with Watts, Watts.

*Beckenham* was subsequently a constructive total loss when she went ashore near Cape Ratmanova, Northern Russia, whilst on passage from Igarka to London with a cargo of timber on 7th October 1953. By 13th October the ship had broken in two and all hopes of salvage gone.

*Greenwich* was sold in 1959 to Alejandro Zubizaretta of Bilbao, an associated company of Naviera Aznar, well-known as owners of the Spanish 'Monte' ships. The vessel was re-named *Portador* of the Argus Shipping Co, Monrovia, Liberia.

On April 13th, 1962 this vessel was on fire and abandoned in a position approximately 250 miles west of Fastnet Rock whilst on passage from Manchester to Bay Comeau, Canada, in ballast. A later report says 'presumed sunk'.

F H Eagle





# United Kingdom Pilots' Association (Marine)

## Local Secretaries

District	Name	Address and Telephone Number
Aberdeen	G Bruce	Aberdeen Harbour Pilots, North Pier, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire 0224 529571 x 237 (Office) OR 0224 647610 (Home) 0232 795133 (Home)
Belfast	NCE McKinney	8 Alt Min Avenue, Belfast 8 4NJ 0289 307404
Berwick	JH Jenkinson	c/o Harbour Master's Office, Tweedmouth, Tweed Dock, Berwick upon Tweed TD15 2AA 0670 355639
Blyth	C Briggs	34 Druridge Drive, Blyth, Northumberland 0205 760830 (Home)
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Milford Haven	JM Leney	1 Grassholm Close, Westhill, Milford Haven, Dyfed 06462 3150 (Home); 06462 3091x32 (Office)
Mostyn	J Southwood	Green End, Beacon Lane, Heswall L60 0DD 0745 560335 (Office); 051 342 5978 (Home)
Orkney	W Cowie	The Borders, Bignold Park Road, Kirkwall, Orkney DW15 1PT 0856 3987 (Home)
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Teignmouth	JC Whittaker	Stone Lodge, Newton Road, Bishopsteighton, Nr Teignmouth TQ14 9PR 06267 6134 (Home)
Tyne	JH Burn	44 Walton Avenue, North Shields, Tyne & Wear NE29 9BS 091 257 3999 (Home); 091 455 56567 (Office)
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Gt Yarmouth	B Collingwood, Esq	2 Bernard Road, Gorleston on Sea, Gt Yarmouth 0493 668223 (Home); 0493 661715 (Duty Pilot)