

THE FOGHORN

The Newsletter of the Maritime Division of the
Company of Master Mariners of Canada



MAY 2008

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*Any opinion or meaning you find
in this newsletter is your own*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEXT MEETING

LUNENBURG SEASON ENDING DINNER -
OLD FISH FACTORY

Friday 16 May - SPOUSES WELCOME -
1900 for 1930

\$25 per person

salad, then steak or haddock or chicken,
dessert blueberry cake

Presentation honorary member

Local guest speaker

Overnight Accommodation Brigantine
Inn

Special CMMC Rate \$69

Call soon 634-3300 or 1-800-360-1181

Battle Of The Atlantic Ceremony

Merchant Navy Veterans Battle of the
Atlantic Ceremony

65th Anniversary

1000 Saturday 03 May

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic
Veterans Affairs Canada National
Delegation Participation

**Remembering HMCS Esquimalt
In music**

Within Sight of Shore

By Scott Macmillan

**Saturday, April 26 at 7:30 pm - St. John's
Anglican Church, 81 Cumberland St.,
Lunenburg**

**Sunday, April 27 at 7:30 pm - Maritime
Museum of the Atlantic**

**Tickets are \$25 (adult); \$20 (seniors) and
\$10 (students)**

MINUTES OF THE PROFESSIONAL MEETING

Armdale Yacht Club Wednesday 09 April

Following a preprandial refreshment and social gathering, 19 members sat down to dinner at 1840. The Deputy Master, Capt Rick Gates presided.

Just before 2000, Capt Gates rose to announce upcoming events and to introduce the evening's speaker, Richard F. Southcott. Mr. Southcott is a distinguished and accomplished lawyer well known in local and Canadian marine circles as a result of extensive work in maritime law. Capt Gates highlighted our speaker's Newfoundland roots, Nova Scotian and British academic qualifications, and notably his Rhodes Scholarship.

Mr. Southcott spoke for 30 minutes before taking questions. Having been asked to discuss the issue of Fair Treatment of Seafarers, he described his work in the Canadian Maritime Law Association (CMLA) where he is Chair of the sub-committee dealing with both the Fair Treatment and Places of Refuge issues. As a result, he is also involved with the CMLA's work with the Comité Maritime International (CMI).

Mr. Southcott described the current, international, maritime legal situation wherein states are now targeting seafarers as material witnesses and sometimes accused in legal actions. Incidents of recent years including Exxon Valdez, Prestige, Erika and the Tasman Spirit have given rise to a politically charged environment and laws being applied in ways

that were not intended. The recent amendments to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and the Migratory Birds Convention Act are an example of legislation which increases the exposure of seafarers to prosecution, despite resistance from the CMLA. CMLA had argued that this placed mariners in an increased and inappropriate level of jeopardy. On the positive side, he reported that there has not to date been observed a change in Canadian prosecutorial direction with seafarers being charged rather than vessel owners.

Mr. Southcott spoke about CMI's work at its Vancouver Conference in 2004, its Colloquium in Cape Town in 2006 and plans for an upcoming Conference in Athens later this year where Places of Refuge is on the agenda and will likely touch on Fair Treatment issues. On a related issue, Mr. Southcott discussed briefly the work of the IMO Safety Committee and efforts to incorporate into the SOLAS Convention a Code governing the investigation of maritime casualties.

As a general comment, Mr. Southcott was optimistic that seafarers stand to gain from the CMI and IMO work on the Fair Treatment and Places of Refuge issues if IMO members support the work.

After taking a number of questions including one from Capt Wagner wondering how he keeps on top of such wide-ranging work, Mr. Southcott noted that he produces an annual review. He did not recommend the review to the reader in search for entertainment but noted that it does record in detail the progress of maritime law issues in Canada.

At 2050, after thanking Mr. Southcott and giving a brief report on the recent National Council Teleconference, Capt Gates adjourned the meeting.

POET'S CORNER

TRADE IT IN

If my body were a car I would be thinking of trading it in for a newer model. I've got bumps and dents and scratches in my finish and my paint job is getting a little dull...

But that's not the worst of it. My headlights are out of focus and it's especially hard to see things up close. My traction is not as graceful as it once was. I slip and slide and skid and bump into things even in the best of weather. My whitewalls are stained with varicose veins. It takes me hours to reach my maximum speed. My fuel consumption gets more each time I fill up. But the worst of it is, almost every time I sneeze, cough of laugh... either the radiator leaks or the exhaust backfires!

Anonymous

MARINE NEWS, WEATHER & SPORTS



WHAT A BRILLIANT NEW IDEA!

The Dutch shipping company Splithoff Beheer in combination with the Maritime Academie are going to fit eight of 24 new buildings as cadet ships, although they will probably have a more academic title.

There will be four double birth cabins for the trainees, a classroom, sports room and recreation room added to the accommodation block for the trainees. A training bridge above the working bridge is being built for the trainees to practice in. A cabin for the training officer, who will have no other duties, is also being added. College personnel as well as mariners are expected to be training officers on an exchange basis.

The cost of the extra construction for the eight vessels is reported to be nine million Euros so this is not a cheep project. Splithoff has a fleet of more than 120 vessels and a staff in excess of 2,000.

There were cadet ships in many companies forty or more years ago and this sounds as if it is an effort to improve / increase the on-board training and practical skills. Of the officers of tomorrow. Unfortunately there may be few left to provide the skills and knowledge required

NUMBER / BAGGAGE CRUNCHING

Heathrow has its problems but think of the new Royal Caribbean Project Genesis ships. The new terminal in Port Everglades built specifically for these ships will have to handle 36,000 pieces of luggage in a few hours. No airport handles that much in the same time frame. If this does not include stores then their ability to handle items is astonishing. Embarking and disembarking passengers will be in the same terminal at the same time and the two groups must be kept separated. 1.2 million passengers a year will be embarked and disembarked from the ships alone.

Ports and wharves to accommodate these ships will limit the itineraries.

MEDIA MANUALS USELESS TO CANADIAN COAST GUARD

You may have read that the Chronicle Herald that the reporters looked in a library and found a United States and a Swedish manual that each advocated towing close astern in ice. I have two American manuals, Polar Operations published in 1969 and the Manual of Ice Seamanship published in 1951 (price seventy five cents) and the Swedish Director of Ice

Navigation Notice of 1959 and all do advocate towing close astern. They advocate towing with the bow of the towed vessel in a notch in the stern of the icebreaker using the vessel's anchor chains or 2.24 inch plow steel bridals to hold the vessel in place. The reporters obviously could not understand that the US manuals were written for the polar regions to tow un-strengthened cargo vessels while the Swedish one was for towing commercial vessel in Baltic ice conditions. Nowhere in these manuals does it mention towing a fishing boat (which is shorter than the vessels intended to be towed in the manuals are wide), with or without a rudder in Gulf St Lawrence ice conditions using a Canadian ice breaker.

The only Canadian icebreaker with a notched stern that I know of was the *LABRADOR* which was a copy of the US *Wind* class icebreaker, which the US manuals were written for. Looking at plans of the *Wind* class I would estimate only the top couple of feet of the *L'ACADIEN II*'s bow would have rested in the notch. The fishing boat had no anchor chains and no hawse pipes so the media advocated way of securing and towing would not have worked. The ice breaker's wire pendants, if used, would have weighted the bow of the fishing boat down. The after deck of the *Wind* class icebreaker would have been higher than the bow of the fishing vessel so any towing medium would have lead upwards from the cleats on the bow of the fishing vessel creating an incredible strain on them, which they are unlikely to have withstood for long.

The Herald said the above information was 'interesting' but they 'did not know how to use it'. Possibly my comment that 'The media reports so far have, on technical matters at least, been as incompetent as the media is trying to make the Coast Guard personnel out to be' upset them. The politicians and the media beat the 'sea is in our blood' drum but there does not appear to be any maritime ability in the media which can shed any practical input on anything marine.

It is only conjecture on my part, based on some experience following Canadian and Swedish icebreakers, that the search light was turned out so the lights on the immersion suit's the fishermen were supposed to be wearing could be seen on a dark night. (Will Transport Canada now require mariners to have strips of reflective tape on underwear?) Again is it conjecture the icebreaker may have increased speed without adjusting the revolutions because it came into open water of weaker ice. The survivor indicated the situation went from safe to capsized in fifteen seconds so how long was the following boat 'screaming into the VHF?' Was the engine of the fishing boat turned off or was it ready to go into reverse and what was the man at the 'helm' doing if the rudder was not working? If the Coast Guard are to have people on the stern with an axe would it not make sense for the fishing boat to have someone on the bow with an axe, especially if they

thought the Coast Guard axe was unattended? And so it could go on.

It is strange that the Canadian Coast Guard's public relations department let this whole situation get away from them so totally and quickly.



Bringing a FRB alongside a larger vessel

SHORT SNAPPERS

- The owners and chief engineer of the 27,000 tonne Italian bulk carrier *WINDSOR CASTLE* have pleaded guilty to illegally dumping oily sludge, bilge waste and contaminated ballast water. The oil record book was also falsified. A 'magic pipe' was found on board after tips were provided by crew members. Union Castle rest in peace.

- Container movements in South African ports

	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Durban	222,429	190,342 teu
Cape Town	63,445	61,971 teu
Port Elizabeth	27,561	30,495 teu

For comparison Halifax averages about 44,700 teu a month.

- A fisherman's truck broke down on the highway and when he called the Provincial Department of Transportation for a free tow he was most upset when they refused. He was flabbergasted he had to pay someone to tow him on land.

- Before the poop and scoop law came in in New York there were an estimated 20,000 tonnes of the stuff left on the streets every year. Every time someone looked up at a 'watch your step' sign, guess what?

- Some call it 'delegating authority' while others call it 'passing the buck.'

- It is reported there are four pubs shutting down every day in the United Kingdom. It is indeed, 'Time Gentlemen, Please!'

PUFFING, POTTY & PETROLEUM PROBLEMS

MIGRATORY BIRDS

DO

FLY OVER THE LAND

On the 3rd August 2005 a CN freight train of 140 cars suffered a derailment near the town of Wabamun, Alberta. Of the 43 cars that derailed some 26 were on their side and reportedly spilled 730,000 litres of fuel and other hazardous products into a lake in cottage country. An article appeared in *From The Bridge* in December 2005 wondering why the engineer and management (if available) were not jailed without charges and the train impounded until a fine had been paid under the Migratory Bird Act, as would undoubtedly have happened had it been a marine incident.

On the 18th March 2008 it is reported that Ottawa has laid three charges against Canadian National Railways. One count is for depositing a substance harmful to migratory birds in to Wabamun Lake and two for alleged disruption of or destruction of a fish habitat.

CN spokesperson would not comment as the case was before the courts but believes 'CN has lived up to its commitments regarding clean up and offering compensation to residents.' Some residents, it was reported at the time, were cleaning the spill with their bare hands for about five days before CN informed them there were carcinogens in the spill.

If I remember correctly CN was congratulated on getting the trains moving over the tracks within about 48 hours.

It will be interesting to see how this plays out compared to a marine case under the same charges.

CALL THE MATE



From one Queen to another.

QE II as seen from the QM and vice versa
Crossing the Atlantic in what must have been bad weather to make these giants pitch so much



The end of another year of interesting professional meetings and it is to be hoped we can put our weight behind those mariners suffering from unfair treatment no matter what country it may occur in.

I will try and keep you abreast of any Divisional news over the summer and send out the notice of the AGM in due course. Mark your date book for 10th September 2008 at the Maritime Museum at 2000 hours.

DECK LOG



What happens if you are late with the dues
TTFN