



# SEATIMES

The Newsletter of the Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada

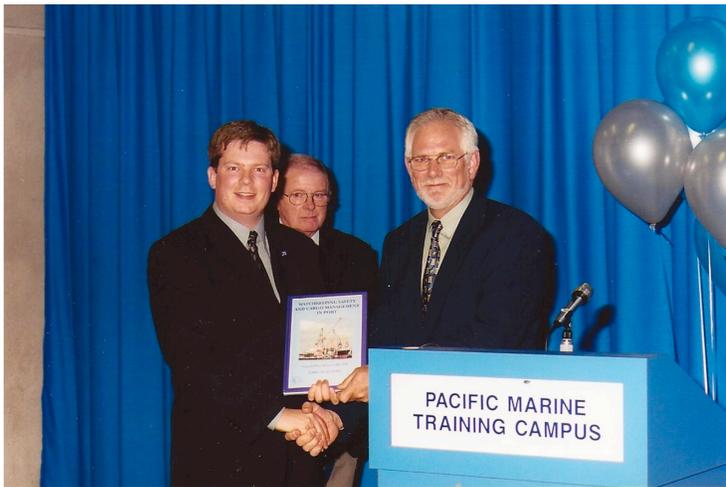
(Society founded in 1995 by the British Columbia Branch of the Nautical Institute)

Affiliated Members: The Company of Master Mariners of Canada, The Canadian Institute of Marine Engineers.

September 2011

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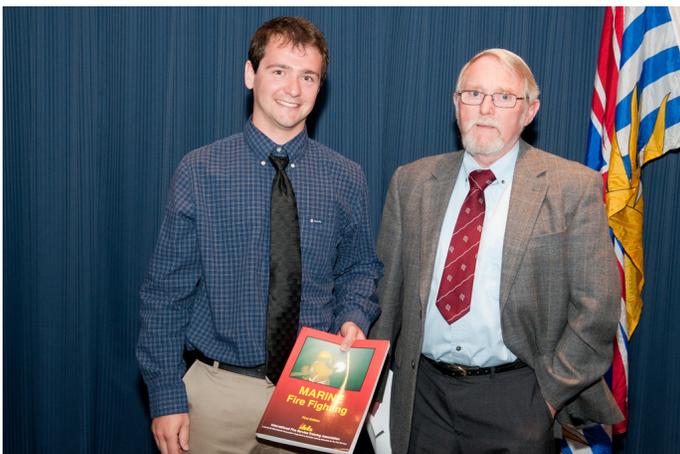
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On August 16<sup>th</sup> a Convocation Ceremony was held at the downtown Vancouver campus of the British Columbia Institute of Technology for graduates of the Institute's Nautical Sciences and Marine Engineering courses. This was the ninth year that the Society had presented books at such a ceremony. When the first intake of Nautical Science Cadets graduated in 2003, the class included David Willows who is now a Director of the BC Branch of the Nautical Institute and holds the position of Second Officer/Relief Chief Officer with the British Columbia Ferry Services. David is shown in this picture from July 2003 receiving a copy of the NI publication, *Watchkeeping and Cargo Management in Ports* from Captain Stan Bowles FNI, with myself, David Whitaker, in attendance. Note that the school was then referred to as the Pacific Marine Training Campus.

This year nineteen Nautical Sciences' students graduated along with fourteen from the Marine Engineer's course. These two groups were notable because of their high retention rate. Almost everyone who had begun the courses in 2007 had completed the programme and graduated.

The students chosen to receive our book awards for their Academic Achievements this year were Deck Officer Logan Kenning, shown in the first picture below with Brian Silvester FNI, and Engineer Officer Frank de Crom shown in the second picture with myself. They each received a copy of the "Marine Fire Fighting" manual.



The remaining activities of the Society for this year will include the Annual General Meeting, date and venue yet to be decided, and the selection of this year's recipient of our annual "Vancouver Foundation" bursary. There should be a presentation of the BCIT Foundation bursary too but this year it will go to a second year Engineer Cadet and experience has shown that he or she is liable to be at sea until early in the coming year.

*Here is an interesting item that was found in the pages of the Fairplay magazine dated February 7<sup>th</sup> 1991: -*

**The old school:** In these days of shipmanagers it is difficult to recall that there was once a time when some shipowners knew all the seafarers who worked for them. At least, they gave that impression.

Lawrence Holt, one-time senior partner of the Blue Funnel Line, certainly knew well all his senior officers and cadets, together with many of the senior ratings. After a completed voyage he would interview the Master and Chief Engineer and, if the voyage had been economically successful, they would receive a bonus. Whenever it was practical he would also visit a ship before she sailed from Liverpool and greet her upon her return.

Such men become the subject of legend, and stories of Lawrence Holt were legion within the Blue Funnel fleet, a fleet which at one time numbered over a hundred *Homeric* heroes – *Ajax, Diomed, Agamemnon* and the rest.

The senior partner was not a dressy man. His garb for ship visiting was an old trilby hat and a raincoat that had seen better days. His staff tried to keep up with him and, if he left his headquarters in “India Buildings” to visit a vessel, the Master would normally receive a warning, not from Lawrence but from someone else at head office who had been detailed to keep a watching brief. Even so, he could defeat them.

A newly promoted Chief Officer was keeping a weather eye open for him on one occasion, only to discover that he was already on board enjoying a cup of tea with the cook. In his trilby hat and dirty raincoat he had sneaked aboard unrecognised.

Once, in that garb, he was said to have been hailed from a ship coming alongside and asked to receive a line to help secure her. He did so but afterwards he sent an invoice to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to secure payment for his services in berthing the ship.

In the half-deck – the Cadets' or Midshipmen's quarters – he supplied the textbooks necessary to their craft, volumes of seamanship and navigation, and, on one occasion, he urged the young men to study the books when he saw them off.

On their return he asked if the books had been read and was solemnly assured that they had. Rifling through the pages of one he dislodged pound notes that he had put there when the vessel had sailed. “I see,” he remarked, pocketing the money, “that you had no use for these”.

Shipmanagers in today's industry, one fears, are really not quite of that same ilk.

(Ronald Hope - “Of Shoes & Ships” Fairplay February 7<sup>th</sup> 1991.)



*The following articles, promoting a career at sea, are taken from the web pages of BIMCO. BIMCO is the largest of the international shipping associations representing ship-owners controlling around 65 percent of the world's tonnage and with members in more than 120 countries drawn from a broad range of stakeholders having a vested interest in the shipping industry, including managers, brokers and agents.*

[https://www.bimco.org/en/About/About\\_BIMCO.aspx](https://www.bimco.org/en/About/About_BIMCO.aspx)

**David Patraiko: Seize the opportunities afloat:** David Patraiko is the Director of Projects for The Nautical Institute. This cheerful American is responsible for developing and managing major Institute projects and co-ordinates the NI's Technical and Professional Development Committees. He represents the professional interests of members in general shipping, training and technical forums, and spends time at the International Maritime Organization, fortunately but a short walk from the NI's headquarters in Lambeth, London.

Much of his work is aimed at assisting mariner members of the Institute with their Continuous Professional Development, which he admits is something of a passion. He has led research and produced many papers and articles on the use of CBT, Electronic Navigation, IT systems

and the inescapable “human element” issues that often arise through technology changes.

During his childhood, David was inspired by marine adventurers such as Cook, Bligh and Columbus, even declaring at the age of ten his intentions to run away to sea, which his mother managed to head off by telling him that there were no ships anymore since aircraft had been invented! But there was no stopping this determined mariner, and once the family moved close to the sea, he worked on yachts, doing deliveries and even at one time in his life lived on his own craft. And there was a profession ahead which saw him enrol and subsequently graduate from the famous Massachusetts Maritime Academy.

Some seafarers are specialists and plump for one type of trade or ship. David was more of an “itinerant” and perhaps more adventurous and curious than some and during a sea career which lasted some 12 years, sailed mostly on tankers, but also on bulk carriers and car carriers. He stayed clear of chemical tankers or passenger ships (hazardous cargoes, he suggests), but believes that by never staying too long in one ship or run, the variety, and additional experienced gained has been beneficial later in his career.

After obtaining his Unlimited Master's Certificate, and with two small children at home, David started looking for shore side employment. By then the family had located to the UK, so London was the obvious place to start looking. It was not, he confesses, easy, as like many seafarers he was largely unaware of the opportunities that are available in the shoreside shipping industry. He found a library with copies of Lloyd's List and started to educate himself about career possibilities. He was also engaged in an MBA degree, and the research involved with this, he recalls, brought him to The Nautical Institute.

Did this indicate an early interest in Continuous Professional Development? It might be a convenient term, but, he emphasises, represents only a formal approach to what many people merely think of as wanting to learn more. While he was at sea, David found that many mariners read out of interest, and try to understand how their job can be done better. CPD, he says, is a formal approach that helps to focus this learning and also permits individuals to demonstrate their professionalism to an employer. He is saddened by the attitudes of some who sail



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only for employment and seem to think that it is the employer's responsibility to train them. But everyone, he maintains, needs to develop themselves and to think about their own potential both as individuals and as professionals. And it is clear that he enjoys his job with the NI as he firmly believes that a professional body really does provide an opportunity for practitioners to share ideas, learn from each other, develop best practice and set new standards for safe and effective operation. In an age when the shipping industry is surging ahead with the application of new technology, innovations, regulations and greater demand for public accountability, professionals working on current operations are ideally placed to influence these things through the vehicle of their Institute. By working with its members, the professional institute is also able to inform and influence regulators at such forums as the IMO to improve regulation at the design stage.

Would David recommend young people to go to sea today? "I certainly would", he replies, going on to suggest that if they recognise that there are some risks and a rather different lifestyle, there are huge opportunities. Going to sea will equip a young officer with a unique degree of responsibility, authority, technical ability and self-confidence. A 22-year-old watchkeeping officer can be in sole charge of a watch, responsible for lives aboard ship, millions of dollars of cargo and ship value and billions in environmental liability. This early responsibility, says David Patraiko, builds character and self-confidence that benefits more senior roles at sea or ashore.

Date: 08.10.10

[https://www.bimco.org/Education/Seascapes/Seascapers/David\\_Patraiko.aspx](https://www.bimco.org/Education/Seascapes/Seascapers/David_Patraiko.aspx)

**John Guy - Never stop learning:** Education is forever, and learning is a lifetime activity, says John Guy, partner of Merlin Corporate Communications, which specialises in public relations and strategic marketing for the maritime industry. John really began the learning process when at the age of 16, he decided he didn't like school and obtained a sponsored cadetship with the famous old British liner company Cayzer Irvine. He admits that he hasn't stopped learning since.

After a year at the Warsash Maritime Academy he went to sea in the line's general cargo ships, then, after his first certificate, wandered between shipping companies "having fun and travelling", a period which included icebreaking with United Baltic Co and worldwide tramping with Bolton Steam Shipping Co. He became an enthusiastic "customer" of the Marine Society's College of the Sea, learning languages and writing as a hobby, entering (and indeed sometimes winning) the Society's competitions for seafarers' short stories and poems.

By 1976, he was a Chief Officer, serving in Bolton's bulkers, with voyages mostly to the Great Lakes in summer and worldwide the rest of the year. He became a regular correspondent for Fairplay International Shipping Weekly, bringing some real contemporary authenticity to that magazine. He wrote lively, well-received accounts of life aboard hard-working ships in the St. Lawrence Seaway and Lakes trade, along with tales of more surprising and less routine adventures, which included his ship being stuck in Iran during the tumultuous days of the Iranian revolution. He was also in the Royal Naval Reserve, serving in a number of warships and eventually becoming a Lieutenant Commander.

After obtaining his Master's Certificate, John pressed on and passed for Extra Master in 1981 winning the Royal Society of the Arts Silver Medal in doing so, and then, in 1984, he left Bolton to join the Department of Transport in South Africa as Principal Ship Surveyor and Chief Examiner. He admits that by then, he was enthusiastically always learning new things, using his free time at sea productively as he learned to write creatively and professionally.

While in South Africa he tried to communicate this to his department, establishing an internal learning programme for all the survey staff, based on "knowledge sharing", which really depends on everyone learning together and passing around what it is they have learned. He was to reprise this concept after he returned to England after four years in the SA DoT, to take up a position as Deputy Editor of Fairplay, joining the staff of the famous old magazine to which he had contributed, by then, for several years. With Fairplay, like so many trade publications, finding it difficult to attract marine professionals to work as journalists, he established an induction and ongoing learning scheme for these newcomers. John admits that it was useful to his own development as he found that he, as a marine professional, had to quickly learn what it was that journalists should know and do!

An acknowledged "multi-tasker", while at Fairplay John wrote two practical textbooks, both of which have been, and continue to be exceptionally useful for seafarers. The first - "Marine Surveying" - was a compendium of what he himself had been required to learn in his South African role. "Effective Writing" remains a first-class practical guide to a craft that everyone really needs, but which insufficient numbers of even professional people ever master.

Some have said that being a maritime journalist is like being permanently at university, and John has enjoyed using the access enjoyed by journalists to real "experts" in our industry, "to learn about the bits of shipping I didn't know about - like finance". He was also serving as an expert witness, with a particular expertise in "hot coal" problems, and spent some time as an arbitrator. His own personal education has continued, and while at Fairplay, he earned an Open University Degree in economics and sociology, and has continued to learn three languages "more or less" fluently, and others sufficient for work.

In 1995 John and colleague Chris Hewer established Merlin Corporate Communications, which rapidly became an industry leader, creating, editing and publishing magazines and corporate newsletters and other materials while providing public relations and crisis support to global companies. Crisis and communications training, along with conference and seminar facilitation have been among the other initiatives of this busy consultancy. John remains a regular choice as a conference chairman, with his own distinctive style, which tends to be remembered by those who have experienced this particular skill.

Merlin remains an important activity for John, although it has downsized and provides PR and strategic marketing for only relatively few clients, leaving its senior partner to get on with an increasing voluntary workload in the health sector in Wales, where he has settled. He is notable for his skill in meetings, getting to the point swiftly, and getting things done. And he is still learning!

Would he recommend a career at sea in an industry that has changed greatly in the past forty years? "Yes, of course, for the right person" - he answers without hesitation. It remains, he says, a career that offers a chance to travel, free time to study, a path to self-reliance and the important ability to live and work with people of all countries and cultures. There are also, he adds, even more career opportunities in the maritime world, suggesting the offshore, wind energy and super yacht sectors. "Seafaring for me", says John, "was never an end in itself; just something I liked doing, which seemed naturally to lead to other things which I also liked, and still like today!"

Date: 11.07.11

[https://www.bimco.org/Education/Seascapes/Seascapers/John\\_Guy.aspx](https://www.bimco.org/Education/Seascapes/Seascapers/John_Guy.aspx)



**Attracting a new generation of seafarers:** For many years there was a sort of generational continuity in the seafaring workforce in many shipping nations. Seafaring was often a family business, with large populations of seafarers living around the ports. Ships were more visible and better understood by the general public. Recruitment was thus no great problem.

Today, even in maritime nations, the shipping industry tends to be “out of sight and out of mind”, the ships that were once seen in the midst of big port cities, banished to the deep-water terminals far from the city centres. The general public makes no connection between the goods in the shops and the ships that brought them into the country and shipping, and what it does is largely taken for granted.

This is something of a problem to the shipping industry as it struggles to maintain its recruitment at a level that will see the workforce replenished. Not only does the industry have to “sell” shipping to the potential recruits, but it also has to explain what shipping does. It would be theoretically possible to depend entirely on foreign workforces as in many countries there is very often no longer any nationality requirements for seafarers. But that would leave a maritime nation dependent on the skills of others, and there is also a benefit that comes from a sea-experienced workforce in the maritime infrastructure - all the jobs ashore that require or benefit from seafaring experience.

So the shipping industry has to sell itself to young people who may not have ever thought of themselves as seafarers, and has to promote the industry “awareness” through schools and colleges. So it works hard to tell people about itself, why shipping is so important, and the interest and advantages of the various elements of the sea career.

Once it could have merely suggested that a life at sea was one that would appeal to the adventurous, with the fascination of strange foreign ports and world travel as premier attractions. Today, of course, many young people go abroad for their holidays, and it must be admitted that the average ship’s time alongside in port does not leave much opportunity for sightseeing!

Instead the industry recruiters focus on a number of “positives” - the interest of a job that is so very different from the 9-5 toil in an office, one that offers huge responsibilities at a very young age, good prospects in an expanding world industry and qualifications - that can be degree-level - that are internationally recognised. They rightly emphasise the technology and sense of achievement that comes from being part of a team operating large and sophisticated ships. They might talk about the “university” of the sea and being part of a fascinating international industry, with the opportunity to meet people from all over the world. They recognise that young people have choices these days, but the sea life can be attractive!

Seascapes 05.03.08

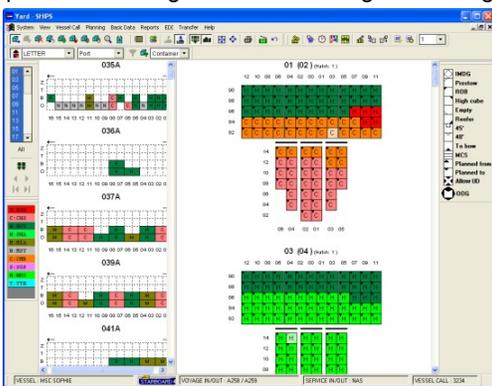
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**Why stevedoring matters:** Ships earn their money in transit from port to port. So, the shortest time they are tied up alongside, the more they earn. This is why expeditious cargo handling is as important today as it was when dockworkers moved cargo around on their shoulders.

Stevedoring might be thought of as the science of cargo handling and it makes a huge difference to the whole economics of sea transport. It is a matter of ensuring that the ship, on arrival in port, is met with sufficient labour and equipment to discharge or load whatever cargo might be required. Once an exceedingly labour intensive business, with several hundreds of dockworkers required to handle general cargo ships in the pre-container days, it has become a capital-intensive industry.

A container terminal will require huge shiploader gantry cranes, equipment such as straddle carriers to move containers around on the ground and equipment for moving boxes on and off trains or trucks. The computerised systems for identifying the individual boxes on the terminal and sorting them so that they are in the optimum place for stowage or collection might be thought of as the last word in modern stevedoring equipment, while the workers who operate such a terminal are a long way from the dockers who once handled cargo with their own muscles.



Specialist terminals such as those which handle bulk ships are similarly sophisticated, with a relatively small number of people handling gigantic quantities of coal, iron ore or similar dry cargoes. There are specialist stevedores who handle “project” cargo, which might be enormous indivisible loads, heavy lifts, rolling cargoes such as vehicles, or such cargoes as wind-farm components. All require a great deal of skill and proper training if they are to be handled safely, with the ship not in any way hazarded.

The terminal operator and the stevedore are increasingly specialised, but the principles of safely handling cargo and despatching ships on time are the crucial elements of successful stevedoring. Good stevedores, many of whom will have come out of the seagoing side of shipping, know that the safety of the ship once she leaves port will be in their hands, and they will be at pains to ensure that detailed cargo plans are followed to the letter, and that the cargo is secure and lashed down before the ship goes to sea.

Time is always of the essence in stevedoring. The science of stevedoring balances the need for speed with the demand for safety. A ship leaving on time, her cargo safe aboard, is the stevedore’s aim.

[https://www.bimco.org/Education/Seascapes/Maritime\\_Matters/Why\\_stevedoring\\_matters.aspx](https://www.bimco.org/Education/Seascapes/Maritime_Matters/Why_stevedoring_matters.aspx)

*Watery Words (Compiled by Mary Alderton): as seen in a past edition of "Fairplay". <http://www.fairplay.co.uk/>*

**The origin of seafaring words: "Down the hatch"** may be old fashioned or facetious as a toast, but the name for the hole in the deck is very much in business today. There is not much agreement among various languages on this word, which proves the idea came relatively late – you would think it would be a fairly obvious arrangement.

One man's name lives as the person who prevented greedy shipowners from stuffing too much cargo down the hatch, thus risking seafarers' lives. This was Samuel Plimsoll, the British Member of Parliament, who lived from 1824 to 1898.

He took seamen's welfare so much to heart that he would lose his temper and shake his fist as he harangued Parliament on the subject of safety. He even called the members "scoundrels", but in spite of such unparliamentary language we eventually got the **Plimsoll Line** on every cargo vessel.

This is of course connected with the **draught** of a ship, a very much older concept. The word is related to "to draw" in the sense of to drag or pull, and we are talking about drawing water from a tap or drawing a bath – nothing to do with breezes or artwork.

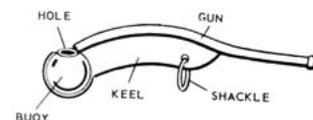
Each language here has its own version, mostly meaning depth or immersion.

Depth brings us to "**fathom**". We try to fathom a mystery or speak of unfathomable depths if we are feeling poetic. "Full fathom five thy father lies" must be one of Shakespeare's most familiar lines.

A fathom is now only to measure depth, but the meaning came from the distance spanned by a man's outstretched arms as he heaved the leadline from the water and measured as he pulled by the number of spans. Thus a horizontal measure became a vertical one. The old meaning survives in Scandinavian languages where for example Swedish uses "famn" to mean "(within one's) embrace of arms".

**Two reasons why whistling at sea was discouraged in the old days From "The Mariner's Book of Days 2011":**

1. Whistling was thought to bring on the wind, which could be a good thing, but too much whistling could bring on too much wind.
2. Orders were passed by bosun's call (or pipe) on large vessels, particularly warships; so random whistling could cause confusion.



The Boatswain's (Bosun's) Call,

**"Our thanks to those members who have donated to the Society this year. Our suggested membership fee of \$40.00 has not altered in 16 years. You are not limited in your donation and some members have made sizeable contributions. Most give what they can afford and many have given annually. The amount donated is tax deductible. It is our hope that with all members of the BC Branch of the Nautical Institute contributing annually we can better assist the new generations of mariners in their studies. Many have responded to our request with the comment "certainly I'll donate – I was unaware of the NPESC." So, spread the word, and ensure all members of the BC Branch are aware of the Society. Tell your employers; if we cannot encourage young mariners, then who will man the vessels?"**

**Captain John Lewis FNI. Chairman**

The Society welcomes any financial contribution you can make. Donations should be made payable to the **NPESC** and mailed to: **Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada, 20 – 1030 Hulford Street, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3B6**

Would you like to know more about the Society? If so, please contact me at [whitknit@shaw.ca](mailto:whitknit@shaw.ca)  
**David Whitaker FNI. Editor**

**When making a donation please complete this form to accompany your cheque. Thank you.**

**Yes!** I wish to support the aims of the Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada.

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