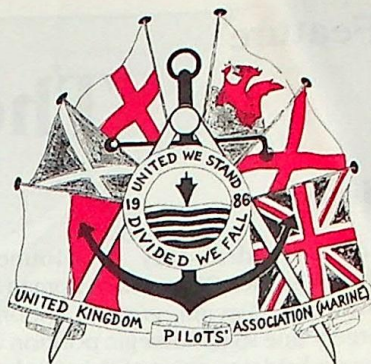


# THE PILOT

JANUARY 1993

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



## Editorial

Most importantly I should like to wish all our readers a Happy New Year and to hope, once again, that 1993 brings not only prosperity but some kind of latent normality to those districts so badly affected by the present recession.

Reading George Woollard's excellent feature on the Port of Gloucester makes one yearn for a new stability in a pilot's future. I have an unhappy feeling that many ports and pilots are in similar invidious positions and that for some reason we do not hear about them. I do not suggest that publication of their problems in *The Pilot* will alleviate what pilots in smaller ports, or larger ports for that matter, may be facing but surely publicity, even in our small journal with its restricted circulation, can do no harm.

Our 1992 Annual Conference has been and gone. The Copthorne Tara seemed a better venue than in years past, the discussions robust and answers readily given by our Chairman, Paul Hames, and our Section Committee. Yet even here I feel our world is changing. Smaller ports cannot be represented fully, declining numbers and increasing expense must necessarily make this a Conference for those districts with General Purpose Funds or the like, that can afford the best part of £200 for each pilot to take part, much greater for some of our far flung colleagues. CHAs will seldom help. Do they really want you to be there? Our national presence is still probably seen as the biggest threat to their future plans.

Even if those pilots from the troubled ports had turned up they would not have been heard. Not, I hasten to add, through indifference, far from it, but because our pilots' age structure has formed a schism in our midst. The Pilots National Pension Fund and its future is now so important, and pensions so imminent, to a massive section of the older serving pilots that Conference had to spend over half its entire working time discussing the PNPF and its satellite bodies. To the massive intake of younger or transferee pilots which has occurred in some ports, few of whom can subscribe to the PNPF, yet all of whom must belong to a future

UKPA(M) to keep it viable, the Conference and the Minutes will be a bore. IMPA and EMPA were the next most discussed agenda items, organisations which the thinking pilot realises are vitally important to his future; yet organisations which do not, and cannot, sparkle and show resounding success to Joe Bloggs on a dirty night swinging his Filipino crewed chemical "bomb" five metres off an unlit jetty.

The UKPA(M) Chairman and the Section Committee are more aware of this than I am. They also know that if an old codger like me can see it so can many others. Yet old codgers have one attribute left – experience. My experience tells me we are near a cross roads as far as Conference is concerned. This expensive, necessary annual gathering of pilots has to be worthwhile. It has got to attract the younger man, it has got to give him an insight into his future within our Association. It has got to give him confidence. Do this and he will give you his support – and his subscription!

I believe the PNPF, important as it is, has got to have a separate forum for its discussions, attended by the Trustees and the members of the National Negotiating Forum. As Editor I am privileged to be able to express here my own thoughts although others tell me they hold similar views. I will not presume to use this magazine to advance details of what I would do, that is for the Section Committee to decide. Paul Hames, our Chairman and a very busy man, has told me he will be giving his ideas on Conference and its importance in our

next issue. Space is available for your views, too, just write them down, it only costs the price of a stamp.

Time does many things, as a myriad of sayings will tell you, the most important of which is "run out". Do not let this happen to our Association, nor to our Annual Conference. We have been invited to Hull for 1993 by the Spurn Pilots, a district which in my pilotage lifetime has supplied three able and innovative leaders of our Association.

Could we make Hull 1993 a milestone in our Annual Conference history? I believe we could, and should.

*John Godden*

140 Dover Rd, Sandwich, Kent. CT13 0DD  
Tel 0304 612752

## 1993 ANNUAL CONFERENCE Hull, 18th - 19th November

Spurn Pilots, who are hosting the 1993 Annual Conference, will be organising a splendid programme of social events in addition to the conference.

They look forward to welcoming Pilots and their Ladies from all over the country.

Further details of hotels, programme etc will be published in a later edition of *The Pilot*.

**Don't forget! Reserve these dates now.**

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## 1992 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT

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## Feature

# The Port of Gloucester

## History

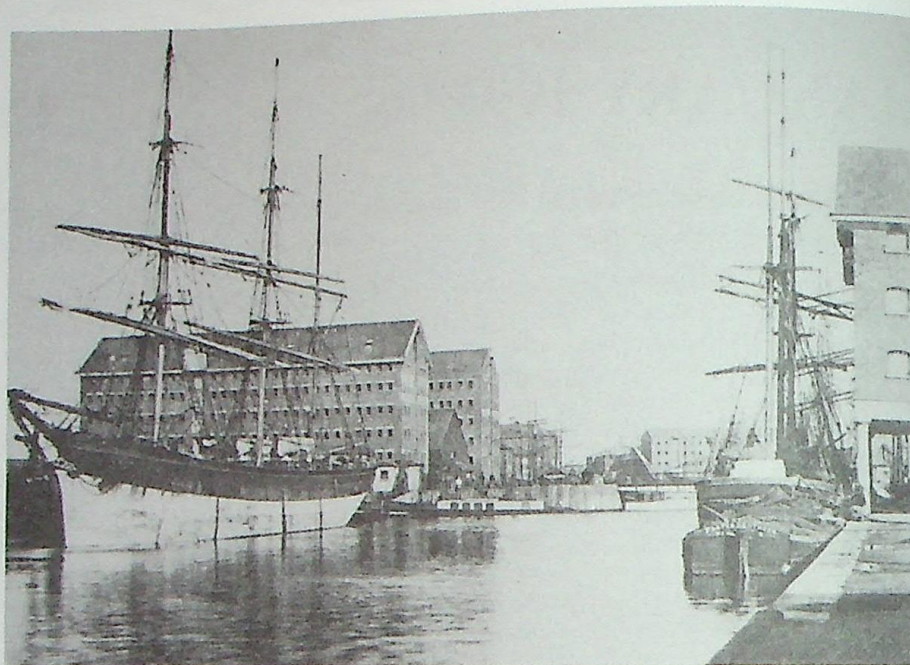
The Cathedral City of Gloucester, anciently *Caer Glow* and in Roman times known as *Glevum*, grew in importance largely due to its strategic position at the lowest bridging point of Britain's longest river. It became a vital communications cross-roads on the main East-West route into South Wales, and the main route into the heartland of England to the North.

From earliest days the Severn waterway provided a ready made artery for the carriage of goods to and from the Midlands, and centres to the south and west like Bristol, Devon, Cornwall, S Wales and Ireland. This, despite a tidal regime in the lower reaches of the estuary second only to the Bay of Fundy in Canada for its range and strength, coupled with a tortuous, shifting, navigable channel. Another 'hazard' to be coped with prior to the developments outlined below, was the famous Severn Bore, which still draws thousands of sightseers to the banks of the river below Gloucester each time the higher Spring tides are advertised in the local press.

## The Ports Gloucester

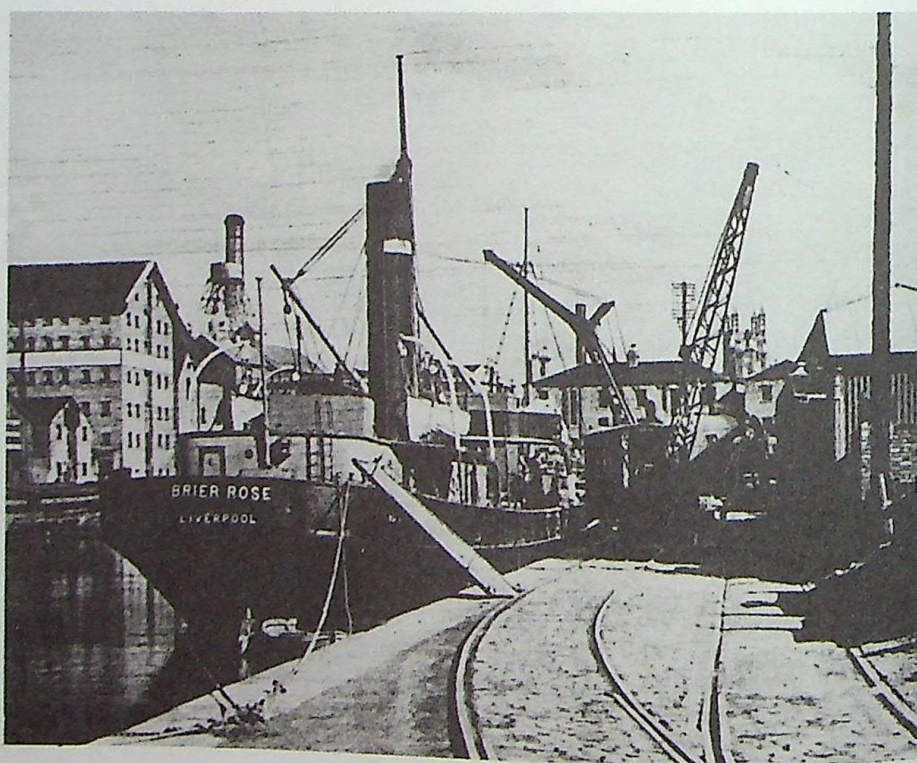
Gloucester itself was granted a Charter as a Port by Queen Elizabeth in 1580, despite considerable opposition and competition from the merchants of Bristol to the seaward, flourishing and developing as the years passed. So much so, in fact, that it was considered necessary to excavate an enclosed docks system to complement the riverside quays and to provide additional safe berths for the ever increasing trade.

Various schemes were put forward and Acts of Parliament sought, until it was finally accepted that a dock system at Gloucester, coupled with a ship canal to bypass the most difficult part of the estuary, should be adopted. Consequently work began in 1794 but many difficulties, physical and financial, bedevilled the project before eventual completion was realised in April 1827, when the lock entrance at Sharpness Point was officially opened. Thus, the Port of Gloucester now comprised a tidal basin and locks at Sharpness at the seaward end of a sixteen mile long, lockless ship canal, leading to the enclosed docks in the City of Gloucester. Several berths were available along the length of the canal, and halfway to Gloucester was the junction with the Stroudwater Canal, which itself was developed into the Thames-Severn Canal. In time the



Above: Gloucester Docks circa 1900

Below: Bags of cement being transferred into the transit shed beside the Victoria Dock (1930s)

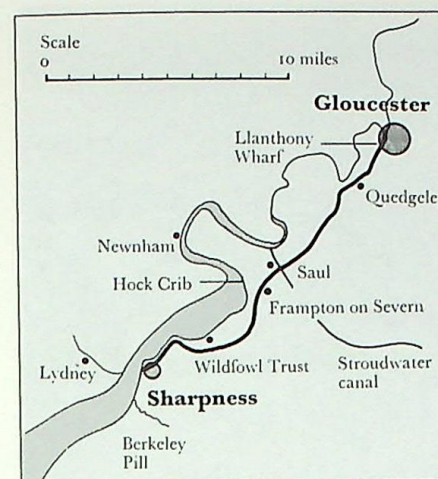


Gloucester-Sharpness Canal became second only to the Manchester Ship Canal in importance for the transit of sea-going vessels.

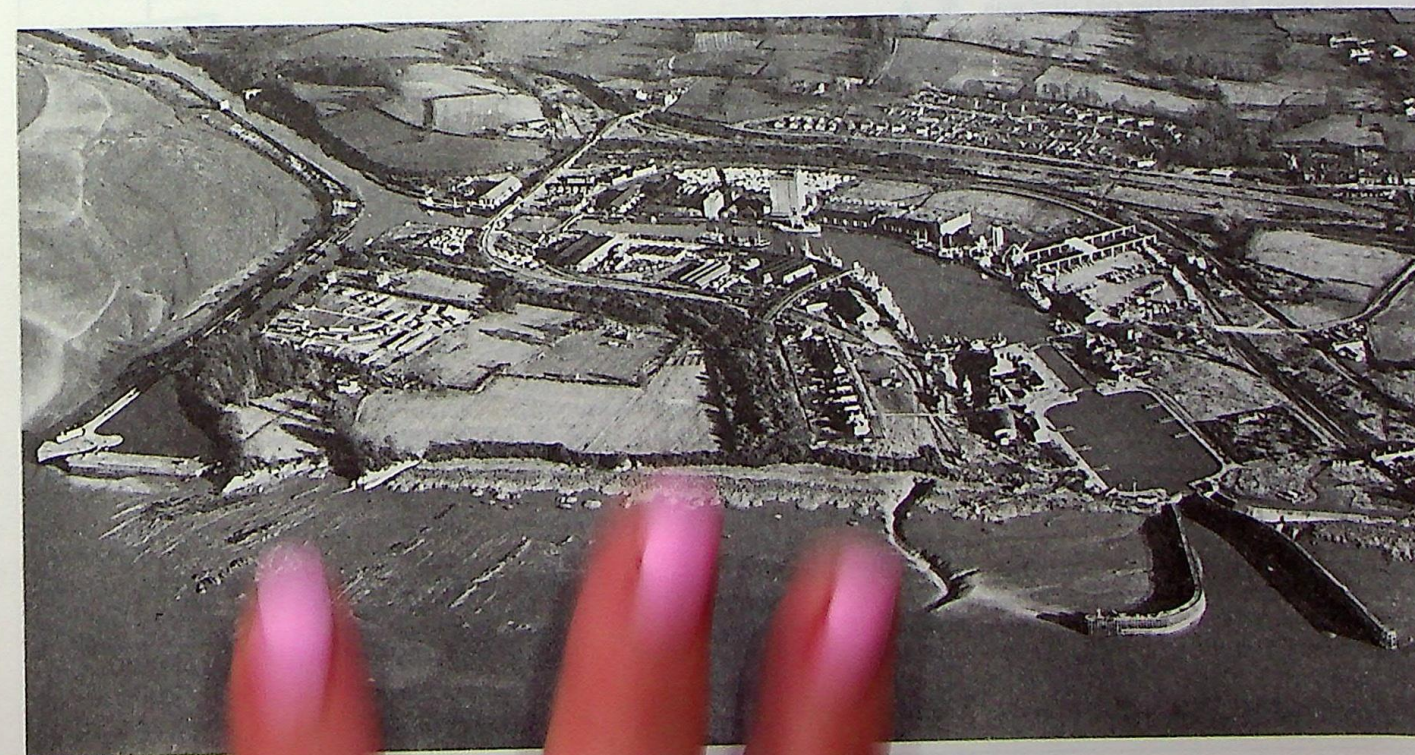
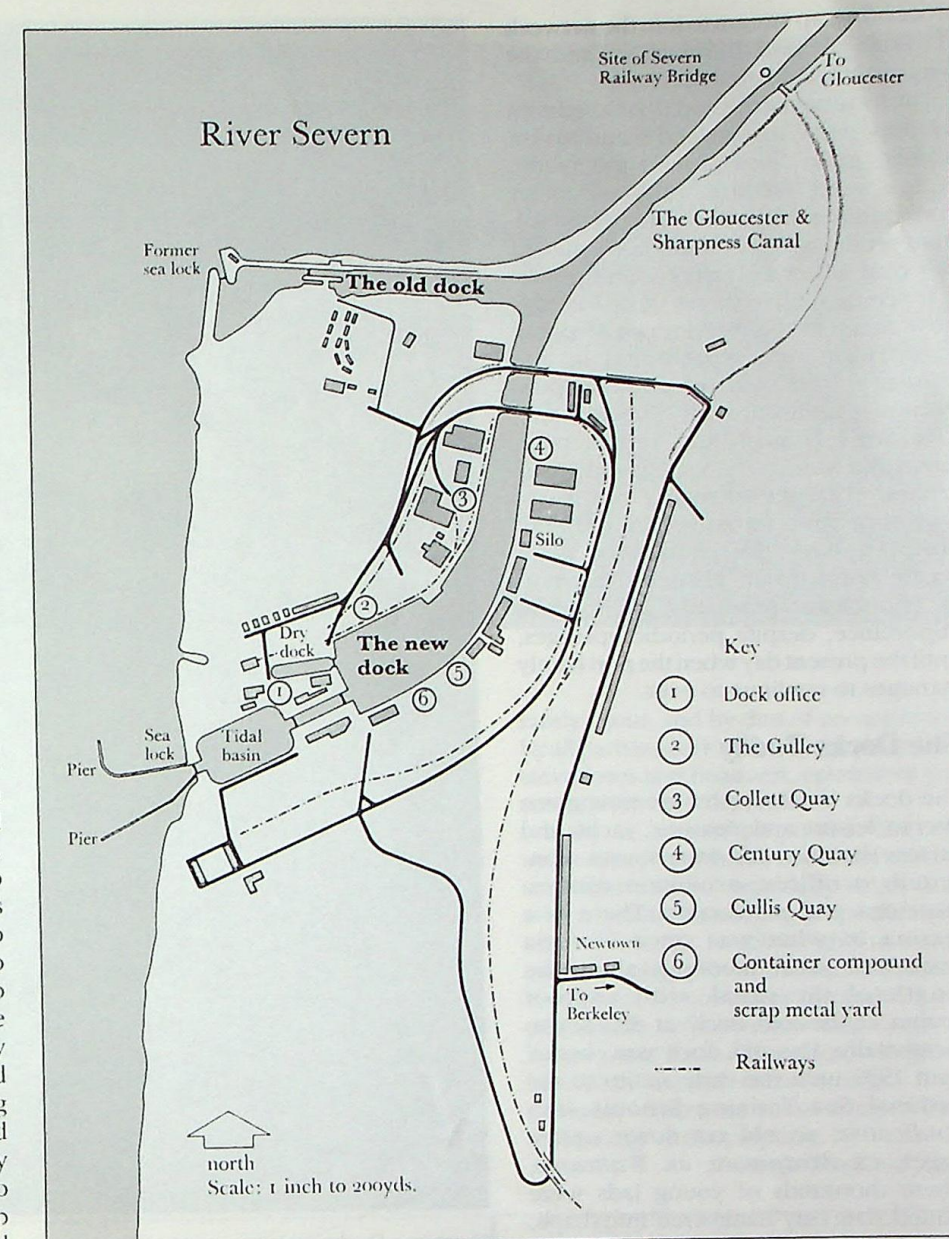
## Sharpness

However, as trade increased and ships grew larger, it became evident that there were many disadvantages to the system,

not least the delays caused by transit of the canal and congestion at Gloucester. The up-shot was the decision to build a new, larger, docks system at Sharpness capable of handling all but the very largest of ocean going shipping then in use. Accordingly, an enclosed dock was constructed which provided 12,000 ft of quayside with depths of 24 feet at all berths. Access from the river was provided



by an entrance sixty feet wide, a tidal basin and a lock 320 feet long. The 'new docks', as they became known, were opened in November 1874 with due ceremony. The first two vessels to use the new entrance being the New Brunswick registered barque *Director* and the Norwegian full rigged ship *Protector*. So, the Port of Gloucester was established, much as it exists to this day, with the docks systems at Gloucester and Sharpness linked by the ship canal. The docks at Sharpness were able to accommodate ships of up to 8000 tons dwt, whilst coastal and short sea cargo vessels of up to 1100 dwt were able to proceed up to Gloucester. Smaller cargo vessels of around 400 dwt were then able to lock back down into the river and carry on from Gloucester up to Tewksbury and Worcester. Still smaller vessels, including the ubiquitous *Severn Trow*, could, and did, trade onward to Stourport, Bewdley and Shrewsbury. Canal barges also utilised the waterway, loading from ship at Sharpness and Gloucester, and





proceeding up stream to join the network of canals around Birmingham and the burgeoning industrial Midlands.

The fortunes of the Port flourished with the import of Canadian and Scandinavian timber, grain from around the world, cotton seed, feeding stuffs and other commodities including, latterly, petroleum products. Exports handled included salt, coal, wheat and manufactured goods.

It seems strange these days, to recall how many of the well known shipping company's were represented by the regular visits of their vessels to the port, examples being ships of the Brocklebank, Clan, Strick, Hogarth, Runciman, Ropner, Court and Stag Lines, together with many others. With the changing pattern of shipping and transport in general, coupled with the growth of deep water Ports down channel, the Port of Gloucester gradually declined in importance, despite periodic upsurges, until the present day when the port barely manages to continue to exist.

### The Docks Today

The docks at Gloucester are now given over to 'leisure and pleasure', yachts and narrow boats, with warehouses converted to offices, exhibition centres, museums and restaurants. There is a marina in what was once Victoria Dock and yacht moorings along the length of the canal, with another marina at the 'old dock' at Sharpness. Incidentally, this old dock was 'home' from 1939 until the early sixties to the National Sea Training Schools ship *Vindictrix*, an old cut down square rigger, ex *Arranmore*, ex *Waltrante*, where thousands of young lads were trained, dare I say 'hammered' into shape, to provide seamen and stewards for the Merchant Navy. In 1967 the old ship was regrettably towed away to Newport and broken up for scrap.

Commercial traffic to Gloucester has all but ceased, with just the occasional visit by a coaster to pick up a single item of machine plant from a canal side factory on the city outskirts.

All petroleum traffic has ceased and few large ships visit Sharpness these days, although in recent years the Greek *Eliza* of 10,200 dwt docked with a part cargo. Surprisingly, no pilots were recorded as being off 'sick' at that time. Nowadays, shipping is haphazard, involving the movement of scrap metal, bulk cement, grain and some coal.

### Pilotage

As ship movements have steadily declined, so the pilotage service has dwindled until now, when there are just five authorised Pilots. At the time of re-organisation, numbers had fallen from fourteen to twelve. As well as four 'early'



Sharpness Docks and entrance to Gloucester Canal

retirements, other pilots have successfully transferred to Bideford, Portsmouth and SE Wales. To augment the fluctuating income, the existing Pilots have been forced to take on additional work such as servicing and maintenance of navigational lights, beacons and buoys in the estuary, and contracting for services to the builders of the second Severn crossing scheme, now getting under way.

In 1988 the Gloucester pilots formed themselves into a co-operative styled Amalgamated Gloucester Pilots Ltd, electing, albeit reluctantly, to remain self-employed, and eventually signed a contract with the local CHA to provide the necessary pilotage services to the Port. The great difficulty, exacerbated by the deepening recession, was that the CHA, Gloucester Harbour Trustees, made it clear that they were not able to employ pilots, whilst the owners of the Port, British Waterways Board, declined to accept any pilotage responsibility, refusing to become the competent

Harbour Authority in their own right. The present situation is that after the first three or four years, the contract has lapsed and only loose letters of agreement between the CHA and AGP Ltd, coupled with 'goodwill' and a sense of survival, keeps the service in being.

With one more pilot nearing retirement, and no provision for training, the future looks decidedly bleak. Any potential recruit would need comprehensive and concentrated training with no guaranteed income, with only the expectation of scraping a living as long as the Port remains as it was a hundred years ago, when our forebears went 'seeking' to the Westward in their famous cutters, hoping to sustain a livelihood governed by the vagaries of trade. British Waterways Board constantly stress that they are fully committed to the commercial future of their Port, but unfortunately such lip service does not take into account the continuing decline of a pilotage service built upon generations of hard won local



Sharpness Docks looking seaward

knowledge and experience passed on to a successful line of young pilots, while they gained their own fund of experience. It does look as if the present incumbents are, indeed, the last of the line.

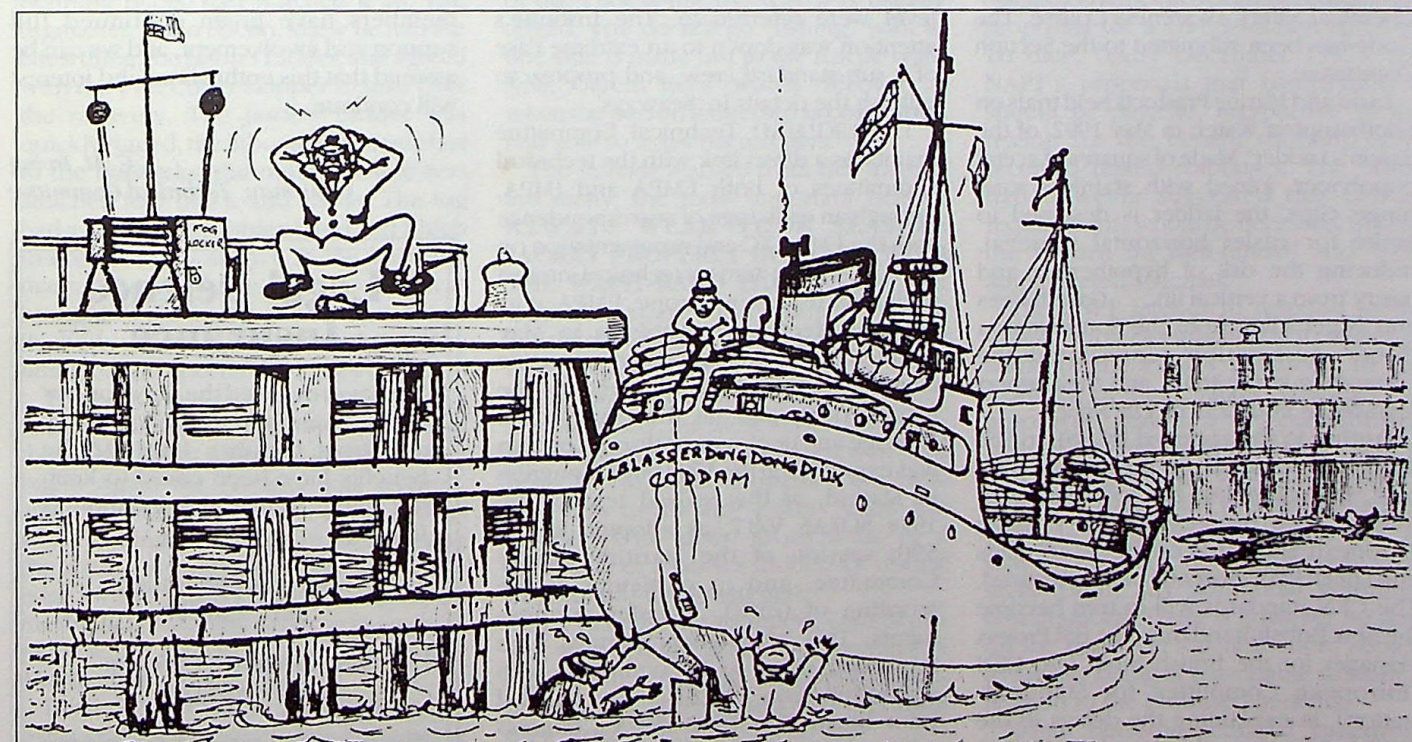
The pilotage to Sharpness is compulsory within the Port limits, which now extend from just under two miles north of Avonmouth, right up to the weirs at the City of Gloucester itself, although navigation above Sharpness is severely restricted and only undertaken by small local craft. Boarding and landing has to take place in Barry Roads, off the South Glamorgan coast, forty miles to the seaward of Sharpness, utilising the joint Bristol/Gloucester pilot cutter *Robina*

*Fisk*. With overland travel between base and pilot station being sixty nine miles, it is only possible to undertake one act of pilotage per tide, per pilot, except in exceptional circumstances when a pilot may elect to dock one ship as early as possible, then sail with another before the arrival of other inward traffic. The unique conformation of the Severn Estuary, together with the tidal regime previously mentioned, permits an operational 'window' of only two hours at best, on each tide for vessel movements, which means that in some circumstances potential delays to ships might be unacceptable to shipowners by modern standards and criteria. However, delays

rarely occur, and by dint of co-operation by all parties, dock officials, agents, pilots, stevedores and boatmen, operations run smoothly within the limits.

It is, in a way, tragic that the old apprenticeship scheme could not survive in modern times, especially in an area which, whilst demanding of special skills and knowledge, is able to give in return such complete job satisfaction to the ship handler as he continues throughout his piloting life, no matter how long, to add to his personal bank of local knowledge in beautiful, natural surroundings. Even nowadays, there are some things which technology cannot replace.

George Woollard, 1992



Gloucester pilots will always get there – Subject to incentive

George Woollard



## Technical Sub-Committee Report

The Technical Committee has met twice at Transport House since the 1991 Conference. The committee strength remains at six, with Angus MacKinnon from Milford Pilotage Ltd., now retired, being replaced by John Brown from Associated Forth Pilots. Ben Masey continues the representation from Europilots, as does Michael Battrick from the Section Committee.

Further to the 1991 Technical Committee Report, the 2nd draft of the Boarding and Landing Code of Practice was completed by the committee, for submission to the Section Committee. This Code, sighted and now prepared in booklet form by the British Ports Federation, is to act as a guide to safe practice and is commended by the BPF to all those involved in the pilotage service. Their belief is that this Code should be used primarily as a basis for safe operating procedures, capable of being adapted to suit particular locations or type of operation.

After referral back by the Section Committee, and further full consideration, the committee have prepared a new draft on Procedures for enhancing the safety of pilots serving vessels carrying chemical and gas cargoes in bulk. This detailed Code deals with Boarding and Landing Safety Check List, Berth and Vessel Access, Berth Information Document, Chemical Information Booklet, and Chemical Safety Awareness Course. The Code has been submitted to the Section Committee.

Land and Marine Products held trials on Southampton Water, in May 1992, of the 'Jason's Ladder'. Made of squares of acetal copolymer, joined with stainless steel hinge clips, the ladder is designed to make for easier horizontal retrieval, reducing the risk of hypothermia and injury from a vertical lift. Gareth Rees and Nigel Allen from the Southampton Pilots' Association represented the committee at the trials, and their report features in Issue 231 of *The Pilot*.

Further to the approval by BSI, to BSI 3595:1981 standard, for the SeaSafe pilot coat, the committee has followed, with interest, the progress of the coming European Standards on Buoyancy Aids and Lifejackets, currently being prepared. The CEN standards will in turn become the new British Standards. The BSI Project Manager for the British input into CEN (European Committee for Standardisation), in explaining the delays to the final drafting, has added the UKPA(M) to the mailing list of those awaiting progress from Europe. John Brown prepared a

comparison between the British and the draft European standards, for the October meeting of the committee.

In April, Mike Barratt attended the Safety at Sea and Marine Electronics Exhibition (SASMEX) and Conference 1992, with the theme of 'Maritime Safety into the 90s'. A comprehensive report of the Conference, and relevant brochures from equipment manufacturers supporting the exhibition, are filed at Transport House.

Representation continues on the Papers and Technical Committee of the Nautical Institute, with an agenda item now being allocated for matters both practical and technical, at a United Kingdom, European and International Pilots' level. Peter Russell attended the February meeting at Lambeth Road, and myself, the meeting in September. The Institute were acquainted with the recently published Code on Boarding and Landing by Pilot Boat, and reasons for the preparation of the draft on Procedures for enhancing the safety of pilots serving vessels carrying chemical and gas cargoes in bulk (referred to above) by David Hodgson and the committee. Approval was shown by the P&T committee at the prepared First Aid Treatment, Dangerous Cargoes booklet referred to in the draft code, and now being offered by EMPA to member associations. Concern was expressed at the continuance of pilot transfer non-compliance, and the transfer difficulties being experienced by pilots on ships, such as the *Widukind* class, with sponsons and accordingly unable to comply with Regulation V/17(a)(ii) of SOLAS 74. The databanks of reported transfer incidents held at EMPA and IMPA level were referred to. The Institute's attention was drawn to an extreme case of a sub-standard crew, and propose to publish the details in 'Seaways'.

The UKPA(M) Technical Committee maintains a direct link with the technical committees of both EMPA and IMPA, through an exchange of correspondence with the EMPA TC and representation on the ITC. Among items of technical interest under discussion in Europe, EMPA at its General Meeting in Antwerp in May adopted recommendations on protective clothing and Safety equipment for the marine pilot, and on the pilot ladder stowage and deployment drum. Concern was expressed at the 1992 IMPA Congress in Madrid, at the revised text of the 1974 SOLAS V/17, as adopted at the 59th session of the Maritime Safety Committee, and in particular at the wording of (c)(ii), Transfer arrangements. This amendment permits high freeboard ships to be equipped with a combination rig or a mechanical pilot hoist. The 1992 IMPA Congress adopted the draft resolution, proposed by the Japan Pilots' Association, on the compulsory provision of combination

ladders on high freeboard ships in the revised text in SOLAS V/17.

To better pursue the JPA resolution at IMO, clear evidence of difficulties experienced by pilots during mechanical pilot hoist transfer is needed, as was underlined by the IMPA President's circular, dated 26th May 1992. Again, as referred to above, both EMPA and IMPA call for evidence of non-compliance in pilot transfer arrangements, for their representatives to be able to better argue the case for the improvement and stricter enforcement of the SOLAS Requirements, at European and International forums.

The committee represented the UKPA(M) at the June meeting of the United Kingdom's Safety of Navigation Committee – a representation that needs considerable preparation from the many technical and politically sensitive papers circulated, with the added difficulty of the recent practice of the late presentation of agenda items on the day of the meeting. Peter Russell has stood down from the UK SONC, and the ECDIS Committee, after some 14 years of representation, and future representation will be from both the Section Committee and the Technical Committee.

Since joining the committee in 1989, Ben Masey, from Europilots, has given a valued contribution, particularly with his contact with boat builders, European pilot services and the varied methods of transfer, the preparation of Routing and TSS related papers, and is to research a file on One Man Bridge Operations (OMBO) for the April 1993 meeting.

This had been a full and rewarding year, enhanced by the active liaison with the EMPA TC and ITC. Committee members have given continued full support and involvement, and we can be assured that this enthusiasm and interest will continue.

C. M. Irving  
Chairman, Technical Committee

## Legal Defence Insurance

We have reviewed the cover on our Pilots' Indemnity Insurance Policy and from October 1st 1992 the benefits have been raised to keep the values in line with inflation as follows:

Loss of Authorisation  
Max. £30,000

Legal Defence expenses  
Max. £35,000

The cost of this policy is part of your UKPA(M) subscription.

## MAN OVERBOARD Do we stand a chance?

Just after midday, whilst proceeding to land a River Thames Pilot off Gravesend Pier, Pilot Cutter skipper Keith Lock saw a shape in the water. He knew what it was, working as he has for years on the river he had pulled more than one person, including a pilot, from a watery grave. By a stroke of good fortune the cutter crew was three strong that day, one more than usual, and it was flat calm with slack water on a high tide.

The Matesaver was quickly rigged from the special davit on the cutter's top deck. Boathooks at the ready and lifejackets donned the crew had practised this so many times it was easy. The casualty, a woman of some 12 stones, was secured with a boathook and the Matesaver strap quickly passed around the torso and under the arms. It worked well. The strap was hooked onto the davit and the weight taken. As the unconscious casualty rose inches from the water so the body weight caused the arms to rise and the body snaked out of the loop. A second and third time the Matesaver loop was easily positioned but the body was like jelly, clothed in a coat, and with the height of the davit and the cutter's freeboard, the crew were helpless as yet again the casualty slipped through the loop.

The Alexandra tug *Sun Kent*, a properly certificated pilot boat tug, used at the Oil Refineries in the Thames to ship and land berthing pilots, had watched it all. The tugmaster, Brian Bacon, knew he had the latest thing, the Jason's Ladder, and agreed with the Pilot Cutter skipper to take over the recovery. The Jason's Ladder was quickly rigged, the inboard side made fast to the bulwarks, the outboard side was attached to a block and tackle. The tug had a half-metre rubbing band and a high freeboard but with five in the crew the master was confident. The casualty was brought to the Ladder by boathook and the body guided into the bight formed by lifting on the special davit provided.

The body was positioned in the Jason's Ladder but when lifting commenced and the body rolled it slipped out of the Ladder bight. Again the casualty was secured, again the body slipped out of the Ladder when rolling occurred. In desperation the Mate of the tug jumped on the outside edge of the Jason's Ladder, feet in it's mesh, and physically held the casualty in place whilst he was lifted on the Ladder and the body rolled inboard.

Both Pilot Cutter and Tug crews expressed their frustration and anger that in broad daylight with perfect conditions they were unable to effect a swifter rescue

using all the latest technology at their command. Keith Lock, the Pilot Cutter skipper, believes an unconscious pilot in a self-inflated SEASAFE JACKET would stand little more chance in the Matesaver device, but with such a situation he would use a block and tackle and hook onto the "D" ring of the Jacket to raise the pilot from the water. He was not surprised that the unconscious human body behaved in no way the same as the dummy with which the crews practise. Brian Bacon, the Tugmaster, believes the narrow 2 ft width of the Jason's Ladder actually squeezes and shuffles the body out of the rolling ladder, a wider ladder could be better. He was conscious that in bad weather or in a tideway his Mate, perched precariously on the moving Ladder mesh could himself slip and who would rescue him in the circumstances. Asked if a pilot in a SEASAFE JACKET would fare better he gave an emphatic "No". What would he do? Like Keith Lock, he would use a boathook and attach a line to the Jacket's "D" ring – and heave. Both men would rig overside ladders immediately.

The Pilot Cutter and the tug had rounded sterns and high freeboards, and the tug a rubbing band which made things difficult. Unfortunately pilots cannot arrange to fall overboard when more conventional, low freeboard, easier to operate craft are to hand. The illustration of the Jason's Ladder in our October issue of the Pilot is not the way it is usually rigged, you do not go "fishing" with it, one side is made fast to the rescue craft. Note Gareth Rees' words "recovery – when the person immersed is conscious and able to assist his rescuers."

The lessons learned from this tragedy are many, the most important being; **ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEASAFE JACKET PROPERLY BUCKLED WITH THE WAIST-BAND TIGHTENED.** That way an expert local seaman with a boathook and line will stand a better chance of reaching you.

The questions this experience poses are also many, the most important being; what happens in a two-man crewed pilot boat? Worse, what happens if the crew man falls overboard? I don't know the answer. Who does? Does it lie in a Matesaver or a Jason's Ladder? Or does it lie in an old-fashioned net?

The casualty in this report, contrary to the way it may read, was recovered quickly with medical support to hand, but she died. Her rescuers did everything they could.

**PILOTS, PLEASE, TAKE NO CHANCES – THINK SAFETY!**

## PENSION NEWS

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

### PENSIONS LEGISLATION: Pension Law Review

In June 1992, the Secretary of State for Social Security set up a Pension Law Review Committee to review the framework of law and regulation within which occupational pension schemes operate, taking into account the rights and interests of scheme members, pensioners and employers; to consider in particular the status and ownership of occupational pension funds and the accountability and roles of trustees, fund managers, auditors and pension scheme advisers; and to make recommendations.

The Secretary of State asked the Committee to report by mid 1993. In September 1992, the Committee issued a Consultation Document on the law and regulation of occupational pension schemes. The Document included background to the current pensions system and set out the issues on which the Committee was seeking views from individuals and organisations. The issues were far ranging, including pension rights and expectations, ownership of funds, rights on divorce, distribution of powers and responsibilities, trust law, investments and custodians, and the desirability of a compensation scheme.

In addition, the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) produced a discussion paper in November containing proposals for a compensation scheme. To date, (early December 1992), the NAPF's proposals that compensation should be payable, irrespective of the reason for the benefit shortfall, have received mixed responses. The NAPF had however suggested that certain requirements would be necessary to limit the burden on well-funded and well-administered schemes.

The PNPf intends to respond to the Consultation Document and to highlight some of the Fund's practices. In the majority of final salary schemes, an employee makes a set contribution (commonly 5%-6% of pensionable salary) and the employer pays the balance necessary to fund the promised benefits. There is a limit to the amount that an employee may contribute of 15%, inclusive of any additional voluntary contributions. There is however no limit on the employer's contribution, subject to the rate being of reasonable amount in relation to the promised benefits.

When periodic actuarial valuations disclose a surplus, the employee's rate of contribution is rarely reduced but the



employer's rate often is reduced or even suspended, resulting in a 'contribution holiday'. Conversely, if a deficiency is disclosed, the employer is required to increase his rate of contribution but the employee's rate generally remains the same.

However in the PNPF, employed pilots and their employers pay contributions in accordance with an agreed ratio, of 1 to 1.5. Therefore both 'sides' could benefit from a surplus or would suffer from a deficiency as far as contributions are concerned.

Since early 1988, when PNPF Trust Company Limited was established, the board of trustees has included equal numbers of representatives from the pilots' and the ports' organisations. The Chairmanship changes every three years, passing alternately between a port and a pilot trustee. The Chairman does not have an additional or casting vote. All decisions and resolutions require the majority of votes of all trustees present at the meeting, where the quorum is four trustees, two each representing the ports' and pilots' organisations.

Whilst the PNPF's trustee structure is not unique, it is not yet particularly usual to see equal representation from both 'sides', although in our experience, the composition has worked well and it might be a suitable standard for some other pension schemes.

### Disclosure of Information, (Amended Regulations)

In the autumn of 1992, the Department of Social Security amended the regulations for disclosure of information on pension schemes. These included advising all members of the functions of the Occupational Pensions Advisory Service and the Pensions Ombudsman together with their addresses, and also whether information about the scheme had been given to the Registrar of Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes. You should have received these details from us December.

In addition, we shall show the history of pension increases over the last 10 years in future annual reports. We are also required to advise members if their contributions are not received from their employers within three months of deduction.

The Department of Social Security has also introduced certain specific time limits on the availability of information and we hope that this will speed up response times to our requests for transfer value details from some schemes.

### UKPA(M) Conference 1992

Deborah Marten and I were very kindly invited to attend Conference on 25th November when pensions were the main

topic of debate. It was extremely interesting to hear the various views expressed on a number of topics (as mentioned in the Conference Report). The Executive Committee spoke in response to the fears and concerns expressed by pilots following the distribution of a circular from the UKPA(M) about, *inter alia*, the change in the investment policy/asset allocation of the Fund's investments.

The circular had been sent to inform and advise pilots and for their interest but its effect had been rather more wide ranging! However the Conference Report in this magazine covers the issues as you will, no doubt, now read.

### Pension Benefits

I understand that a number of pilots have expressed an interest in hearing the way in which we calculate benefits upon retirement or death. I shall therefore include one example each quarter of how our fingers tot up the figures in various circumstances, e.g. early retirement, death in service. I shall start with the obvious, but not necessarily most common, type of retirement benefit, the one payable if you manage to hang on in there until normal retirement age.

**Let us look at Sandy Banks' pension benefits and options available upon his retirement on his 65th birthday, 31st January 1993.**

Sandy became a licensed pilot in 1959 and joined the PNPF upon inception on 1st April 1971. He is a Special Member of the Fund as he was originally licensed by Trinity House, (his Participating Body as at 30th September 1988), prior to April 1971. He has a period of pre-membership service (PMS) of 57 months, in lieu of licensed service in the Trinity House Benefit Fund before April 1971. The service is increased by 0.5% for every month of pensionable service worked after age 60, up to age 65, in Sandy's case 60 months at 0.5% = 30%. In 1987, Sandy was awarded topping-up credit equal to 9 months at age 65, and in 1989, as a Special Member, he received a past service credit of 60 months in place of the 'double 60ths'.

So we now need to calculate Sandy's, total pensionable service:-

	Months
1) Pre-membership service of 57 months increased by 30%	74.10
2) Service from 1/4/1971 to 31/1/1993 plus 60 months	322.00
3) Topping-up credit	9.00
<b>Total pensionable service</b>	<b>405.10</b>

The accrual rate is 1/60th for each year of

service. As we base calculations on completed months service we convert 60ths per annum to 720ths per month. Thus Sandy's pensionable service amounted to  $405.10 \div 720 \times \text{Final Pensionable Earnings (FPE)}$ . FPE are an average of the best three consecutive years' earnings out of the last ten before retirement, ending on either 30th June or 31st January 1993. His FPE covered the three years to 31st December 1992. The figure was £32,000. Therefore, Sandy's total entitlement is  $405.10 \div 720 \times £32,000 = £18,004.44 \text{ p.a.}$

Sandy can exchange, i.e. commute part of his entitlement for a tax free cash sum. As his pensionable service exceeded 20 years, he may take up to 1.5 x FPE, being £48,000.

However Sandy joined the Additional Voluntary Contribution Scheme (AVCS) in 1982 and his investments have produced a capital sum of £28,000. This cannot be taken in addition to the £48,000 and we therefore reduce the maximum amount of tax free cash sum available from the Fund to £20,000, so that in total he receives £48,000.

As Sandy decided to take the maximum take free cash sum available, he had to give up part of his entitlement, at the rate of £1 of pension for every £10 of cash. His residual pension was therefore reduced by £2,000 to £16,004.44 p.a.

In summary, Sandy's benefits upon retirement were as follows:-

- 1) Tax free cash sum from the fund £ 20,000.00
- Tax free cash sum from AVCS investments £ 28,000.00
- PLUS
- 2) An annual pension of £ 16,004.44
- 3) A widow's pension, payable in the event of Sandy's death after retirement of (half his original entitlement) £ 9,002.22

The widow's pension is always 50% of total entitlement and is not affected by any decision to commute; however if Sandy's wife had been more than 10 years younger, then the widow's pension would have been reduced by 2% for each year (or part year) that the difference in ages exceeds 10.

Sandy could also have bought additional pension for his wife, by giving up part of his entitlement. The cost would have depended upon their individual ages, but if Mrs Banks had been exactly 63 years old, Sandy could have bought additional widow's pension of £2.72 for every £1 of his own pension foregone.

Both Sandy's pension and his wife's prospective widow's pension will increase each year by at least 3% starting on 1st January 1994.

### Investing Capital Sums

Sandy received a total of £48,000 cash upon retirement and he could have used this in any number of ways. For example he could have bought a Purchased Life Annuity to provide additional income during retirement. These annuities are more popular in times of high interest rates, but one particular advantage is that part of the income payable (monthly, quarterly, annually at the purchaser's choice) is deemed to be a return of capital and is therefore free of income tax.

There are, of course, many types of investments, income bonds, Personal Equity Plans, etc where you would retain the capital in some way but, under the Financial Services Act 1986, we are not permitted to give financial advice. When large sums of capital are received it is often wise to seek the advice of an independent financial adviser. You will be required to pay a fee but it is very often reduced or even eliminated, by any commission received by the financial adviser if you follow his advice. A financial adviser is obliged to give best advice, taking into account his client's circumstances and requirements. Personal recommendation from family and friends is often the best way to find a good and reliable adviser, or we can provide some further information if you contact us.

I hope these details help to clarify some of the mysteries and next quarter I shall show an example of an ill health retirement pension for a pilot whose pensionable service has been reduced because of leave of absence.

Jan Lemon

### DAS Legal Expenses Insurance

Policy no. TT2 3009513

We have been reviewing the procedure for making claims on our policy.

Pilots who wish to make a claim on this policy should contact UKPA(M) by phone and request a claim form.

This form should be returned to UKPA(M), where we will record the claim and send the form on to the broker and thus DAS for processing.

This procedure will allow the UKPA(M) to properly monitor the use of this policy, and identify any areas that may need attention.

## OBITUARIES

### Arthur Lindsay Stuart Kestin

Arthur Kestin was born on 26th. August 1922 in the Dufferin Military Hospital Rangoon. His birth certificate is signed by his father who was the Commanding Officer of the Garrison.

Arthur went to sea in 1940 and completed his apprenticeship in September 1944, his last ship as an apprentice being the *Romney*. On obtaining his 2nd Mates Certificate he served in the *Kaimata* and the *Empire Trinidad*, he then tried tankers and served in the *Regent Panther*. On obtaining his 1st Mates Certificate he joined Euxine Shipping Co. and served in the *Helka* and *Hemdrik* obtaining his Masters Certificate during his time during his time with Euxine Shipping. He was licensed as a Trinity House River Pilot on 5th. July 1955 and retired on 26th. August 1987.

Arthur died in hospital on the 10th. September 1992 after a short illness. A church service, held at St. John's Church, Meopham, Kent on the 17th. September, was attended by many of his friends including former colleagues. He leaves a widow, Rosemary, resident in Meopham to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.



### Albert Lennard Shepherd

Albert Lennard Shepherd, a retired Manchester Pilot, known to most as Len, died on the 14th. September 1992 at the age of 80 years. Len served his time in Manchester Liners, finishing his apprenticeship in 1932, when he applied to join the Manchester Pilotage Service as a Helmsman. He subsequently joined the Helmsmen in 1936 and steered for fourteen years until 1950 when he became a 2nd. Class Pilot. He was promoted to 1st. Class in 1953. In 1956 he became appropriated to Lykes Lines and remained their Pilot until 1968, when the Lykes Line appropriation ceased. He retired from the Service in 1977 at the age of 65 years.

### James Athur Ramsay

Born in Edinburgh on September 23rd. 1939, Jim Ramsay was indentured as an apprentice with Furness Withy & Co. in January 1957. He served continuously with that company until being appointed as a Forth Pilot in 1976.

Jim did not enjoy good health and took early retirement in 1989. He died suddenly on September 11th. 1992 and is survived by his wife, Heather, and his two sons, Steven and Alexander. He will be sadly missed by his family, friends and colleagues.

### Pensioners Deceased September to November 1992

RV Coombes	Liverpool Retired 1988
D Hunter	London Retired 1982
J Jarman	London Retired 1984
JC Johnston	Belfast Retired 1976
ALS Kestin	London Retired 1987
JJV Marks	London Retired 1984
O Olsen	Blyth Retired 1984
JA Ramsay	Forth Retired 1987
AL Shepherd	Manchester Retired 1977



# The Annual Conference of the United Kingdom Pilots Association (Marine)

The Copthorne Tara Hotel, London. 25th and 26th November 1992.

## ITEMS 1. & 2.

The Chairman, Paul Hames, welcomed all those present and declared the Conference open. The Minutes of the 1991 Conference as published in issue No.228 of *The Pilot* were approved.

## ITEM 3. The Chairman's Annual Report

The Report having previously been distributed was not read. The Chairman spoke to his Report referring to the amount of legal advice which had been sought in the last 12 months. Arbitration had been necessary in Aberdeen, Liverpool and the Clyde. The arbitration agreement at Aberdeen had not yet been implemented and the Clyde had an ongoing problem. He believed that the end of the fourth year since the 1988 implementation of the Pilotage Act could herald the beginning of several legal battles with CHAs who were trying to vary their original agreements. Legal advice already received had been, and would be, distributed to any Station faced with such problems. Although expensive, legal advice was absolutely necessary to ensure the UKPA(M) could effectively support all pilots under attack, both employed and self-employed.

The Chairman also highlighted the controversy surrounding the Hayes Report on River Safety. Local committees were to be set up to report to District Committees which in turn would report to a National Committee. Eight District Committees were set up and pilots had only been asked to sit on one, for the East Coast of Scotland. Although local Senior Surveyors had a wide remit to those who could be deemed to be a prime mover in the promotion of safety in our rivers, pilots had been actively excluded by Government suggestion from the District Committees.

The Chairman reported the demise of the British Ports Federation from the 9th December 1992, which had gone into liquidation. An Association of Competent Harbour Authorities was being set up to represent the Ports on the Pilots National Pension Fund. Before agreeing to any such forum being a true representation of Ports as required by the PNPF Rules, the Section Committee would study the new Association's constitution.

## ITEM 4. Debate on the Chairman's Report

Marshman, Medway, asked the Chairman to expand on a CHA varying or cancelling its Pilotage Directions with reference to the very real effect such action could have on a pilot's livelihood. The Chairman

explained their barrister's legal advice had shown it to be very difficult to stop any CHA changing their Pilotage Directions except where clear evidence was available that such action was causing a safety problem. Records could be kept in any District affected to show a worsening scenario, although any Judicial Review had to be requested within 3 months of the challenged action, and was costly. Some pilots had their Port's Pilotage Directions spelled out in their Contracts of Employment, such pilots had a stronger case. Some ports went as far as to offer port passages without a pilot for whatever reason, effectively suspending their own Pilotage Directions at will. Government, when appraised of such action, deemed it not to be their problem under the 1987 Pilotage Act.

Herbert, Holyhead, a single pilot port, had a responsibility for pilotage written into his contract which made him liable if any ship elected not to use him as a pilot, the other end of the spectrum.

Marshman, Medway, asked if the UKPA(M) could devise national guidelines on the proper numbers and working hours required in any port. This would help younger pilots in future negotiations. The Chairman thought this well-nigh impossible under the new era since 1988. Each port was different, some using hours, some pilot numbers, and some both. As self-employed ports differed from employed ports any guidelines would surely have to remain a local matter.

## ITEM 5. Resolutions

### (i) from the Section Committee

*"That this Conference instructs the Section Committee to instigate investigations with a view to achieving overall control of the PNPF"*

Because of the intense interest engendered by the Chairman's letter to all serving PNPF pilots of the 5th October 1992, entitled "The Pension Fund and its Future" long discussion took place on the present and future state of the PNPF.

The Chairman apologised if his 5th October letter had frightened some pilots rather than enlightening them but he believed the interest caused was good for the debate. The Section Committee had deemed it prudent to tell the Fund's Actuary of the declining number in the Fund and the inability of newly employed pilots to join the Fund. Pilot numbers would continue to decline to a level between 690 and a possible low of 500 in 10 years. In response the Actuary had written a paper

on the Fund being a "Mature Fund". It was apparent that to the layman a mature fund was one which had sufficient funds to pay all the participating pilots and dependants a pension until the last survivor breathed their last and somebody turned the lights out! In actuarial terms this is not so.

An actuarial "Mature Fund" is one where the ratio of pensioners to pilots is high and will obviously get higher. It did not mean that the Fund was under threat or that there were insufficient funds to offset the liabilities. It did mean that a prudent fund would look to its investment policy to ensure that no risks were taken, to consider the volatility of the Fund. At present, in general terms, the investments are distributed 70% in shares and 30% in Bonds. The Actuary's advice was to invest 60% in shares and 40% in Bonds. This policy may not be as dynamic as before but ensures a steadier return on investments. Such investment decisions are a normal part of the ongoing business of running any pension fund. It was agreed that the change of investment would probably mean smaller surpluses, if any, in the years after 1993. It would take 5 years for the investments to be realigned.

Vowles, Bristol, wanted to know why in 1990 our Actuary, Messrs Watsons, had declared the Fund's investment policy to be sound, knowing at the time a difficult recessionary period was at hand, yet now a significant change had to be made. The Chairman explained that the Actuary had not been made aware in 1990 that the serving pilot numbers could drop by a third in 10 years. This, coupled with the fact that CHAs with employed pilots were certainly not committed to the long term survival of the PNPF, had persuaded our pension representatives to follow the actuary's advice.

Several pilots declared themselves anxious that any hope of their retiring early, or at the projected age of 60 now looked unlikely. The Section Committee pension representatives, Messrs Hames, Topp and Frith, supported by John Connelly of the TGWU, sincerely believed it was in all PNPF pilots' best interests to follow our actuary's advice in order to stop any reduction in a port's contribution and for the Fund's long term viability to protect pensioners.

Returning to the tabled Resolution the Chairman declared the suggestion was to make pilots consider the long term administration of the PNPF. Although the pilots had managed to get the lion's share of the surplus in 1990, money was still outstanding for an additional pensioners

increase for 1991 from 3% to 4%. Although it was agreed in 1988 that the ports would support the continuance of the PNPF it was increasingly obvious that such support was waning. New entry employed pilots were not encouraged to join the Fund, the BPF had gone into liquidation, and its successor, the Association of CHAs was an unknown entity. All pilots agreed that the independence of the PNPF was vital, the PNPF was the last bastion of a pilot's national profile, the ports would dearly love to see this founder. Although there was no move afoot to remove the ports from the Trusteeship of the PNPF it was equally arguable that they no longer merited an equal presence on the Board. With this in mind the pilots would do well to investigate the possibility of gaining overall control of the Fund. The investigation would review all ways of progressing this, from pilot chairmanship of the Fund to the appointment of an independent Trustee. No action would be taken until the membership had been consulted. The results of the Section Committee's deliberations, should the Resolution be carried, will be an item on the Agenda for the 1993 Conference.

Discussion took place from the floor, the SE Wales pilots had unhappy memories of pilots running their old pension fund and the subsequent lost pension years. In summing up both the Proposer and the Seconder stressed the port's lack of commitment to the PNPF, both today and more especially in the future. An amendment to alter "overall control" to "control" was defeated. The original Resolution stood.

*Voting: For 44; Against Nil; Abstain 11.  
The Resolution was carried.*

### (ii) Resolution 2

*"That this Conference supports the view that all pilots at retirement should achieve at least a year's pension for each year served."*

Proposer: D Devey, Liverpool. Seconder: T Crowe, Liverpool

The proposer gave an example of a Liverpool pilot who on retirement with 42 years service would be unable to achieve a full pension. Owing to the past structure of the various Pilot Pension schemes this pilot would only be credited with 6 years and 2 months credits for a service period of 19 years and 8 months. The 13 years and 6 months lost would show a shortfall in his pension of some £1800 p.a. It was suggested that this was an iniquitous situation after such long service.

Whilst a degree of sympathy was shown from the floor it was realised that the only means of progressing such a Resolution was to use any Fund surplus to increase an affected pilot's pension. In effect only one group of pilots, those licensed before 1972, would be the surplus beneficiaries. It was not thought fair that only one section of

pilots should benefit from any future Fund surpluses, all pilots should be considered. It was pointed out that a Resolution had been passed in 1991 calling for exactly the same outcome. The Chairman referred to the art of the possible in any negotiations and that in his view and in the view of the vast majority of interested pilots, a decrease in the Fund's Denominator, thus allowing all pilots to retire earlier, would be better addressed.

*Voting: For 9; Against 33; Abstain 12.  
The Resolution was defeated.*

### (iii) Resolution 3

*"That the Trustees of the Pilots National Pension Fund publish the criteria by which they determine the grant of ill-health pensions."*

Proposer: S Ledger, Spurn Pilots. Seconder: M Barrett, Spurn Pilots.

The Proposer quoted the case of a pilot who failed a medical in his port and was sent to a PNPF specialist with an ear problem. In effect the pilot was suffering from severe depression. Apparently no one consulted the pilot on this problem, nor consulted the local Station's committee chairman. There was no way in which a pilot could ascertain whether his ill-health would qualify him for early retirement on pension or whether in fact he could be summarily de-authorised by his CHA having failed their medical on a severely reduced standard pension. The Proposer believed some guidelines on the criteria could be issued to enable all pilots to know if the PNPF would grant an early retirement pension. It was suggested that MN 1331, the Merchant Service medical standard would be a suitable ill-health standard for pilots which the Fund Trustees could always apply. As pilots are bound to have port medicals to work then such medicals should entitle a sick pilot to a full pension if he fails one.

The pilot PNPF Trustees, Messrs Hames, Topp and Frith took great pains to explain the very nature of the duties of any Fund Trustee, that their reason for being was to protect the Fund from abuse, to arrive at fair decisions in all considerations and to run the Fund efficiently. There were no ill-health criteria for Trustees to strictly follow, that each medical case was fully investigated by the Fund's medical occupational consultant, that any decision taken was fair and the reasoning not divulged. Under the Rules for Trustees what the Resolution demanded could not be provided. Trustees had to use their judgement, and in practice no genuinely ill pilot had ever been refused an ill-health PNPF pension. Pilots were reminded that our previous permanent ill-health scheme had collapsed under the strain of tenuous ill-health claims. The Trustees would not allow this to happen to the PNPF and were protecting every pilot's right to a stable medical retirement if necessary.

*Voting: For 6; Against 35; Abstain 11.  
The Resolution was defeated.*

## ITEM 6. Pensions

### a) PNPF Report

H Frith, PNPF Trustee, spoke to his tabled Report. He explained that by request papers on the investments in Gilts and the result of the Portsmouth litigation had been included. The new investment policy review included two reports from our investment firms Bailey Gifford and MAMS. He was pleased to report that having studied a review of Pension Fund management practices, in part instigated by the infamous Maxwell affair, it was found that the PNPF conducted its business in line with modern management.

All questions from the floor revolved around the use of the expected 1993 surplus, if any, being used for the reduction in the pilot's retirement age. The Chairman's aim was to ensure every retiring pilot achieved a 40/60ths pension regardless of age, enabling a pilot to choose when to retire after 25 years service. This would benefit all pilots, those who were in the scheme before 1972 and those subsequent.

### (b) National Negotiating Forum Report

P Hames, Section Committee, pointed out that with the British Ports Federation going into liquidation on the 9th December the UKPA(M) had no one to talk to for negotiating future pension strategy. The new Association of CHAs had recruited 28 port members to his knowledge. A meeting of the Forum had been requested for January 1993. An increase of 3.6% for pensioners had been accepted in 1991 but an outstanding 0.9% was still to be agreed. The Forum would be asked to establish the guidelines for an ongoing Early Retirement Scheme for which a £1/2 million had been set aside.

In answer to questions from the floor it was explained that although the same pilots attended the Forum as were the PNPF pilot Trustees, at the Forum they represented the UKPA(M) Section Committee, not the PNPF Trustees. The Forum was the place where ports and pilots agreed, or otherwise, just what they would request the PNPF to progress by way of pension increases, early retirement etc.

### c) PNCP Report

M Kitchen, PNCP Secretary, spoke to his tabled Report of the two meetings the Committee had held in 1992. Mark Hambley, Medway, had been elected to the Committee as the pilot representative for those pilots not in the PNPF but in port pension funds. The role of this pilot representative would obviously increase as time went on and more new pilots entered service. Perhaps in time the PNPF would be a self-employed pilots Fund as



the present employed pilots retired. Discussion took place concerning any redundancy terms for both employed and self-employed pilots in relation to any early retirement scheme. It was agreed that each pilot's case would be reviewed individually.

The Chairman thanked Messrs Vowles and Kitchen for the good work the PNCP did on behalf of all pilots.

#### ITEM 7. "The Pilot"

The Editor, J Godden, thanked all those pilots who had participated in the writing and production of another successful year. He urged those pilot Stations who had not volunteered to submit a Port Profile to contact him with a view to contributing. The Editor explained that the Profile was not political, was interesting to the participating pilots and was eagerly awaited by the recipients. He was especially interested in Liverpool, Manchester, Great Yarmouth, Aberdeen and SE Wales. In future issues the Pension News column would be expanded to run estimates of fictitious pilots' expected pensions at varying ages.

In 1993 a concerted effort would be made to sell more magazines to our colleagues in Europe and in IMPA. Advertising was a bargain, and the Discount Travel concession with Hover-speed Seacat was extended for the whole of 1993. Local Secretaries were urged to let the Editor know of retirements and recruitment in their Districts. This was the only way the magazine could be expanded and the costs kept down.

#### ITEM 8. Secretary/Treasurers Report

As Secretary of the UKPA(M) J Burn spoke on tabled paper 5 concerning a proposed UKPA(M) Rule change. A new Rule 13 was proposed which although allowing any Ordinary Member not on the Section Committee to be nominated to serve or represent the Association, should this representation involve taking an Executive position then the pilot nominated had to be a present member of the Section Committee, who, should he subsequently resign from the Section Committee would resign from such an Executive position forthwith.

On inquiry this change of rule stemmed from the fact that a former Section Committee member had resigned from the Section Committee in 1991 yet retained his place as Vice-President of IMPA. Although it seemed he had continued to discharge his duties at IMPA in an exemplary manner it was felt that such an Executive post should be afforded to Section Committee members only, to enable the Committee to keep a careful eye on all things pilotage internationally, not least the cost.

*Voting on the rule change was:  
For 50; Against 9; Abstain 13.*

As Treasurer J. Burn explained, due to the accounting procedure change in 1992 the accounts were to run for 18 months from July 1991 until December 1992. These accounts would be audited as soon as practicable and despatched to all Stations in January 1993.

The Treasurer went on to explain that costs had risen quite dramatically during the last 12 months. Our insurances, both DAS and the Navigators and General were up by 47% and 12.5% respectively. Our legal costs had escalated due to the pressure the ports were exerting in various Districts on cutting pilot numbers and altering their contracts. Section Committee expenses had not increased in 3 years. In spite of this, with the pound's devaluation adversely affecting the EMPA and IMPA subscription rates, and the forecasted reducing number of pilot members of the UKPA(M) an increase in subscription of £4.90 per quarter was required.

Many points were raised in debate on the increase. The need for the DAS insurance was queried, which would be investigated, the urgent need to contain costs for our international organisations was stressed, which our Chairman was hotly pursuing, and a need to consider the whole structure of the UKPA(M) in the light of the known falling numbers was urged.

Other pilots stressed the need to consider our international affiliations as a necessary insurance and safeguard against the many maritime forces internationally and nationally ranged against us, and the small price any pilot had to pay to belong to his professional organisation and be properly and expertly represented.

Voting on the increase in Subscription was by an overwhelming majority, only 2 votes being not in favour.

Finally M Marsh, Haven Ports and Section Committee, was commended for the splendid job he had made of the UKPA(M) introductory booklet soon to be sent to all pilots both serving and newly recruited.

#### ITEM 9. Insurances

The benefits under our insurances had been increased. A pilot's Loss of Authority Insurance had been increased to £30,000 and his Legal Defence Insurance to £35,000. This for a *per capita* sum of £18. Details of these insurances will be included in the new UKPA(M) booklet, mentioned above and shortly to be received.

#### ITEM 10.

##### (i) International Maritime Pilots Association

N McKinney spoke to his tabled Report concerning the years work at IMPA. He noted the success of the meeting in Madrid the result of which had the effect of our receiving much more maritime information. The subject of pilot boarding and landing arrangements on high sided ships and the subject of VTS. were of

paramount importance. The thorny subject of cost was vigorously debated, the need to contain it being universally agreed.

Michel Pouliot, a fellow Canadian pilot and the President of IMPA, was attending our Conference for the day. The Chairman prevailed on M. Pouliot to expand on the subject of IMPA. In an excellent appraisal he highlighted the problem that IMPA was a victim of its own success. Now internationally recognised IMPA input was required in more and more fields. VTS representation was vital, especially at a time when shipowners, ports and governments were generously funding any forum for the deregulation of pilotage. Whilst agreeing that the UKPA(M) were giving him a hard time requiring a paring of costs he believed each and every UK pilot needed his compatriot overseas, as they needed him; that despite the recession the opportunity to stick together should not be lightly discarded.

The next IMPA Conference will take place in Vancouver in September 1994, with the Canadian pilots contributing over £125,000 to the cost.

The Chairman thanked M. Pouliot for his valuable contribution to our Conference.

A Boddy, PLA and IMPA Vice-president expended on his work at IMO on behalf of IMPA with working groups examining new port channels, pilot hoists and the seriously inadequate ship's bridge construction in some new building. The Secretary General of IMO had accepted Honorary membership of IMPA, an indication of IMPA's growing importance.

##### (ii) European Maritime Pilots Association

G Topp, Vice-chairman of the Section Committee, expanded on his tabled Report. Owing to welcome additional membership the EMPA Executive was to be increased by one in 1993. Membership of EMPA was in a transitional stage, changing due to the emergence of the new Europe. The Baltic States were now separate entities and enquiries had been made by Ukraine, Georgia, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia. Russian pilots could even have a problem of opposition as some self-styled pilots were setting up against the established pilots.

The technical side of EMPA had been greatly assisted during the year by Mike Irving and the UKPA(M) Technical Committee's work. The President's Task Group, of which P Hames is a member, had met several times to discuss working and policy documents on Shore Based Pilotage and the pilot's view of VTS. A visit had been made to the EC Transport Directorate in Brussels as a result of which EMPA pilots had been requested to join working groups and seminars allied to matters maritime and specifically matters VTS and maritime safety.

The next EMPA conference will be held in Copenhagen in May 1993, all pilots

being invited to attend. As with IMPA, stress was placed on the ongoing need to belong to our international organisations in view of the biased anti-pilot ideas presently being expounded in Europe.

Lord Stanley Clinton-Davis, our President attending his first Annual Conference, was invited to speak. He reminded pilots of his unique knowledge of pilots and pilotage due to his time as Secretary of State for Transport in the Labour Government of 1974-79, during which the 1979 Pilotage Act was passed. Subsequently, as an ex-EC Commissioner for Transport and the Environment, he will be able to play a part in furthering our European cause having the ear of the present Commissioner, who does not perhaps have experience in things pilotage. It should open doors which would otherwise remain shut.

Lord Clinton-Davis was also endeavouring to help in the case of the Hayes Report on River Safety. He was amazed at Lord Caithness's reply to the letter from Sir Malcolm Thornton and was astonished to find the Government believe pilots are not directly responsible for port safety, especially as Port State Control relies exclusively on pilot participation. He would consider raising the issue in the House of Lords and consult J Prescott to do likewise in the Commons.

The Chairman extended Lord Clinton-Davis a vote of thanks for his help as our President.

Questions on the EMPA Report mainly revolved around tests for Drug and Alcohol abuse. Several ports were reported as carrying out, or considering, random testing for alcohol levels, some with future bye-laws to cover it. The Chairman stressed strongly that until all ports had published national guidelines for a legal alcohol limit pilots submitting to breath tests were entering a legal minefield. The subject would be high (*sic*) on the agenda for the next Section Committee meeting and with the CHAs meeting in January 1993. No sensible pilot would oppose such tests, but all sensible pilots would recognise the need for a common standard before participating. Pilots in a port's VTS system will be reported more fully under Item 14.

##### (iii) International Transport Workers Federation (ITF)

M Leney, Section Committee highlighted the new proposals for one man bridge operations (OMBO – can you believe it!) These proposals advocate only one bridge man on duty provided that at night the Master can be on the bridge in "one minute"! This regrettable decline in standards was being fought at IMO through the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) which was part of the ITF. The question of the late arrival of committee papers for UKSON would be addressed.

#### ITEM 11. Deep Sea Pilotage

G Topp, UKPA(M) Vice-chairman, reported that some 27 Europilots out of a total of 54 pilots were members of the UKPA(M). Only three Port Authorities now issued Deep Sea Pilotage Certificates, yet certain uncertificated pilots were still plying for hire. A North Sea Pilots Association had been set up with the Dutch and French to co-ordinate policies within EMPA and in the EC. It was hoped to interest the German and Belgian pilots although it was reported that over 300 German District pilots may soon ask for a Deep Sea qualification. The Euro-pilot representative present, PK Grey, welcomed the work done on their behalf by the UKPA(M) but said escalating costs made it difficult to persuade all pilots to join.

#### ITEM 12. Technical Committee Report

Mike Irving, our redoubtable Committee Chairman from the Tees, spoke of another rewarding years work by himself and his excellent Committee. He was the link man technically between the UKPA(M) and IMPA and EMPA. As the Technical Committee achieved its aims it was becoming better known and more frequently consulted. The Code of Practice for the Boarding and Landing of Pilots was now in being, the ports having virtually agreed the wording from the UKPA(M). Further training had taken place in the retrieval of casualties. The Code of Practice for the Carriage of Chemical and Noxious Cargo Carriers was now with the Section Committee in draft form for perusal and the booklet on First Aid for chemical cargo accidents was printed and could be obtained in the New Year.

Seasafe coats were now made of a better, more waterproof material. They had passed all their inflation tests with flying colours, well in excess of the bursting limits allowed for. Various flotation and immersion suits had been tested and a personal locator alarm was under test in the Tees on a Seasafe jacket.

The Technical Committee's video on Pilot Boats was on show during the Conference. This should be available to all in the New Year, details from our Head Office in due course. This excellent video had been sponsored by some 6 or 7 manufacturers, including the ever popular Seasafe Allweather Wear Ltd.

#### ITEM 13. Reports from Districts

Reports had been received from Belfast, Falmouth, Forth, Fowey, Harwich, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Milford Haven, Southampton and Tees and Hartlepool. In addition verbal reports were given by the Medway and the Clyde. These reports will be circulated in due course.

#### ITEM 14. Vessel Traffic Services

G Topp, Vice-chairman of the Section

Committee, emphasised the continuing interest being shown in VTS. Both the VTS Symposium in Vancouver and the Southampton Symposium were hell bent on displacing pilots from the maritime scene. Once again it was of the utmost importance that pilots were represented at any gathering of ports or governments where cost seems to be the overriding factor when considering maritime safety.

The Chairman spoke of the VTS proposals from the EC. He had been to Genoa with the EMPA Presidents Task Group where an IMO working group was busy drawing up VTS guidelines and procedures for future Systems. It talks of a navigational assistance service incorporating shore based pilotage with a CHA being responsible for the safety of navigation in the area. A VTS service should have legal backing including the qualifications of operators depending on the type and level of service. The President's Task Group was at odds with the draft document and will request it be radically altered, especially as regards shore based pilotage being in agreed designated areas only. Things are moving quickly, meetings on shore based pilotage taking place in January/February 1993.

From the floor it was pointed out that Harwich were operating a VTS with unqualified operators, requesting pilot participation without training on the equipment; Southampton wondered if such action was *ultra vires* the 1987 Pilotage Act; whereas the Port of London, with pilots advising in the VTS, were already providing assisted passages in certain circumstances.

The Chairman agreed it was a grey area, one on which the UKPA(M) will keep all informed as things develop.

#### ITEM 15. Pilot Boats

This item had been adequately covered by the Technical Committee Report under Item 12.

#### ITEM 16. Elections

There being no elections subsections a., b., c. and d. were not debated.

Our present Auditors were retained under subsection e.

#### ITEM 17. Annual UKPA(M) Conference 1993

At the invitation of the Spurn Pilots the 1993 Conference will be held in Hull on the 18th and 19th November.

The Conference was closed by the Chairman who thanked the Section Committee and John Connolly of the TGWU for their continued help in difficult times. He also thanked Davina Connor our Secretary for her infinite patience in all the hard work she did for us.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman from the floor was passed *nem con*.



## IMPA

**7th International Symposium  
Vessel Traffic Services  
June 8-12, 1992  
Vancouver, Canada**

*Captain Paul Lopinot's report on the Seventh International VTS Symposium.*

The idea of a World Organisation is developing, with a VTS Centre as a base of a VTS network. To achieve that, procedures common to all nations and coordination between VTS are necessary.

Sharing data gathered by VTS Centres will benefit maritime transport with regards to costs and efficient use of the means.

In coastal waters, maritime traffic regulations must be respected and coordination between Port services improved. The operation of VTS relies on the partnership principle.

IALA-VTS Committee task leaders presented the work performed in their working groups.

Mr Alex Smith (IAPH) mentioned the study on legal aspects of VTS. He referred in particular to the "authority", "competence" (who is doing what) and Civil liability of VTS, depending on the nature of the service provided ie information, advice, instruction or "shore-based pilotage".

This study is carried out, bearing in mind that VTS are designed for active traffic management and not active traffic control.

Capt Kop (Netherlands Administration), Chairman of IALA-VTS Committee reported on the results and proposals of a working group dedicated to a revision of the IMO VTS Guideline.

It is intended to propose new definitions for VTS and services, participation to VTS could become mandatory in certain sensitive areas and "shore-based pilotage" mentioned in the new guidelines.

The proposed definition is not quite clear and the presentation revealed a number ambiguous points.

Aline de Bièvre, Lloyds London Press, expressed concern on mandatory participation of vessels in VTS and put forward the question of VTS liability in case of accident.

This added to the confusion and the role of VTS as mandatory participation to VTS does not mean that the vessel is under active control of the VTS.

Mr Prunieras (Institute of Navigation, France) expects that "competent authority" will be properly defined in the new IMO VTS Guidelines.

This sequence of the symposium could,

have brought clarity but on the contrary, it maintained ambiguity between traffic "management" and "control" and ambiguity on reciprocal responsibilities between VTS and vessels.

For the "Operational panel", I was asked to address an:

"Introductory overview describing how I see the Relationship between the Mariner and VTS".

Therefore, I prepared the following concise note and read it during the session:

What do Mariners expect from VTS?

- relevant and reliable information given in good time, in relation with the navigation of the vessel and the call in Port
- straight forward reporting procedures kept to a minimum
- good coordination of different services which is essential to conduct the vessel to the berth.

For pilots, what is of upmost importance?

- good traffic management according to local traffic regulations but no control from shore through instructions
- traffic monitoring is the responsibility of the VTS
- navigation of the vessel is the responsibility of the Master.

For more extensive considerations, I have addressed the IMPA paper, approved by the profession during our IMPA General Meeting held last April.

In conclusion, this symposium emphasized the evolution of VTS becoming mainly concerned with the protection of the environment. In the near future, VTS will play an important role in maritime traffic and influence the Mariner's behaviour. Coastal and Port VTS will contribute to this change.

In ports and Harbour approaches, the obligation of pilotage will be reinforced because these areas present a high ecological risk.

Before, the proximity of land represented a danger to vessels. Today, vessels represent a danger to the coastal environment.

Prevention of marine accidents will be done from shore and this new approach will give more importance to the pilot's role.

Pilots will have, or already have a role in Port State Control. In the application of navigation procedures and in the ship's reporting systems.

The "freedom of the seas" will have a different meaning and the pilot will lose some tactical independence. But pilotage will remain the best means to ensure the highest degree of safety and it is up to the pilots to have a positive contribution to the running of VTS to enhance maritime traffic safety and the protection of the environment.

*Captain Paul Lopinot  
Senior Vice-President, IMPA*

## NOTICE TO MARINERS

No. 37/92 B11, C14, D5, E5, F5, G12

### CAUTION

#### TRINITY HOUSE VESSELS WRECK MARKING

Consequent upon recent instances where vessels have passed perilously close to Trinity House Vessels engaged in marking newly occurred wrecks, Mariners are advised that:-

1. Trinity House Vessels when engaged in wreck searching or surveying, during which time they may be proceeding at slow speeds on various headings, or marking wrecks prior to laying Buoy(s), exhibit the lights/shapes prescribed under Rule 27(b) of the COLREGS for vessels restricted in their ability to manoeuvre. Additionally when wreck marking Trinity House Vessels will exhibit the lights/shapes prescribed under Rule 27(b) of the COLREGS for a vessel engaged in underwater operations to indicate the side on which the obstruction exists, and the side on which another vessel may pass.
2. Trinity House Vessels when marking new wrecks may also exhibit a RACON. This will be in addition to signals displayed under Rule 27.

The characteristics of the RACON will be as follows:-

Type	: Agile Frequency
	'X' and 'S' Bands
Code	: Morse 'D'
Nominal Range	: 10 miles

3. In addition to the foregoing lights/shapes, when a Trinity House Vessel on wreck marking wishes to draw the urgent attention of an approaching vessel(s) which is standing dangerously close to either the marking vessel or the wreck, the Trinity House Vessel will fire detonating signals and reporting procedures may be put in hand against the offending vessel.

*Mariners should both respect the efforts of the marking vessel and safeguard their own vessel by reducing speed, and by giving the area a wide berth on the clear side of the Trinity House wreck marking vessel.*

#### By Order

*Capt PH King  
Director of Navigational Requirements  
Trinity House, 8th Sept, 1992*

## Retirements

### Tony Robinson, Falmouth

Earlier this year Falmouth pilot Tony Robinson retired on medical grounds after 21 years service to the port. Trained on HMS Conway, his formative years spent with the New Zealand Shipping Co, Tony has a firm belief in the need to strive for the highest possible standards at sea. Tony led the Falmouth pilots in the difficult period of re-organisation in 1988. Unfortunately no reasonable agreement could be reached and arbitration resulted, when pilots were awarded a substantial increase in earnings and provided with a basis to obtain an extra pilot. Four years hence the harbour authorities are now trying to take advantage of Tony's enforced retirement to reduce both the pilot numbers and their income.

The first recipient of the Nautical Institute's Harbour Masters Certificate and author of "Harbour Fendering", Tony still maintains close links with the sea. He is Secretary of The Falmouth Blue Peter League, Trustee of Cornwall's Seamen's Benevolent Fund, Treasurer of Cornwall's branch of the King George's Fund for Sailors, a member of the Honorable Company of Master Mariners and a Fellow and Council member of the Nautical Institute.

Tony's actions, since retirement, include an input into the U.K. P and I Club's report on pilotage, a nautical briefing for Seb Coe (his new MP) and an unsuccessful attempt to retain the BP Terminal in Falmouth. He has recently been engaged by West Marine Surveyors.

I am sure everyone will wish Tony a long and happy retirement, at least his family may see something of him, albeit not in the daytime!

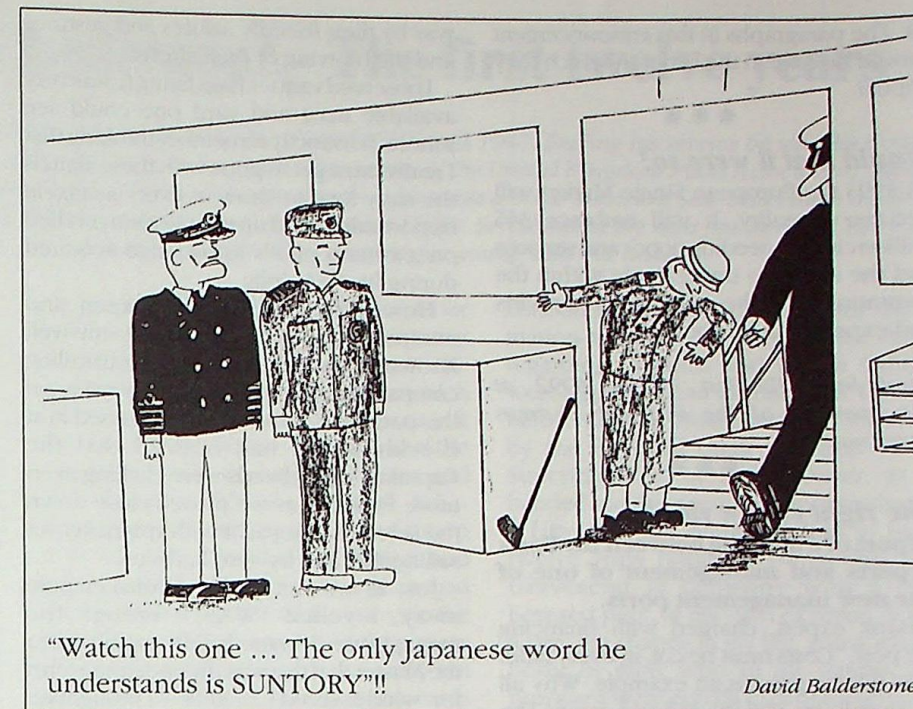
### Retirements from Service September to November 1992

AH Acason	London	October
R Allerston	Humber	October
WE Bell	London	October
GK Booker	SE Wales	November
GE Brown	Humber	November
WG Clarke	Aberdeen	September
PJ Mullett	Humber	August
MS Proud	Humber	October

**The editor would remind all Local Secretaries that only they can let him know of District News.**

### Pilot Boat Certificates

Just a note to remind all pilots to ensure that their Pilot Boats are duly certificated by 2nd October 1992 as per Pilot Boat regulations.



## Coastlines

### Staff Announcement from your new CHA Management Team

1. Following the unprecedented chaos resulting from the previous series of reorganisations – first to product, then to geographical and finally to market-driven structures, it has been decided at the highest level that such changes will in future be implemented only at a frequency which exceeds staff ability to assimilate them.

2. This notice is to advise you of the next re-structuring, which would have taken place three weeks ago but has been delayed by staff interviews for positions within the previous organisation. Applications for posts within this new structure (to be announced next month) must have been received by the Job Economy Manager (to be appointed) at some Head Office location (yet to be determined) one week ago.

3. In keeping with this revolutionary approach to job insecurity the CHA has decided to consolidate responsibility for the generation of all rumours to a single Head Office department. This will ensure that each member of staff is provided with as many conflicting views as possible to the CHA strategy. It will also avoid previous (unconfirmed) reports that several people hear identical rumours with different endings.

4. Performance targets will be established for the organisation as a whole and the key task will be selected on a weekly basis by drawing a single objective from a hat (colour and size to be determined). Eg, the key factor for this week could be – Black 6 7/8.

5. If you have been allocated a post in the revised structure (probably a mistake) you will be approached in the next few weeks by your new manager. He will be a complete stranger to you and will make himself known by the use of a password which, for the sake of confidentiality, is known only to him. (One password that has recently had to be withdrawn is 'bollocks' as too many people have been heard muttering it to themselves).

6. Rumours that Head Office premises are to be sold and converted into an egg packing station are totally unfounded and aren't due to be confirmed until November anyway.

7. In order to keep you abreast of the new structure within the organisation a blank chart is provided with the appropriate tree structure defined together with plenty of space to enter individuals names. Please update this as and when required. (Do not write your own name).

8. It is intended that a member of Personnel will visit the building for half an hour sometime in the next six months. This person will be immediately recognisable by the fact that he/she will be smiling. (A picture of a smile is available from the Duty Pilot). It is not recommended that you approach this person nor indeed use the words "you are Chalky White and I claim a full redundancy package".

9. To summarise all of the above:  
It is going to happen.  
It is not yet determined to whom.  
It is not certain by whom.  
Don't ask why.  
But you will be briefed after it has.



10. The paragraphs in this announcement should be read in the order in which they appear.

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### Would that it were so!

'In 1993 the European Single Market will become a reality. It will embrace 345 million citizens needing goods and services and the ability to travel freely within the community. All the red tape on imports and experts will be abolished'.

Quote from, 'The Port', October 1992, at the opening of the Purfleet Thames Terminal.

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### The right end in view!

#### Report of a meeting between the Bank experts and management of one of our new management ports.

Bank expert, charged with financing the port, "Costs must be cut, in every field. This bill for paint is an example. Why all these colours, yellow, red and green. The costs are enormous".

Management explained they were responsible for the ports buoyage system, hence the paint.

The Bank expert countered "Well never mind the fancy colours, can't you just make do with one?".

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### The Cautionary Tale of a Retired Portsmouth Pilot

The Harbour Master, Portsmouth

My Dear Sir,  
I feel that I must file my report on a small, and I stress minor, incident in some haste. This is to preclude any verbal reports from others who may tend to exaggerate the situation, human nature being what it is, particularly amongst our seafaring friends who frequent our pilotage waters. The VHF radio is indeed a powerful instrument and nowhere is this more ably demonstrated than within our own very fine port.

I was proceeding in my usual cool and deadly manner into harbour aboard the motor vessel *Marrakesh*, bound for those historic quays known as flathouse.

The whole operation was a credit to the council. I was fully booted and spurred and all my pennants were flying correctly in the breeze. This breeze, incidentally, was some twenty five knots from the south east, and I had already diligently noted from my tide tables that high water was in some two hours time.

I had earlier greatly impressed the Captain with my skill at giving him a really close view of the fine bow wave generated at speed by one of Her Majesty's warships. I insisted, of course, that our Patagonian ensign was correctly lowered in the usual exchange of courtesies as we cut ahead. I also noted how impressed the warship

was by their friendly salutes and gestures and the blowing of their sirens.

I observed various flags flying from every available mast and yard one could see ashore. I distinctly remember thinking that I really must get to grips with these signals the navy love to show at every available opportunity. I had up to now always relied on a certain pilot's knowledge acquired during his RFA drills.

However, I digress, as a keen and intrepid yachtsman I believe I am well known for my tolerance towards our sailing companions in the Solent. However, on this particular occasion, as we passed in at Blockhouse, I had noticed that the Captain's worry beads were clicking even more violently as we passed close down the side of a fine yacht with spinnaker set sailing 'full and by' into harbour.

Just as we carried his spinnaker pole away, I yelled "WAFI" through the megaphone. I immediately explained to the Master that this was my endearing term for 'wind assisted f..... idiot' - I thought he would be pleased about that, and it just might have eased his fixed expression of sheer terror.

You see whilst I am slightly conversant with the French language, my knowledge of the Patagonian language is nil. Therefore, I feel I am in no way responsible for the fact that 'WAFI' in this obscure language means 'Let Go'.

You can imagine my surprise when the crew on the fore-castle promptly let go the port anchor. Mind you, it was not so great a surprise as it was to our local boatman, who was blissfully endeavouring to get his line up under the bow. I fear it may take some time for the boatman to feel kindly towards my person, for I have to say that he was rendered speechless for the first known time in his long career. Nevertheless, I feel confident that with the passage of time he will thank me for giving him a full view of a three ton anchor entering the water from a distance of no less than one metre. Not everyone is so privileged.

As a fellow seaman, sir, you will appreciate the effect of dropping an anchor with both a twenty five knot breeze and a four knot tide astern giving us an estimated speed of a comfortable fifteen knots.

Some would say we sheered violently to Port, but I would describe it as no more than out of control. My first reaction was to ensure that our pennants were flying correctly in the breeze and that the Captain exchanged the usual courtesies with *HMS Dolphin* as we powered up Haslar Creek.

In truth we must have looked a fine sight, and I was disappointed to observe *HMS Dolphin* did not dip their ensign in reply. In fact, I feel a stiff letter to QHM would not go amiss about this.

As we passed the submarine that has been so cleverly put on stilts I decided to take full charge of the situation. Here I have to say that I never cease to be amazed

by the behaviour of foreigners at times of minor mishap. You see, by this time, the Captain was rolling on the deck in what I can only describe as uncontrolled anguish.

I personally managed to stop the engine just as we hit the bridge which I believe is locally known as 'pneumonia'. I would like to suggest incidentally, that the new bridge, when built, is called 'Marrakesh'.

With the council's best interests at heart, as always, I did consider leaving the vessel in this position as a sightseeing attraction along with *Victory*, *Mary Rose*, *Warrior* and *Alliance*. It might have also allowed our boatman to increase his trade in harbour cruises. However, I cleverly remembered this was Gosport and not Portsmouth, and so I engaged the engine into full astern, and to use that quaint naval expression, 'sternboarded' out of the creek with a display of quite unique seamanship. Here, I regret to report, the Captain was moaning in a crouched position under the flag locker taking large swigs from a proprietary brand of whisky.

I have to tell you, sir, that the lorry that fell onto our fore-castle from the gap in the bridge was full of livestock. This was really just bad luck, because as they escaped onto the deck they showed their displeasure at this unexpected boat ride in the only manner known to beast. This is where, perhaps, my standard of seamanship, which you have undoubtedly begun to rely upon, slipped a little. I trust you will appreciate the distraction of what I estimate as no more than three score of beef cattle bellowing and generally charging around the deck had on my cool and deadly approach to all matters of seamanship. I also noted many sirens and blue flashing lights from ashore, which was yet another distraction.

So you will appreciate that once again I really cannot be held responsible when our stern collided with the very new *HMS Sandown* as she was leaving harbour on her maiden voyage. However, I am pleased to report that it afforded her crew with the most realistic exercise in abandoning ship.

Now this is where, sir, you will be so proud of my quick thinking. You see I left the bridge and managed to pass one of the ship's sternlines to the rapidly sinking *Sandown*. You will be well versed in salvage law, and you will appreciate how pertinent this will be when our council lawyers sue Her Majesty's navy for salvage. I am also enclosing the name and address of the lorry driver so that the ship owners can claim insurance against his lorry for damaging their ship.

Well, sir, I have to close now as they have just announced the final call for my flight.

Farewell to you all.

ANON  
ex Portsmouth Pilot

PS Any chance of a reference?

## Reminiscences

# Captain James Learmont - The first twelve years

*Captain James S. Learmont was a London District Cinque Ports Pilot from 1910 until 1947. During his service he was the Cinque Ports Pilots representative for a number of years and on the Executive Committee of the United Kingdom Pilots Association. Master in sail prior to becoming a pilot he survived two World Wars. A natural author, he wrote a book 'Master in Sail' and I have no doubt would have written another on the Pilotage Service had he not died in the late 1950s. Serialised in the next few issues of The Pilot, James S. Learmont's reminiscences of his first 12 years make excellent reading for young and old alike.*

## Part 1 - 1910

### Qualifying as an entrant to the Trinity House Pilotage Service, London District.

On January 4th, 1910, the four-masted barque *Bengaim* sailed from Port Talbot for Taltal, Chile. In her I had spent nearly three-and-a-half years and she was my favourite ship; as she went through the locks in tow of one of the Jolliffe tugs it was like parting with an old friend. Six of my crew were aboard of her. Four were apprentices. At the request of my owners I had been acting as Marine Superintendent, and in view of a new master taking over command I had much to do. An additional task was the preparations for her cargo, nut coal, as it was liable to shift if not properly secured in a specially constructed bunker for the 'tween-deck cargo.

My instructions from Trinity House were that I should present myself before the Pilotage Committee for approval on the 8th of January, 1910, so everything was fitting in very well. In due course on the day appointed I presented myself before the Elder Brethren and was told that I could come up for examination when I was ready. After the interview I travelled to my home at Isle of Whithorn after calling at the owners' office in Liverpool to settle up.

For me, the studying for my examination to pass as a Cinque Ports pilot was a complete change from my way of life and I must admit that I found it very trying. Fortunately for me I had a friend who had been a Cinque Ports pilot for nearly three years and was studying for his All-Draught Licence. He at one time was master in the ship *Celestial Empire* but was now stationed at Broadstairs (or 'on the island' as it was termed in the Pilot Service), so to Broadstairs I went, found good accommodation and started to study the part of the London Pilotage District for which I was seeking a Licence.

The Cinque Ports pilots are the oldest branch of the London Pilots; they were at one time under the Warden of the Cinque Ports, who lived at Deal. A candidate has to be well acquainted with every buoy, lighted and unlighted, from Selsey Bill to Gravesend; he must know the character of the buoy, the depth of water where it is moored and cross-bearings of shore marks so as you could know if it was in its charted position; if lighted you must know the character of the lights; all Lighthouses, the character of lighthouses and the sectors if

any and what dangers they cover; contour lines on the English coast, their distance from the shore; 10 and 20 fathoms and the depth of water in all the channels for which you were seeking a licence. In my case it was through the Downs and outside of the Goodwin Sands, through the Horse and Gore Channel, Prince's Channel, Edinburgh Channel and Knock Deep right up to Gravesend. This is a big subject and required much study. Trinity House had special shore marks for all the buoys in the River Thames. In many cases they were windmills and tall trees in their vicinity but times and conditions had in many cases removed what were accepted chart marks excepting those in which churches were used. Trinity House had actually built a spire on Trinity Church, Margate, for the purpose of taking bearings and placing Light Vessels in the estuary of the Thames. Reculver Towers are the property of Trinity House for this purpose. For a candidate it was a case of saturating yourself in the area that you were studying both on land and sea. In due course, feeling that I was competent to pass the examination, I gave Trinity House notice and a day was fixed for me to attend Trinity House.

The general method of examination was, an Elder Brother who was a member of the Pilotage Committee was your examiner; you were told to be seated and would be told perhaps this:

"You are in charge of a ship at Selsey Bill. Now proceed to pilot this vessel up the Channel".

You had to give the courses and distances, depth of water, all buoys, Lighthouses and Lightships as you went along. He might, and most probably would, say "Enter Dover Harbour and Ramsgate Harbour", and question you about both, regarding suitable times of tides to enter. From Dungeness to Gravesend, which is a Compulsory Pilotage District, your examination would be more searching, especially re the Goodwin Sands. Each lightship's exact position, day-marks and character of light and fog signal you must answer correctly; then the courses and distances from buoy to buoy right up to Gravesend. It was necessary that you should know the System of Buoyage and give reasons for the various markings. As the Elder Brethren were in constant attendance as advisers in the Admiralty Courts, they, in view of the many collision cases they had sat on, were experts in the Rule of the Road at sea, and also Port of

London Regulations. In this your examination was very thorough. Your duties regarding Customs and Health Officers were all part of your examination. I passed before Captain Hoare and was informed by the Principal Clerk to report to the Superintendent of Pilots, Dover, as he handed me the necessary documents.

Like all other entrants I had to make twelve trips between Dungeness and Gravesend in company with a fully licensed pilot, at my own expense. It was a very big change in my life, going among body of men who to all intents and purposes were equals excepting seniority - and the Senior Pilot was an important person. He was responsible for the behaviour of the pilots when afloat and the safety of the Pilot Vessel; in cases of fog, or when shipping a pilot was considered dangerous, the master of the Pilot Vessel could not anchor or stop shipping pilots without consulting the Senior Pilot. As a rule a report from the master was accepted and permission granted to anchor or haul down the distinguishing signals. The hauling down of the lights was most essential before going in to anchor in a sheltered position otherwise ships requiring a pilot would be lured into danger. As the duty changed Senior Pilots it changed conditions in many cases; some were very strict about the supply of drink from the cutter's bar and others were, to put it mildly, indifferent. As one was anxious to get the trips in, and wishing to avoid any question of preference, those qualifying went with the first pilot to be shipped. On one occasion I went with a pilot that was quite unfit to take charge of a ship as he was under the influence of drink. As you would expect he soon fell asleep. I didn't mind as I was quite capable of taking my ship through the Downs at least. Just a year ago I had sailed my ship through the Downs when bound for Hamburg. We had reached the Gull Light Vessel when the pilot woke up. With a volley of oaths he said, "You are going wrong, Port, you fool, you have South Foreland on your wrong bow". The master then intervened and would not allow the pilot to give any more orders, saying, "I am quite satisfied with this young man as a pilot". Realising his position the pilot on arrival at Gravesend offered me what later I guessed was hush-money, but I wouldn't accept it. Seemingly the Senior Pilot knew that this pilot was not in a state to be shipped, but knowing that I was going



with him they said nothing. His father had been a pilot and the Senior knew him. Amongst the documents handed you after passing is a book. On completing a trip you fill it in as far as possible, ship's name, draught of water, tonnage and state of weather. The pilot fills in the part re your interest and attention and signs.

On completion of my turns I was instructed to attend Trinity House, and at the Pilotage Committee on March 18th, 1910, I was granted my Pilot's Licence. This licence states that upon examination I was found to be duly skilled to act as a Pilot for the purpose of conducting ships of 14-foot draught from Selsey Bill to Gravesend and up the River Medway as far as Stangate Creek, and into and out of Ramsgate, Dover, Sandwich, Margate and Folkestone Harbours. My licence was the second last 'vice-versa' that was issued by Trinity House to a Cinque Ports pilot.

#### Underdraughtsman. 'On the Island'

I was instructed to report to the Superintendent of Pilots, Dover. He ordered me to take up my station at Margate on the Isle of Thanet. The term 'Island' for the Isle of Thanet used by Cinque Ports Pilots went back to the times when Thanet was said to be an island, and it must be considered that the river Stour that ran into Pegwell Bay went past the City of Canterbury and came out about Whitstable. Pilots who were stationed at Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate were known as 'the young men from the Island', and are to this day. The Cinque Ports Pilots at one time had a considerable number of pilots stationed there; they were stationed at Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs to supply ships that had passed the Dungeness Station owing to weather conditions. In some cases it was with a view of evading compulsory pilotage. This during my time was carried to a ridiculous point: an Italian ship passed Dungeness and went to the Sunk to get a London pilot because he had, on looking up the schedule of rates, noted that from Sunk to Gravesend was less. He somehow did not consider that to get a reduction of £2 he steamed 40 miles and would lose both time and fuel in doing so. All pilots entering the London Pilotage are granted a Licence to pilot ships whose draught does not exceed fourteen feet. On completion of three years you make application to be re-examined and if you are successful you are

licensed to pilot any ship and you are what they termed an 'all-draught' pilot. No longer a 'Dustman' or a 'Fourteen-foot man'.

As a rule only fourteen-foot men were stationed on the Island; it was quite common for ships above fourteen feet to command your services, so you took them very gladly as the rate received was at times double that you would get by being shipped at Dungeness. During my time on the Island I was fortunate in getting several large ships, one a P&O and another, a Castle Liner; both were from Continental ports as the special pilot was unable to join them there. I had two ships on one day: one was a German liner and the other was the Czar of Russia's *Polar Star* that was bound to the Medway.

On the Island pilots did not keep a look-out; the boatmen who were on the watch around the Piers made a race of it to get the pilot. As taxis then were not common an old cabby with a white horse was generally used. In every case the ship was 'flying a Jack as big as a blanket'. They were rather cute when ships when ships were trying to evade pilotage; in one case a Riga Slide was anchored off Margate Sand awaiting the turn of the tide. Boatmen boarded him saying they were waiting to land a pilot. They were suspicious of the grass on his topsides, so asked the Master where he was from: "Baltic". (At that time ships from the Baltic were not subject to Compulsory Pilotage). But as they yarned the boatman was whittling away at the logs that comprised his deck cargo. Finding that it was hard, he left and came ashore, and with the old cabby was soon at my house: "Master, there is a fellow out there trying to go it on his own", and gave his description of how he found out, saying that, "They don't bring mahogany logs from the Baltic". By this time the flood had made, and he was away: a stern chase is a long chase, but we with sails and oars caught up with him near the Girdler L.V. which was nine miles from where he anchored and ten miles from the Nore. He had to pay full pilotage and double shipping money; one of the shipping monies went to the cutter at Dungeness. Had he conducted his ship to Gravesend he would have had to pay full pilotage into the Customs on his entering his ship. Only when he was able to provide proof that he had made every endeavour to obtain a pilot and failed would the pilotage be refunded.

(To be continued)

## Discount Travel

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### HOVERSPED - SEACAT

We are pleased to announce a further 12 months discount travel on the Dover/Calais; Folkestone/Boulogne; Stranraer/Larne services during 1993. The usual 25% discount is available with a stamped addressed letter to the editor at his home address. Hoverspeed - Seacat staff looked after us well in 1992, they have promised the same service in 1993.

**Book early, travel cheaply.**

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### SEALINK STENA LINE

I am pleased to offer you a 25% discount on applicable fares valid until 31st December, 1992 for travel with Sealink Stena Line on the Larne-Stranraer service.

Reservations may be made by contacting my office at Larne 0574 273616. Please advise the clerk of your reference number (T2/775). Tickets will be issued at the reduced rate on receipt of payment prior to departure at the booking office in Larne.

ME McWilliam, Passenger Manager

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### NORTH SEA FERRIES Hull-Rotterdam

I have discussed with my Reservations Controller the simplest method for bookings to be made by your members and we feel that it would be appropriate for them to state that they are members of the United Kingdom Pilots' Association at the time booking. Our staff will then initiate the 10% reduction upon making their reservation (for Passenger Reservations telephone 0482 77177).

AE Farrel

UK Passenger Sales & Marketing  
Manager

## SANDWICH OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

10th - 19th July, 1993

Bed and Breakfast accommodation could be available to interested pilots during the above dates.

For more information telephone the editor

## Sir Malcolm Thornton MP

We are pleased to announce that Malcolm Thornton, a past Liverpool pilot and presently Member of Parliament for Crosby, was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

We congratulate Sir Malcolm and look forward to his continued commitment to pilot's interests in Parliament.

## UKPA(M) Subscriptions 1993

At Annual Delegate Conference 1992 it was agreed to set a new subscription rate to the UKPA(M) of £52.90 per quarter, effective 1st January 1993.

The breakdown is as follows:

	£
T&GWU Subscription (Gross)	17.55 per quarter
Local Admin. allowance (10%)	1.76
T&GWU Subscription (Nett)	15.79
UKPA Subscription	37.11

UKPA(M) Subscription per quarter **£52.90 PAYABLE**

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## 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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## To all Pensioner Pilots

Inserted within this copy of your magazine should be a reminder notice that your subscription for 1993 is now due.

We have not increased the cost. *The Pilot* is still £5 for the four quarterly editions or £1.50 per single copy.

Any queries please contact the editor or Davina Connor UKPA(M) secretary.

## 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 Ext. 3142

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 L Powell  
Daytime tel: 0273-29866 ext 3142

#### Outside office hours

Mr L Powell  
Home tel: 0323-29393  
or Mr N S Cooper  
Home tel: 0903-742927,  
or Mr S S McCarthy  
Home tel: 0444-248520

## 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**.



# United Kingdom Pilots' Association (Marine)

## Local Secretaries

District	Name	Address and Telephone Number
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