



WORLD SHIP SOCIETY, HAVEN PORTS BRANCH
NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2021

Haven Ports Branch of the World Ship Society



Join us for our monthly interactive Zoom meetings online
Every 2nd Thursday of the Month



For more information, contact our
branch secretary
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First Time Caller



Departing Felixstowe on 1st July and heading for ports in Greece and Turkey is “**Frankfurt Express**”. The 335 metre long and 2010 built vessel was constructed to the “*Colombo Express*” design by Hyundai, Ulsan along with over ten more similar ships. *(Photo contributed)*



Sailing on the same day on a Unifeeder service is “**Mastery D**”, her schedule includes the ports of Immingham, Szczecin and Hamburg. Launched in the Ukraine by Damen Okean, Mykolayiv in June 2005 she was completed by Volharding, Foxhol the following January as “*Beluga Mastery*”. For a charter in 2006 she was renamed “*Delta Rotterdam*”. She regained her first name in 2008 and was sold when Beluga ran into financial trouble and became “*X-Press Hoogly*” in 2011. Drevin Beereederungs (founded by Rainer Drevin in 1983) has owned her since 2013 changing her name in 2015. *(Photo contributed)* (2)



Arriving at Felixstowe on 1st July from Zeebrugge on a Maersk charter to load empty containers. “**Lyme Bay**” would later sail for Rotterdam on July 5th, where she lay in the Caland Canal for a day without handling any cargo, so it is assumed to be a bunkering stop. She arrived at the Omani port of Salalah on 24th July and left on 26th for Hamad in Qatar. Built in South Korea by Sundong, Tongyeong as “*Hanjin New Jersey*”, her Singapore based owners renamed her in 2016 after the demise of Hanjin. *(Photo contributed)*



Seen in the River Orwell approaching Ipswich on 1st July is “**Lilbo**”. Built for German owners in 1989 by Cassens, Emden, she had made several calls to Ipswich under her original name of “*Tanja*”. Her current owners are Timbership based in Latvia. Here she is in ballast with her last port being Keadby, North Lincolnshire on the River Trent. Loading for Rouen in France she would not depart until 7th July. *(Photo contributed)*



Swapping containers at Trinity Terminal, Felixstowe on a dull 5th July is United Shipping Companies of Drochtersen owned “**Elbspirit**”. Her builders Nordseewerke of Emden completed her for German owners who chartered her to CSAV of Chile in 2008 as “**CSAV Rungue**”. In 2013 she became “**Primavera**” but still German owned. USC acquired her in 2019 and changed her name to fit their nomenclature. *(Photo contributed)*



The third vessel to be added to Dalby Offshore's wind farm support fleet “**Dalby Tees**” passes Felixstowe inbound from the London Array wind farm on 6th July. She was completed by Alicat Workboats, Great Yarmouth in 2012. *(Photo contributed)*



With the spire of the clock tower at the Royal Hospital School at Holbrook in the background **“Olympic Triton”** is passing Harwich outbound from Parkeston Quay on 6th of July. Making for Dunkirk she had arrived the previous day from Kristiansand. Launched by the Maritime Shipyard, Gdansk in August 2007 she was completed at Ulsteinvik, Norway in October. Her owners are Olympic Shipping of Fosnavaag. Now classed as an offshore support ship originally she was a platform supply. *(Photo by Derek Sands)*



Research vessel **“Fugro Galaxy”** passes Harwich outbound on 7th July, she would use Parkeston Quay as a base for a while making several calls. Most of her work appears to be surveying the sea bed in anticipation of further extensions to the Galloper and Outer/Greater Gabbard wind farms. Another product of the Maritime Shipyard, Gdansk, this time completed in March 2011 by Fassmer, Berne the yard is situated on the River Weser a few kilometres downstream from Bremen. *(Photo by Derek Sands)*



Chinese built “**Olivia M**” passes Felixstowe outbound from Ipswich on 13th July. Completed in 2010 by Penglai, Bohai as “**Fehn Light**” she had a short time as “**Manisa Anna**” in 2020 before gaining her present name in May 2021. Her next port would be St. Petersburg, having arrived at Ipswich from Cork on 10th July. Her current owners are believed to be German based and she is flying the flag of Latvia. *(Photo contributed)*



Another Chinese built ship “**Amberland**” seen here in the River Orwell, near Ipswich on 14th July. She was arriving from St. Petersburg. Completed in 2010 by Rongcheng SBI as “**Drentediep**” she became “**Beringdiep**” in 2011 and then “**Burgoe**” in 2017. Her owners in 2020 became Navalis and she conforms now with their naming scheme. She is managed by the tom Worden company of Oldendorf, a family run business with two from the tom Worden family as directors also of Navalis. The ship is registered in Madeira. *(Photo contributed)*



Two atmospheric views of one of MSC's latest acquisitions “**MSC Nadriely**” as she arrives at Felixstowe on 22nd July from Bremerhaven to load empty containers. Looking well for her near 23 years she was built in Warnemunde by Kvaerner in 1998, launched as “*Alicia*” and completed as “*Charlotta*” for Peter Dohle. Although registered in Cyprus all through her many charters and through ten previous name changes she always appears to be German owned until now. *(Photos contributed)*

Brightlingsea Shipping



Seen from East Mersea as she is about to turn into Brightlingsea Creek on 29th June is “Seg”. She had come in ballast from Wisbech to load a scrap metal cargo for Klaipeda and sailed the next day. One of a series of fifteen ships built to this design by Arminuswerfe, Bodenwerder, “Seg” was the seventh one and was completed in May 1993 for Russian owners. The shipyard is situated far inland on the river Weser and size restrictions imposed by the curved lock at Hamlin two hours downstream from Bodenweder meant building of ships ceased in 1997. Three more ships were built to the same design by Onega Arminius at Petrozavodsk, Russia. “Seg” is owned by Port of Wisbech holdings with management in St Petersburg so retains her Russian connection. The Petrozavodsk built “Sandal” is also owned by the company.



(All photos by Ian Clarke)



Making what is believed to be her second call at Brightlingsea on 4th July was Hav Bulk's “**Danica Hav**”. No one seems to have captured an image of her arriving from Setubal, so the image above taken at Mistley in 2019 has to suffice. After a swift discharge of her bagged cement cargo she sailed in ballast for Sheerness the next day. She was built by Hugo Peters at Wewelsfleth in 1984 as “**Birka**” for Heinrich Beutler, Lubeck, moving to Union Transport as “**Union Arbo**” in 1994. She was acquired in 2001 by Hav Bulk A/S, Oslo and renamed “**Danica Hav**” and is managed from Kaliningrad, Russia by Hav Ship Management Norrus. *(Photo Derek Sands)*



The Chinese built “**Fehn Companion**” sails from Brightlingsea on 16th July for Ijmuiden. She had arrived earlier in the day with bagged cement from Setubal. Launched as “**Fehn Captain**” by Wuxue Kaiyangxing, she was completed as “**Rhine Express 2**” in 2010. She was renamed in 2014 under management by Fehn Ship Management, Leer. *(Photographed from East Mersea by Ian Clarke)*



“**Bering**” turns into Brightlingsea Creek on 21st July after a ballast voyage from Goole.



She approaches the turning circle and will turn around to face head out on the berth. Loading of a cargo of scrap metal for Leixoes in Portugal will commence as soon as she is alongside and departure on the evening tide of 22nd July was scheduled, and achieved. Once a member of the numerous fleet of Erwin Strahlmann as “**Luhnau**” she was completed by Slovenske Lodenice, Komarno, Slovakia in February 2007. However her keel was laid in June 1998! It's believed she was purchased on the stocks by Strahlmann, having originally been ordered by German compatriot Bojen. When Strahlmann got into financial difficulties the fleet was sold leaving just a management company. Acquired in June 2021 by Baltnautic, Lithuania she gained her present name. *(Photos by Derek Sands)*

Mistley Shipping



Bringing more bricks from Aalst in the Netherlands “**RMS Duisburg**” arrives on 4th July. Launched into the Danube by Severin, Drobeta in 1999 she was completed as “*Moseldiep*” by Schloemer, Oldersum for Feederlines, Groningen. Also in 1999 she was renamed to the French sounding “*Cpt. L' Alexandre*”. Ownership then has been difficult to trace, but looks to have still been Feederlines. RMS renamed her when she was acquired in 2006.



(Photos by Steve Cone)



Passing Wrabness on the River Stour and heading for Mistley on 13th July “**Scot Bay**” is inbound from Inverness with wood pellets. Up until March this year she was named “**Scot Isles**” but with this name being required for a new ship being launched by Royal Bodewes, Hoogezand on 4th June, she was renamed. Originally the “**Somers Isles**” and possibly launched as “**Eclips**” for Dutch flag owners in 2001 by Tille, Kootstertille, in 2006 she was renamed “**Scot Isles**” her registered owner being Hohebank Shipping of Romford, and managed by Intrada, Rochester. Upon her recent name change her registered owner became Scotline. *(Photo by Graham Lee)*



Approaching the berth at Mistley
(Photo by Mick Warrick)

Awaiting discharge
(Photo by Steve Cone)





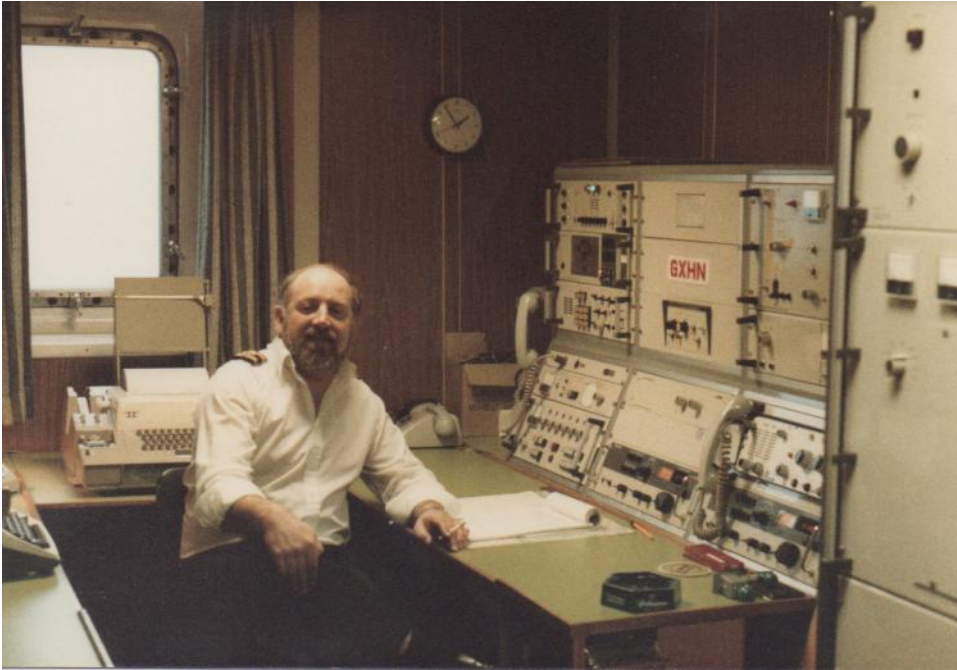
Alongside on 27th July are “**Lady Clara**” and “**RMS Duisburg**”. This was the latter's second recent call with bricks from Aalst from where she arrived the previous day. “**Lady Clara**” had however arrived from Rotterdam on 21st July with bagged Chinese organic soya meal from Rotterdam and was suffering a slow discharge due to a lack of road transport. Completed as “**Okko Tom Brook**” by Slovenske Lodenice, Komarno in 2007 and named after a 14th Century East Frisian chieftain by her owners Bojen, she came under Vertom- Bojen ownership in 2011 changing to her current name. Both ships sailed early on 28th July: “**Lady Clara**” for Vlissingen and “**RMS Duisburg**” for Rotterdam. *(Photo by Derek Sands)*



Arriving on the same tide at approximately 03.30 from Ijmuiden was “**Nautica**” to load malt for Scotland. She is seen here approaching the quay in a photo from April 2016. Built in 1992 for Dutch owner C. Leyton as “**Vesting**” by Ferus Smit, Foxhol, in 2000 she was sold and renamed “**Meander**” with a registered owner of the same name. Waterway Shipping acquired her in 2005, she was renamed as above and is managed by Baltnautic, Klaipeda. *(Photo by Derek Sands)*

Memoirs of a Radio Officer (Part Two)

by Colin L. Keeble



Having organised a bespoke conversion course from PMG2 to the new qualification (Marine Radio Government Cert.), I started to attend the Autumn term at Lowestoft. During the week I would stay at the Deep Sea Fisherman's establishment travelling to Ipswich at the weekends.

I joined the class for Part 2 Radiocomms, of the writtens, having hopefully covered the Part 1 paper (Tec Elect.) during my last deep sea trip. Each paper was 3 hours and one of the initial problems was writing for that amount of time. Each Friday afternoon I would sit one of the old papers, it being duly returned on Monday suitably marked and with helpful comments.

We sat the writtens in December, when I discovered I was the only candidate for the Part 1 paper. A one hour break then into the second paper with the remainder of the class. Driving back that night, I dropped the Head of School off at Kessingland and we discussed my chances. I was confident with the first paper but had reservations with the second. Not to worry, he said, we begin the Part 2 again in January.

In January he strolled into the classroom with news of the results. Only candidate for Part 1 (me) a pass and for the Part 2 paper there was one failure. Fortunately not me.

We now had the second part to conclude which included the practical side such as Morse code, regulations and fault finding. Fortunately I received dispensations for some of these only having to do fault finding. This was conducted very much differently to my first examination in 1964 and this time I would work with another candidate to approach the fault in an orderly manner, keeping notes and at the same time being asked questions by the examiner. Fortunately I was successful and got my MRGC.

I was placed on leave until mid March, awaiting my next appointment: *MV nf TIGER GXYP, built 1972 by Helsingor Skips in Helsingor for Jdysk Faerfaht. Named KATTEGAT for Grena-Hundested Service. Gross Tons 4,044.*



nf Tiger

She was purchased by Normandy Ferries and renamed *nf Tiger* and commenced service in 1978 on P&O's Dover-Boulogne Service. On the same service was *nf Panther* and *Lion*.



Lion

Appointed to this ship in March 1981, I travelled down a day early in order to do a days makkee learner. As the crew had to live in a laid down radius from Dover, the R/Os were accommodated in the annex of a motel in Snargate Street, Dover. Depending whether on days or nights the joining times in Eastern Docks were 0515, 0715 and 0915 in the morning (days) or 1715, 1915 and 2115 (nights). It was 12 on 12 off for 7 days then a week's leave. So basically it was a week of days, a week off, then a week of nights, 12 on 12 off duty wise.

P&O provided twelve sailings per day, leaving Dover on the even hour. The run to Boulogne was about two hours with an hour alongside before leaving again for Dover. During a 12 hour duty we would complete two round trips to France and back. The ship generally maintained the schedule but could occasionally be delayed due to weather or busy traffic arriving in Dover. It should be remembered that Dover was very busy, services being provided by British Rail, Townsends, the French and Belgians. In the earlier months of the year, when traffic bookings were lighter, we would sometimes make only one round trip at night laying up in France. During layup we would use the opportunity to undertake lifeboat and fire drills.

The late sailings on Sunday were always busy with the French lifting the heavy lorry restrictions in force on that day. As mid summer arrived there was a big increase in holiday traffic most sailings being full. There was a big increase in round trippers having a day out in Boulogne. The passenger certificate was, I recall, 1,004 and it could be very crowded during the summer.

The Radio Room was just off the bridge and comprehensively equipped with ITT gear. A TR to GNF (Northforelandradio) was about the extent of the radio traffic. During sailings the R/O would standby the VHF relaying any port control instructions to the master at the starboard wing controls. During Dover dockings, the R/O would assist relaying distances down the port side. It was quite a tight squeeze into the Dover berth.

Traffic in the Dover Strait was very busy but the vessels were equipped with very good radars and generations away from those when I first went to sea. Foggy nights were more strenuous for the deck officers and when really bad about the only thing sighted was the linkspan at either end of the trip.

My first period on Tiger last until the middle of August when I then proceeded on leave. This lasted until December when I was recalled just before Christmas for another deep sea trip: *TEXACO WELLINGTON Texaco Overseas Tankships, 13,887 Gross Tons.*



Texaco Wellington (Derek Sands)

I had sailed on this ship two years previously and was now joining for her last voyage before scrapping. Travelled out with British Airways (DC10) Heathrow, Kuwait then Dubai. We sailed from Dubai just after Christmas and proceeded just down the coast to load at the Jebel Ali oil terminal. After loading proceeded out through the Straits of Hormuz but detoured to the anchorage at Khor Fakkan. We evidently had a problem with part of a bilge keel becoming detached and this required divers to go down and cut the offending part away. From then on we had a nice passage across to the south of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Malacca Straits, Singapore then up to Bangkok.

I seem to recall we did a part discharge in Bangkok, then back down to Singapore to discharge the remaining cargo, at Jurong I believe, then out to the anchorage to part de-store and begin gas freeing. From Singapore we proceeded northwards up the South China Sea bound for our final port, Kaohsiung in Taiwan. Some more gas freeing while at anchor then the pilot boarded for the ship's final move to the breakers yard.

Our berthing was not taken with the usual care as we moved alongside another vessel with the bridge wings scraping and sparks flying. Port officials boarded to finalise the last business of handing over the vessel, two officials to began to decommission the radio room and remove safety certificates etc. In the afternoon a coach arrived to take the whole crew off to a hotel. Last man off the ship was the 3rd engineer whose final job was to switch off fuel to the generator in the engine room. After a while the lights slowly went out and the whole ship was quiet. Considering the ship had been looked after since 1944, it was a sad day. The following day we took a local China Airlines flight up to Taipei and transferred from the domestic airport to the international one. A Thai Airways flight took us to Hong Kong where we connected with the British Airways 747 evening flight to Heathrow via Bombay and Rome. The whole voyage from the Persian Gulf to the breakers yard was just on seven weeks.

We are now into 1982 and at the end of March I went back down to Dover.



Nf Tiger

NF TIGER P&O Ferries (details as before). Rejoined this vessel and once again began running to Boulogne as described previously. This time I was attached for 6 months so experienced the whole of the summer season. These vessels appeared to have been very popular for day runs to Boulogne especially at weekends and were quite crowded at times. During this time, early April, when leaving Dover we observed P&O Ferrymasters MV Elk passing through the Straits at full speed for Southampton. She had been requisitioned for service in the Falklands (STUFT) along with Canberra and was one of the first ships to be so. I little realised I would become very familiar with this vessel. This time my spell on Tiger finished at the end of October and once again proceeded on leave.

MV ELK/GXHN P&O Ferrymasters, 5462 Gross, Built Hyundai H. I. Ulsan South Korea 1977.



Elk going upriver at Gothenburg

In early February 1983 I was appointed to Ferrymaster's MV Elk, joining her in Middlesbrough. She was one of a class of ships ordered by Stena Line and built in South Korea. Known as Stena Sea Runner class, I believe some twelve vessels were built (I stand to be corrected) which were taken on by various owners, Townsends amongst them. Options were available when built and Elk was completed with stabilisers. Fitted with bow thrusters and twin Pielstick engines, her service speed was 17.7 kts on two and about 15 kts on one. The radio room was well equipped for a ferry, being ITT gear with a 1.2Kw main transmitter, two main receivers, emergency transmitter and VHF. She also had a telex facility. The ship was a weather reporting vessel and would forward 6 hourly reports to the UK. On building she was fitted with two Raytheon radars (3 and 10cm) with full tracking facilities. Technical details are somewhat hazy now but these could track around 40 vessels. Additional equipment was added later. The capacity was about 120 40 ft trailers, loaded on the top deck and main deck and 20 or so in the lower hold, which were lowered down on a lift on the starboard side of the main deck.



Elk in rough weather in the North Sea

When I joined in early February, she had been back from the Falklands for six months or so and after some refitting had once again taken up the Middlesbrough/Scandinavia service. Elk was, along with Canberra, one of the first STUFT vessels requisitioned by the government and sailed with her early on for Ascension. The bulwarks were removed there to enable helicopter operations and two bofors guns fitted to the canopy. The only merchant vessel to be armed, I understand, during the conflict. Her cargo south was some 2 to 3 thousand tons of ammunition and the remainder vehicles. The crew complement increased to about 81 (21 normal crew) and the remainder service personnel.

Considered a high value unit because of her load, she was held to the east of the islands until making her runs into San Carlos to unload. The ship acquitted herself well and was fondly known as Elk Royal among the servicemen. Apart from the Falklands episode, Elk had been on the Scandinavian service since building. In the late 70s she grounded on the approaches to Gothenburg due to a steering failure, requiring repair and during another episode had heavy cargo damage due the heavy weather (trailer straps failing).

The vessel made two trips to Sweden every week as follows: Sail Middlesbrough Thursday midday for arrival Gothenburg late afternoon Friday. Sail Gothenburg late Friday for an overnight passage to Helsingborg. Saturday morning load and discharge, sailing from Helsingborg about noon for arrival Middlesbrough 0600 Monday morning. Discharge and load leaving about noon for Gothenburg, arriving there Tuesday afternoon. Discharge and load sailing late Tuesday to arrive in Middlesbrough at 0600 Thursday.

This was a complete week's itinerary and would then begin again on Thursday. On the weekend run back from Helsingborg we would stop an engine and slow down for a Monday morning arrival. However, if engine maintenance was programmed we could arrive early Sunday evening to enable this to be carried out. This was about the only opportunity for a trip ashore during a spell on board. The distance from Middlesbrough to Gothenburg was just over 500 miles which we achieved in about 28 hours.

Crew accommodation was all en-suite and we also had twin berth cabins for 12 self drives. They also had their own mess room. Self drive lorries were not too numerous on this run but at times we had the odd self drive passenger or even private foot passenger. Passenger wise this was not generally advertised but seemed to be a case of being in the know. As far as I recall the fare was around £60-£70 for a one way crossing, all meals included.



Elk in ice and with the Helsingborg pilot boat approaching and (right) entering the port

Normal joining day was a Thursday but I joined on the Monday in order to do a makee learner round voyage. The R/O did additional paper work mainly concerned with preparing arrival papers, crew declarations, passenger lists, etc and dealt with officials at both ends. These were customs and immigration in Sweden and the same in the UK plus Special Branch. The R/O was also responsible for the the bond which which was issued twice a week to the crew, that included ordering in and accounts. This was prior to the Herald disaster at Dover and alcohol was still available to the crew. The crew rotation was 2 weeks on and 2 weeks off, the R/Os doing 28 days on and 28 off, with some of the crew changing over each Thursday. This was a nice steady job and being rostered well in advance could plan things during leave. Apart from promotions and requests there was very little changes with the crew.



Rail ferry Trekoner in Helsingborg just berthing after arriving from Copenhagen and Elk at her berth

During my first spell on Elk we relieved the drydocked Norsesea on the Ipswich/Europort run and came down from Middlesbrough to take up the service for a week. Unfortunately we could not keep up the usual schedule due to draft restrictions and would arrive in Ipswich an hour later each day. The Ipswich dockers were not impressed. This was my first time into my home town. (19)



Elk passing under the Orwell bridge outbound from Ipswich

The two masters on my first spell on Elk were Captain Brian Luke and Captain Mike Godfrey with the relief master being Captain Neil Hardy. My first period on the Elk lasted until February 1984 completing seven 28 day periods and then went on leave again.

MV nf TIGER (details as before). More on the Elk later. Once again I went back down to Dover and joined Tiger for the week on week off roster as previously described. This was my third time on Tiger and not too much had changed. Still on a week on week off roster with two daily trips to Boulogne. The daily return trips for foot passengers to were really popular during this period especially at the weekends. During autumn we even had a Dance to France return trip on a Saturday evening. My time for this period on Tiger came to an end in the middle of January when I left the vessel. After a period of leave I now joined what was to become my last deep sea voyage which was to turn out to be quite an interesting one. This would be my third and last appointment to a Ben Line ship: *MV BENHOPE Ben Line, 30,987 Gross. Built Sunderland 1978.*



Benhope

By this time Ben Line had disposed of most of if not all of their conventional cargo liners to the Far East as containerisation took over the shipping scene. However they still had some bulk carriers and tankers also small coastal tankers plus had diversified into the oil industry with self positioning drill vessels. My understanding was that Benhope had been purchased on the stocks, being previously ordered by a Northeast ship owner. I'm sure a WSS member will put me right on this (*Ordered by Sheaf Steamship, W.A. Souter, Newcastle*).



The vessel was laying in New Orleans and was chartered for a voyage to Aqaba, Jordan, via the Suez Canal, with a full load of soya beans destined for Iraq. It should be remembered that the Iraq-Iran war was under way at this time so the northern Persian Gulf a no-no.

Benhope in New Orleans

After a night in a hotel close to Heathrow, I travelled to Schipol then KLM (747) to Atlanta, Georgia. In Schipol I was to meet up with about another 8 crew members, outbound reliefs. From Atlanta, we were booked on local Delta Airlines flight to New Orleans. Collected by the agent we were all booked into a motel not too far from the airport. Following morning we were taken upriver from New Orleans where Benhope was alongside an elevator loading, which was almost complete. A slow passage down river and passed the main city for some reason we anchored for a day. We eventually sailed and on clearing the Mississippi Delta set off for the Suez Canal. Passing through the Miami Straits and skirting the Bahamas we proceeded for the Straits of Gibraltar, the Mediterranean and to Port Said. Our passage through the canal was delayed, awaiting payment of the canal dues. This was unusual for Ben Line ships. In the old Far East run days things were a little different.

Transiting the Straits of Tiran (where Benhope had come to grief earlier in her life necessitating proceeding to Piraeus for repairs) we eventually arrived at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqaba. There we anchored along with many other ships. As mentioned earlier, with the Iraq-Iran war still carrying on, a lot of Iraqi cargo was being shipped through Aqaba and thus the port was heavily congested. The anchoring area is very restricted as the seabed shelves up very steeply. Geographically the Gulf of Aqaba is a continuation of the Rift Valley coming up from Africa and is thus very deep. Anchoring is taken with great care, it being lowered gently as compared to let go and allowed to run. On one occasion during our stay we observed one ship who allowed the cable to run allowing it to gather great speed resulting in the cable disappearing into the deep. They tried using the brake which ended with smoke and flames coming out of the windlass.

A little explanation on the geography of the area may enlighten you to the political sensitivities. Four countries meet at the top end. Egypt, on the western side, a little bit of Israel (Eilat) then on the eastern side Jordan with Saudi Arabia about 15 miles to the south. The top end is hardly 2 to 3 miles wide with the Israeli-Jordanian border running down the middle and extending out seaward. Hence the restricted anchorage. Two bunkers, plus barbed wire, in the middle where both Israeli and Jordanian forces spent all day looking at one another through binoculars. We had a few interesting incidents during our stay in Aqaba. While anchored, the wind changed direction for a short period and the vessel swung so the stern ended up in Israeli territory. In no time we had an Israeli gunboat alongside requesting us to move. We explained it took about an hour to get the engines ready but fortunately by that time the wind had changed direction again and we swung back to Jordanian waters.

For some reason we were asked to leave the anchorage at times to proceed a few miles south and drift for a while. During one such time, just after dinner, I returned to the bridge to keep the 3rd mate company when suddenly the VHF burst into life with someone calling Mayday. (21)

I acknowledged the call to discover that the vessel was a large Israeli pleasure yacht that was being escorted into a Saudi Arabian port and could we relay this information to the Israeli Navy in Eilat. Not in immediate danger we passed the information to Eilat. Overheard by Aqaba Port Control we were informed to cease transmissions immediately. This we complied with. About a week later, while back at the anchorage, the yacht had been released and on seeing us called us up to say thank you. Not wishing to upset anyone our reply was a very short 'That's ok'.

The most serious incident was on another occasion when we had to vacate the anchorage. The date is remembered as we were set to watch the Ladies Single Final from Wimbledon on the local TV. As we left the anchorage fire broke out in the economiser in the funnel casing. The economiser was used to utilise the exhaust heat from the engine room. To try and control the outbreak the engines were stopped and draught prevented from going up to the funnel. Unfortunately we drifted close to the Egyptian coast but could not use the anchors due to the depth of water. We were fortunate to get a harbour tug from Aqaba to assist who managed to get a line aboard and very slowly tow us across the Gulf to anchor south of of Aqaba. After many hours of boundary cooling and eventual access to the seat of the fire we managed to gain control. The heat must have been very high as parts of the steel structure had melted back to its constituent parts. During the tow, we managed to get an R/T call through to Edinburgh via Norddeichradio (DAN) to give the engineering super the good news. He flew out to the vessel to join on Monday in order to ascertain the cause. I understand the main reason was the build up of soot near the economiser which should have been cleared during running maintenance.



After a great amount of time we eventually got alongside to begin discharge. This was going to be a very slow process as the cargo was lifted by grabs into hoppers where it was bagged and immediately loaded onto lorries. This was then driven across the border into Iraq. We had a few runs ashore which was very pleasant and even had a football match against the local Holiday Inn Hotel. Not surprisingly the pitch was a bit sandy.

Tours of duty with Ben Line were about 4 months and during our time alongside the group who had joined in New Orleans were just about due for relief. Seats to London via Amman were in short supply and the group paid off in the middle of July into a very pleasant hotel in Aqaba. Not sure when we would be travelling, the agent would arrive each day with the news 'Maybe tomorrow'. After about 4 days we were picked up by taxi (always seem to be Mercedes in the Middle East) and taken out to the airport at Aqaba for a local flight up to Amman. A couple of hours wait there and we all flew back to Heathrow courtesy of Royal Jordanian Airlines.

I understand the vessel loaded phosphates in Aqaba for South Korea then on to Japan for repairs. The Benhope's visits to the Gulf of Aqaba were not happy ones, a grounding then a fire. During this voyage the managing agents were in Ipswich, the telegraphic address I recall being WAVENEY IPSWICH. This turned out to be my last deep sea voyage and from now on would sail mostly on the North Sea.

After another period of leave in October I was asked to do a months relieving on P&O's Norsky, then sailing out of Ipswich on the Ipswich-Europort service: *MV NORSKY P&O North Sea Ferries, 6,309 Gross, built Mitsui, Tomano as the IBEX.*



Norsky

Originally built as Ibex for the Irish Sea services with a sister ship, in 1984 she was transferred to the Ipswich-Rotterdam service and a daily run to Europort. Leaving Ipswich around noon she would arrive in Europort around 6pm sailing again about 2200 hours for arrival back in Ipswich (West Bank Terminal) around 6.30. This was a fairly popular run with self drives, especially west bound, and would usually have a full complement of 12. From the West Bank Terminal it was only a matter of about a mile to the A14 for the Midlands or A12 to London. As on the Elk I was responsible for the some of the arrival paperwork and the bond for both crew and drivers. Driver accommodation on NORSKY was quite comfortable, two to a cabin and en-suite. There was also a small bar they could use. Drivers would board while we were loading in Rotterdam for their meal then bring on their self drives last. Last on, first off. An early morning call for breakfast would enable them to be first off in Ipswich where we arrived about 7 o'clock in the morning.

After a month the regular R/O returned and once again I went on leave. This turned out to be very short, just over three weeks, and at the end of November I was recalled to once again go down to Dover, this time to join Townsend's Panther. By this time Townsends had taken over the P&O ferry operations in Dover and had temporarily retained their Dover ships for the Dover-Boulogne service although retaining their old names, these being Tiger, Panther and Lion.

MV PANTHER Townsend Thoresen GBCB, 4,044 Gross, built at Helsingor 1973 by the same yard that built Tiger and were sister ships. Built as DJURSLAND, renamed LASSE II in 1974. Sold to P&O 1979 to run with Tiger and renamed Panther.



Nf Panther

After being taken over by Townsends, the ships were repainted in their orange livery, with new funnel colours, in my opinion not as nice as P&O's pastel blue livery. The service was a repeat of that undertaken by P&O with two return trips to Boulogne per 12 hour shift. My stay on Panther was relatively short, a month and a half over the Christmas period, and in the middle of January proceeded once again on leave. Sometime in 1987 Panther was withdrawn from service and laid up on the Thames. She was re-purchased by P&O, rebuilt and renamed St Sunniva, to take up service between Aberdeen and Lerwick. In 2002 sold to a company in Dubai and renamed Faye for a service in the Gulf. In February 2005 she arrived in Alang, India for scrap.

On leave again, in early spring I had a change of scenery and was seconded to Marconi's head office in Chelmsford to work in the office. This was mainly working on details of equipment as Marconi was still manufacturing marine equipment for export around the world. Becoming a commuter was a change but driving down to Chelmsford every day soon becomes soul destroying. When I first joined Marconi in 1964 I was attached to the East Ham Depot. The two chaps there responsible for ship appointments were Stan Padfield and Cliff Finter, both being very persuasive and could make the rustiest tramp ship sound like the finest ship afloat. By this time Stan Padfield was working in Chelmsford and while there I would meet him frequently. When I was due to go back to sea again, I requested the Elk again, and fortunately at the end of June I rejoined her in Middlesbrough. At the end of June travelled up to Teesport to begin what was to be the longest period on one ship which was to last until 1993: *MV ELK P&O Ferrymasters GXHN, 5,462 Gross then 6,182 after lengthening. Eventually 14,374 (new measurements).*

During my two year absence from the vessel, not too much had changed. The two masters were still Captains Brian Luke and Mike Godfrey with Neil Hardy as relief master at this time. For the most part the crew remained the same, changes only coming about by retirement or promotion. Not long after joining, the vessel proceeded to the ARNO shipyard in Dunkirk to be lengthened by 12.6 metres with a 1.5 metre overhang each side on the top deck. The centre section had been pre-fabricated to be placed centrally after the ship had been cut in half. Ferrymasters did not want the ship to be off service too long and about 20 days was allowed for this work. A ducktail was also fitted around the stern. The lengthening increased the carrying capacity from around 120 to 141 12.5m trailers. By putting a 1.5m overhang each side they effectively created an extra lane on the top deck. Gross tonnage also increased but the lengthening had little or no effect on the speed of the vessel. I travelled back from Dunkirk on the Dover ferry then train to Ipswich.



Elk crew circa 1987

From now on the rota for R/Os was 28 days on and 28 days off. Losing 2 or 3 days each month meant you would spend alternative Christmases at home. The itinerary remained the same with a trip down to Helsingborg over the weekend. Passenger wise, we would see regular ones at different times of the year but self drives were nowhere as numerous as on the Ipswich-Europort run. Berth to berth Teesport-Gothenburg was about 28 hours distance around 530 miles or so.

Equipment wise the radio room remained pretty much the same but one useful addition was a weather facsimile receiver. A little elaboration on the weather up the top end of the North Sea. Distance from Teesport to the Danish coast was a fair stretch which would allow much bigger seas than in the southern part of the North Sea. This was especially so with northwesterlies as there was nothing between the top of Scotland and Denmark. Thus a very close eye was kept on the weather maps which gave us some idea of what to expect especially in the winter time. With expectant bad weather trailers on the top deck were always double chained. The station we received our maps from was Mainflingen in Germany. These consisted of synoptic charts for 12, 24 and 48 hours with smaller ones extending to 3 days. Our experience was that they were pretty accurate showing the lows and fronts coming in from the North Atlantic and would give us a very good idea of what to expect weather wise. Heightened interest was always shown if it was your last trip before leave. We very rarely deviated from our regular run unless something unexpected occurred. On one crossing she picked up a length of fishing tackle off Helsingborg which consisted of steel wire, shackles and chain. This wrapped itself around one of the shafts and we had to go down to Immingham to drydock. We were there a few days during which the shaft was pulled and checked. Three other ships we regularly encountered were Inowroclaw (Polish InterOcean), a roro, which was on the Tilbury, Teesport, Gdynia service and Tor Line's Scandinavia and Britannia. Regularly saw the last two passing Skagen at 24 kts.

The ship remained on its scheduled run of Teesport, Gothenburg and Helsingborg but on two or three occasions we used the port of Wallam on Tjorn island. This was north of Gothenburg on the way into Uddevalla. We picked the pilot up at Marstrand. This was due to labour problems in Gothenburg. On one occasion we arrived there and the agent had miscalculated the length of berth required, meaning we had to abandon the call and proceed down to Helsingborg.

During my time there the winter of 1987/88 was probably the coldest we experienced. We met ice in the Skagerrak proceeding northeast along the Danish coast and this extended all the way to Skagen and to Gothenburg. The Kattegat was also frozen down past Helsingborg. During this period icebreakers were working to free up the small coasters unable to proceed in the ice. Leaving Helsingborg and proceeding north, we received a call from a small coaster asking for help. We attempted to pass close and break the ice, but although we passed close he did not have enough power to reach the open channel we had created.



East German coaster Boltenhagen trapped in ice with Elk passing close trying to break her out (25)



Our drydockings were always taken up on the Tyne and I was on board for two or three of these which made for a change of scenery. I'm not quite sure if our sailings were taken up by another vessel. Drydocking usually took place in the summer during the quieter period of trade. Later on in the late 80s sailings on this service were doubled with chartered tonnage being bought in but they always seem to struggle to keep up with the service especially during the bad winter weather.



Equipment wise, things gradually changed on the bridge. At one of the drydockings, the old reliable Raytheon radars were removed and we were fitted with the all singing and dancing (at the time) Decca coloured raster scans, both 3 and 10 centimetre. Why 3 and 10cm? The 3 tends to pick up more sea clutter around the centre possibly obscuring any nearby targets, whereas the 10 picks up less. It's a bit of a compromise. The problems of losing targets mean that the tracking facility can be dropped along with all the tracking information. A useful facility on the Decca radars was that for our regular ports, the positions of the channel buoys (taken from the chart) could be fed into a memory. Prior to sailing this was recalled and the indicator for a known target was positioned on top of the radar target. The channel was then indicated out to the pilot station.

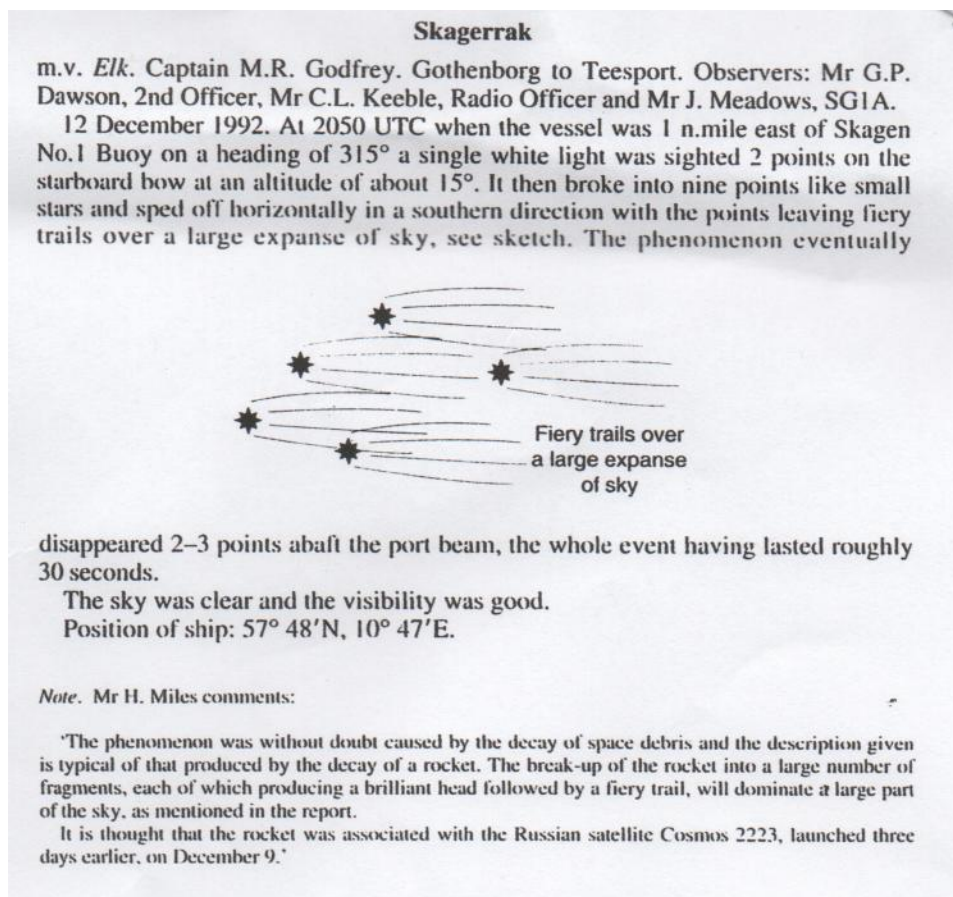
An important safety addition after the Herald of Free Enterprise Dover incident was the addition of audible alarms to the door closure lights on the bridge console. With the myriad of lights on the console, the light (red or green) could easily be overlooked but with a loud audible warning could hardly be ignored. Our electrician completed the work at minimum cost.

The Navtex arrived providing continuous readouts of weather forecasts and navigation warnings and we were fitted with an Epirb, automatic distress device which floats off the vessel if in trouble. Perhaps the bigger change was the automatic voyage recorder. This came probably as a result of the Herald incident. The radar pictures, engine movements, bridge voices were continually recorded in case of an incident. Every so often the tape would be sent up to head office for dissemination.

Every Friday was Board of Trade Sports, meaning lifeboat and fire drill. This was always taken very seriously and a different fire scenario was undertaken each week. During this time the R/O was on the bridge assisting the master, answering phones and walkie talkies, and keeping a running log. When finished the crew all came to the bridge where we could see where things went well or not. Basically, you never stop learning especially when the exercise did not go as well as expected. Once a year we had a safety audit with safety officers from ashore doing a round trip from Thursday to Monday and they went through the ship thoroughly. As much as we prepared, they would always pick us up on something, generally minor. The checks went as far as checking the use by dates on sauce bottles.

The fire and boat drill was observed on the bridge and they would set the scenario, however throwing in googlies along the way was to see how we dealt with changes in events. As far as I recall we always came through with a good report.

We still remained a weather ship sending in our reports to Bracknell where the Met Office was situated then. One event we reported was in 1992 when on passage around the top of Skagen. We saw fiery trails flying through the sky towards us quite slow moving. We eventually heard back from the Met Office that we had witnessed the break up of a Russian satellite (see report below).



Seamen have always been interested in their surroundings and keen observers of natural phenomena and any wildlife observed during their sea passages, no less so on the *Elk*. During migration period we would have a wide range of birdlife looking for a little help on their journeys south. The light from any accommodation door left open at night would act as an attraction to birds migrating south for winter. These included the usual swallows but also robins, firecrests, oyster catchers and a crossbill although the last two were not flying south. Two highlights were a long-eared owl and a sparrowhawk both of which hitched a lift from Denmark to the UK. With migrating swallows the sparrowhawk had a travelling larder on board. Being a member of the Royal Navy Birdwatching Society, I would often be called by one of the crew if we had an unexpected visitor on board.

From the end of the 80s the R/O became responsible for testing of the bridge equipment prior to sailing. This was a fairly long checklist, signed, and reported to the master. This released the 2nd mate and mate who were completing loading on the main deck, 2nd mate closing the doors and the mate completing the stability figures on the ship's computer which were reported to the master prior to leaving the berth. By the time the mate appeared on the bridge stations had been called, engines started and preparations for singling up had begun.

My period on Elk this time lasted from 1986 to 1993 except that is for a short interlude just prior to my leaving. Some time, it must have been during 1992, when on leave from Elk I was asked to join BT Marine's CS Monrach which required an R/O for about a week: *CS MONARCH BT Marine, built Robb Caledon, commissioned 1975.*

Joined this vessel in Tilbury. She was engaged at the time in removing redundant telephone cables off the seabed. During the week on board the cable being lifted ran from the coast near Aldeburgh (Suffolk) across to Walcheren Island in Holland. This was my first time on a specialised vessel and turned out to be very interesting. As well as Admiralty charts they also have their own special charts showing the cable position on the seabed. Basically the vessel positions over where it should be then drags a grapple left and right to snag the cable which is then lifted on board. It's not always easy as over the years the cable is covered on the seabed and during lifting often broke. On a good day we were lucky to lift about two miles or so. Every so often a repeater would be lifted. This basically is an amplifier, about six feet long, and powered along cable, the purpose of which is to amplify the signal as it travels along. Where we were operating was near to the northern approaches to the Haven Ports and although we were exhibiting the required signals plus being lit up like a Christmas tree, it was surprising how many vessels were chancing their luck and passing too close to us. A constant bridge watch ensured vessels passing too close were warned off on the VHF.

Being BT, the radio room was over equipped with gear with the addition of Satcom. A daily report on operations was completed by the master on a floppy disk (blast from the past) and wizzed down to head office via the Satcom. Also included was a shredder which intrigued me. Evidently they carried out seabed work for the MOD in the North Atlantic. Accommodation on this ship was more than usual to cater for the extra technicians on board for deep sea cable work. The cable was taken to Tilbury for discharge. This was quite an interesting interlude for me.



CS Monarch

In June 1993 I left the Elk. Ferrymasters were to discontinue with Marconi R/Os on both the Swedish and Europort runs. However we were informed should we be made redundant, we could return and be appointed by the crewing agency. My next vessel turned out to my last appointment with Marconi and after a month on leave was asked to join the Isle of Man Steam Packet's Lady of Mann: *LADY OF MANN Isle of Man Steam Packet Co., 3,176 Gross, built 1976 Ailsa Shipbuilding, Troon. Passengers 1,200.*

Travelled up to Liverpool and was met at Lime Street by a colleague from the Elk. She was laying in the Bidston Drydock on the Birkenhead side of the Mersey. On our arrival, it was obvious she had met with an accident as part of the bow had been stove in and was being replaced.

On boarding, we were informed that during the TT Race period and on arriving in Douglas, something had gone wrong when swinging inside the breakwater and she had lost an argument with the Admiralty Pier.

Lady of Mann was, I think, the last conventional ferry owned and built by the IOM S. P. Co. Unusual with ferries she was a sideloader to enable cars to be driven on board. During her last years on the Irish Sea services, she laid up at times in Liverpool, being bought out into service during the annual TT Races.

Coming out of drydock on the Monday evening we did a couple of test runs up and down the Mersey then went alongside the Landing Stage to embark passengers for Douglas. The following day a run to Fleetwood to do a day return trip to Douglas. Thereafter she settled down to her normal Irish Sea runs, sometimes to Liverpool then Dublin or Belfast. Apart from Belfast, where we stayed overnight, we always ended up in Douglas about eight in the evening staying overnight and sailing at eight in the morning. Very civilised enabling a walk up the road after arrival.

When I first joined, on one occasion we laid up all day for some reason. This gave me the opportunity to do the whole of the Isle of Man transport system. Leaving the ship first thing in the morning, did a return trip in the steam railway down to Port Erin and back. A trip along the seafront on the horse drawn tram, I then caught the electric railway which went up to Ramsey in the north of the island. Northbound, broke the journey at Laxey, to take the railway up to Snaefell. Managed to get back to the ship late afternoon.



Lady of Mann

One of the masters sailing at that time was Captain Vernon Kinley, very well known on the island. One of his interests was spotting basking sharks, which are quite numerous around the island. Any sightings he would announce over the tannoy. On one occasion, leaving Douglas in the morning, we hugged the coast southbound to the Calf of Man. Just about abeam of Derbyhaven, I remarked that someone was waving a towel from ashore. Turned out it was his neighbour, interestingly a Mr Ronnie Aldridge, who he pointed out was the pianist with the WW2 RAF band The Squadronaires. Took over as leader after the war and did a lot of work with the BBC during the 50s and into the early 60s. He had retired to the island and passed on, a couple of months after I left the vessel.

Afraid my stay only extended to a month and I paid off in Fleetwood in the latter end of July. Interestingly, the Lady of Mann in her later years and prior to scrapping, she was chartered by the ACOR Line to run during the winter months from Madeira to the adjacent island of Porto Santo.

In July 1993 I was made redundant from Marconi having completed 29 years service. Considering the rapid decline in the Merchant Navy from the mid 70s onwards, and with regular redundancies being announced by Marconi, plus future technology changes, I had survived remarkably well.

As mentioned before, on leaving Elk, the possibility of rejoining was kept open, and having served my redundancy notice, I rejoined Ferrymasters/North Sea Ferries in early November 1993: *MV NORSKY P&O North Sea Ferries, MV ELK P&O Ferrymasters.*

As the last of the R/Os to rejoin, I was the relief man between the two vessels. As such I would do two weeks sailing out of Ipswich on the Europort run, then travel up to Teesport to do two on the Scandinavian service. Depending whether on the the day or night run, I would leave the ship in Ipswich on a Friday night or Saturday morning and then travel up north to join Elk Monday morning.

Passenger wise, the Ipswich/Europort run was always busy with self drives. One of the masters I had sailed with from Teesport, Capt. Mike Godfrey, had by this time transferred down to Ipswich. Capt. Brian Luke and Capt. Neil Hardy were still on the Elk although the former was to retire in the not too distant future. The runs and itineraries of both vessels I have described previously. This arrangement lasted until April 1995 when P&O decided to finish the Ipswich/Europort service and the Norsky was transferred to the Irish Sea service running between the UK and Ireland. She was extensively rebuilt with a considerable addition of drivers accommodation for this service.

The Elk continued to run on the Scandinavian service and with the agreement of the other R/O we decided to return to our 28 days on, 28 days off roster and relieving on the Thursday as in the past. The crew remained for the most part the same apart from some transfers from Ipswich. Capt. Luke retired shortly after this, and was replaced by Capt. Brian Kay.

Apart from annual drydocking up on the Tyne, the vessel continued to run like clockwork, very rarely being late on service. It was calculated that the vessel spent approx 83% of her time at sea and during all the periods I had sailed on her, could not recall a time when she was not fully loaded.

The time for eventual removal of R/Os was looming and due in 1999. Unfortunately I didn't quite reach that time and eventually finished my career at sea in February 1998. This came about unexpectedly when I joined the vessel in early February 1998 and experienced discomfort chest-wise. This resulted in being landed in Gothenburg and spending almost a month in the Salgrenska University Hospital to undergo treatment. Having some new pipework fitted around the heart, I flew back to Heathrow, care of SAS, and into retirement. A replacement R/O flew out at short notice to replace me.

This was not the end of my association with Elk and in June of 1998 I went up to Middlesbrough during the summer layup for a presentation marking my end of sea service. At night we attended a bit of a 'do' at the Royal Oak in Great Ayton attended by the other officers including Captains Brian Luke, Mike Godfrey and Neil Hardy. A good time was had by all. For two or three years I also had an invite for the Royal Oak Christmas party and would go up to Teesport and stay overnight on board.

The ship was eventually sold to Tor Line and changed to the Scandinavia Harwich service. On a couple of occasions I had lunch on board in Harwich and visited her the day she changed her name to Tor Baltica. Eventually sold by Tor Line, my final visit was for a farewell dinner for all the crew which was held in the Pier Hotel, Harwich. A bit of a sad occasion but said farewell to the old girl in good fashion.



Tor Baltica (ex Elk) at Number 4 berth Harwich, Parkeston Quay

After 20 years I still keep in contact with some colleagues I sailed with among them 2nd mates Pete Marcon and Graham Dawson also bosun Billy Roe not forgetting Capt. Brian Kay. My most regular contact is with Capt. Brian Luke who is always interested in any news of his old boys. Unfortunately time had taken its toll Mike Godfrey and bosuns Derek Springell and Ronnie Shaw are no longer with us.

Looking back to 1964 when I went to sea, it's difficult to realise that containerisation had already begun and long established companies were beginning to disappear although not yet on the level of the 1970s. I feel I was fortunate to have experienced the merchant navy when we still had lots of ships and when young. It was still with a spirit of adventure to set off on a voyage to the other side of the world. On reflection, I don't think I would hesitate to do it all again, and feel fortunate to have experienced so much of the world. Since finishing I have made a few ferry trips, namely the HSS Harwich/Hook service before it ended and a Dover/Calais hovercraft day trip. Although fast at about 35 minutes, I thought the latter pretty uncomfortable with the excess noise and vibration. This concludes my record of MN service. Part One of my memoirs (see December 2020 newsletter) finished with a photo of a wanderer who came on board for a rest, so I finish this part with a photo of Elk's longest serving crew member.



Appendix of photos not used in main article



Elk alongside in Gothenburg

Stena Jutlandica in Gothenburg



Thor Heyerdahl and ferry in drydock at Gothenburg



nf Tiger docking in Dover

Backing into the berths at Dover

Chantilly (right)

Free Enterprise V (below)





Three Dover regulars from top to bottom: *Horsa*, *St Christopher* and *Lion*.

Some more shots of *Elk* in ice conditions





Norsky alongside the berth at West Bank, Ipswich

Norsky swinging off the berth - a very tight squeeze with a tanker berthed opposite



Norsky passing under the Orwell Bridge and below with "the Strand" on her starboard side.





Louise A. loading at Cliff Quay, Ipswich for West Africa

Cast Salmon, at the CAST berth, West Bank, Ipswich as *Norsky* passes outbound



We finish with *HMS Hermes* seen at Gothenburg from *Elk*
(Unless stated all photographs from the author's collection)

Noah's Ark Departs



Passing Felixstowe outbound on 1st July, after spending over twenty months in Ipswich, the giant model of Noah's Ark mounted on a barge arrived in 2019 for a three month stay but the exhibition on board was soon closed by the Covid pandemic. The vessel's stay in Ipswich was extended by the MCA (Maritime and Coastguard Agency) when it deemed it unseaworthy. Once these issues were resolved she was allowed to sail. The exhibition will re-open in Vlissingen in late July. *(Photo by Alex Dace)*



In charge of the outward tow was the Scheveningen registered tug “**Anteos**” owned by Dutch Tender Service BV. Built as “**Britoil 47**” for Britoil Offshore Services, Singapore in 2000 by Jiangsu, Wuxi her current owners acquired her in 2008. *(Photo contributed)*

Sir David Attenborough Arrives



Passing Harwich inbound for an extended stay at Parkeston Quay on the 20th July, the vessel is still working up towards its maiden voyage to the Antarctic. The Stanley, Falkland Islands registered research vessel was completed in January 2021. Her builder Cammell Laird, Birkenhead faced many challenges with such a complex ship. Her next call will be the Danish port of Fredrikshaven but she may have to complete a two week quarantine before berthing. Once alongside it's understood more equipment will be fitted before she sets off for the Antarctic. Scheduled to depart at 10am on 28th July this was aborted at the last minute for an unknown reason.



(Photos by Derek Sands)

Bunkering of MSC Amsterdam at Felixstowe



Turkish built and Turkish owned despite her Maltese registry, “**Duzgit Harmony**” arrives at Felixstowe on 22nd July. A product of the Gemtis yard at Tuzla in 2009.

She heads towards Trinity number seven berth where her customer awaits.



Calais was this small tanker's last port and after supplying this large container ship at Felixstowe she headed for Dunkirk.

(Photos contributed)

Recent Callers



Nearly at her voyage end from Vlissingen as she is about to pass under Ipswich's Orwell Bridge on 1st July is **“Sarah-B”**. After a quick discharge she would depart for Rotterdam the next day. One of a series of ships built by Arminius, Bodenwerder, far inland on the River Weser. Originally **“Kovera”** for Russian owners, she was completed in June 1995. Sold in 2016 to German owners JEB, based in Elsfleth, she acquired only her second name. *(Photo contributed)*



Seen in the background of the previous photo, **“Bothnia”** is heading for the tanker berth at Ipswich. She is inbound from Kalundborg in Denmark and would depart for the same port the following day. Her cargo is believed to be waste oils for recycling. This was at least her second visit to Ipswich. Launched as **“OW Bothnia”** in 2012 by Chinese yard, Zhenjiang Sopo she was completed as **“Bothnia”** in 2013. During her time being completed she also had the name **“Pu Xin 1”**. Renamed **“Orabothnia”** later in 2013 with a black hull and funnel. Unclear when her livery changed to its current one but probably when she changed to her present name. Despite her Gibraltar flag she is owned by Ciresa Shipping BV of Dordrecht. *(Photo contributed)* (41)



Passing Woolverstone outbound on the River Orwell after her second recent visit is “**New Leo**” on July 1st. She is heading for Klaipeda where she arrived on 7th July. Coincidentally she was launched by Baltijos, Klaipeda in August 1996 for the Lithuanian Shipping Co. as “**Akvile**” and completed in Huelva, Spain in July 1997. Ukrainian owners acquired her in 2015 giving the current name. *(Photo contributed)*



“**Chemical Traveller**” passes Felixstowe inbound for Parkeston Tanker Jetty from Terneuzen on 2nd July. Loading a part cargo she departed for Rotterdam the following day. Built and owned in Japan she is managed by Chemship of the Netherlands. Completed in 2019 by Kitanihon, Hachinoe, she made her first visit to Parkeston just two months later. *(Photo contributed)*



Two great views of “**Fokko Ukena**” as she departs Ipswich for Antwerp on 2nd July. She had arrived on 30th June after making a long voyage from Safi in Morocco, her cargo was more than likely phosphate which is mined in great quantities in Morocco and is used primarily in the UK in fertilisers. The ship was built in Slovakia in 2007 by Slovenske Lodenice, Komarno. She is owned by Kapitan Bojen of Moomerland, Germany and managed by Vertom. Her name is derived from a Frisian chieftain from the 14th century and an opponent of the tom Brook family of East Frisia, reference “*Lady Clara*” on the Mistleay pages of this newsletter. *(Photo contributed)*



Arriving at Ipswich on 3rd July “**Sea Melody**” has just completed a voyage from Inverness. After a four day visit she departed for Amsterdam. Originally built for Dutch owners as “**Oosterbrug**” she was launched in June 2001 by Daewoo-Mangalia and completed by Damen Bergum in December. Next she was “**HC Freya**” in 2004 and then “**Yvonne K.**” in 2007. Sold in 2021 her new owners are apparently Boddingtons/Saturn/Gillie and Blair. The first two being brewers and the third a well known ship manager. She is managed by Torbulk of Market Rasen, Lincolnshire. *(Photo contributed)*



Showing evidence of a hard working life “**Cosco Glory**” is being turned to berth at Felixstowe as she makes a rare appearance at the port on 5th July. She is on a twelve year fixed rate time charter to Cosco from Seaspan. The 366 metre vessel was built in 2011 by Hyundai, Ulsan. *(Photo contributed)*



In the middle of her port swing as the tugs manoeuvre her to berth head out at Felixstowe on 8th July is “**Thalassa Elpida**”, built in 2014 by Hyundai, Ulsan. Chartered to Evergreen she and her nine sisters were once common sights in the harbour, but rarely visit now. The ships are owned by Enesel Pte Ltd, Singapore. The company is part of the Lemos Group of Greece, a shipping enterprise established over one hundred and seventy three years ago and is still family run.



(Both photos contributed)



MSC charter “**Seamax Norwalk**” departs Felixstowe for Rotterdam on 10th July. She is on the Himalaya Express route via Hamburg and Rotterdam to Mundra in India with an ETA of 2nd August. She was one of the vessels delayed at Suez by the “**Ever Given**” incident among a number at anchor waiting to go southbound. Built by Hyundai, Ulsan she was the former “**Hanjin Boston**” until 2016, when acquired by MC-Seamax LLC a Japanese backed company based in the USA. All the company's vessels are for charter, they do not operate any themselves. *(Photo contributed)*



Negotiating the tight turn at the Beach End, “**MSC Isabella**” is assisted by the Felixstowe based Svitzer tugs on 10th July. With an overall length of 399.8 and a beam of 61 metres she is getting close to the harbour limits. Constructed in South Korea by Daewoo, Okpo in 2019. *(Photo by Derek Sands)*



Regular caller “**Aastind**” arrives at Ipswich from the Norwegian port of Eikefjet on 14th July, almost certainly with an aggregate cargo from the quarry near to the port. Built in 1997 by Niestern Sander, Delfzijl as “**Viscount**” for Dutch company Becks, in 2004 she went to Carisbrooke as “**Vectis Harrier**” and three years later to Italian flag owners as “**Alida S.**”. Acquired by Aasen in 2019, she was fitted with an excavator for self unloading and renamed. *(Photo contributed)*



Lying fully discharged on 14th July at Ipswich's 500ft berth, Cliff Quay “**Arklow Ace**” is soon to sail. She had arrived from Belfast three days earlier. Without any cargo on offer at Ipswich she sailed for further orders. After waiting at Montoir anchorage for nearly six days, she eventually arrived in Nantes on 23rd July picking up a cargo for Belfast. She left there for Gijon in Spain on 29th July. She was completed in June 2020 by Ferus Smit, Westerbroek. *(Photo contributed)*



“**Titan**” makes an impressive sight at Felixstowe's number nine berth on 15th July. Owned by Costamare of Greece she has been on charter to Evergreen since her completion by Samsung, Koje in 2016. The charter expires in April 2026. *(Photo contributed)*



The Turkish built “**Sylvia**” was launched as “**Time**” but completed with her present name by Umo Shipyard, KD-Eregli in 2008. She is arriving at Ipswich from Antwerp on 17th July. After discharge she would leave for the same port on 20th July. Her owners are Van Dam Scheepvaart, Farmsum, situated on the River Ems. *(Photo contributed)*



Passing “*Maersk Edmonton*” at number nine berth as she sails from Felixstowe's Trinity terminal, “*MSC Rapallo*” is underway for Algeciras on 20th July.



She arrived at Algeciras on 23rd of July and departed late the next day for Singapore with an ETA of 8th August. Owned by Claus-Peter Offen, she is was chartered to MSC from her completion in October 2011 by Daewoo, Okpo. *(Photos contributed)*



Last of her kind?

Although her registration letters indicate home port of Rye, Sussex, “**Wayward Lad**” is making her way up the River Colne to Wivenhoe. Seen from East Mersea with Brightlingsea in the background, she is one of the last fishing boats to land her catches in Wivenhoe. Of 13 tons she was built in 1982. (Photo by Ian Clarke)

Blast From The Past



At number two portal berth Parkeston Quay on 10th December 1967 is DFDS freight ship “**Stafford**”. Built in Denmark by Helsingor Vaerft, Elsinore and completed in June 1967, she was lengthened in 1973 when a two and a half metre section was inserted. Renamed by DFDS as “**Dana Gloria**” in 1984, she was sold the following year and converted into a passenger-car ferry and renamed “**Voyager**” by Tzamar Corp. of Limassol. In 1987 she went to Greek owners Cross Med Maritime and was renamed “**Monaco**”. Retaining her ownership Cross Med renamed her “**Sitia**” in 1988, “**Tropic Star**” in 1991, two years later she became “**Pacific Star**” and finally “**Aegeo Star**” in 1995. Sold to Fortune Shipping Investments of Panama (Greek principals) in 1997 and renamed “**New York Fortune I**”, they later renamed her “**Atlantis**” in 2002. Her final name came in 2007 when owned by Island Breeze Int. Corp of Panama, appropriately “**Island Breeze**”. She soldiered on in tribute to her original builders until Aliaga breakers took her in August 2018. (Photo by Malcolm Cornes)

Dredging News

Boskalis has secured the £140 million contract to deepen the approach channel and inner harbour from Harwich Haven Authority. It will be shared 50/50 with Van Oord and work will commence very soon. The minimum depth of the Harwich approach channel will be increased by 1.5 metres to 16 metres to allow greater hours of access for the largest ships now in operation. The work will be carried out by large suction dredgers supplemented by a backhoe dredger to remove large boulders.

Newsletter compiled by Derek Sands and edited by Neil Davidson.

With grateful thanks to David Hazell for all his contributions.

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Also to the following: Malcolm Cornes, Steve Cone, Geoff Cone, Alex Dace, Mick Warrick, Ian Clarke, Graham Lee and Jim Griffiths (Uniconnection Shipping) (apologies if I have missed anyone).

Apologies to anyone who has submitted material which has not yet been published. It will be kept on file for later editions.

Blast from the past has been kept short for this edition so the newsletter does not become overlong. Also some photos of recent visitors have had to be held over till the next issue.

Any mistakes or inaccuracies are unintended.

Submissions of any material to Derek Sands by email please dereksands54@gmail.com