



SEATIMES

The Newsletter of the Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada
(Society founded in 1995 by the British Columbia Branch of The Nautical Institute)



February 2024

From "Sea Breezes": November 1970. A wireless operator or radio officer in the earlier days of radio at sea was often a man of many parts, according to the ship he was in. Here, FRED G. SHAW recalls some memories of his time at sea in this capacity.

The Wireless Operator: The era of the electronics officer is upon us. The radio officer will be a forgotten title before long.

Oh, the names I have been called in my Discharge Book! Marconi Operator, Marconi Officer, First Marconi, Second Marconi, Assistant Marconi, Wireless Operator, Wireless Telegraphist, Telegraphist, Telegraph Operator, Radio Operator, Radio Telegraphist, Radio Officer. I'm sure I could find another half-dozen names. It all seems so long ago, so very long ago.

In some ships I wore a bowler hat and a Gladstone collar; on others, a funny little uniform cap with a letter **M** on a plush background inside crossed oak leaves. On another the only wear was one's oldest suit, a cloth cap and a muffler.

In some ships of the White Star Line out of Liverpool one was an honoured guest (at 25 shillings per week); on other ships a description of one's reception could not be printed here. Today, when I read of SSB, facsimile, data loggers and other mysteries, I tremble like a jelly. I know nothing about electronics.

Oh, the days of Edouard Branly's Coherer with its iron filings and ticky-tacky, the clockwork magnetic detector (dear old Maggie), the multiple tuner, a precision engineering job if ever there was one, and the fixed spark gap with its mysterious smell. Then, oh heavens, came the 31A crystal and the rotary gap. One day in New York the senior came aboard with a little glass tube wrapped in cotton wool and my eyes stuck out like hat pegs and my breathing almost stopped.

But I must get on with the words that flow out of me like the beer flowed in the Oriel Bar in Water Street, Liverpool. Who remembers Oriel Chambers, Water Street, Liverpool, the first floor, up those dirty stairs, the offices of the Marconi International Marine Communication Co. Ltd. and of course Mr. Pereira and sometimes Mr. W.R. Cross? The offices weren't up to much, wooden tables and benches – but by some arrangement with the staff clerk, his office had been wired to one end of the Oriel bar downstairs, and when an operator on standby was wanted, his name was tapped out and he was up the stairs and at the staff clerk's window within a minute or so.

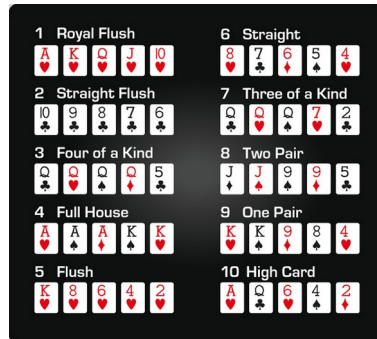
The junior operators were taken down to the Oriel bar with the seniors and occasionally allowed a smell of the barman's apron, but their chief job was to sit at one end of the bar near the buzzer. Then, at the staff clerk's window one would be handed a large sheet of official-looking paper on which it might have said, "Proceed to Huskisson Dock tomorrow morning at 1000 and sign on *Cedric*"

It all seems so long ago – Freddie Bradley in the *Adriatic*, Freddie James in the *Baltic* and Brewster Walsh in the *Cedric*. I forgot where that real old timer Billy Davis was then. We always understood that he was the holder of PMG Ticket No. 1. I wonder if it was true.

What memories those days bring back. Poldhu MPD, Naven POZ and the Eiffel Tower FL. But wireless ranges in those days were small and a few days out from home the familiar buzz of MPD from Poldhu in Cornwall and the piping note of the Eiffel Tower FL soon faded away.



Dark schemes were planned in the Oriel Bar. As it is around 50 years ago I suppose there's no harm in writing of them. Operators used to work six on and six off in those days. The senior usually took the 2000 to 0200 watch and the junior the 0200 to 0800 watch. But in one of my White Star boats this was reversed as the senior was fond of poker and there were great opportunities, but not if he had to be on watch from 2000 to 0200; hence the switch.

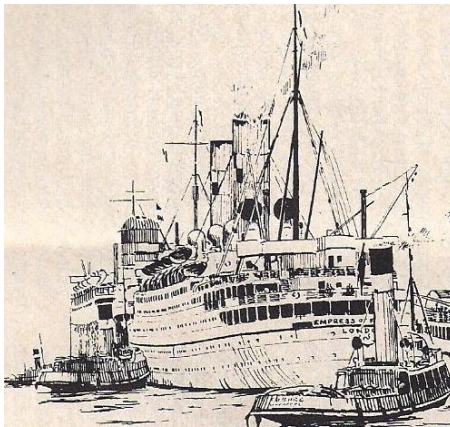


I have a vivid recollection of one voyage when a Canadian Pacific liner left the landing stage at Liverpool for Canada the same day as we left for New York. I was given instructions to answer all calls and to take all traffic for both ships and to hand over the traffic for the C.P.R. boat to the senior when he relieved me. Then I believe it was passed to the C.P.R. boat in the early morning on 425 metres. I understood that both of the C.P.R. operators were playing poker.

Perhaps some old timers remember the White Star liners *Cretic* and *Canopic* on the Mediterranean run with about 2,000 immigrants each trip to Boston or New York. Somebody thought up a bright scheme. The Italian immigrants wanted to let their relatives know they were coming as the ship was fitted with the wireless. But messages to America via Cape Race VCE were 35 cents per word I think. If they were held for a couple of days they could be routed through an American coast station at about 18 cents per word. Profit: 17 cents per word.

Official receipts couldn't be issued but the ship's printer did a good job. Messages were handed in at the purser's office and not the wireless office. Och, I can see those two pursers clerks now, just as clear as in 1920. But they overstepped the mark with their greed. With their "psychological knowledge" they decided that some of the messages needn't be sent at all, thereby giving a profit of 25 cents per word. It couldn't last of course. Some of the immigrants were really annoyed when they found their messages undelivered. They brought their receipts to the New York office and there were some painful interviews with Mr. Short, the New York representative. We draw a veil over the proceedings: there was some redeployment of labour and the White Star losses became the Furness, Withy Black Sea run gains! Mr. Cross and Mr. Pereira were not amused.

Oh, how I often think of the old days in Liverpool and the Overhead Railway along the docks. What a wonderful view! And who remembers that great friend of sailors in Liverpool, Dr. Richard Downey, Archbishop of Liverpool? He never got his Red Hat but it was always expected that he would. He was a great friend and always ready to help anybody. To hear him talk about the Liverpool "thrams" was a thing to be remembered forever. Somebody will remember that Liverpool had first-class and third-class trams, the first-class with plush blue seats, with white lace and antimacassars. But what I was thinking of was the way "Dickie" Downey used to say that no wonder Liverpool bred a race of sailors because of the Liverpool "thrams", the speed they used to go and the way they listed as they went around the corners.



Dr. Downey was a great believer in the principles of the Labour Party, but he used to condemn what he called the modern sin of "stateolatry" and the birth controllers, the life controllers and the death controllers.

But, back to life. Who remembers the old AWT office? Was it in Bold Street or Ranelagh Street, before it moved to Dale Street and later to Chapel Street? Oh the magnificent work done for radio officers by Harry Perkins, who died recently in September 1966. The younger generation don't realise just what was done for the profession in those early days. It would take volumes to write it. But I must keep off names. The ROU has had, and still has, many devoted servants.

Now, what about the General Strike of 1926! Golly, it's 44 years ago! I'd left a ship in London, gone on leave to my home in North

Wales and asked if I could report to Liverpool afterwards. Even in those days they sometimes said, “Yes”. But when the time came to report to Liverpool the strike was on. Those were the days of the radio clubs run by the ROU, where operators could stay for a reasonable sum. I forget where the Liverpool club was, but I do remember that I was there when my money ran out. The pay hadn’t been much in those days, only about £11 or £12 per month.

The Marconi Company did their very best to recruit “blacklegs”. I remember the taxis waiting outside the Radio Club every morning – and the clerk had a list of ships – take your pick – go where you want – free taxi service to sign on – free gear transport to ship.

But I had a word with Harry Perkins and he said, “Don’t worry, Fred, never mind the bill; you can pay us back anytime”. Which I did, eventually, by allotment when I’d signed on again. Now, if that isn’t real help I don’t know what is.

(It is difficult to realize that these tales are from 100 years ago)

To be continued.

Awards made by the Society during the year 2023.

Bursaries.

Spring: Adam Sirk (BCIT-NS), Rodney Amos (Camosun – Captain Brian Silvester Award)

Fall: Jason Agnew (BCIT-NS), Melissa Blake (BCIT-NS), Jeremy Burrage (BCIT-NS),
Keegan Cumiskey (BCIT-M.Eng), Dale Gisborne (WMI).

BCIT Foundation Bursaries: Blaze Pihl (BCIT-NS), Aidan Hinkins (BCIT-M.Eng).

(NS = Nautical Science; M.Eng = Marine Engineering)

Book Awards.

Camosun College: Sophie Kjernisted. Western Maritime Institute: Daniel Clarke.

BCIT: Nathaniel Scott (Nautical Science), Ethan Van Vliet (Marine Engineering)

Here are three everyday phrases that you may not have realized were born in the days when sailing made the world go round.

A clean bill of health: -

According to *dictionary.com* this phrase derives from the days when the crew of ocean going ships might be a little less than hygienic, so they needed to present a certificate, carried by a ship, attesting to the presence or absence of infectious diseases among the ship’s crew and at the port from which it has come.

Feeling Blue: -

How often do you hear people talking about feeling blue or have the blues? An entire genre of music comes from this phrase. Who knew that came from the world of sailing? *See-the-sea.org* explains the popular phrase comes from a custom that was practiced when a ship lost its captain during a voyage. The ship would fly blue flags and have a blue band painted along her hull when she returned to port.

Pipe down: -

Parents have been screaming “*pipe down*” to their children forever, but where does that actually come from? Apparently, ‘Pipe Down’ was the last signal from the Bosun’s pipe each day, which meant lights-out, quiet down, time to go to bed.

From the Archives
A page from the NIBC Newsletter of January 1995.

BowWave

Newsletter of the British Columbia Branch of The Nautical Institute
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Issue No. 1

Chairman's Message

I wish to take this opportunity of wishing all members a most Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Since I last spoke to you in the BowWave of October 1994, the activities affecting the Branch have been numerous and varied.

The activity that directly involved the membership was the very successful "Day at Sea Ashore" seminar held on November 26th. This very full and informative day culminated with the Annual Dinner, which took place at the Avalon Hotel in North Vancouver. The attending members and their guests enjoyed a fine meal and the company of friends, both old and new.

With some exceptions, on the first Tuesday of each month, your Directors meet in the Training Room at the B.C. Ferry Terminal at Tsawwassen. The Mainland Directors drive to the meeting and meet their Island counterparts who arrive at approximately 1840 (the 1700 sailing from Swartz Bay). As the Island contingent must catch the last ferry at 2100, the meetings are restricted to two hours in duration.

A considerable amount of business is accomplished in that period of time. Meetings which have taken place monthly since June 1994 have involved the planning and organizing of the constitution of "The Nautical Professional Education Society of British Columbia". This constitution will be registered under the Societies Act in time for the February meeting. The subject content of seminars and the subsequent planning and organizing of the same is a responsibility of the Directors. At the February meeting it is hoped to finalize plans for the subject matter and location for the Spring Seminar. At the December '94 and January '95 meetings there was lengthy discussion of the "Green Award Scheme" which was publicized in the June 1994 edition of "Seaways". The Branch, through your Directors, has established dialogue with Captain Arne Wolters of Rotterdam, the first port to adopt the Green Award Scheme, and the Provincial Ministry of the Environment.

I would like to invite members-at-large to attend your Directors Meetings. You will be made welcome and we would encourage your input into the business of the meeting. At these meetings I am surrounded by a group of dedicated, assured and knowledgeable individuals who often resort to wit and repartee to lighten our deliberations. Why don't you join us occasionally?

At the various marine-flavoured occasions, receptions etc. to which I have been invited as your representative, I have spread the word about the Institute and our Branch, informing my fellow guests of who and what we are, emphasizing our mandate and purpose. I would request of you, the individual Members of the Branch, when you are in conversation with new contacts or "old" colleagues, who are not members of The Nautical Institute, that you do the same – "spread the word".

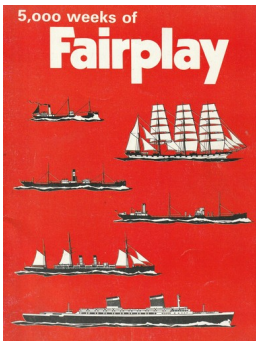
Jim Arnott MNI - Chairman

Trivia – The Moon and Rain: Can the moon hold off the rain?

Folklore passed on by sailors has long suggested that the Full Moon “eats clouds”. An old shepherd’s proverb also states, “The circle of the moon never filled a pond”, meaning it doesn’t often rain during a Full Moon. Science has recently confirmed that when the Full Moon rises it creates a bulge in the Earth’s atmosphere, meaning higher pressure and a rise in temperatures. This in turn makes rain less likely. Researchers at Washington University in the USA have made the link between rain and the moon official. According to their study, the moon’s gravitational pull not only influences the water in our seas, but also has an effect on the water in the clouds. This “atmospheric tide” causes the Earth’s atmosphere to bulge toward the moon. The resulting air pressure causes the air to heat up. Because warm air can hold more water vapour than cooler air, the air beneath the moon is more likely to hang on to water that may otherwise have fallen as rain. So the amount of rainfall we get here on Earth is very slightly influenced by the moon.

More on the subject of Fatigue: -

Sir, I have lately been employing my spare time in reading your back numbers, and was much struck by several letters on the supposed cause of the loss of missing steamers, and perhaps another reason or two might enliven your readers. I think an Act ought to be passed to prevent vessels leaving dock before they are made secure on deck, not rushing out as soon as the last waggon of coal is tipped, improperly trimmed perhaps, a few inches by the head and a slight list (is this un-seaworthiness?), anchors to get in and lash; the forecastle head being in a state of confusion, things can’t be found in the dark as lights can’t be used on deck – most pilots will not allow a dark lantern, it blinding the eyes of those on the bridge. A small crew of perhaps 5 A.B.’s in a steamer of, say 700 nett – the Second Mate steering out of port – have to trim the cargo before they can get the hatches to fit on the coamings. Before this can be done the vessel begins to make her obeisance to the waves; then there is usually a lot of coal on deck, which is thrown overboard to save trouble (make a note of this, ye shippers of coal!) then lines to coil down and lash. One watch getting an hour’s sleep after being frequently on deck twenty-four hours. I have stood at the wheel half asleep myself, and the officer of the watch not much better. What can be expected but careless steering? And when a man leaves the wheel to do two hour’s lookout, can you wonder at carelessness? And you hear of mysterious currents taking vessels out of their course; the Captain is blamed for not using the lead, when he has not the hands to do it, frequently, to say nothing of one or two of the crew joining the ship at the last moment half-drunk, a danger to themselves and other men to work with.



ALPHA

The above was a Letter to the Editor of the Fairplay Magazine, September 12th 1884.
It was republished in the “5,000 weeks of Fairplay” edition.

Combustion of Oily Rags Causes \$1.5 Million Yacht Fire:

The National Transportation Safety Board has released its report into a fire on board the private yacht *Pegasus* in Gig Harbor, Washington last year.

The report highlights the fire hazards of improperly stored oily rags on vessels.

The *Pegasus* caught fire on July 15, 2022, while moored at the Peninsula Yacht Basin in Gig Harbor, Washington. The fire burned for about an hour before it was reported, and by the



time firefighters arrived, the fire had engulfed the aft section of the vessel. The *Pegasus*, valued at about \$1.5 million, was declared a total loss.

No injuries were reported.

NTSB determined the fire aboard the *Pegasus* was caused by spontaneous combustion due to the self-heating of used oil-soaked rags that had been improperly disposed of. The day before the fire a bag with rags soaked with a raw-linseed-oil product was left under a table on the aft deck.

"Rags soaked with oil-based finishes, which are commonly used for painting and refinishing, pose a fire hazard if stored improperly," the NTSB report said. "Because they generate heat as they dry, oily rags that are piled up, put together in a trash can, or bagged do not allow the heat to escape, creating a high risk for spontaneous combustion."

To prevent a fire, mariners using oil-based products (or any chemical product) should carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleanup and disposal of rags, steel wool, brushes and other applicators.

June 20th 2023

[https://gcaptain.com/combustion-of-oily-rags-causes-1-5-million-yacht-fire/?](https://gcaptain.com/combustion-of-oily-rags-causes-1-5-million-yacht-fire/?subscriber=true&goal=0_f50174ef03-ffe1c1a314-169937937&mc_cid=ffe1c1a314&mc_eid=35ccf165ad)

[subscriber=true&goal=0_f50174ef03-ffe1c1a314-169937937&mc_cid=ffe1c1a314&mc_eid=35ccf165ad](https://gcaptain.com/combustion-of-oily-rags-causes-1-5-million-yacht-fire/?subscriber=true&goal=0_f50174ef03-ffe1c1a314-169937937&mc_cid=ffe1c1a314&mc_eid=35ccf165ad)

On the dark side of Flags of Convenience: There probably will not be that many people around who can recall the summer of 1984, when there was an important conference in Geneva to consider the problems of flags of convenience (FOC), or open registers, as we are now enjoined to call them. The meeting, held in the lofty halls of the Palais des Nations, was, among other things, an attempt to properly clarify whether there should be a "genuine link" between a ship and the place of registry painted on its stern.

I have fond memories of the event, as I was reporting for a somewhat lean organisation at the time and living in a tent on the shores of the lake, (albeit in a fairly luxurious campsite), from where, to the amazement of fellow campers, I would set off in my suit to the railway station each morning. The event itself, held over nearly three weeks, could not, from the standpoint of those wishing to circumscribe FOC operations, be counted a success. Ferocious efforts by the industry, which wished to maintain at least the freedom to register their ships anywhere on earth (possibly even the moon), ensured that it was no more than a tidying up operation, despite the amazing oratory and vast numbers of papers.

I was reminded of this somewhat intense exposure to the arguments around FOCs reading the *Nautilus Telegraph*, which pointed out that the issue had been debated at this year's TUC Congress. It also reminded us that it was the 75th anniversary of the first FOC campaign by the International Transport Workers' Federation., which really was before my time.



It might be suggested that the problems of bad behaviour by dodgy flags registering unsafe ships and exploited seafarers have been mitigated by a range of associated, but not necessarily direct constraints over the years. Port state control brought in a major oversight of ship safety and condition, while everything from ITF inspectors in ports to the public rating of flag state performance

by the US, Europe and the various MOUs has been an incentive for good performance and the

opposite for those operating marginal tonnage. The International Chamber of Shipping's annual survey of flag state performance is scrutinised by charterers and owners alike. So far so good. You can argue that open registers, some of which work hard to maintain the quality of the ships on their books are often better custodians of safety and standards than many other flags. Where this argument falls down, however, is in conditions where law and order break down and their inability to enforce anything very much becomes obvious. After all, why should navies, paid for by taxpayers, be employed to protect navigational freedoms for those owners who feel no obligation to pay taxes?

Tankers carrying sanctioned oil out of Russia: And while the status quo on FOCs seemed to be motoring on over the decades, the recent global instabilities, along with the emergence of the huge fleet of "dark" tankers carrying sanctioned oil out of Russia, has thrown ship registration into sharp focus. In particular, it has reminded us of the cavalier fashion in which these ships are changing owners and flags at the drop of a hat, without any pretence of inspections or surveillance by emergent states, most of which have not the slightest experience or competence in the requirements of a ship register, operating very large ships, carrying enormous quantities of pollutants.

These ships, of mystery ownership, appear as a law unto themselves, operating with insurance that is non-existent or of doubtful pedigree; the ships in the autumn of their lives (to put it politely). They carry out ship-to-ship oil transfers without proper supervision by coastal states, and other risky activities. Just recently, two large tankers were arrested for carrying out an unauthorised STS operation in Malaysian waters and when apprehended, refusing to let the authorities of the coastal state on board requiring military intervention.

There has been an increase in casualties, and if one considers the reputational damage being done to a tanker sector that has long been a top performer in international safety and standards, there must be widespread concern for the image of the shipping industry in general. A major accident involving one of this dark fleet and all the accusations about the "wild west" of transport and the allegedly lawless world of international shipping will be given front page publicity.

Should you have 300,000dwt tankers registered in states which could just about summon the expertise to register a paragraph coaster? The fact that this is now so widespread, with the scandal of this huge dark fleet, perhaps ought to be telling us that the liberal interpretation of a genuine link between ship and flag really needs a 21st century update. Sadly, my tent has been sold.

By Michael Grey*. Maritime Magazine 2023-11-06

(Photo from vesseltracker.com shows the Gatik-managed Galatia tanker that has been detained in the Port of Antwerp since last July due to 22 identified technical defects. It is alleged to be part of a dark fleet that maintains Russian oil exports.)

*Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List. This column is published with the kind permission of The Maritime Advocate.

<https://maritimemag.com/en/on-our-forum-on-the-dark-side-of-flags-of-convenience/>



VIKING changes the shape of the lifeboat market.

Maritime safety solutions provider VIKING Life-Saving Equipment is launching an innovative range of lifeboats and davits which it says set new standards for compact and lightweight lifeboat-based evacuation solutions. **November 23rd 2023. For the complete report see: -**

<https://shipmanagementinternational.com/viking-changes-the-shape-of-the-lifeboat-market/>



Thermal Runaway of Lithium-Ion Battery Destroys Tanker's Bridge

The [National Transportation Safety Board](#) (NTSB) said that a fire on an oil tanker last year was caused by the thermal runaway of a cell within a handheld radio's lithium-ion battery. The incident occurred while the vessel, named *S-Trust*, was docked at the Genesis Port Allen Terminal in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on November 13, 2022.

The fire resulted in extensive damage throughout the bridge, including significant smoke and thermal damage, amounting to \$3 million in total. The navigation systems, communication systems, and alarm systems on the vessel were irreparably damaged.

According to the NTSB's investigation, the fire originated from an explosion of one of the cells in a lithium-ion battery used for an ultra-high-frequency handheld radio.

The *S-Trust* carried 20 of these radios for communication during vessel operations. The batteries and chargers were stored on the communications table on the bridge. Fortunately, the crew managed to extinguish the fire, and no injuries were reported.



Photos from the bridge closed-circuit camera showing (1) a second explosion occurs, (2) an object is propelled on fire into the air (circled), and (3) the object, still on fire, landing on the floor. (Source: Stalwart Management Ltd)

Lithium-ion battery cell explosions are commonly caused by thermal runaway, a chemical reaction that can lead to the cell igniting and exploding. Thermal runaway can occur spontaneously if the battery is damaged, shorted, overheated, defective, or overcharged.

To prevent thermal runaways and subsequent fires, the NTSB advises crews to follow manufacturers' instructions for the care and maintenance of lithium-ion batteries, properly dispose of damaged batteries, avoid unsupervised charging, and keep batteries and chargers away from heat sources and flammable materials.

The damage to the bridge.

The NTSB report also recommends that companies ensure that lithium-ion batteries and devices using these batteries are certified by Underwriters Laboratory or another recognized organization.

In the event of a lithium-ion battery fire, crews can attempt to extinguish the fire using water, foam, CO₂, or other dry chemical or powdered agents designed for Class A (combustible) fires. If the fire cannot be extinguished, personnel should allow the battery pack to burn in a controlled manner while monitoring for nearby cells experiencing thermal runaway and extinguishing other combustible materials that may catch fire.

Overall the incident highlights the importance of proper handling and maintenance of lithium-ion batteries to prevent hazardous situations and ensure the safety of personnel and equipment.

[Marine Investigation Report 23-23](#) is available on the [NTSB website](#).

https://gcaptain.com/thermal-runaway-of-lithium-ion-battery-destroys-tankers-bridge/?subscriber=true&goal=0_f50174ef03-6bdd51c476-169937937&mc_cid=6bdd51c476&mc_eid=35ccf165ad



Why I want to be Captain: I want to be a Captain when I grow up because it's a fun job and easy to do. Captains don't need much school education; they just have to learn numbers so they can read instruments. I guess they should be able to read maps so they won't get lost.

Captains should be brave so they won't get scared if it's foggy and they can't see; or if the propeller falls off they should stay calm so they will know what to do. Captains have to have eyes to see through the clouds and they can't be afraid of thunder or lightning because they are closer to them than we are.

The salary that captains make is another thing I like. They make more money than they can spend. This is because most people think captaining a ship is dangerous, except Captains, because they know how easy it is. There isn't much I don't like, except girls like Captains and all the girls want to marry a Captain so they always have to chase them away so they won't bother them.

I hope I don't get seasick because I get carsick and if I get seasick I could not be a Captain and then I would have to go out and work.

Written by a 10 year-old schoolboy and printed in the BCIT Marine Campus "Co-op Times" May 2004, with acknowledgements to the Journal of AMOU (Australian Maritime Officers Union) and the IFSMA (International Federation of Ship Masters' Associations) Newsletter.

A Cadet loses his life onboard a bulk carrier: Britannia P&I Club released a case study focusing on a tragic incident that unfolded on board a bulk carrier, claiming the life of a Cadet who had spent three months on board.

What happened: On 12 November 2022, aboard a bulk carrier off the western coast of Africa, a sequence of events unfolded that tragically led to the death of the Deck Cadet (DC). At the time of the incident, the ship was carrying approximately 46,000 MT of Nickel Ore, with the No. 5 cargo hold loaded to an estimated



47%. The ship had several Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) tanks, including the No. 2 HFO tank (port), which emitted vapours from vents with approximately 170 MT low Sulphur fuel (0.49% of Sulphur content). The ship's Chief Officer (CO) tasked the fitter with conducting repairs in the No. 5 cargo hold, and he, with the DC began preparations around 0800 hours. They noticed a strong smell of fumes emanating from a vent associated with the No. 2 HFO tank port.

The fitter assured the DC that the repair wouldn't take long, and the work began once the bosun opened the hatch cover,

taking approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The DC assisted the fitter by passing equipment into the cargo hold while standing near the HFO tank vent on the main deck. Both exited the cargo hold around 1115 hours, with the DC expressing discomfort. The following day, the DC reported feeling unwell to the CO, mentioning a headache and attributing it to inhaling fumes from the HFO tank vent the previous day. The CO advised rest and informed the ship's Master. The DC's condition gradually worsened over the next few days, marked by reduced food consumption and diarrhoea.

Efforts were made to provide medical advice through communication with the crewing manager and a medical professional. The advice was to place the DC on a light diet. On 20 November, while the ship was sailing near the Cape of Good Hope, the Master advised the DC to remain in his cabin due to choppy seas. On 24 November 2022, citing that the DC had been experiencing dizziness, vomiting and diarrhoea, the Master contacted the crewing manager to discuss the possibility of signing off the DC at Mauritius (ETA – 28

November 2022). It was decided that the Second Officer should accompany the DC's sign-off, while the company-initiated plans for the DC to seek medical attention in Mauritius. Attempts were made to encourage the DC to consume food and receive medical advice, but his condition continued to deteriorate. On 25 November, the DC's condition deteriorated significantly, and he was found unresponsive by another Deck Cadet (DC 2) tasked with monitoring his condition every two hours. CPR was initiated, but the DC did not show any vital signs, and he was declared deceased.

According to Britannia Club, this tragic incident highlights the need for effective safety measures, crew training and awareness of potential health hazards on board ships. It also serves as a reminder of the importance of timely medical intervention and communication with medical professionals in the event of crew member's health issues at sea.

Experience of the crew member: The DC had been on board for three months, and this was his first time on a ship. He had received familiarization training as per the Safety Management System (SMS). However, there was no specific familiarization training on the risks associated with shipboard operations for Cadets or Trainees who were on their first ship. Due to his lack of experience and inadequate supervision while performing his duties, the DC was not aware of the risks associated with inhaling fumes from HFO. Although he found it uncomfortable to breathe the fumes, his inexperience left him unsure of what steps to take, such as seeking an alternative method to complete the task.

Nature of work: The fitter was tasked by the Chief Officer to carry out some repair work inside No.5 cargo hold and the fitter prepared the items needed for the repair with the DC. When the bosun opened the hatch cover, both the fitter and the DC were waiting near No. 2 HFO tank port and noticed a strong smell of fumes from the vent of HFO tank. The DC lowered equipment required for repair into the hold standing on the raised steps aft of the HFO tank vent.

It is unclear from the casualty investigation report whether a permit-to-work system was followed and if a permit was issued for the Hot Work conducted in the cargo hold. Typically, such a job requires a risk assessment to identify associated risks, necessary safeguards, the appointment of a responsible Officer not involved in the Hot Work, a work plan meeting to identify personnel, equipment, PPE, a detailed operation plan, a toolbox meeting at the work site, and a cease-task system to halt work if it becomes unsafe.

If the above procedures had been followed, they would have identified the DC's lack of experience as a risk. The DC should have accompanied another crew member with suitable experience. A responsible Officer monitoring safety at the work site would have noticed the proximity of where equipment was lowered into the cargo hold to the bunker vent, which was venting fumes. A cease-task system or a similar mechanism could have allowed the fitter and DC to abort the task when they both sensed strong fumes and select an alternative access point to lower equipment into the hold. A typical SMS may prohibit Deck Cadets and Trainees from performing such tasks as part of Hot Work, without guidance and supervision from experienced crew members.

<https://safety4sea.com/britannia-club-a-cadet-losses-his-life-onboard-a-bulk-carrier/#:~:text=On%2012%20November%202022,loaded%20to%20an%20estimated%2047%25>.

November 24th 2023



The Importance of P&I Clubs in shipping.

Protection is required for the safe working of seafarers and ships, and indemnity is necessary to compensate for any loss of life, environment and property. P & I club is an association composed of ship owners members to support seafarers' safety and well being by providing the required necessities.

What is P&I club? A Protection and Indemnity or P&I club is a non-governmental, non-profitable mutual or cooperative association of marine insurance providers to its members which consists of ship owners, operators, charterers and seafarers under the member companies.

Why is P&I insurance Important? The three essential elements of shipping industry are the ship, the seafarers and the cargo. The one part which is directly connected to all the three mentioned is the "Risk" involved in transporting the cargo on a ship by seafarers.

Due to the “Risk” factor, a shipowner can face substantial monetary losses if his/her ship meets an accident and there is damage to the environment, cargo or to the vessel. Also, the risk to the lives of seafarers is kept above all and thus P & I insurance is a significant aspect of sailing.

During the sea service, the most valuable element onboard, i.e. human life can be at risk due to illness, injury by accident or even death by hazards.

A P&I club provides compensation in the form of insurance cover for reasons as mentioned above to the seafarers. This not only helps him in the difficult time but also to the seafarer’s family in case of death of their earning member.

Each P&I club sets a premium for an individual owner reflecting:

- The risks against which he requires cover
- His fleet’s gross tonnage
- His fleet exposure to risk
- Other factors including the likelihood of significant claims in the coming year

What P&I insurance covers?

- Personal injury, illness and death claims from the crew, passenger, etc.
- Stowaways and its repatriation arrangement.
- Cargo claims for damage or loss of the same.
- Unrecoverable GA contributions.
- Liability due to a collision.
- Damage to fixed and floating objects (Jetty, Pier, marine animals, Rig, Fishery Facility, etc.)
- Liability under approved towage contracts
- Removal of wreck
- Salvage operations
- Civil liabilities imposed due to pollution or oil spill
- Other fines

What are the functions of P & I Clubs?

- 1.Ensure ship owners and operators against third-party liabilities not covered by hull and machinery policies obtained. The club will usually only accept risks on chartered-in-tonnage where the member also has owned vessels entered with the organization. Charterers club exists to offer similar cover for charterers
2. Often ensure entire company fleets, but tend to prefer owners with similar types and standards of fleet
3. May subject owners vessels to inspection before entry into the club and during membership
4. Strive to keep ‘calls on their members’ at a minimum through loss prevention methods such as information bulletins aimed at owners insurance officers
5. Disseminate information aimed at keeping members premiums down
6. Produce lists of correspondents and reliable lawyers and surveyors
7. Produce standard forms of letters of indemnity and protest
8. May post bonds against members, ships when under arrest
9. Issue handbooks containing club rules and lists of correspondents, which are very useful to master seeking advice and assistance in any kind of trouble

Club control and management

- Controlled by the committee of directors representing the shipowner member. Large claims are examined by the directors at regular meetings before payment is made
- Managed by firms of insurance experts, maritime lawyers and Mariners
- Operate on a non-profit making basis
- Members ships entered may be subjected to random ship inspections concentrating on the management of the vessel. If failed, a more intensive condition survey by independent surveyors may be called by the club’s managers. An owner who fails to keep his vessel in the condition required by the club’s rules may be expelled from the club
- Issue each member vessel with the ‘certificate of entry’, which should be kept by the master

P&I Club Correspondents

Clubs retain correspondents at numerous sports worldwide. In some countries the correspondents maybe a firm of insurance specialists acting for more than one club, or a shipbroking or insurance company only occasionally handling P&I business. The correspondence is often a law firm with maritime law practitioners.

Disclaimer: The authors' views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of Marine Insight. Data and charts, if used, in the article have been sourced from available information and have not been authenticated by any statutory authority. The author and Marine Insight do not claim it to be accurate nor accept any responsibility for the same. The views constitute only the opinions and do not constitute any guidelines or recommendation on any course of action to be followed by the reader.

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insight

By [Anish Marine Safety](#) May 24th 2019

<https://www.marineinsight.com/marine-safety/the-importance-of-p-i-club-in-shipping/>



On December 5th 2023 one of the Society's Book Awards was presented to Sophia Kjernisted of Camosun College in Victoria.

Making the presentation were Ms Vivienne Siddall & Captain Ivan Oxford, Directors of the Society.

"Ice Man" wins 2023 Admirals' Medal.

David Snider, a Founding Member of the Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada and a Past President of The Nautical Institute, was selected for the Medal by the Naval Association of Canada.

For the complete report read: -

<https://www.lookoutnewspaper.com/ice-man-wins-2023-admirals-medal/>





WESTERN MARITIME INSTITUTE

**Early in December 2023 Captain John Lewis
attended WMI on behalf
of the Society to present Awards**

**Dale Gisborne (right) received one of the
Society's Fall Bursaries**



**Receiving the Book Award is
Daniel Clark (left)**



NPESC Fall 2023 Bursary Winners at the Marine Campus of BCIT
Cadets Nathaniel Scott, Melissa Blake, Ethan Van Vliet, Blaze Pihl, Keegan Cumisky, Aidan Hinkins.

**The following letter was received from Ms Demi Leuchter,
a winner of a Society Bursary in 2022.**

January 10, 2024

To NPESC,

It has almost been one year since I have finished school.

Since completing the course, I have been trained at BC Ferries as a deckhand and worked over the summer to complete my seetime. I am grateful to say that I worked hard to be able to be quartermaster for most of the summer.

I have truly enjoyed working in the marine industry and getting more involved in the navigation process on the vessel.

I have been working at BC ferries in the catering department for 6 years. I am currently waiting for regular job to become a deck hand full time.

I am hopeful I will get one before the summer season.

In the meantime, I have continued to refresh on the material from school. I have also started to study materials for future classes that I plan to take this 2024 fall/winter.

I am very grateful for the opportunity that you and the NPESC has provided.

My goal is to advance in my career at BC ferries and to encourage women to join to make a more diverse work environment.

Thank you again for the opportunity you have provided me.

Demi Leuchter (Camosun College Student)



The 1952-built steamer *Philip R. Clarke*, commanded by Captain Scott Hein, closed the 2023-24 Soo Locks season when she passed downbound on a sunny but cold Tuesday morning (January 16th 2024) bound from Two Harbors, MN, to Conneaut, OH, with taconite pellets. Once unloaded, she will winter at Toledo.



***Philip R. Clarke* ends 2023-24 Soo Locks season**

Boatwatchers at Mission Point were treated to a full salute, complete with cheers from those on the boat and on the shore. A placard placed at the engine room door by the Chief Engineer Kate Walheim, proclaimed "If you ain't first, you're last!"

She was followed closely by the tug *Shirley Ann* and barge, headed for Cheboygan, MI, for the winter. The pair spent the season working on the New Lock project at the Soo.

The Soo Locks will remain closed through 12:01 a.m. March 25 to perform seasonal critical maintenance. The

Soo Locks' other operating lock, the MacArthur Lock closed for the Navigation Season at 7 a.m. on December 17 and will remain closed through April 24, 2024.

Federal regulation (33 CFR 207.440) establishes the operating season based on the feasibility of vessels operating during typical Great Lakes ice conditions.

"Every year, the Corps of Engineers uses the non-navigation winter period to perform maintenance and keep the Soo Locks operating," Maintenance Branch Chief Nicholas Pettit said. "The Detroit District team works long hours in extreme conditions to complete a significant amount of maintenance during this annual closure period. The work they perform is unique, especially given the harsh northern Michigan winter conditions they work in."

The team will install a temporary panel bridge across the Poe Lock. This panel bridge will provide the ability to mobilize materials and equipment to the job sites throughout the winter closure.

Maintenance crews will complete structural inspections, maintenance and install lifting lugs on the upstream miter gate. On the downstream miter gates, crews will install anchorage components and complete critical structural repairs. Major rehabilitation will continue on the Poe Lock's upstream and downstream ship arrestor systems.

The Soo Locks when drained for repairs.

The miter gates are the large gates serving as dams at each end of the lock chamber, sealing the chamber and allowing the water level to be raised and lowered in the chamber. Additionally, crews will perform a wide range of other maintenance tasks from replacement of pier fender timbers to inspections and preventative maintenance on electrical and mechanical systems on both Poe and MacArthur Locks.

"With the winter temperatures being more mild than previous years, the Soo Operations team has been proactively prepping for the non-navigation season," Soo Locks Operations Manager LeighAnn Ryckeghem said. "Every year weather poses challenges and adds intensity to maintenance, the team is highly skilled and equipped to safely execute critical projects that allow for continued operational reliability during the navigation season,"

Contractors are currently working on the Poe Lock ship arrestor project. OCCI of Missouri, was awarded the contract in July 2021, for \$17.5 million after awarded options. This winter the company is primarily completing the rehabilitation of the upstream arrestor, installing the new arrestor machinery and replacing the arrestor boom.



More upheaval for global shipping as Panama Canal cuts traffic due to drought.

Shipping companies already dealing with attacks on vessels in Red Sea.

With shipping companies already dealing with disruptions in the Red Sea due to attacks on ships, word comes that another important trade route is being forced to curtail traffic. A severe drought that began last year has forced authorities to slash ship crossings in the Panama Canal by 36 per cent.

The cuts announced by authorities in Panama are set to deal an even greater economic blow than previously expected. Panama Canal administrator Ricarte Vasquez now estimates that dipping water levels could



cost them between US\$500 million and US\$700 million in 2024, compared to previous estimates of US\$200 million.

One of the most severe droughts to ever hit the Central American country has stirred chaos in the 80-kilometre route, causing a traffic jam of vessels, casting doubts on the canal's reliability for international shipping and raising concerns about its affect on global trade.

A cargo ship waits near the Centennial Bridge for transit through the Panama Canal locks, in Panama City, Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2024. (AP Photo/Agustin Herrera)

"It's vital that the country sends a message that we're going to take this on and find a solution to this water problem," Vasquez said.

The disruption of the major trade route between Asia and the United States comes at a precarious time. Attacks on commercial ships in the Red Sea by Yemen's Houthi rebels have rerouted vessels away from the crucial corridor for consumer goods and energy supplies.

The combination is having far-reaching effects on global trade by delaying shipments and raising transport costs. Some companies had planned to reroute to the Red Sea — a key route between Asia and Europe — to avoid delays at the Panama Canal, analysts say. Now, that's no longer an option for most.

On Wednesday, Vasquez said the canal authorities would cut daily ship crossings to 24, down from 38 a day in normal times last year. Vasquez added that in the first quarter of the fiscal year the passageway saw a 20 per cent drop in cargo and 791 fewer ships than the same period the year before.

It was a "significant reduction" for Panama, Vasquez said. But he said that more "efficient" water management and a jump in rainfall in November have at least ensured that water levels are high enough for 24 ships to pass daily until the end of April, the start of the next rainy season.

Canal authorities attributed the drought to the El Niño weather phenomenon and climate change, and warned it was urgent for Panama to seek new water sources for both the canal's operations and human consumption. The same lakes that fill the canal also provide water for more than 50 per cent of the country of more than four million people.

"The water problem is a national problem, not just of the canal," Vasquez said. "We have to address this issue across the entire country."

The Associated Press January 19th 2024

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/panama-canal-drought-shipping-1.7088695#:~:text=A%20severe%20drought%20that%20began,economic%20blow%20than%20previously%20expected.>



January 31st.

**Captain Rüther attended the
BCIT Marine Campus
to present Certificates to
Nautical Science Cadets,
Jeremy Burrage & Jason Agnew**

Late News: SIU Canada releases report on harassment & bullying in Canadian marine sector.
<https://maritimemag.com/en/siu-canada-releases-report-on-harassment-and-bullying-in-canadian-marine-sector/>

The NPESC 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.

Contributions to the NPESC are tax deductible. Charitable Registration # 1039049-20



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

