

SEATIMES

The Newsletter of the Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada

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



October 2018

In 2017 one of BC Ferries' "Spirit" class ships left the waters it had sailed for 25 years and headed for Poland and a mid-life refit. Here is a story about the voyages, there & back.

M.V. *Spirit of British Columbia*: Tsawwassen to Gdansk: On September 12th, 2017, one of the two largest ships in the BC Ferries' fleet set sail from Vancouver, Canada to the Remontowa Shipyard in Gdansk, Poland. After 25 years of running between Tsawwassen on the British Columbia mainland and Swartz Bay on Vancouver Island, the *Spirit of British Columbia* was to undergo a complete midlife refit. I was the Second Officer for this voyage. It was my first appointment after graduating from the British Columbia Institute of Technology Nautical Sciences Diploma Program.

The most notable upgrade is the installation of a dual fuel system, which will enable the ferry to run on either liquefied natural gas or low sulphur diesel. The newest vessels in the BC Ferries' fleet, the *Salish* class, were built in the Remontowa Shipyard and were designed specifically to run on this dual fuel system. These efforts are a part of the huge initiative by BC Ferries to reduce emissions and significantly improve the carbon footprint of the entire west coast shipping industry.

The first leg of the voyage was from Vancouver to Panama. Crossing the American border in the Juan de Fuca Strait marked the furthest distance the *Spirit of British Columbia* has ever sailed from its homeport of Victoria. The vessel had to go through a multitude of modifications to satisfy all SOLAS regulations for a foreign going vessel. Firstly, the vessel was re-classed as a cargo ship to permit a minimal crew of 16 people. Items to be fitted included GMDSS equipment (MF/HF, Inmarsat B & C), SARTs, EPIRB, survival suits, water activated lights to be affixed onto lifejackets and SOLAS Type A life rafts.

This ferry and its sister, the *Spirit of Vancouver Island*, have no bilge keels. The GM is high which means the vessels are quite stiff with a tendency to roll. The journey was not entirely smooth as literally no one could predict how the vessel would take the ocean swell. There were some unforgiving waves that stood you straight up out of bed, but we managed to successfully avoid all the storms. Midway to Panama, we had to substantially alter course further south in an effort to dodge hurricane 'Norma' that was developing to the south of the Baja California peninsula. This added a day to our total voyage, but it was the only option.

We anchored off Balboa early afternoon on September 24th and spent 6 days carrying out inspections and other necessary jobs in order to transit the canal. The biggest issue was getting the proper placement of "panama leads", the fairleads that ensure the wires from mules would not chafe on the bulwarks as the ship was transiting the locks. After almost a week, the *Spirit of British Columbia* was finally allotted a time slot for a night transit.

After 10 hours at the Cristobal anchorage on the Atlantic side of the Canal we received provisions, filled up our fuel tanks again (this time to the brim) and continued through the Caribbean and into the Atlantic. The transit of the Atlantic was pretty smooth; actually too smooth, which is very uncharacteristic for these parts of the world at that time of year.

There was a massive storm brewing to the north, hurricane 'Ophelia'. It wasn't necessarily in our way, but helped eliminate the idea of taking fuel and provisions in Horta in the Azores. Sailing at an average of 15 knots, we reached Tenerife in the Canary Islands in 10 days. Again: fuel, provisions and fresh water.



Off the west coast of Portugal we were hit by the worst weather of the entire trip, where we clocked in 36° rolls. The ship held great, just discomfoting. We continued through the English Channel, around Skagen, through Helsingborg and Copenhagen Straits and into the Baltic Sea.

On October 22nd, 2017 we dipped down right into the port city of Gdansk, Poland where I signed off the vessel.

PART II – Return Delivery: Five months later I flew back to Poland in readiness for the return voyage. After an incredibly ambitious and labour intensive 5 months, Remontowa Shipyard was able to deliver a unique conversion project, with state of the art technology and highest quality equipment. The bridge, to my surprise, was completely remodelled. Fully paperless ECDIS with 3 independent nodes; two X-band and one S-band radars; new gyros, auto pilots, thermal camera, sound direction finder, top class fire and LNG detection systems, etc. And yet still, the main upgrade was in the engine room. It was a brand new LNG vessel, with 4 Wärtsilä 4000 kW 8-cylinder dual fuel engines, gearboxes, propellers, new rudders, steering system and bow thrusters. The *Spirit of BC* went for 5 daytime sea trials with 130 people onboard. Typical for a new build, unexpected hurdles were encountered but swiftly rectified.

The actual departure date after approval by DNV and Transport Canada was March 31st, 2018. After a relatively smooth 3-day sail, the ship anchored off the coast of Normandy in anticipation of a weather window in the Bay of Biscay. For 4 days, Biscay had a 4 to 5-metre swell and winds in excess of 40 knots.

We departed on the evening of April 6th, and resuming a speed of 18 knots, sailed down to a Spanish port of Vigo, again for shelter. After 3 days at anchor, we continued to Tenerife, where our first BC Ferries crew change would be. The delivery of the new ferry is divided into 3 distinct legs, each time with a new bridge and engine room compliment undergoing familiarization with their 'new' vessel.

On the 14th of April, *Spirit of British Columbia* sailed out across the Atlantic (see "Atlantic Sunrise" above). We caught the North Equatorial current, gaining a couple knots, hoping to make up for the days spent at anchor. Unfortunately, the current was slow. We passed between Martinique and St. Lucia into the Caribbean, and on the 23rd, we were alongside in Cristobal.

The entirety of the first two legs we were sailing on diesel. The average consumption was 40 tonnes per day, running three engines. On the third leg, from Panama to British Columbia, we ran each engine briefly on LNG before running all four engines on it for a period of more than two days. This extended the range of the diesel and it was not necessary to stop for fuel. The weather was unbelievably welcoming and we averaged 21 knots. We left Balboa on the 25th of April



and arrived 10 days later at the BC Ferries Deas Dock Fleet Maintenance Unit on the Fraser River (left).

This ambitious undertaking required a very a large number of people to commit a lot of time, effort and resources to make the project successful. For a month after the delivery, the *Spirit of British Columbia* crew will get trained and familiarized on their new ship in preparation for the vessel to return to service.

I am currently standing by a new LNG build in Québec but will soon be flying to join the *Spirit of Vancouver Island* for its turn to visit the shipyard in Poland.

Serguei Koutaitsev AMNI, 2nd Officer, July 31, 2018

Some sites worth looking at:

For a view of the Remontowa Shipyard look at: <http://gcaptain.com/watch-drone-video-shows-a-busy-remontowa-shipyard/>

BC Ferries June 12th Press Release: <https://www.bcferries.com/about/projects/sobc-midlife-upgrade.html>

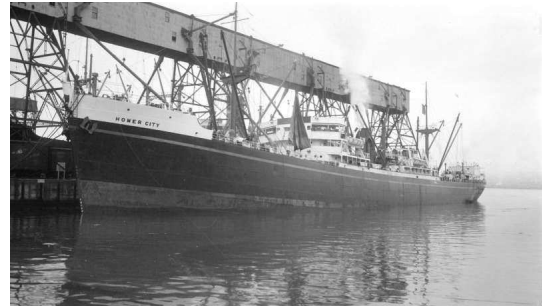
About Deas Dock: <https://www.vancouverisawesome.com/2018/02/01/bc-ferries-richmond-tunnel-deas-dock/>

Life at Sea. The experiences of apprentices who served with four different British shipping companies. From 'Ships Monthly' May 1996.

2. Smith's of Cardiff: I served my apprenticeship with Smith's of Cardiff in the fifties (1956-60). There was a marked difference in service between an Indian-crewed ship and those with an all-British crew. All newly built post war ships were Indian-manned. These were *King City* and *Queen City* (1950) and *Leeds City*, *New Westminster City*, *Welsh City* and *Victoria City*, all commissioning 1955-56. The *Victoria City* was unfortunately lost as a result of collision in the North Sea within nine months of her entering service. *Homer City* of 1944 (ex *Empire Rangoon*) was the only older ship with Indian crew. I served in her in 1959.

Life for apprentices in Indian-crewed ships was more akin to the style of cargo liner companies of that period with an emphasis on uniform and dining in the Officers' saloon. On British-crewed ships of older pre-war and war-built vintage, apprentices had their own separate messroom. The Junior Apprentice, 'peg', drew the coffee, tea, sugar, condensed milk etc. weekly from the 2nd Steward and collected the daily meals direct from the galley in mess kits. I recall 'borrowing' the keys from the well-dined Chief Steward of the *Bradford City* on numerous occasions and supplementing our provisions from the store with rarely seen tinned 'goodies'. The Senior Apprentice normally reported directly to the Mate for daily duties, although some Mates took the line of least resistance and placed the apprentices under the Bosun. Apprentices working independently were valued by Mates, particularly on the Japan-Australia ballast passages for the expert erection of grain shifting boards to the high standard required by the feared government surveyor in Fremantle, Captain Bruce. Many a weary hour was spent crawling through box-beams with a hand brush eliminating coal cargo residues.

'Turn-to' was at 0700. My job as Junior Apprentice in *Cornish City* was to replenish the fresh water and sanitary tanks that served the Mates', Engineers' and crew's bathroom/toilets by gravity. This was a thankless job as numerous toilet valves would be carelessly left open and I was frequently assailed mid-morning in broad Sunderland by an irate Second that there was "nee f...n, b...t



watter in the s... house."

Due to the unreliability of the ubiquitous Brown's Autopilot, the older ships were frequently under hand steering. The 4-8 watch was manned by the apprentices working the traditional 'First-wheel, second-wheel, farmer rotation. Bridge watchkeeping training was not a feature of this system unless one had a young enthusiastic Mate who would stretch our dopey early morning brains with star sights.

Smiths' approach to recruitment and training was not sophisticated. Interviews were not a feature of the selection process; however, a correspondence course was provided, diminishing devotion to which was directly proportional to the proximity of the fleshpots of the Motomachi in Kobe (in the

days when Japan was a cheap run ashore).

In compensation for the somewhat arduous and exploitive nature of the apprentices' lot, Smiths were indulgent regarding accommodation. All newly built post-war ships had pleasant single-berth cabins for apprentices and many of the war-built ships were given excellent renovations. I joined the *Cornish City* (1943, ex *Empire Cheer*) in drydock at Rotterdam in March 1956 and the apprentices had been given a deck-house at the after end of the boat deck, comprising four single cabins, messroom and bathroom. I have some good memories of that ship, particularly the long period at anchor in the Solent in the company of many other government-chartered ships during the Suez Canal crisis of 1956. This stay was highlighted by runs ashore into Cowes, much to the dismay of local residents who found it difficult to cope with the exuberance of 'jack ashore'. Behaviour was, I'm sure, no worse than that of some 'Hooray-Henry yachties' during Cowes week, but it provoked virulent 'anti-merch' comment in the press at the time. I can remember many of the ships at anchor, including *Benvannoch*, *Cedarpool*, *Sandsend*, *Parkgate*, *North Britain* and many others.

Smiths were also relatively indulgent regarding pay. We were initially on 1s 3d per hour overtime, rising to 1s 9d. In discharge ports we could loiter in the region of No.3 hatch at night in case the Mate on duty wanted derricks topped or lowered, giving us welcome hours overtime. All this was a long time ago and I've got no regrets. The ethos absorbed at the time has stood us all in good stead.

Captain V.W. Pitcher, Sittingbourne, Kent.

(No. 3, Blue Star Line, will appear in the next edition of *Seatimes*.)

Welcome to a Life at Sea: Sixty years ago, after an all night train journey from Plymouth, the start of my boyhood ambition to go to sea came to fruition. Cadet 254 Lewarn joined the *H.M.S. Conway* Merchant

Navy Cadet Ship for two very 'interesting' and formative years. Settling in to the Maintop dorm in the House was generally a positive experience, including being sent to get a 'long stand' from the duty Cadet Captain! As one learned the ropes, routine soon took over and the 'learning' experience got underway. By the end of the Summer Term 1960, with an Extra Leaving Certificate, a few prizes and swimming colours to show for my efforts, the *Conway* years were over and my real ambition was about to become a reality. Having been accepted for an apprenticeship with Royal Mail Lines, I was appointed to join RMS *Araby* (right) in London for my first trip to sea, and what a baptism to life at sea it turned out to be.

On an unusually warm autumn Friday, in full uniform and carrying a large heavy suitcase with all my needs for the forthcoming voyage, I arrived at Head Office in Leadenhall Street, London to be briefed and to collect the Plath sextant that was to serve me well for 13 years at sea, and remains with me today as a treasured possession. Briefing over, and after a quick taxi ride to the Royal Docks (below) I was duly deposited at the west gate of the Royal Victoria Dock, only to discover *Araby* was berthed



The Royal Docks - early 1950s

near the east end of the King George V Dock some 5 kilometres away! I finally arrived at the bottom of *Araby's* gangway hot, tired and thirsty after the 5-kilometre walk, with suitcase and sextant in hand. The ship was a great disappointment as it was in a state of disrepair, particularly dirty and surrounded by other really smart-looking ships. With growing trepidation, I climbed the gangway, narrowly missing the wet paint, only to find there was nobody around. Finally the 2nd Mate appeared and greeted me with, 'What do you want? Why are you here? It's Friday and this is a dead ship, we don't need you until Monday so you might as well go home for the weekend.' Having explained this was not possible, I was finally shown to the Cadet's cabin, which was very small for two people and covered in grime. The reason for the grime became

clear once we put to sea. After discovering there was no food on board until Monday, my excitement at finally joining my first ship turned to utter despair. Welcome to my new career, surely things couldn't get worse! After a miserable weekend, Monday arrived and by midday the ship was humming with life, the crew was signed on and lunch was served. Things were finally looking up.

Over the next few days, preparations were made to start the scheduled 10-week voyage. We were to pick up the outward cargo from Middlesbrough, Newport, Swansea and London and then proceed to the West Indies. Finally sailing for Middlesbrough, it was all very exciting. However, my first voyage in *Araby* turned out to be an 'interesting' and challenging introduction to seafaring.

While going from Middlesbrough to Newport, at night, in the incredibly busy English Channel, just off Dover, *Araby* suffered a total power loss and blackout. Anchoring was considered imprudent so we just drifted in the busy shipping lane. Oil lamps were deployed to let other ships know we were there. However, they were only visible over a short distance and I was instructed to rig the Aldis light and 'wave it about' so we could be seen! After what seemed an eternity and a few near misses, power was restored and we continued on to Newport.

Returning to London and after completing loading, *Araby* was finally on her way to the West Indies and the cause of the grime in the accommodation soon became apparent. She was a five-hatch general cargo ship built in 1947 for the West Indies trades and fitted with a heavy oil main engine and steam auxiliaries. The exhaust from the main engine was particularly sooty so that, when at sea, the exhaust blew aft over the deck and was 'efficiently' sucked in to the accommodation entrance at the after end of the main deck accommodation where it duly permeated all the living quarters, leaving grime everywhere! The steam auxiliaries also included the windlass, the after docking winch and all the cargo winches, the winch bed of one forming the deckhead of the cadets' cabin; great for sleeping when night cargo was worked! My docking station was aft and it was my duty to clear the condensation from the steam lines to the docking winch. In warm weather this was a relatively quick task but in cold weather this could take up to thirty minutes before the crew went to stations for docking; very character-forming on a February winter's night!

About three days after leaving London, it was discovered we were almost out of fresh water and we went on to rationing. This was a time before salt-water desalinators were common on ships, so the decision was made to stop at the Azores and take on fresh water to fill the fresh water tanks. The Azores Islands are not the wettest place on the planet, so the cost of filling the tanks at Ponta Delgada on Sao Miguel Island must have been an expensive exercise.

After arriving at our next port, Kingston in Jamaica, the ship's generators began to have problems causing blackouts. Here I also discovered the 'joys' of living in a very small, two-berth cabin in the Tropics with no air-conditioning and an incredibly hot steam winch above the cabin.

After three weeks of very intermittent electrical power while the engineers tried to effect repairs, *Araby* sailed on to San Juan in Puerto Rico and La Guaira in Venezuela without further incident. The weeks in Kingston provided considerable leisure time for us apprentices including afternoon swims in the Myrtle Bank Hotel pool and being introduced to what became the lifelong pleasure of high quality rum. However, all this frivolity was not to last as shortly after, at Puerto Cabello in Venezuela, the troublesome generators broke down completely. Spare parts had to be flown out from London, so in the meantime we were hooked up by power cables to a Harrison Line ship some distance astern. Communication was frequently by semaphore (all those stints as duty signaller paid off, thank you, Conway). A week later the Harrison ship had to depart, leaving *Araby* without power. Fortunately the spares soon arrived, the generators were repaired, and *Araby* was on her way once again, albeit some four weeks behind schedule.

Calls at Willemstad and Saint Nicolas in the Dutch West Indies were followed by calls at Punta Cardon and Maracaibo in Venezuela. Next was Cartagena in Columbia where the ship adopted a small cat, duly named 'Gena', what else! Having discharged all the outbound cargo, *Araby* sailed for Beaumont in Texas to load a cargo of sulphur. On the way to Beaumont the 3rd Engineer tragically died, from what I don't know, only to be followed shortly thereafter by the death of the newly acquired ship's cat, from what was probably feline enteritis.

Beaumont is about 40 miles from the sea, of which the first 20 miles is the Sabine River, which marks the boundary between Texas and Louisiana, and the remainder is the Beaumont Ship Channel. The Beaumont Ship Channel passage was interesting as it is formed by levee banks, where the ship's waterline was actually higher than the land on either side. Also, several hundred US Reserve Fleet ships were mothballed and laid up just off the main channel.... quite a sight. Loading bulk sulphur is a messy business as, when the sulphur ignited from time to time, it is almost impossible to see the flame in daylight. This was particularly hazardous if the flames were not extinguished quickly as dust explosions were easily caused. Much worse for us apprentices was the fact that sulphur dust turns brasswork black; you can guess whose task it was to keep the brass on the bridge clean.

After completing loading and heading down back down the Ship Channel, *Araby* suffered a complete loss of steering and ploughed fully loaded into the levee at seven knots. The ship was left blocking the channel with the bow about a third of the way into the levee. The immediate reaction was to back out once steering had been restored, but because the levee had been weakened by the impact, the pilot indicated it was safer for the ship to remain impaled. The US Corps of Engineers inspected the damage and decided to strengthen the bank on the landward side before attempting to free the ship. Some days later, after the strengthening work was completed, *Araby* was slowly backed out of the levee under her own power. After an inspection of the bow that no damage had been caused by the soft levee bank, we proceeded to sea and headed for Cork and Manchester to unload.

While sailing through the Florida Strait there was a further problem with the steering that required a full steering gear shutdown for repairs. The aft emergency steering was activated and *Araby* deviated to Port Everglades where the repairs could be carried out. Steering from the aft emergency steering position was physically demanding due to the direct gearing to the steering quadrant and the constant difficulty of keeping the ship on course. It was with great relief that *Araby* berthed in Port Everglades, successfully repaired the steering gear and, three days later, headed for Cork.

Having partially unloaded at Cork, where there were dirty, ragged, barefoot kids on the streets begging for money and/or food, we continued to Manchester, some 36 miles up the Manchester Ship Canal. Shortly after arriving at Ellesmere Port, just beyond the entrance to the canal, the topmasts were lowered so the ship could pass under the low span bridges on the way to Manchester. Once this was completed *Araby* headed up the canal. About a ship's length before each bridge, a 'trip' wire was permanently rigged from one side of the canal to the other. The span bridges had a clearance height of 75' and the trip wires were 6" lower than the span. If a ship tripped the wire it was unlikely to pass safely under the bridge. We approached the first

bridge, the Latchford High Level Bridge (below) and, with a loud bang, the wire tripped. After some discussion it was decided to send me up the foremast and, as the ship edged forward towards the bridge, I was to signal back to the ship's bridge to indicate whether we would pass safely under. We edged forward; it looked OK; we got closer and I was less sure; too late to stop; we went under the bridge with about 2" to spare; utter relief! What a task to give a 17-year old boy on his first trip to sea! I still imagine what could have happened if I had got it wrong.



After an 'interesting' first voyage of 14,000 nautical miles, I officially signed off in Manchester on March 6th 1961, some 3 months and 27 days after signing on in London for what was supposed to be 10-week voyage! My introduction to seafaring could well have been a case of 'be careful what you wish for' but did the voyage put me off seafaring? Decidedly no. The voyage was certainly challenging but my enthusiasm for the sea was not diminished. I had learned a lot, being thrown back on one's ingenuity was stimulating and the freedom given a 17-year old ex-Conway boy was exhilarating. Some 13 years later, after another 'interesting' voyage, this time to the Canadian Arctic, life ashore beckoned and my career in academia commenced; but that's another story.

(By Barrie Lewarn "The Cadet" July 2018.)

"The Cadet" is the official publication of *The Conway Club*.

Klaveness conducts ship survey with no surveyor on board: One of Norway's most tech savvy owners, Torvald Klaveness, has released details of how it has concluded a class-approved ship survey with the surveyor sitting some 5,000 km away from the vessel. Klaveness Ship Management (KSM) set out to explore the road towards condition based maintenance back in April 2017 with a working theory that shipowners could save substantial amounts by addressing maintenance tasks on vessels when needed instead of makers' recommendation, which normally is maintenance at a set number of hours.

In order to achieve class notation for condition monitoring, it is a requirement to have MPMS (machinery planned maintenance system) notation in place. For KSM, this meant that some vessels would have to undergo an initial MPMS survey.



KSM completed the first ever-approved remote initial MPMS survey on the caustic bulk vessel *Ballard* in June this year. The survey preparation and execution was done in close collaboration with class society DNV GL. The traditional engine room inspection was replaced with a video recorded by the use of a GoPro camera, which was shared with the surveyor in advance of the survey.

The survey was conducted with the surveyor located in Oslo, sharing screen and communicating with a Chief Engineer onboard the vessel during a port call in Bahrain. The Chief Engineer presented the PMS and the onboard maintenance routines, and answered all questions to the satisfaction of the surveyor.

"Remote surveys can reduce cost for the shipowner by eliminating travel expenses for surveyors, but most importantly it can enable parts of, or entire, surveys to be completed while the vessel is at sea. This can ultimately reduce workload and fatigue for the crew, allowing them to focus more of their attention on safe cargo and port operations," Torvald Klaveness maintained in a release.

Going forward Klaveness said it will, together with DNV GL, investigate further survey elements that can be carried out remotely. <https://splash247.com/klaveness-conducts-ship-survey-with-no-surveyor-onboard>

Read the NPESC listing on the Vancouver Foundation site.

<https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/npesc>

Western Maritime Institute is applying for funding under the Oceans' Protection Plan Marine Training Program that was released by Transport Canada recently. Our goal is to train a cohort of 16 new entrant Indigenous people and women from the Bridge Watch Rating to the Master 500GT, Domestic Certificate level over a 3.5-year period. By the end of the program, successful trainees will hold the Bridge Watch Rating, Master 150GT Domestic, Watchkeeping Mate Near Coastal, and Master 500GT Domestic Certificates of Competency. The proposed 3.5 year timeline is contingent on Transport Canada recognizing this program as an Approved Training Program, which leads to a remission of sea time based on a competency-based supervised sea time accrual program that we plan to implement. The program will go ahead even without the Approved Training Program designation, which would lead to achieving their Watchkeeping Mate certificate and obtaining the courses required to move on to the Master 500GT Domestic level after they've accumulated additional sea time post funded program.

We are looking for industry to provide financial support (pay a portion of the trainees' wages and contribute to the tuition cost if possible to reduce the amount of funding we're asking from Transport Canada), provide support letters indicating that this program (with the remissions of sea time) will fill the gaps they have identified within their operations, and/or provide berths on their vessels (minimum 25GT operating outside sheltered waters) and supervision for the sea phase portions of the program. The application is due on October 19th.



North of England P&I: Loss Prevention

<http://www.nepia.com/insights/publications/loss-prevention-publications/hot-spots/>



'Hot-Spot' sheets are published as a loss prevention tool to provide practical hints and tips to help avoid incidents, claims and Port State deficiencies, or help to prepare for inspections and surveys. Issued with 'Signals' in a laminated format, they are designed to be placed with spares or alongside equipment where they can provide a quick reference to all; they are not intended to be filed. Additional hard copies can be obtained on request from the loss prevention department; alternatively 'Hot-Spot' sheets can be downloaded in a pdf format from the links below.

Download 'Hot-Spots': [Hot-Spots Bills of Lading](#)
[Hot-Spots Cargo Stowage](#) [Hot-Spots Cold Chain](#)
[Hot-Spots Entry Into Enclosed Space](#) [Hot-Spots Port State](#)
[Hot-Spots Liquid Cargo Sampling](#) [Hot-Spots Galley Safety](#)
[Hot-Spots Oxygen and Acetylene](#) [Hot-Spots Hatch Cover](#)
[Hot-Spots Liquefaction](#) [Hot-Spots Manual Handling](#)
[Hot-Spots Mooring Operations](#) [Hot-Spots Pilot Ladder](#)
[Hot-Spots Voyage Planning With ECDIS](#) [Hot-Spots VDR](#)

Doctor at Sea: Four waiters surround Robert Bruce-Chwatt at his private table, catering to his every lunchtime whim as he talks about the gruelling, never-ending rigors of his job as a ship's doctor.

No "Wednesdays off" to play golf (one waiter lays his silver and linen napkin). No referring patients to specialists (another fills his glass with a spirited yet subtle Chardonnay). Not a moment's rest without some passenger sponging free medical advice (today's entrees: milk-fed veal, a succulent beef stew and a fettuccine so rich it almost guarantees a few bellyaching patients in the coming hours).

Pity the poor guy. "The responsibility is heavy," he says, a straight face on his sun-tanned mug. "When you're a ship's surgeon, you're a general practitioner, a specialist and everything else. You're a surgeon, the orthopaedics specialist, a department head. You're even the dentist and the guy who develops the X-rays. You're on call 24 hours a day, every day, and have no time off unless you're onshore. This is a one-horse town and you're talking to Doc Holiday."

But don't haul out the violins. Bruce-Chwatt isn't exactly mailing out resumes or reading the classifieds for a career change. Seems the job of being a ship's surgeon - as it is officially known - does have certain advantages. Especially when you're the real-life equivalent of "Doc" Adam Bricker, the character played by Bernie Kopell on television's long-

running *The Love Boat*. You remember Doc, the seagoing sawbones who chased - and caught - more female passengers than he treated.

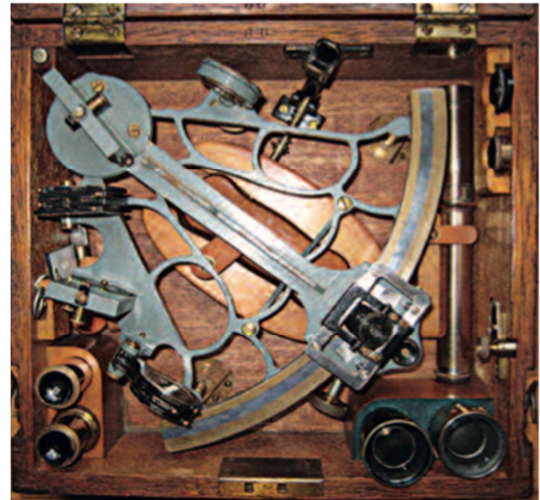
Bruce-Chwatt, a London-born and educated physician, spent the past four years working as a ship's surgeon for Princess Cruise Lines, the Los Angeles company that operates the vessel used on *The Love Boat*. He is serving a four-month tour on *Sea Princess*, which docks at Port Everglades every 20 days between voyages through the Caribbean. March 16, 1987 | By SID KIRCHHEIMER. The Sun-Sentinel.

(The Sun-Sentinel is a South Florida newspaper).

http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/1987-03-16/features/8701160735_1_surgeon-quick-wit-doc-holiday

Why did I include the above article? Well, I did a bit of 'surfing' after I read the "Journal of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, Issue 2/2018" in which there is an interesting article about a pre-war Japanese sextant that Bruce-Chwatt found. He was on a walk around the Los Angeles port area on a turn-round day in 1988 from mv *Sun Princess*. In the window of a local pawnbroker was an excellent sextant with the original box. On enquiry it was \$120, but when informed that it would be re-joining a ship the price came down to \$100, a bargain even if a hundred bucks was three and a bit P&O passenger medical consultation fees at the time. Sextant 792 was produced at Tamaya's Aoyama factory in Tokyo and certified on April 10th of the 11th year of Showa, which is 1936. In Japan, years are dated from the reign of each Emperor, the *Showa* period, 昭和時代, began on December 25th 1926 with the accession of Emperor Hirohito. *Showa*, rather ironically in retrospect, means: "Enlightened peace/harmony" of which there was little between 1941 and 1945. The *Showa* period ended 63 years later with Hirohito's death aged 88, on January 7th 1989.

The sextant frame is bronze with what appears to be a bell-shaped motif, is painted "battleship grey" and all the attachments to the frame are brass. The inlaid scale of the arc and the vernier scale are sterling silver, any cleaning risking damage by wear to the figures and lines, even if done carefully. There is a ground glass light diffuser set between the upper supports of the frame above the vernier to reduce reflection and it has a Ramsden eyepiece reader, the lenses both of focal length 45mm, the separation being 25mm, thus avoiding both chromatic and spherical aberration. The eyepiece can be slid to either side, pivots about the horizontal axis, the objective focuses at 15mm from the Vernier and magnification is about 6x.



The article continues to describe this and other sextants in great detail. The author, as you will have gathered, was a Doctor and not someone engaged in navigation. I had the pleasure of meeting him in the wardroom of the "HQS Wellington" two years ago. It was the day before the "Brexit Referendum" and I still have the "Vote Leave" button he gave me. If you Google his name you will find a lot about him, including: -

Doctor in the sauna, from The Times August 31 2011: Sir, Merchant Navy shore leave in the mid-1980s, when overnight in Scandinavian ports with the ship's local agent, introduced us to the trick of inhaling alcohol vapour ([letter, Aug 30](#)) by pouring vodka onto the hot stones in a sauna.

Alcohol from the bonded store on the ship was very cheap, £2 for a litre of vodka, compared with £25 from a government bottle store in Helsinki. We would head for the nearest sauna with several ship's bottles down our trousers and then pour half, drink half.

The very rapid effect of inhaled alcohol vapour in a confined space was extraordinary and quite probably very foolhardy, but then there was a doctor present.

Dr. Robert Bruce-Chwatt. P&O Ship's Surgeon, 1983-90.

(I would have written more if I could have read it, but I chose not to sign up as a reader of "The Times").

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/doctor-in-the-sauna-zq27xhcj55z>

Other sites include: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Robert_Bruce-Chwatt

<https://www.omicsonline.org/fitness-to-transfer-and-deport-to-a-foreign-country-political-and-other-priorities-on-the-fme-and-the-ethical-considerations-of-such-transfers-2157-7145.1000110.php?aid=24536>

WATCH: Kings Point's New U.S. Merchant Marine Ad Campaign.

<https://gcaptain.com/watch-kings-points-new-u-s-merchant-marine-ad-campaign/>

Following is a summary of Scholarships/Bursaries available to Nautical Students in British Columbia. Much of this information is reproduced courtesy of the Western Mariner Magazine. www.westernmariner.com after it appeared in the September 2018 edition.

WESTERN MARITIME INSTITUTE/ BC FERRIES: BCFMWU/WMI Colin Laird Memorial Scholarship



The Western Maritime Institute and the BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union offer full scholarships to two members for the fall and spring Deckhand/Bridge Watch Rating Program at Western Maritime Institute in Ladysmith BC. The scholarships include tuition for the full Bridge Watch Rating program.

Criteria for application: member in good standing of BCFMWU – preference will be given to active members of the Union; grade 12 graduation with preference given to those with Math 10 and English 12. Also open to all non-licensed members interested in a career in the Deck Department. For information contact WMI Admissions or your BCFMWU Local President.



CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE ENGINEERING

Vancouver Branch Scholarships: The Vancouver Branch of the Canadian Institute of Marine Engineering (CIMarE) offers three Branch Scholarships to students in the Marine Engineering Program at the British Columbia Institute of Technology's Marine Campus: two \$500 awards to qualified first-year students; one \$1,000 award to a qualified second or third year student. Application forms are available from CIMarE Vancouver Branch Directors and BCIT staff and by email from Francis Lin in.imcl@telus.net.

Denis Cressey Scholarships: The Vancouver Branch of the CIMarE awards three scholarships annually from the Denis Cressey Marine Engineering Scholarship Trust: two \$1,000 awards, and one \$2,000 award.

These awards are open to students studying Marine Engineering, Naval Architecture and allied disciplines anywhere in Canada. Applicants are required to be a Canadian Citizen or Landed Immigrant and studying or employed (while attending school). There is no formal application for these scholarships though candidates must submit: career objectives, employment background, education history with proof of marks, and references. Submit applications to Francis Lin: in.imcl@telus.net or by mail to: CIMarE Scholarships, PO Box 91370, West Vancouver BC V7V 3P1

National Scholarship: The National Branch of CIMarE awards one \$3,000 scholarship each year to a fulltime student enrolled in a post-secondary marine engineering education and training program with the aim of attaining a marine engineering diploma and a government-conferred marine engineering operating designation or certificate.

Information is available from the CIMarE National Administrator, Lauren Solar: lsolar@cimare.ca



NAUTICAL INSTITUTE, BC BRANCH/ VANCOUVER TRANSPORTATION FOUNDATION



VTF Scholarships: The BC Branch of The Nautical Institute, by arrangement with the Vancouver Transportation Foundation (VTF), provides scholarships to applicants enrolled in the BCIT Nautical Science Program. The timing and amount of these scholarships may vary from year to year. Visit: <https://nibcbbranch.ca/>



NAUTICAL PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY OF CANADA



Nautical Science and Marine Engineering Bursaries: The NPESC, founded by the BC Branch of The Nautical Institute in 1995, offers Bursaries to students enrolled in Nautical Science or Marine Engineering courses that entail a minimum of 250 hours at a training school registered in British Columbia and approved by Transport Canada. Four bursaries, valued at \$1,500 each are offered. These are generated from funds donated by the BC Supercargoes Association and from the NPESC Endowment with the Vancouver Foundation. <http://npesc.ca/>



INTERNATIONAL SAILORS' SOCIETY CANADA. Sue Hanby Maritime Bursary

The International Sailors' Society Canada offers a maritime bursary created in honour of long-serving director and corporate secretary, Sue Hanby. Two bursaries of \$1,000 each are available to students who are enrolling in marine related studies with a recognized educational institution, with preference given to students who are preparing for a sea-going career.

Bursary application forms are available on the website www.sailorssociety.ca



MASTER MARINERS OF CANADA. Captain G.O. Baugh Memorial Scholarship

Annually, The Company of Master Mariners Foundation offers 2 x \$2,000 Scholarships in memory of Captain G.O. Baugh, one of the founders of the Company.

The Scholarships are offered to Nautical Science students at schools across the country.

Further information at <http://www.mastermariners.ca/baugh-memorial-fund/>



MASTER MARINERS
OF CANADA

Thoughts on training: A few years ago, I took a class on motorcycle training and was struck by the comparisons with marine training. After all, both types of training require physical skills to operate the vehicle, knowledge of the appropriate Rules of the Road, and application of both while driving the vehicle.

The first step was to study the Rules of the Road and pass the computerized test for a Learner's License. That done, I signed up for training – not obligatory, as I might have challenged the tests. However, after 40 years of not riding I thought it prudent to learn and re-learn.

Three evenings of classroom set the scene while we learned about braking systems, types of motorcycles and application of Rules *versus* Defensive Driving. Points made were illustrated by pertinent and often humorous anecdotes.

A weekend (14 hours) riding in a parking lot culminated in passing the Motorcycle Skills Assessment. It's amazing how much we learned in a short time – and yes, someone did fall off their machine (not I).

Two evening rides followed; the Playground and School Zone ride, to emphasize reading the road and road signs, and the big one – the Trip to Vancouver, emphasizing the defensive driving techniques, referred to as “combat techniques”. Returning home over the Alex Fraser bridge, in rain and a cross wind, was both nerve-wracking and exhilarating.

I chose to take one 45-minute Road assessment the following week, just to satisfy myself on small points, and then successfully challenged the Road Test. The instructor and the assessor both said the same as the examiner when I gained my Master Mariner Certificate – “the license just entitles you to go out and learn. It will take years to become good at this.”

OK, so now I've added a license for the smallest and most vulnerable road vehicle to my qualifications. It has certainly refreshed and improved my driving skills. I read the road better and am more conscious of vehicle (car or motorcycle) behaviour. I now have several years of motor biking on a variety of roads. Was the training successful? Yes. It prepared me to deal with the conditions I encountered.

What does this have to do with marine training? I renewed my interest in recreational boating a few years ago and regularly drive a 27' sailboat and a 26' powerboat. How did my marine training help me? Overall, it was useful: I focussed on what I needed to know. I treated the boats as I would have a ship. The result was that I drove more slowly, allowed for momentum, and overall, learned to handle the boats reasonably well. (Docking under sail is a wonderful experience.)

By comparison, most of my fellow boaters drive faster and rely on the engine to get out of difficulties – difficulties which they might not be in if they drove slower. I also have trained others to sail and operate the boats. One “deckhand” learned why I always insisted he stand by for'd with a boathook and a fender; we had an engine failure in a stiff breeze – but we were prepared and took appropriate action. Some thought I was too “big ship” in my approach. In a sense I was a marine truck driver learning to drive a marine motorcycle.

How then is marine training serving us today? Overall, not too badly, but something is lacking when someone has a deck officer qualification and can't handle a small boat. Simulators are excellent but cannot fully achieve their goal of “teaching experience” – only experience can do that.

I performed some navigational audits on deep-sea vessels a few years ago and was struck by 1) how smart and diligent the officers were and 2) how little they really appreciated vessel handling. In retrospect, I learned more ship handling in six months on a middle-trade coaster than in years deep sea. (Stopping a vessel in the locks using the for'd spring is definitely a “learning experience”.)

Marine training has shortened and become focussed on simulators. This is not a bad approach, but is it enough? I suggest we add back the old ideas of learning to handle smaller vessels so that no deck officer will feel inadequate. I read recently that the Canadian Navy has a program of successive promotion from smaller to larger vessels. So, this is not a new idea, just an old one that has been re-evaluated and re-adopted. The combination of physical and cognitive skills training is hard to beat.

Captain John Lewis FNI. August 2018

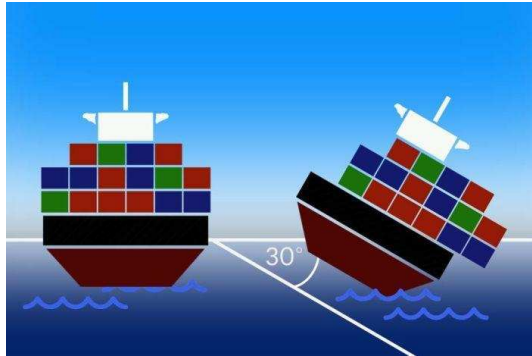
YM EFFICIENCY suffered 'heavy rolling' for up to 90 seconds before losing 81 containers:

A Liberian-flagged ship that lost 81 containers overboard off the NSW coast suffered 90 seconds of "heavy rolling" as it drifted in wild weather, according to a preliminary report into the incident.

Key points:

- Ship rolled up to 30 degrees port and starboard during wild weather
- Crew's actions immediately after accident to be scrutinized in next stage of probe
- 50 containers identified on the ocean floor by a hydrographic survey vessel

The 268-metre *YM EFFICIENCY* was on its way to Port Botany from Taiwan on June 1 when gale-force weather conditions worsened. □ An initial report by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) reveals the ship was delayed by eight hours and told it could not dock in Sydney until 8:00pm. □ The main engine was stopped but restarted for brief periods over several hours to maintain control of the drift. □ But at 12:30am, disaster struck when the ship was 16 nautical miles off the coast of Newcastle. □ "The ship experienced a period of quick, heavy rolling for about 60 to 90 seconds," the report said. "The rolling was estimated by the ship's Master as having reached angles of up to 30 degrees to port and starboard." Engineering alarms sounded and the Second Officer reported hearing "loud noises on deck". When the deck lights were turned on, the crew's worst fears were confirmed — cargo had been lost overboard. It wasn't until the morning that a proper assessment



could take place and they discovered 81 containers had been lost, and a further 62 were damaged. □

ATSB Executive Director Nat Nagy said it was clear the *YM Efficiency* encountered gale-force weather conditions. □ "The next steps of the ATSB investigation will include analysis of the ship's container stow and lashing arrangements, the actions of the crew immediately following the incident, as well as analysis of the weather conditions at the time," he said.

Massive cleanup after the spill: The incident prompted an expensive cleanup effort, in addition to concern about the danger posed to other vessels by containers floating just beneath the surface. Only two of the containers washed up on shore, however debris was found across a broad area. A hydrographic survey vessel hired by the *YM Efficiency's* insurers has so far identified 50 containers, either broken or intact, on the sea floor.

An investigation by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority found a number of deficiencies relating to the ship's safety management system, safety of navigation and cargo storage. After inspecting the ship when it berthed in Port Botany on June 6, investigators found a total of 324 containers exceeded their tier weight limits set in the ship's cargo securing manual.

The ship left Port Botany for Brisbane, with a new Master in command.

By **Jamie McKinnell** 2018 July 24

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-07-24/ym-efficiency-suffered-90-seconds-of-chaos/10029558>



Nautical Slang in Common Usage. Under the weather - Keeping watch onboard sailing ships was a boring and tedious job, but the worst watch station was on the "weather" (windward) side of the bow. The sailor who was assigned to this station was subject to the constant pitching and rolling of the ship. By the end of his watch, he would be soaked from the waves crashing over the bow. A sailor who was assigned to this unpleasant duty was said to be "under the weather." Sometimes, these men fell ill and died as a result of the assignment, which is why today "under the weather" is used to refer to someone suffering from an illness. A related theory claims that ill sailors were sent below deck (or "under the weather") if they were feeling sick.

NIBC/VTF Scholarships 2018: This year the Vancouver Transportation Foundation (VTF) offered four scholarships, each worth \$2,000. The BC Branch of The Nautical Institute (NIBC) advertised these scholarships at the British Columbia Institute of Technology Marine Campus and after assessing the applications, details about the top four applicants were submitted to the VTF, recommending them for the scholarships.

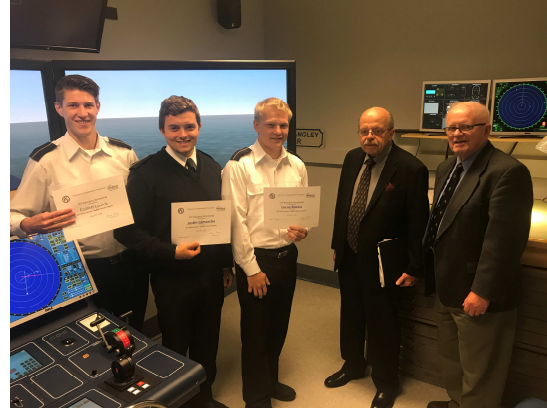
One scholarship went to Ben Murray, a Junior Officer in the fourth year of his Nautical Science programme. He received his award on May 26th during the Branch AGM. Captain Ramanbir Mangat AFNI and the Branch Chairman, LCdr Angus Fedoruk AFNI made the presentation.

The other three scholarships were awarded to Third Year Cadets Cullen Lovick and Lucas Anaka along with First Year Cadet Justin Lamarche. David Whitaker FNI and James Kohnke, the VTC Executive Director made the award presentations on June 11th at the BCIT Marine Campus.

The VTF was founded in 1994 as a British Columbia non-profit Society. A part of its mandate is "to provide scholarships and bursaries for the benefit of students in pursuit of post-secondary education, with emphasis upon areas of studies relative to transportation".



Angus Fedoruk, Ben Murray, Ramanbir Mangat



Cullen Lovick, Justin Lamarche, Lucas Anaka
with James Kohnke & David Whitaker

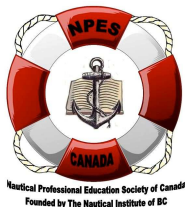
Your Society. Do you wish to make a financial contribution to the Society? Is it time for you to renew your membership? The Annual Membership Fee remains at \$40.00 but any amount that you can donate will be greatly appreciated.

Please make your cheque payable to the NPESC and mail it to: -

Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada,
3648 Glenview Crescent, North Vancouver, B.C. V7R 3E8

Thank you.

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Articles or comments for inclusion in future editions
of Seatimes can be sent to me at whitknit@telus.net
David Whitaker FNI

