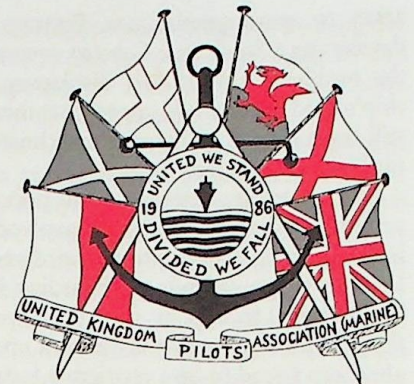


# THE PILOT

JULY 1999

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## Editorial

It would appear that this quarter has seen the end of the superb port feature series that was started exactly 10 years ago by John Godden in the July 1989 issue. Virtually all the UK ports have now been covered and what has been remarkable has been the high quality of each submission resulting in a unique and valuable record. Equally remarkable has been the fact that the authors of these features have all enjoyed producing the work and seeing the finished presentation. Yes, there is a lot of talent out there, some of it yet unpublished and I need it now! As a full time pilot and part time volunteer editor I need articles. If you have any opinions, experiences, anecdotes, press cuttings, are or have been involved in pursuits which you feel may be of interest please send them in. Many of you retired pilots who make up nearly 50% of our readership have fascinating stories to pass on as with the Graham Allan story in this issue. John Rich's nostalgia feature resulted in favourable comments from many colleagues and John has provided more interest this Quarter. What may have seemed routine in the past is now fascinating for those of us working with DGPS, ARPA radar, electronic charts etc. This quarter I have attempted to approach the new concept of "Laptop" pilotage, special thanks to George Woollard for his response to my request for information on PAMS. Next quarter I hope to analyse VTS and pilotage so if you have any views on either of these please send them in.

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# LAPTOP PILOT?

## Pilot Aid Manoeuvring System (PAMS)



During the last 10 years the rapid development of portable GPS receivers coupled with the release of additional satellites for non-military use has resulted in a remarkable increase in positioning accuracy and reliability of these units. The provision of DGPS coverage has further enhanced this accuracy to the effect that a position accuracy of  $\pm 1$ metre in areas of DGPS coverage is now 98% probable.

So far very few ports have utilised this technology for pilots. At the 1998 Pilotage Conference at Brisbane a paper was presented by Ron Liley, senior pilot at the port of Launceston and Bruce Goodchild, senior lecturer in Simulation and electronic Navigation Systems at the Australian Maritime College (AMC). This paper provides an interesting account of the development of a specialist DGPS system for pilotage use and shows what can be

achieved by a port, pilots, a college research department and a manufacturer working together. As far as I am aware no port in the UK is currently using such a system.

My request for personal accounts of "carry aboard" units in the April edition produced an article from George Woollard which details the development of a specialist radar based system for use in the Severn Estuary at the site of the second road bridge. The advantage of this radar system over the Launceston DGPS arrangement is that the VTS centre receives exactly the same information as the pilot on board. It would appear that so far the development of such high precision pilotage aids have mainly been limited to specific applications rather than general pilotage but Rotterdam are now using the portable "Portray" system and in London trials have been undertaken with a laptop unit for use on the deep draft tankers. These latter systems are basically adapted DGPS units and their major drawback is the lack of provision of the ships heading. This means that the vector displayed on the chart is the direction of movement of the aerial which may bear no resemblance to the heading of the ship especially when a large course alteration or swing is being undertaken. This fact alone renders the unit largely ineffective but it is probably possible to adapt the Launceston

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array to more general use. Portray are developing a Solid State Gyro to overcome the problem of accurately displaying the ship's head but it would appear that there is still some way to go before the technology of this SSG is perfected.

One complaint common to all portable systems is the extra weight involved in having to carry these units on board and in London where the pilot is boarding in a Navigational focal point for 3 major ports the time involved in setting the unit up has also been found to be a restricting factor.

So, is there a future in these portable units? My own feelings are that for specific applications they are a very valuable addition but for general pilotage the fact that ships are increasingly equipped with their own DGPS overlaid onto electronic charts will render the carry aboard system redundant. The latest generation of ECDIS displays are now including raw radar overlay and the ship is displayed to exact scale on the ECDIS orientated to the gyro heading thus eliminating the need for complex aerial arrays! Please let me know your thoughts.

JCB

## Pilot Aid Manoeuvring System

R Liley, B Goodchild

The Pilot Aid Manoeuvring System (PAMS) is a portable precision navigation system based on DGPS technology which can be used by marine pilots for manoeuvring large ships in restricted waterways. PAMS uses an attitude sensing GPS receiver to provide position, velocity and azimuth information to an electronic chart system on a notebook computer. It has provided for Launceston a cost effective and unique solution for the night time manoeuvring of bulk carriers in the Tamar River, Tasmania.

### Introduction

The Port of Launceston (POL) in Northern Tasmania is responsible for providing facilities for shipping in the Tamar Estuary. One of the exports from the State is woodchips for papermaking. The wood chip berths are situated in Long Reach where the estuary is some 600 metres wide. The available swinging area off the berth for a ship is about 380 metres. The operation of swinging a 50,000 tonne, 230 metre woodchip carrier in tidal currents up to two knots and winds of 30 knots requires considerable skill on the part of the pilot.

Prior to PAMS, ships were only swung off the woodchip berths during daylight hours mainly using unlit navigational buoys and beacons. A woodchip export company wanted to open the operation window for their berth and asked the Port of Launceston

to provide the necessary pilotage aids to achieve this. By providing lights to the existing navigational marks the problem could be solved but at considerable expense to the Port of Launceston. Instead a solution was found in 1995 using DGPS technology which was about half the cost of installing navigational lights.

### The Concept of PAMS

Since the early 1990's research work had been undertaken at the AMC Launceston to investigate the accuracy of position and velocity which could be achieved using GPS and DGPS. As the errors inherent in DGPS were quantified, it's suitability as the basis of a pilotage aid became apparent. The AMC decided to investigate the possibility of a system which would supplement existing visual and radar aids by providing pilots with information on the ship's position, speed and heading. The aid would have to be portable, so that it could be carried aboard by the pilot, and a target weight of ten kilograms was agreed. Ideally the system would be completely independent of the ship's equipment. DGPS certainly provided the necessary positional and speed information so development concentrated on the screen graphical presentation of data and a means of measuring heading of the ship. The single antenna of a DGPS receiver will provide the track over the ground of a ship but not the heading, which is vital, when swinging a vessel and manoeuvring astern. To resolve the heading problem many options were considered but all had disadvantages and it was decided to investigate the use of attitude sensing GPS receivers which used a multiple antenna array.

### The Trimble TANS Vector Attitude Sensing GPS System

In January of 1995, the POL approached the AMC who had been involved with trials of GPS equipment from the Trimble Company with a request for assistance with the problem. The College was able to approach Trimble for a loan of their recently developed TANS Vector Attitude Sensing GPS System. Trials with the TANS Vector revealed that this system could form the basis of a pilotage aid.

The TANS Vector consists of a single receiver with an array of four small antennae. Capable of DGPS operation, the TANS Vector will output position, speed, azimuth (heading), pitch and roll of the host platform.

From experimentation, it was found a baseline separation of 35 cm gave an acceptable azimuth accuracy for this application (Figure 1).

The TANS Vector was found to operate reliably with acceptable errors. In addition to the size, weight and unit cost made it

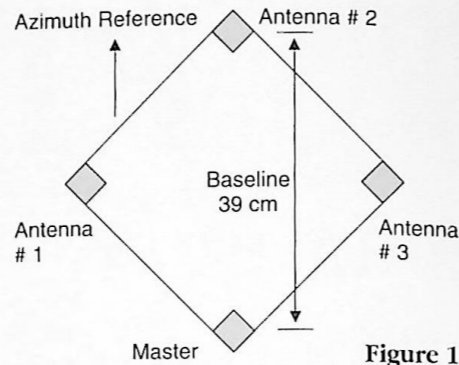


Figure 1

possible to develop a pilotage aid based on this receiver.

The ship board equipment carried by the pilot consists of three basic items all fitting into a rugged carry case. The equipment is as follows:

- Antenna Array Platform with securing straps.
- Notebook Computer.
- Radio Link Receiver with an emergency datalink cable.

A schematic of the PAMS system is shown in figure 2.

The antenna array platform is an aluminium folded and welded box 375 mm x 375 mm x 65mm with the four antennae mounted on the lid. The effective baseline for the array is 39 cm. The array platform is mounted on the bridgework of the ship with a clear view to the sky.

The notebook computer is connected to the radio link receiver to collect position, position quality speed and heading information from the array platform. The notebook runs the software which shows the position and correct orientation of the ship in relation to the navigational hazards in the port. The pilot is able to quickly see how close the bow or the stern of the ship is to a danger and also the longitudinal and transverse speed of the ship. Figure 3 shows the graphical display the pilot views and illustrates some of the principal features of the software including:

- ship graphic true to scale
- wharf and shoreline detail
- navigation lines
- GPS positions as provided from the TANS Vector
- smoothed past track of the ship
- position quality indicators

The DOS based software was designed to be operated with minimal keystrokes for simplicity of operation, using function keys. The screen graphics were developed to show only the essential information the pilot requires with the vector electronic chart only showing shore and wharf lines with a single highlighted critical depth contour (10.5 metres) Beacons and other navigational marks and lines are shown with the ability to switch on and off feature names. Software development was made easier by

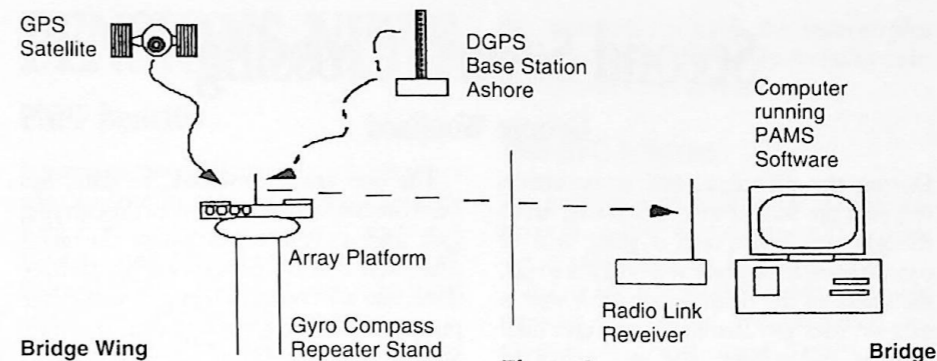


Figure 2

the ability of AMC researchers to accompany pilots for many river transits and observe the system working on a variety of ship types.

All the equipment is fitted with batteries for three hours continuous operation or the system can be run from ship's power via voltage converters.

### System Operation

The act of piloting a vessel has traditionally been a visual operation with only occasional reference to electronic aids such as radar and log. The following problems were identified as major factors preventing woodchip vessels from swinging at night in Long Reach using conventional techniques:

- Existing daylight visual marks (leads) were unsuitable for conversion to night leads due to incorrect horizontal and vertical separation.
- Difficulty in estimating the distance of the vessel off the berth and shoal areas during the swing i.e. a problem of depth perception which makes the bow appear closer to the berth than it actually is.
- Difficulty in estimating the vessels forward and lateral speed over the ground during the swing, particularly when the vessel was at ninety degrees to the berth.
- Lighting at the berth and illumination of mooring dolphins and mooring points ashore was inadequate to allow the safe handling of mooring lines.

Given that the lighting of the berth and mooring points could be upgraded to a satisfactory standard the main criteria for the use of PAMS was that the system should allow a 230 metre vessel to be swung through 180 degrees with complete safety.

The woodchip berths are located on the eastern side of the Tamar River 14 miles from the pilot boarding ground. The transit from the entrance to Bell Bay (8 miles) is quite tortuous with ten alterations of course, two of which are 60 degrees. Strong tidal flows of up to five knots are experienced by vessels during the transit. However night navigation marks for this section of the pilotage are quite adequate, and visual navigation techniques are primarily used, with minimal electronic assistance. It is only in the swinging area off Long Reach that PAMS becomes a primary tool with

visual and other electronic aid back up. Departure of vessels from berths at Long Reach does not require the use of PAMS even at night as there is no requirement to swing the ship.

To set up PAMS the pilot must take the array platform to the bridgework and secure it by straps to the bowl of the gyro compass repeater. The array is aligned with the fore and aft axis of the ship and Master/Antenna 2 baseline coincident. Any misalignment is allowed for in the software by comparing gyro compass heading with TANS Vector azimuth. The small whip antenna is screwed onto the array platform and then a single guarded switch will power on the unit. The pilot then moves into the bridge and connects the radio link receiver to the notebook computer and then power up the computer to run the PAMS software. The radio link receiver powers on from the software and the whole initialization process takes about five minutes. The pilot can enter the critical dimensions of the ship and array platform offset position at initialization or from a file if the ship has been used before with the system. The transit from boarding ground to Bell Bay takes one hour so that pilot has plenty of opportunity to set up the equipment. Often the initialization is done directly after the pilot boards.

During the swinging of the ship off Long Reach, the pilot is using all available visual and electronic aids but it the use of PAMS which puts him into the comfort zone. Critical information is the ship's forward or

astern speed when at 90° across the river and distance of bow and stern from the critical depth contours and wharves. A special measurement grid orientated along the face of the wharf with a 25 and 50 metre line spacing, allows the pilot to gauge distances at a glance on the computer screen. The speed information is available from the vectors on the ship graphic. During the swing the pilot will move

from bridge to bridgework and by using the telemetry link between platform array and computer, no one is tripping over data cables in the darkness.

The software records the pilotage and data packets from the TANS VECTOR for later analysis by the pilots and AMC Search development staff. The playback facility is used to observe the completed pilotage in realtime or accelerated viewing.

A comprehensive training programme was undertaken during the trial period involving daylight passages and on-shore simulators. The first night trials involved two pilots on board the ship.

### Two Years On

After two years considerable experience has been gained in using the system and many enhancements have been made to the software. The software now handles the majority of the problems associated with multi pathing and reflector plates are no longer fitted to the vector platform. The database has been redesigned and broken into more manageable sections to allow for easier editing. Preferred tracks are now shown although straight tracks are only shown at this stage. The vector antenna array has now been incorporated into the lid of the case, this allows for a smaller case to be used thus saving weight. Also, the cable has become the preferred option for linking the platform to the note book computer due to RF noise on some ship bridges causing data loss when using the UHF link receiver. PAMS has also been found to be of great assistance when piloting vessels with poor forward visibility at night and in poor weather conditions. A lightweight mini PAMS using a single GPS receiver and using the same software is being developed to assist pilots when operating in periods of marginal weather conditions. It is anticipated that the software will be modified to operate under the Windows 95 operating system in the not too distant future. This will allow track editing, curved tracks and integration of passage planning.

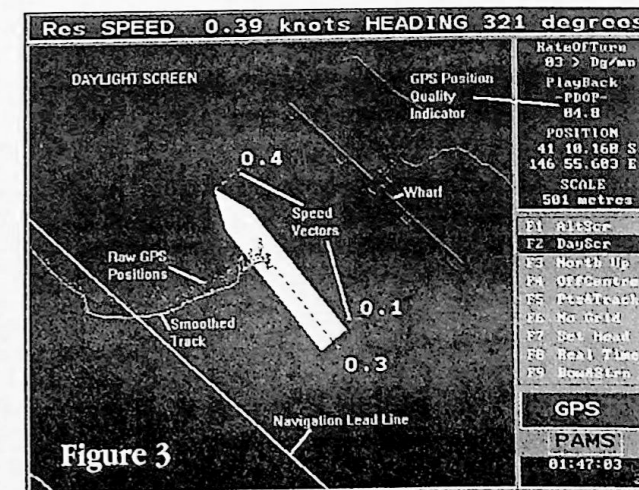


Figure 3

## Conclusion

The development of PAMS was an exciting project for the Australian Maritime College and the Port of Launceston and demonstrated how an academic institution and industry could get together to find a worthwhile application for a new technology. While PAMS was developed to solve a particular problem it has many other applications, which can show tangible economic returns in a short space of time. The similar system developed for Port Stanvac allowed large oil tankers to be berthed at night to a single point mooring buoy. It was calculated that four or five tanker berthings would effectively pay for the cost of PAMS.

The system is not off the shelf but rather is configured to meet the client's requirements quickly and economically. It's accuracy, predictability, and independence from existing ship's equipment makes it a practical solution to many pilotage problems. It is not limited to portable systems, as there is already one dedicated ship system in use and a second system to be installed shortly.

It was long recognised that training in the proper use of PAMS was essential to gaining confidence with the system. It was necessary to not only show people how to set up and operate the hardware and software but how it should be used within the pilotage situation.

The principal advantage of PAMS for the Port of Launceston is that it can open up the operational window for the port and hence potentially increase revenue. For the pilots who use the system, it provides another navigational aid which makes him/her feel more comfortable when manoeuvring in confined areas particularly at night.



Swinging large vessels 180° in restricted waterways requires precise positioning and speed control.

Photo: JCB

# Second Severn Crossing

George Woollard

During the planning, and construction stages of the Second Severn Crossing much thought was given, and a great deal of consultation took place with regard to (a), the safety of the main bridge span over a narrow, rock girt channel, with fierce tidal streams and eddies, and, (b) safety of shipping passing through the bridge area.

Many schemes were mooted, and several eventually adopted after many trials and experiments involving simulators, and dry runs using the system already in place at Dundee always with the full involvement of the Gloucester Pilots.

One such scheme, developed and adopted after many trials and improvements was the 'Pilot-Watch' radar system which can monitor the Southern, and Northern approaches to the bridge remotely and provide the Harbour Master, Pilots, and other river users with a constant radar picture of the bridge environs. (Coverage has since been extended upstream to the entrance to Sharpness Docks).

Very basically the system consists of three strategically placed remote and unmanned radar stations equipped to transmit their raw radar picture either over a land line, or VHF link to slave set receivers elsewhere. This latter of course affected the Pilots, as it was seen that they could now carry their own portable receivers as a back up in case of failure of ships equipment on passage. Up to the time of my retirement the system has been steadily improved and modified, and now works efficiently, and reliably; that is, so long as it is used as an emergency aid, and not as a primary navigation instrument.

The one great drawback, to date, has been the cumbersome nature of the carrying case and equipment, although the manufacturers D & B Electronics of Bootle have done, and are doing, all they can to alleviate this problem. There was a one time a certain amount of disgruntlement among the Pilots when it was suggested by the Harbour Authority that it would be necessary to take sets with them on every ship piloted. However common sense prevailed and usage is at individuals discretion, bearing in mind existing weather conditions.

The nature of the problem was, transporting a carrying case and contents weighing around ten kilos the sixty odd miles between base and the Pilot Station at Barry, and together with other gear, such as VHF set and personal bag, out to the pierhead, down steps and ladders, across other craft to the cutter, and then boarding small vessels with limited deck space, narrow companion ways, and small, cramped wheelhouses. Fine, if ships were fully manned, as they used to be, and assistance was certain, but a bit of a responsibility with current manning levels especially in poor weather in an open and exposed roadstead.

Another difficulty is finding a suitable uncluttered flat surface near the front of the bridge on the average coaster or short-sea trader, to set up shop as it were. (Positioning of the VHF receiving aerial is crucial.)

Current sets are fully independent of a ships power supply, and battery operated, there being a stock of batteries constantly on, charge, and available at Sharpness and at Barry Pilot Station. Battery life, per charge, is about one and a half hours, which is adequate for the full river passage from King Road, North of Avonmouth to Sharpness, if need be. The display, in colour, includes a graphics under/overlay showing the main navigation channel, course lines, buoys and beacons etc., rudimentary controls for range, contrast, brightness, day and night presentation, and a zoom facility.

To summarise, the system works, has been proven, and is fine for what it was originally intended, and, in an emergency situation is capable of being used to guide a ship either directly, or remotely. From a personal point of view let us just say it is a great relief to be no longer so burdened.

Finally, I believe that the pending 'Mark 3' model P.W. set, under development, will be more in the nature of a 'laptop' PC unit. With its obvious potential it will be interesting to see future refinements, and how well it will measure up against other systems now available, and being developed.

# PENSIONS NEWS

## PNPF benefits

It seems as though there are a few members who are confused about the type of benefits they will receive at retirement. There is a fundamental difference between the Pilots' National Pension Fund and the Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme.

The PNPF is a final salary, (defined benefit) arrangement, and it is not dependent upon the level of contributions paid in. A defined benefit pension scheme is one in which benefits arise from the "accrual" rate of the scheme, from service and from earnings.

For example, if you were to complete 20 years' service by your retirement at the age of 60, and your Final Pensionable Earnings were £33,000, your total entitlement would be  $20/60 \times £33,000$ . This would amount to a pension of £11,000 per annum, (one-third of your earnings).

If you were to continue in service after reaching the age of 60 you would continue to build up benefits for every month of service, on the same basis. This means that your benefits could increase to  $25/60 \times$  (say) £35,000, amounting to £14,583 per annum. If you were to retire before reaching the age of 58 your benefits would be reduced at the rate of 5.5% per year for each month between your retirement date and your 58th birthday.

The Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme, on the other hand, provides pensions that are directly related to the contributions paid (and investment returns). They are known as money purchase arrangements and are similar in many ways to defined contribution pension schemes that are run by many companies as an alternative to final salary pension schemes. Additional voluntary contributions in the Pilots' National Pension Fund are invested with Equitable Life's investment vehicles which include with-profits policies, unit linked and deposit administration. At retirement your individual Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme pot of accumulated capital is converted into a pension. The rate of pension is not only related to the level of contributions paid and to investment returns, but also to annuity rates. Many of you will know that annuity rates have been falling for several years (and regrettably there is no prospect of the trend being reversed in the foreseeable future).

As you will see from these explanations, there is a very great difference between the Pilots' National Pension Fund benefits and Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme benefits. The former reflects your years of service as a pilot and your earnings close to retirement whereas the latter reflects

the contributions paid, the income plus capital growth earned on them year by year, and annuity rates at retirement.

## The AVC Scheme

The previous topic leads on to the subject of the next annual renewal of the AVC Scheme which takes place on 1 October 1999.

In July and August Debbie Marten will be sending out renewal documentation and up-to-date performance details to all existing AVC Scheme members. Any new pilots who joined the Fund during the past year, together with any longer-serving pilots, who have expressed an interest in starting to make additional voluntary contributions, will also receive full details about the Scheme. If you have not asked us for details but would like to find out more about the AVC Scheme, do drop a line to Debbie as soon as possible.

## Triennial Actuarial Valuation

You may be aware that the Fund's triennial actuarial valuation, at 31 December 1998, is currently in progress.

You may also recall that in August 1997 we circulated a Post Budget Bulletin following the then new Labour government's abolition of Advance Corporation Tax. We warned that a rise in contributions would be necessary but the level would be dependent upon a number of economic factors. The financial circumstances at the time indicated that the additional rate was likely to be in the region of 3% to 6%. Whilst the rate has not yet been determined, it will undoubtedly be at least at the top end of that range. Many of you will recall that the contribution rate was 15% of total gross earnings before 1 October 1988. This was equivalent to 21% of Pensionable Earnings that applied between 1 October 1988 and 30 September 1989.

As soon as it has been determined, the rate will be confirmed to all Pilots and to all Competent Harbour Authorities.

## New pension advice slips

If you receive a pension from the Fund you will now have starting receiving the new style pension advice slip that I mentioned in the last quarter's article.

The new format caused a little confusion to some who did not tear off the three edges but tried to peel the document apart. By doing so they just found the "change of details" section, and threw away the remaining two-thirds of the advice slip without opening it. By now we hope that the teething problems have been overcome.

We should like to hear your views on the new design and whether it could be improved further before we reprint next year's supply.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Regular readers of PENSIONS NEWS will be aware of my pleas to be advised of changes of home addresses, and here is another one PLEASE, PLEASE remember to tell us when you move, or are about to move.

We do need your change of address details in writing, to safeguard both you and us.

Jan Lemon

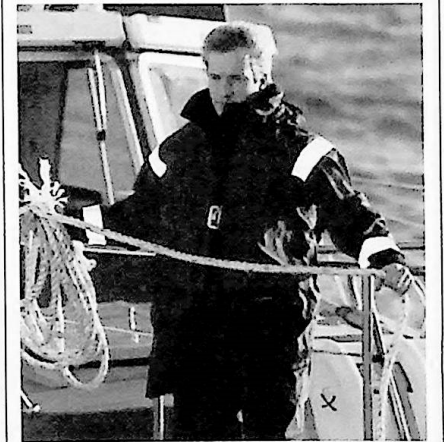
## Retirements

JM Cooley	London - Thames	Jan '99
B Freeman	Humber	Dec '99
AR Hudson	Blyth	Mar '98
AG Pilkington	London - PLA	Mar '99
WJ Rigby	London - North	Mar '99



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## Terrestrial Maritime Radio Commercial Services to close

We have now considered the views expressed to us by the UKPA(M) and other interested groups and have concluded that:

### For long range services (Portishead Radio):

It is reasonable for us to close this service entirely from the end of August 1999. All existing customers still have available to them other HF stations capable of completing their calls, although in general we now recommend satellite services as a better alternative.

### For the medium range service:

There remains a need for service for a reasonable period in order to allow customers to change or add to their equipment. For this reason, we propose to keep the service open for one year, to close on 31 March 2000. Some vessels using this service may be able to access continental radio stations at times, but otherwise satellite services will provide the only alternative for commercial communications.

### For the short range service:

Customer usage of our VHF stations has now fallen to tiny figures, on a daily basis and, subject to a further operational assessment, we now plan to close them all by the end of August 1999. Customers are already using cellular telephone substitutes extensively and are expected to adopt current and new satellite mobile systems, as they become available.

In each of the above cases, the requirements on owners to fit radios for emergency purposes have been considered. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has already taken over the Distress and Safety radio watch previously provided by BT, and intends to provide all medium and short range Safety Broadcasts and Medico radiotelephone services through their own stations from 1 July 1999. Distress and Safety communications will therefore not be affected by our proposals, and will continue through the MCA's facilities on MF and VHF, and satellite services as appropriate to the circumstances. BT will continue to operate the NAVTEX service until January 2000, when HM Coastguard will take on the message-handling function, with transmissions continuing through the existing coast stations.

Some reduction in long range commercial service staffing levels and hours of service may be introduced in the period prior to their closure.

We are currently in discussion with Oftel regarding these plans and, if any changes occur as a result, we will let you know.

It is with regret that we see the end of services which have been a "watch-word" for many of our customers and we remain willing to discuss with you the effects of these closures and the mainly satellite alternatives. In some cases, we may be able to facilitate provision of maritime satellite equipment. If you wish to discuss the alternative services and systems which are available, please contact:

John Westhead  
Telephone +44 (0)1278 772219  
Fax: +44 (0)1278 772203 and  
e-mail: john.westhead@bt.com.

Peter Jackson  
Head of Maritime and  
Land Mobile Satellite Services

## COMPETITION IN PILOTAGE

As you will be aware there has been considerable concern over the fact that since most pilotage services are run as monopolies they have attracted the attention of the EU commissioners as potentially being in breach of EU open competition policies. German pilots who are currently under-going a "rationalisation" process and have seen a Dutch tug company winning towage contracts in Hamburg and Bremerhaven recently instructed a specialist law firm to research the current EU policy on Maritime services. The findings of this research is that pilotage is currently operated in line with European Law. The monopoly situation existing within many European ports is supported because of the need to maintain safety. The UKPA(M) through EMPA continues to lobby Commissioners on the importance of maintaining the status quo in the interests of safety, but with new Commissioners due to be appointed it is becoming evident that many of the arguments will have to be re-presented from scratch!

## Compulsory Pilotage - Overcarrying

Pilotage Directions made by a harbour authority define the area of compulsory pilotage within the jurisdiction of the harbour authority. This area may well not constitute the entire area controlled by the harbour authority. This note only refers to the area in which pilotage is compulsory.

Throughout the compulsory pilotage area, the ship must be piloted either by an authorised pilot or a licensed PEC holder. In this area, the pilot (or the PEC holder) has the conduct of the ship. For the purposes of the pilotage directions made by the harbour authority, the pilot is expected to be on board to complete the movement. A complete movement means the movement of the ship from the seaward limits of the pilotage area to her place of destination within the pilotage area or vice versa.

However, there may be occasions when the pilot may believe that it is safe to disembark before completion of the movement. He may request the Master to permit him to disembark.

If the request is granted, and the pilot disembarks and there is damage to the vessel within the compulsory pilotage area,

the pilot may well be criticised for failing to complete the movement. The Master may also be criticised and may be the subject of prosecution under Section 15 of the Act.

If the Master refuses the request to disembark, and the ship carries on to the limit of the pilotage area, the pilot may be unable to disembark and be overcarried to the vessel's destination. I do not believe the pilot has the right to interfere in the passage of the ship. If the Master wants to arrive at, say, Rotterdam at a particular time, the pilot cannot override that decision.

In taking the decision to proceed, the pilot will presumably take into account the weather conditions, and whether he will be physically able to disembark from the ship or not. He should duly inform the Master of his concern over this matter, thereby enabling the Master to contact his agent/owner to make the necessary arrangements.

Please note that this is Michael Nott's opinion on Compulsory Pilotage/Overcarrying.

It is also apparent that the attitude of the CHAs to the disembarking from a ship before completion of the movement varies from district to district.

I felt that it would be prudent if pilots in each individual district consulted with their CHA and a form of agreement was reached on the issue.

NCE McKinney

## Pilot Transfer Arrangements

The new regulations concerning pilot transfers came into force 10th February 1999. The details are contained in the MCA MSN 1716. All pilots should be aware on the contents of this document and notify all cases of non compliance/deficiencies to the MCA and if the vessel is outwards if possible advise the next port of the deficiency.

## Holiday Insurance

### DON'T FORGET!!

The UKPA(M) have negotiated the following comparative rates for Holiday insurance:

Single:	£34.00 p.a.
Married:	£49.75 p.a.
Family:	£55.50 p.a.

At present cover is restricted to serving and retired pilots under the age of 65. Negotiations are currently taking place to extend cover for those over 65. For an application form and latest information contact: Davina at Transport House.

## MARITIME COURSES

### SHIP HANDLING COURSES

Cost effective training that develops skills and builds confidence in ship handling, within a safe environment.

Courses for Pilots, Masters and Officers run from March to November and can be specifically tailored to suit customer requirements.

The centre has a fleet of 6 scaled manned model ships up to 300,000 Dwt. including a state of the art twin screw vessel with thrusters and independent rudders.

Exercises take place on a sheltered 13 acre lake with many scaled miles of channels and more than 30 berths.

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

This course uses a ship simulator to provide mariners with the opportunity to deal with various emergencies and develop procedures to assist in the safe conduct of the vessel.

All courses can be tailored to meet individual customer requirements and accommodation can be arranged for officers attending courses.

### RADAR & VTS SIMULATION

Courses include:

- Automatic Radar Plotting Aids (ARPA)
- Radar/ARPA Updating
- High Speed Navigation Course
- Navigation Control Course
- Small Vessel Navigation Control Course
- ECDIS Operator Course
- Vessel Traffic Services Courses



WARSASH  
MARITIME CENTRE

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Web pages: <http://www.solent.ac.uk/wmc/>



*The Professional in the picture is wearing a LIFEJACKET and foulweather 100% waterproof coat in one!*

The only choice for those who work near or on the water, should be a SeaSafe coat. This is because a SeaSafe coat incorporates a full CE approved lifejacket that provides up to 180 Newtons of buoyancy, and is available in many different styles and with a huge choice of optional extras. SeaSafe marine clothing has been saving lives every day for over 30 years.

To obtain a colour brochure and price list please contact:

SeaSafe Systems  
Fair Oak Cottage, Allington Lane  
Fair Oak, Eastleigh, Hants SO50 7DB UK  
Tel: +44 (0) 1703 692046  
Fax: +44 (0) 1703 601975

Shop & Factory  
24-26 Birmingham Rd, Cowes  
Isle of Wight, PO31 7BH  
Tel: +44 (0) 1983 282388  
Fax: +44 (0) 1983 282399

BSi III shown in picture

## 112th UKPA(M) Annual Conference

London, 10th-11th November '99

The 1999 Conference will be held at the Copthorne Tara Hotel, London. The rate for rooms this year at the Copthorne has risen to £115 single and £130 double (1996: £90 single and £100 double).

I believe these rates to be exorbitant – and I consider it timely to warn those intending to come to London in November of the cost involved in staying at the Copthorne. The Copthorne Tara have refused to move on the rates quoted.

Accommodation is available at the London Union Hotel, Lancaster Gate (£39 single) and at the Merchant Navy Hotel (£55 single, £86 double) just a short distance from the Copthorne.

If anyone intends to make alternative arrangements early reservation is advisable, as accommodation may be limited. Please advise this office of your intentions and/or reservations as soon as possible. This will assist us.

NCE McKinney

# THURSDAY ISLAND

Having befriended the Barrier Reef pilot whilst on passage from Cairns in *Marco Polo*, he invited me ashore to lunch at one of the world's remotest Pilot Stations - Thursday Island. Set amongst a cluster of islands North of Cape York, it proved an ideal choice for a European settlement as the fierce natives avoided it, believing the island to be haunted as well as being devoid of water. This small, hilly island has less than 5000 inhabitants, the majority of which are the Torres Straits islanders. Its most famous resident, Somerset Maugham, wrote several books here.

The Pilot Station is a large rambling bungalow with accommodation for 10 pilots. In this part of the world the rainy season is coming to an end in March, but the occasional 'light shower' made conversation impossible under the corrugated iron roof. The fans work overtime, and there is little to do apart from improving upon your best break! To perspire freely, even when sitting still, was quite unavoidable.

Over lunch with the 3 pilots awaiting ships, I was to learn that even here the pilots are divided. On the one side are the more experienced Reef Pilots (27) forming the back-bone of the service, but more recently licensed pilots have formed a breakaway group, Queensland Coastal Pilots (23), which has provoked a price war resulting in wages falling from well above Masters', to well below.

Wallace Cray, my host, had held command of ships operating within the Reef for many years before being granted his licence 12 years ago. A big, confident man in his 50s, he had come onboard *Marco Polo* in Cairns for the 500 mile passage complete with laptop computer chart, GPS and dinner jacket!

Each pilot averages about 50 ships a year, and the licence covers 2000 miles, the longest pilotage in the world to be undertaken by one man. Whilst on duty they work a roster, usually 3 weeks on followed by a week or two off, depending on traffic. Draft limitation is 40' which in

some areas gives only 3' clearance from an unfor-giving bottom! The tides are very strong, with a range of 3 metres. What with squat and other considerations, I rather imagine the Thames to be the safer option!

I was greatly indebted to Wal who gave me several publications, including the book about the tragedy of BISN's *Quetta* written by John Foley, himself a Reef pilot of considerable literary fame.

### Historical Background

The Torres Straits sea route became a reality for commercial shipping in the early 1800s. Passages through the Great Barrier Reef had been discovered by some of history's most famous naval explorers - Torres (1606), Cook (1770 Endeavour), Bligh (1789 Lifeboat), Flinders (1803), Jeffreys (1815 Kangaroo). The first to take advantage of this short cut were sailing ships from Sydney bound for China, Java and India.

1872 First pilotage act took place.

1874 P&O Subsidiary, Eastern and Australian SS Co, introduced a service between Australian ports and the Orient via Torres Straits. Two shipmasters were chosen to provide an exclusive service piloting E&A ships.

1877 Thursday Island established being far better situated than Somerset on the mainland.

1884 The Marine Board of Queensland introduced regulations for the operation of a coastal pilot service.

1890 *Quetta* disaster.

1991 Compulsory pilotage introduced for the Inner Route for all vessels over 70m and all tankers.

1993 Federal government de-regulates Queensland coastal pilotage, enabling competitive organizations to offer their services.

BISN Co's *Quetta* - 28 February 1890



John Foot (2nd from left) Thursday Island 'Ready Room'.

SS *Quetta* 3302 grt, 12 knots, 22' 8" draft had left Brisbane on 18 February homeward bound with a cargo of wool, meat, silver bullion and mails, together with 292 passengers and crew. The Barrier Reef pilot was Eldred Hardinge.

At 9.14 on a clear moonlit evening, the ship's bottom was sliced open by an uncharted pinnacle of rock. Mortally wounded with a gaping rent 175' long, the ship's momentum cleared the rock, and she sank in 3 minutes with the loss of 134 lives.

"The *Quetta*, Queensland's worst disaster" by John C H Foley, Nairana publications, makes excellent reading.

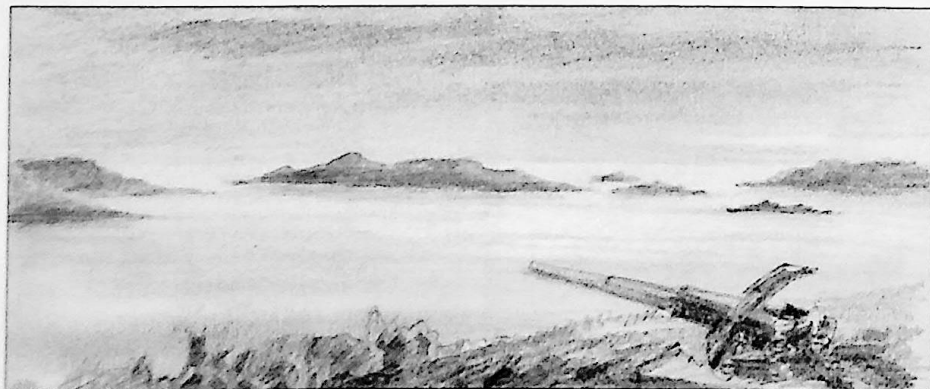
### An Extraordinary Event - 1829

(*Australian Dictionary of Dates & Men of the Time*)

The *Mermaid*, a colonial government cutter, left Sydney for Raffles Bay (Darwin), but on entering Torres Strait got on shore and was lost. All onboard were saved upon a rock. In 3 days afterwards, the *Swiftsure* which sailed from Tasmania hove in sight and took onboard Captain and crew of *Mermaid*, but in 3 days she also got on shore and was wrecked. Two days afterwards, the *Governor Ready*, also from Hobart town, passing within sight, took the ship-wrecked people belonging to the *Mermaid* and *Swiftsure* onboard, but itself was wrecked on May 18, but all the people saved by taking refuge in the longboats. The ship *Comet* also from Tasmania, soon after took the collected crews from *Mermaid*, *Swiftsure* and *Governor Ready* onboard, but was herself wrecked, but all hands saved. At last, the ship *Jupiter* from Tasmania, came in sight, and taking all onboard, steered for Port Raffles at the entrance to which harbour she got on shore, and received so much damage, that she may be said to have been wrecked....' (Confused? So am I!)

John Foot

John Foot's excellent book "The Illustrated Diary of a Thames Pilot" is still available. Price £9.99. Published by Navigator Books, Ringwood, Hants. ISBN 0-902830-51-1.



Fort Victoria - Thursday Island

Author's sketch

# THE GRAHAM ALLEN STORY

I had known about the photograph for many years; in fact for twenty years, since first acquiring the book "A Pictorial History of U-Boats" by Edwin P Hoyt.

The man shown in the photograph walking up a gangplank from U-217 onto the quay at Brest in named as Graham Allen. He was taken on board U-217 as a POW on 3rd February 1943 following the sinking of his ship, the Blue Funnel *Rhexnor*, in mid Atlantic.

As one does with books I had not opened those pages for many months and upon now doing, it occurred to me that in not one of the three pictures is the subject looking at the photographer. Could it possibly be that even to this day he did not know that he was being photographed?

To discover if this was indeed the case I would need to contact him and despite the fact that we were once colleagues as pilots in the port of Aden, it was 43 years since I had last spoken to him or known anything of his circumstances.

Knowing that Graham was not a member of any of the Blue Funnel associations my

only hope was that one of the other members may have known of his whereabouts. That proved to be the case and I can only say that it is always quite a thrill to find oneself in communication again with an old colleague and friend after being incommunicado for half a lifetime.

Having exchanged greetings I asked Graham if he knew of the photographs. He did not, and expressed disbelief that they were in fact of himself. I assured him that there was not the slightest doubt and that to provide absolute certainty, the caption mentioned him by name. He was dumb-founded and I am sure that at that moment you could have knocked him down with the proverbial feather!

I had, of course, promised to send him copies of the pictures (including one of the ship actually sinking), but in this instance I resolved to entrust the precious book itself to the Royal Mail so that he may view the whole thing at his leisure and of course have the opportunity of showing it to his family and friends.

Graham was, as you may imagine,



delighted to have this dramatic record of himself brought to his notice after such a very long interval and the pleasure it has given me to have played a part is absolutely tremendous.

Anyone who has not yet read the account of the sinking of the *Rhexnor* (see Roskill's 'Merchant Fleet at War'), should try and get hold of a copy, it is an enthralling story. Graham told me that during his sojourn in the sub he celebrated - if that is the word for those circumstances - his 21st birthday, and sometime before arrival in Brest was subjected to a severe depth-charging by, presumably, British warships.

One of the pictures shows him smiling; that, he said, was just the sheer relief at being on dry land again! In fact, it can be seen that the rest - who are all Germans - are smiling. Their pleasure was not to last for long, U-217, under the same commander, Kapitan Leutnant Reichenbach-Klinke, was sunk in a position not so many miles from the grave of the *Rhexnor*, by aircraft of the US Navy Squadron VC-9 from the CVE (carrier vessel escort), *USS Bogue*.

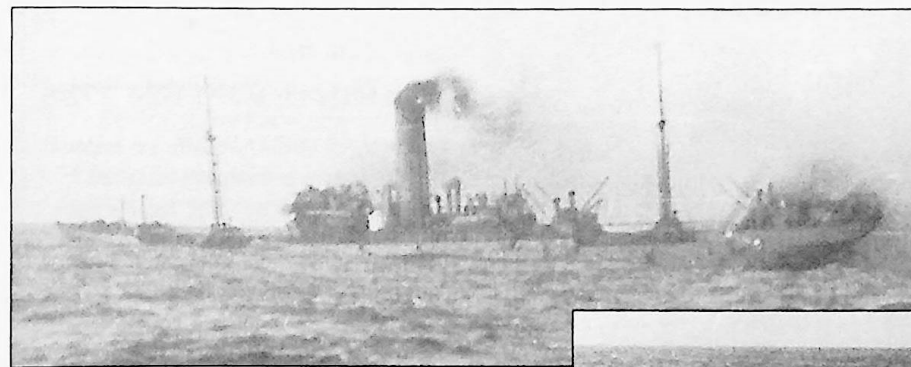
The end of the U-127 began at 7.30 am on the 5th June 1943, when five Grumman Avengers and one Wildcat were catapulted into the air. They were on their return leg to the carrier when at 8.30 they sighted a submarine heading west at speed. The U-127 began firing as they dived on her, but the Wildcat opened up with its six .50 calibre guns and saw four or five men throw up their arms and fall into the sea.

Now it was the turn of Lieutenant Alex McAuslan in his Avenger to come in with his depth-charges which straddled the U-Boat halfway between bow and conning tower. In the cascading spray the U-Boat began settling by the stern with her bows high in the air. McAuslan circled for 55 minutes watching the oil from the stricken submarine, rising vertically to the surface. There were no survivors.

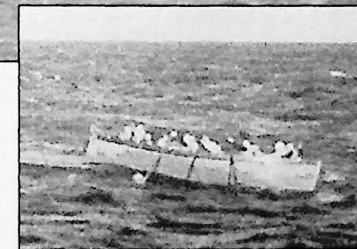
Hugh Ferguson (Cinque Ports Rtd)



"... sheer relief at being on dry land again!"



The last moments of the *Rhexnor*, sunk by U-217. Her complete crew (except Graham Allen) survived epic lifeboat voyages. The lifeboat shown is believed to be No.3 with the Second Mate and sixteen men which covered 1,236 miles in twenty-one days. Pictures from "Merchant Fleet at War".



## Coastlines

### Identification required

The late John Barr's widow, Mrs Barr has found these photographs which were taken on "Survey" in 1956. She would very much appreciate the identification of the pilots

and apprentices. The "Survey" was an annual event where a Liverpool Pilot Boat went around the whole pilotage district to keep pilots' knowledge up-to-date. At that time the Liverpool district included the coasts of North Wales and Lancashire, a large part of the Irish Sea up to St Bees Head in Cumberland and the East coast of the Isle of Man.



## The King George's Fund for Sailors Annual Britannia Concert

29th September 1999



KING GEORGE'S FUND  
for SAILORS

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

KGFS have organised a concert at the Royal Festival Hall performed by the BBC Concert Orchestra accompanied by the Royal Choral Society and Lucy Parham, last year's BBC Young Musician of the Year.

The programme will have the theme "Britannia" and will consist of light classics with a rousing part two which will include "Rule Britannia" and "Fantasia on British sea Songs"

Further details from: Lyn Burke, London Fundraising Manager, KGFS, 8 Hatherley Street, London SW1P 2YY. Telephone: 0171 932 0000. FAX: 0171 932 0095.

## DETR MARINE OPERATIONS CODE FOR PORTS

In March a revised draft copy of the proposed Code was issued by the DETR and copies should be available from your local Secretary or can be obtained directly from the DETR. This new draft includes:

Clarification on the distinction between the "duties" and "powers" of a Harbour Authority.

Details concerning the responsibilities of Harbour Authorities stating that "a fundamental aim of the Code is to make Authorities corporately accountable for the discharge of their duties and powers and to secure recognition by board members of the responsibilities which this entails".

Detail on safety assessment and risk management.

A "Best Practice" guide is to be produced in support of the Code.

Your Section Committee is involved in the working groups and the items currently being formalised are Passage Planning and Training.

The DETR are publishing monthly bulletins on the progress of the Code and these are available from the DETR or on the Internet at:

[www.shipping.detr.gov.uk/pilotage/bulletins/index.htm](http://www.shipping.detr.gov.uk/pilotage/bulletins/index.htm)

## DAS

### Group Legal Protection Insurers

*Insured Incidents we will cover:*

Personal Injury, Employment,  
Contract Disputes, Social/Legal Defence.

Any pilot involved in a personal injury or industrial claim must first contact the UKPA(M) head office who will then process the claim through DAS.

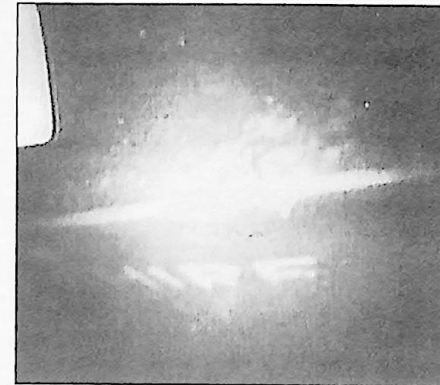
**UKPA(M): 0171 828 7788**

Registered Office: DAS Legal Expenses  
Insurance Company Limited,  
DAS House, Quay Side, Temple Back,  
Bristol BS1 6NH

## 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 30 days.

## MV DERBYSHIRE



The DETR have now re-opened the enquiry into the loss of the *Derbyshire*. Some may question why, after previous enquiries it has been deemed necessary to revisit this tragedy. Basically the reason is that the previous investigations have provided "a great deal of information which is capable of very different interpretations". This is born out by the fact that two different teams of experts involved in previous investigations have come to opposing conclusions, although both do agree that current bulk carrier design is "clearly inadequate". One independent bulk carrier expert, naval architect Andrew Spyru has pointed out that perhaps one of the most disturbing aspects of bulk carrier casualties has been the inability of the IMO technical Committee and the Classification Societies to acknowledge that the maritime industry had a serious problem. There is also generally evidence to suggest that the data has been used to fit a preconceived conclusion. Depositions are currently being accepted and below I have reproduced part of a letter from *Sea Breezes*. If you feel that you can offer anything to the enquiry please contact Paul Lambert. Hopefully, this enquiry will finally reveal the true cause of the tragedy and the industry will move forward to design out the weaknesses which have resulted in continuing appalling losses of these dangerous ships and their crews.

*"Now more than ever it is vital for those with any information, advice, experiences, anything relevant to the Derbyshire and her sisters specifically, and similarly built bulkers generally, to bring it forward - not just to help the Derbyshire Family Association's case, but to catalyse the safety enhancement of these giant workhorses, and save even more lives. Even if readers have seen the information they may have already realted, please send the information; it will be important corroboration. Please, all the help you can muster ..."*

Paul Lambert (Chairman)  
MV Derbyshire Family Association  
109 Liverpool Road  
Huyton, Liverpool L36 3RB

## SAND KITE - MAIB REPORT

The MAIB have recently published their report into the *Sand Kite* collision with the Thames flood barrier on 27th October 1997.

The 76-page report goes into considerable detail as to the events leading up to the collision but the main points of interest to pilots are the recommendations concerning the issuing and administration of PECs by the Port of London Authority (PLA).

### Background:

The *Sand Kite* is one of many aggregate dredgers operating in the North Sea and Channel making regular trips between the dredging grounds and various aggregate jetties on the Thames. Some of these jetties are up river of the Thames flood barrier and it was whilst on an inward passage to such a jetty that the *Sand Kite* collided with the Barrier in fog.

### Findings:

Basically that the Master failed to execute an accurate turn on a course to ensure safe passage through the Barrier and failed to detect that the vessel was too far off track until it was too late to avert the collision.

At the time of the collision the Master, who was not in possession of a valid exemption certificate for that area, had conduct of the vessel. Also on the bridge was the Senior Mate who was in possession of a valid PEC but at the time of the collision was steering the ship because the Master did not have confidence in the steering ability of his AB's. The valid PEC certificate number recorded in the PLA computer as being "active" for the transit belonged to the junior Mate who was off watch and asleep at the time of the collision.

The above facts resulted in the MAIB

focussing on the issue and administration of PEC's by the PLA. The *Sand Kite* having a length of less than 100 metres was exempt from the requirement for the Master to be examined and the current PEC holders had been trained up by previous PEC holders and their certificates had been issued as a matter of routine upon application. This system was compared with procedures in other major ports (Humber, Southampton and Clyde) and London was found to be the only Authority that did not require an assessment by a pilot or a basic oral examination. Consequently, the MAIB recommended that the PLA:

- Introduce a system of periodic checks on existing and new PEC holders for vessels transiting the Thames Barrier.
- Introduce a verifiable means of ensuring that a PEC holder renewing a certificate has had full responsibility for the conduct of the vessel for the requisite number of passages.
- Remind Masters of the need to inform the PLA when certificate numbers are changed during a passage and a system to ensure that all such changes are recorded by the PLA computer system.
- Changes were also recommended to increase the regulation of traffic in the Barrier control zone at times of reduced visibility by the VTS at Woolwich.

Most of these recommendations have been or are shortly to be implemented in full by the PLA.

The Owner of the *Sand Kite*, South Coast Shipping was recommended to learn from this incident and to consider bridge resource management courses to improve the bridge team arrangements on board its vessels.



## Founder Member of the UKPA

John Rich (Bristol pilot retired) has recently sent me some interesting information regarding 2 plaques commemorating the founder members of the UKPA.

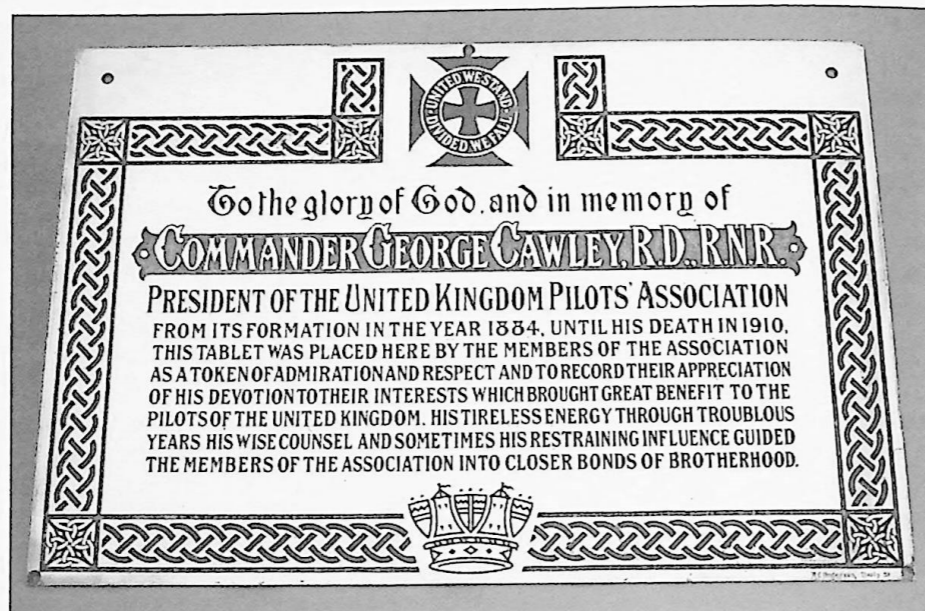
In 1981 Manchester pilot Harry Hignett and John Rich were researching the history of the UKPA and since the founder President Commander George Cawley was a Bristolian, John was able to locate valuable local information. Harry's research had also revealed another name associated with setting up the UKPA constitution, a maritime lawyer, Rear Admiral Bedford Clapperton Tryvellion Pim.

John's research revealed that Bedford Pim had died in 1886 at the age of 61 and as a measure of their regard pilots had commissioned a stained glass window to be installed at the West End of the Seamen's Institute church at Bristol in 1888. Records also revealed the existence of a brass commemorative plaque. Further enquiries revealed that the church in question had been badly damaged during the war and that the church was about to be demolished to make way for a new development. John was able to gain access to the site and was amazed to discover 16 very dirty commemorative plaques dedicated to various

seafarers including not only that of Bedford Pim but also to George Cawley. Sadly, there was no trace of the window.

These plaques were about to be disposed of, possibly as scrap and it took all of John's influence to save them. Following permission from the City of Bristol Museum they were subsequently removed to John's home whilst their fate was decided. Permission was granted to transfer them to the St. Nicholas Church Museum where, following extensive cleaning by John, they were placed on display at the end of 1981. In recent years the museum has closed and the

church now houses a tourist office but the plaques have not been on public display for some time. For this reason John is currently in negotiations with the trustees to have the two UKPA plaques incorporated into a new seafarers centre to be built at Royal Portbury Dock. Unfortunately all 16 plaques are now considered to be a "collection" not to be split up. Regrettably there is insufficient space in the new centre for all the plaques but John is working hard to ensure that at least the UKPA ones may be put on display on long term loan. It is hoped to bring you further news in a later issue.



## UKPA(M) INTERIM DELEGATE MEETING

TRANSPORT HOUSE - 12TH MAY 1999

16 Delegates attended the interim meeting and the following items were discussed:

### REVIEW OF THE PILOTAGE ACT:

The process of drawing up the Marine Operations Code for Ports is on going and working parties have now been established and are currently discussing Passage planning and training. UKPA(M) President Lord Berkeley has been actively involved in liaison between the Section Committee and Ministers.

### REPORTS FROM THE SECTION COMMITTEE

Chairman's Report	Financial Statement
Insurances	Pensions
Legal	EMPA
ITF / T&G	Technical & Training
Conferences.	

### DISTRICT REPORTS:

Were received from those delegates present

### AOB

Marine Operations Code  
PNPF / PNCP relationship  
IMPA membership  
Implications of the Water resources Act on limited liability under the Pilotage Act

Notes from the meeting are available from Davina.

## Discount Travel

### HOVERSPEED - SEACAT

Discount travel on the Dover/Calais; Folkestone/Boulogne; Stranraer/Belfast services continues. The usual 25% discount is available with a stamped addressed letter to the editor at his home address.

Please note that Sheena Ward has taken over as the staff travel co-ordinator and I now have a new application form to be used for the discount. If you require an application form please send me an s.a.c. as per usual.

### NORTH SEA FERRIES

#### Hull-Rotterdam

Pilots wishing to claim their 10% discount should state they are UKPA(M) Members when making their reservations on: **01482 77177**

## HUMBER PILOTS' BICENTENNIAL

Dear Sir,

As many readers will know it was the amalgamation of the Lower Station, Trent and Goole Services in 1988 which formed the nucleus of the present Humber pilots.

Records of pilotage on the Humber date back to Roman times, however it was not until 1512 that records of an official service exist, being carried out by the Brethren of Hull Trinity House. Even this was a situation which was open to abuse by none authorised men and legislation was urgently needed to control pilotage on the Humber, especially with the increase in shipping created by the opening of the first enclosed dock on the river in 1778.

The Act of 1800 gave Hull Trinity House the power to licence 30 pilots for the Humber which they duly did on 1st May 1800.

It is this date that the Humber pilots of today are recognising as a significant anniversary in the history of the river. It was the formation of the modern service and a chain of continuous pilots through two hundred years is a worthy record. Hence, we have commenced our bicentennial celebrations on 1st May 1999, to run until 1st May 2000.

The service has commissioned well known local artist Tom Harland to provide a painting of the Humber Pilots Steam Cutter Co's vessel SS *Commander Cawley* in Princes Dock Hull in 1899. As 'the finest steam pilot cutter afloat' she had just been delivered from the Tyne and was open to public inspection in the dock before commencing her first sea station. She took

her name from Commander Cawley who was a pilotage commissioner and the first president of the U.K.P.A.

On completion the painting will be on view to the public in Hull Maritime Museum, and will finally be presented to the people of Hull in April 2000 at a civic reception in the city's Guildhall. It will be available as a print by the autumn and will be our millennium Christmas card.

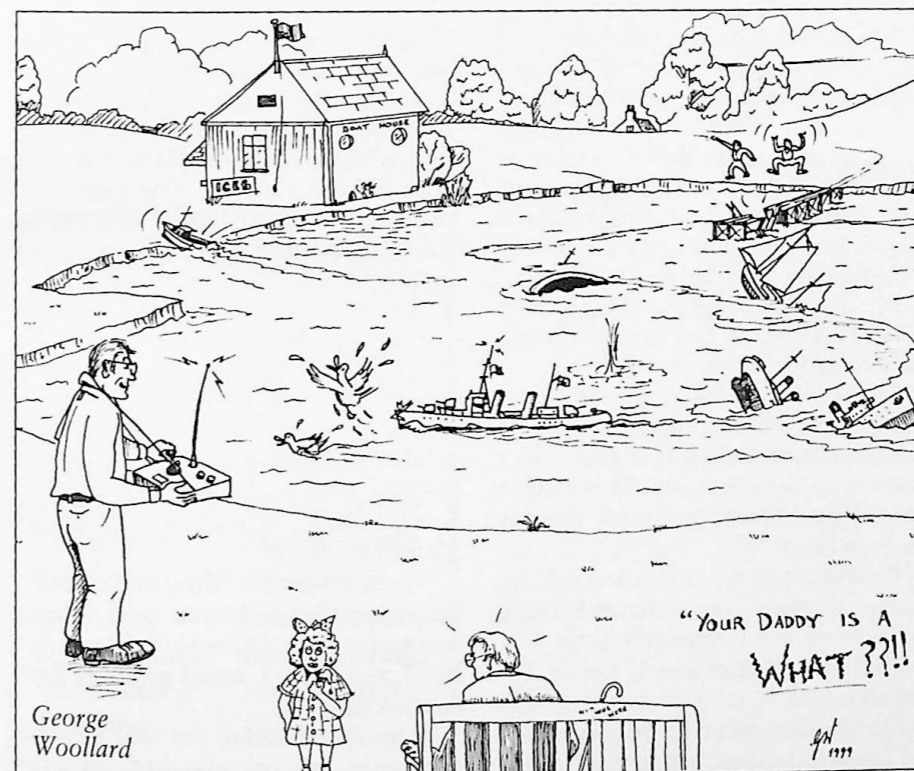
We are hoping to organise many other events during the year including, a stall at the annual Hull Show in September, a non singing presence at the annual Sea Shanty Festival (to everyone's delight), a Bicentennial Ball to be held in April 2000, and a documentary TV series which is being undertaken by Yorkshire Television to be screened in May 2000.

A busy year which we hope will help to lift our spirits and show the general public in the Humber region a side of our work and heritage of which many people are unaware of.

If anyone would like more information we will be adding to our web site during the year, [www.humberpilots.co.uk](http://www.humberpilots.co.uk) or by mail to, The Coordinators, Humber Pilots 200, Dunston House, Livingstone Road, Hessle, E Yorks HU13 OEG.

John Simpson and Alan Duckworth.

By a remarkable coincidence the Humber Pilots are commissioning a painting of the pilot cutter SS *Commander Cawley* at the same time as John Rich is endeavouring to place *Commander Cawley's* memorial plaque on display. Ed



## DISTRICT QUARTERLY REPORTS

### HUMBER (formerly SPURN)

#### Retirements:

B Freeman Nov '99 Due to ill health  
MS Dickinson May '99 Due to ill health  
M James Jan '99 Transfer to Liverpool

#### Recruitments:

J Clark - Commenced training Apr '99  
S Richman - Commenced training Apr '99

#### Other News:

Membership	1st Class	:	114
	2nd Class	:	19
	3rd Class	:	4
	Trainees	:	3

All 137 members of Humber Pilots Ltd. are UKPA(M) Members.

### TEES BAY

#### Recruitment:

RCB Booth - Licensed 12th June '99

#### Deceased:

J Boagey (Hartlepool) 8 April 1999

### FORTH

#### Recruitment:

Capt F Whitaker - Authorised July '99

## 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,  
PO Box No 848, Brighton, BN1 4PR.

#### In office hours

Mr L Powell:  
Daytime tel: 01273-863453

#### Outside office hours

Mr L Powell:  
Home tel: 01323-729393  
or Mr S S McCarthy:  
Home tel: 01444-248520

## BONHAMS

Montpelier Street, London SW7 1HH  
Due to the forthcoming Eclipse,  
we have revised the sale date of:

### Marine Paintings & Works of Art

to: Tuesday 17th August 1999

Contact:

Alistair Laird on 0171 393 3961

Catalogues: 0171 393 3933

# OBITUARIES

## Geoff Pilkington



It was with shock and sadness that London pilots learned of the death of our colleague Geoff, who had been suffering from cancer for some years.

Geoff was born in 1943 and joined Ellerman & Hall Lines in 1961 serving within their deep sea fleet on a variety of trades. It was in 1971 whilst serving as apprentice on board the *City of Leeds* that I first met Geoff, who was Second Mate. That voyage was only my second trip to sea and Geoff's knowledge and professional enthusiasm immediately impressed me. His technique of throwing random scenarios to be worked out made him a very effective tutor and his willingness to impart knowledge and generate enthusiasm remained with him throughout his career. One amusing incident that I recall was when working a night cargo watch in Beira, Geoff decided that a plate of egg and chips would be welcome and despite having been warned of my lack of culinary artistry, duly despatched me off to the galley to cook. Unfortunately the *City of Leeds* still had a coal fired galley and the real master of this environment, the Bhandary, had thoughtfully banked up the fires for the night! My concerns as to how to cope with this commercial dinosaur of a cooking range were met with the usual good humour and, following a brief course on the combustibility of stoking coke, I was able to raise a glimmer of flame. It was a credit to Geoff that his patience and good humour remained undiminished when some two hours later he was presented with a very dismal and soggy offering! Needless to say I was never asked to cook again!

In 1973, having obtained his Master's certificate, Geoff left Ellerman's and worked as Master on self-propelled rigs working in

the North Sea until 1978 when he followed his father as a Trinity House sea pilot on the Thames based at Gravesend. Following the change to employed status in 1988, Geoff was one of the sea pilots selected to become a river pilot and he then went on to become one of the few river pilots to extend their authorisation for the full navigable length of the river Thames above London.

Reflecting his total professionalism, in 1996 Geoff was chosen as one of the five Admiralty pilots responsible for piloting naval vessels above Gravesend but it was, sadly, at this time that his cancer was diagnosed. Following extensive treatments and despite optimism of remission the cancer took hold and in March this year Geoff was forced to take early retirement on health grounds. The knowledge of his deteriorating medical condition coupled with the loss of his pilotage career obviously proved too much and Geoff tragically took his own life.

Following cremation Geoff's ashes were scattered from a pilot cutter in a simple ceremony attended by family members and many of his colleagues. He will be sadly missed by all those who knew him but especially by his wife Margaret and two daughters, Samantha and Alania.

*John Clandillon-Baker*

## VCK Linney (1919-1999)

During the last few years, Dad wrote about his life at sea and his childhood in the village of Totternhoe in Bedfordshire. Here are some of the things he said:

"I was born on July 19, 1919. I have been told that all the church bells were ringing to celebrate the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, although it had been signed on June 28th. Anyway, my first Christian name is Victor, no doubt for that reason."

"I joined my first ship on 5th December 1935, at Southampton. The sailors described the life as 'two months a hermit and two days a lunatic'."

"I was bound to serve the British Tanker Company for four years in the sum of £10. I was to receive £60 for four years and a bonus of £5 at the end, also 12 shillings a year in lieu of washing (I think this was meant to buy soap)."

"Passing along the Spanish coast, we occasionally saw villages and farms burning, and one of the Company's ships was bombed by an aircraft with 47 bombs, but they all missed."

"On the Bass Strait between Australia and Tasmania we disturbed the biggest flock



of birds I ever saw. The noise of their wings sounded like an aircraft taking off."

"My first Captain was a nice old man who harassed no-one if things were going alright. He always whistled a tune called 'A Little White Gardenia' on his way up to the bridge, to warn those on watch to cease any nefarious activities."

"I had as a pet a Bulbul, a pretty little bird with yellow and black markings which got very tame and seemed to like being handled. It would eat anything but especially liked the cockroaches and steam-flies which infested the ship. It got diarrhoea if it ate too many cockroaches. The Bulbul eventually arrived home and my father thought a lot of it."

"Another trip, we took a cargo to Cochin and Ernakulam on the Malabar Coast of India. I remember a lagoon and the fishermen fishing from the beach with nets fixed to long poles which they would lower into the water. One day I saw a colourful procession involving elephants and capering Indians banging cymbals and drums, a great contrast to the miserable Mohammedans of the Persian Gulf who never seemed to enjoy life but hated everyone, or so it seemed. We played a game of football against some young Tamils. They played in bare feet, but won easily."

"Early in December 1939 I enrolled at the Sir John Cass Nautical School in Jewry Street, Aldgate, to study for my Second Mate's Certificate."

"We heard some of Winston Churchill's defiant speeches on the train radio. It never occurred to me that we might be beaten, but had I been older I would probably have worried more."

"Towards the end of this spell ashore, I met again the girl who had been my

sweetheart in school days. I asked her to marry me and she agreed, much to my surprise, as she was already engaged. Many young people rushed into marriage during wartime, thinking they might not be alive much longer."

"I signed on for the next voyage but had to be discharged as I had a poisoned hand which had to be operated on in the Western Infirmary, Glasgow. This was thought to be caused by an insect bite while in West Africa. After about ten days I left hospital and went home, but had more trouble with blood poisoning for several weeks."

"The area to the south of Newfoundland (The Grand Banks) was notorious for fogs and sometimes it took strange forms as, for instance, on one occasion no ship in the convoy was visible, except for their topmasts. Another time, a ship in the next column started to smoke, fog formed around the smoke particles and in a few minutes half the convoy was invisible, while our half remained in bright sunshine."

"From Freetown we went upriver to Pepel to load iron ore. We had a dog which had joined us in Swansea some time before. He was a nuisance for biting dockers, including one in Liverpool who risked his life rescuing him when he fell in the dock. So we gave him to the berthing pilot at Pepel and the last I saw of him, he was happily chasing lizards into the jungle."

"I was enjoying a drink and a chat with some Americans anchored off Murmansk, when the cabin boy burst in and said 'one of the Yanks is in the water'. We only had a rope ladder over the side and he had gone to attend the boat and fallen into the harbour. I rushed out without thinking about gloves or outer clothing and managed to grab his collar, from the foot of the ladder. But the wind was so cold, my hand holding the ladder froze and I had to let go of it and fell backwards into the icy water. The American, whose name I have forgotten, said 'Let go of me - no sense in both of us drowning'. However, I managed to keep

## Pensioners Deceased

February to April 1999

JS Binnie	Forth
J Boagey	Hartlepool
WF Cannell	Boston
EJ Davis	Bristol
WL Dunn	Fowey
RC Floyd	London - North
DJ Fraser	Liverpool
EH Irvin	London - North
AJ Pilkington	London Channel
RR Rowlinson	London - West
WH Ryder	Shoreham

him afloat until some others got into the boat and dragged him into it."

"We passed Cape Race on the 11th in the evening and next morning were off the islands of St Pierre and Miquelon, where we witnessed some remarkable mirages, whereby the horizon all around seemed to be lifted up. Ships actually below the horizon appeared to be steaming towards us, with their inverted images above them, and the hills and islands along the coast appeared to be elongated like the turrets of an old fortress. As the sun rose higher, the mirages disappeared."

"I soon fell under the spell of the Inner Hebrides, navigating the narrow sounds

between the islands was so much more interesting than the open sea. The Captain also seemed happiest close to the shore. Once, rounding the Mull of Galloway, bound for Preston, he went so close that the lighthouse keeper's wife came out and waved a tablecloth to warn us off."

In March 1953, Dad became a pilot for the North Channels of the London Pilotage District, based at Harwich. He remained in the Pilot Service until July 1981, when he retired. He did not write anything about his life after 1953.

We miss him more than words can say.

*Fiona, Sharon and Robert Linney.*

# THE PILOT

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**United Kingdom Pilots' Association (Marine)**

*(A Section of the Transport & General Workers Union)*

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