



From the Bridge

The Newsletter of the Company of Master Mariners of Canada

February 2008

The Company of Master Mariners of Canada is a corporation established to serve the shipping industry, further the efficiency of the sea service and uphold the status, dignity and prestige of Master Mariners.

FROM THE MASTER'S DESK



Dear Colleagues

The first letter of the New Year. A Happy and Healthy 2008 to all!

Winter is upon us, and the weather is affecting us differently across the country; too much snow on the Atlantic Coast, and too much rain on the west coast; the lakes seem to be providing the storm onset for the east coast. Global warming still remains a question! On 27th of this month, the Maritimes Division is holding a second seminar at Dalhousie University on Arctic navigation entitled "*Shipping in the Canadian Arctic: The Challenges and Opportunities*". The interest in the first seminar was exceptional, and it is expected that the interest will be as high this time. The Maritime Division of the CMMC has been able to obtain sponsorship for this programme, and the seminar is being provided at no cost to the participants.

I shall be attending the International Federation of Ship Masters' Associations (IFSMA) in Bremen in May this year, and it is worthy to note that the interests of the Masters of other nations mirror our concerns. "Fair Treatment of Seafarers" and the new "Standards of Training and Certification of Watchkeepers" are high on the agenda for discussion. IFSMA provides the opportunity to speak with a concerted voice, and therefore has more influence than that of each single Association.

A documentary on the break-up and sinking of the Prestige has recently been aired on the History Channel; CMMC has supported the need for Places of Refuge to be defined by nations, and it is time that this is reviewed again. Canada has the longest coast line of any country, and I am sure that our neighbour to the south will review any pollution event affecting its coastline in respect to due diligence.

It is with regret that we will soon be losing both our National Treasurer and our National Secretary. Captains Whitelaw and Ireland will be sorely missed. Both have given their time, expertise and guidance for many years. A new Treasurer and a new Secretary are needed. Please review the positions vacant in this news letter, and if you meet the criteria please consider the positions (Scottish or English accents are not essential to the positions!). Do not hesitate to put forward other members' names!

The New Year is the time for dues to be collected, and I am sure that our Treasurer would appreciate timely payment. At this time, please ensure that the Division has the correct contact information for each member.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Turner
National Master

Captain G.O. Baugh Memorial Fund Scholarships 2007

The recipients of the **Baugh Fund Scholarships** for 2007 are:-

**David Anderson of Memorial University and
Matthew Taylor of Georgian College.**



VANCOUVER DIVISION

Captain Erika Bourgault received her certificate of membership from **Captain David Bremner** at a meeting held in Vancouver on August 18th 2007.

Erika, a recipient of a **Baugh Fund Scholarship** in the year **2001**, is currently serving as Chief Officer on board the BC Ferry, *Spirit of British Columbia*.

Have you contributed to the **Captain G.O. Baugh Memorial Fund** or to the **CMMC Foundation** recently? Donations are always needed to maintain continued growth. Without your support they may not generate the income necessary to keep pace with the increasing costs for education.

Cheques may be sent to the **National Treasurer c/o 1139 Heritage Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C. V7L 3G8**



This Citation, the first ever awarded, was presented to Captain Alan Shard by the Canadian Merchant Navy Veterans Association on December 11th 2007.

VESSELS IN CRISIS The Master's Dilemma on the Great Lakes October 11-12, 2007

This Seminar, presented by The Company of Master Mariners of Canada, Great Lakes Division was held in Hamilton, Ontario beginning on Thursday October 11 at 1300 and concluding on Friday October 12 at 1530. The purpose of the conference was to engage mariners, superintendents, government agencies, responders and ship owners in responding to a realistic ship incident scenario using the Incident Command System (ICS). Approximately 76 professionals attended and all played a role in the emergency management of the incident. The conference was facilitated by **Stafford Reid**, an. emergency management planning consultant from B.C.

Thursday. The room contained 8 sector tables and an Incident Command Post equipped with ICS gear and a computer projector system showing on a big screen. Eight Sector tables included the following categories of participants: Master, Ship Owner, Ship Rep /Pilotage, Ports and Authorities, Government (Provincial, Federal), Municipal Govt and Response Organizations.

A series of speakers presented material designed to prepare and support the attendees for the exercise which would take place on Friday. In two sections Stafford Reid introduced ICS and the concept of working together in "Unified Command". This system which grows to meet the demand of the emergency is designed to work in an orderly fashion outside limits of normal business, for which most laws are created. ICS supports Operations, manages the incident but does not manage the consequences of the incident.

Gary Linsey, Regional Director of Maritime Services Canadian Coast Guard, focused on their resource levels for the area, which he described as "thin". Apart from SAR, MCTS, Tele-Medical advice services CCG is also involved in environmental response and can assume the lead in a response effort.

Dianne Parnham of the Department of Public Safety highlighted their role in ensuring National Security and the ability to provide critical infrastructure in emergency management. Public Safety Canada provides a single point of contact with the federal emergency management teams and the necessary political linkages including the USA Homeland Security Department.

Captain Ray Krick, Regional Director, Transport Canada Marine explained that in a marine emergency TC is the lead agency. TC manages an event and CCG is their operational branch. There are call out procedures for the TC duty officer on a 24/7 basis. Why contact TC? "Because we have the power to get things done".

Ryan Wheeler, Environment Canada Officer, listed the objects of EC as: Preventing, Preparing, Responding and Restoring. EC manages the "Regional Environmental Emergencies Team (REET) to provide consolidated and co-ordinated advice on Environmental Issues. EC exercises monthly with other agencies because "No one likes a blind date at an emergency".

Mark Brown, Regional Manager of Eastern Canada Response Corporation (Sarnia) explained that they have 2300 member companies, 2200 vessels contracted including 700 bulk carriers and 100 oil handling facilities. ECRC has the response capability for a 10,000 tonne spill and they have the equipment and boats to handle all sizes of marine spills. ECRC 9 area plans, specializes in clean up and casualty but does not provide an Incident Commander nor deals with fire.

The day concluded with dinner and a guest speaker. **Mr. Allister Paterson**, President and CEO of **Seaway Marine Transport** spoke on the aspect of Incident Management for corporations known as "Brand protection" an essential aspect of service recovery after an incident. This consideration is to reduce the harm to companies brought on by publicized marine emergencies.

Friday. The morning commenced with a presentation at breakfast by **Mike Wallace** the regional MP describing his commitment to the Marine Community. All participants were seated at their sector tables and the Incident Command Post was not inhabited.

Stafford Reid explained the "Rules of Engagement" for the exercise in detail. He stressed the communication tools, "Communication Cards", and the system to order resources by using "Field Cards". He explained the single Incident Command Post, the need to consider Unified Command (among Govt. and NGO's) and requirement for each sector table to select a leader (spokesperson). Stafford described the "Control" function as the truth table which will provide all the inputs (on the screen) once the exercise started. There will be a post exercise review by all sectors.

The Exercise started on the screen with a Transas ECDIS chart display showing the West End of Lake Ontario, the canal and lift bridge entrance to Hamilton Harbour and several ships underway into and outbound from Hamilton Harbour.

Two ships are inbound-Tanker *Algosar* and Bunkering Vessel *Hamilton Energy*. Outbound- *John D. Leitch*. Tying up at North Pier-Passenger Vessel *Wayward Princess* and at anchor in Harbour- *Salty Bluebird*. On the radio there are the ships, Hamilton Harbour, Burlington Bridge, Prescott CRS, Seaway Newcastle and a News Traffic Reporting Helicopter.

The *Algosar* loses steering and strands on both north and south piers of the ship canal under the bridges, blocking the entrance to the harbour. Two forward cargo tanks are punctured below the waterline and diesel cargo spills into the water. An explosion was heard from the engine room (steering flats) before the ship struck the piers.

All sector tables became engaged in their professional capacities using the tools (e.g. Charts, stability books, communication systems etc). All ships in the area are communicated with; all traffic stopped on the Skyway; and ECRC oil responders dispatched. Due to the oil sheen the *Algosar* was ordered to remain in position by Hamilton Harbour.

Most importantly, once the incident had developed to this point, sector representatives from each table were summoned to the Incident Command Post. Overall, all the exercise rules were being followed and the most important lesson for the participants was about to begin.

Usually it is hard to separate the incident objectives from the overall objectives of the exercise. Most participants want to continue "managing the incident" directly even though there is an Incident Command Post established. However the ICP is set up, through the Incident Command System, to manage the incident moment by moment. The ICP goals are personnel safety on site, security of the ship and environmental protection. The Incident Command team is exactly that. Matters including, oil booming, first aid on site, crew relief, temporarily repairing hull damage, sending a representative, dealing with TSB, moving the ship are the responsibility of the ICP. The corporate EOC supports the ICP by performing such functions as Human resource support, customer care, facility negotiation, insurance, contract with responders, media strategy, political issues, external arrangements and briefings to the executive team and board members.

After the exercise incident stabilized, the ship moved, bridges opened and oil contained, the ICP was disbanded and sector tables prepared their reports for presentation after the lunch speaker concluded.

Wrap Up. Sector table representatives presented the actions of their associates from the log books kept. Overall the management of the incident itself was the main focus of the entire group. Only certain sectors were able to move from incident management to the business of support for the Incident Command Post and service recovery for their organization. Probably this was the most important lesson from the exercise. The Owners sector spoke on saving the asset (ship), protecting the public (environmental strategy) and protection of the profit centre. (Brand protection).

The sponsors and the committee were thanked by the Company of Master Mariners Divisional Master and the conference was declared a success by all.

Lunch Speaker. **Laureen Kinney**, Director General, Marine Security, Transport Canada spoke at lunch. Ms. Kinney described the department's mandate is to work in collaboration with all communities to protect against a threat which is evolving or a visible attack. The department has spent \$1 billion since 2002 on threat identification and to create a visible presence. TCMS has a bilateral agreement with the USCG.

She described the variety of funding programs which her department administers including the Marine Security Contribution and the Marine Security Co-Ordination Fund programs. TCMS administers the Marine Transportation Security Clearance Program (to enter harbours etc.). The department is responsible for the new Marine Security Regulations. They are also responsible for the domestic Ferry Regulations.

TCMS operates or shares facilities nationally as Marine Security Operation Centres and oversees National Port Enforcement Teams (Hamilton is complete). Waterside Security and Policing at Marine Ports is a component of the visible work of this department. Most importantly, TCMS can control vessels and detain ships.

Ratch Wallace 17/12/07

CAPITAL DIVISION

NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY- 11 November 2007



The 2007 Memorial Day Ceremony was held on one of the nicest days in many years. The day was cool but sunny. There was a huge crowd estimated at about 30,000 -- one of the best ever. Several of our members attended and paid their respects to our Merchant Navy veterans and their military colleagues. Captains Legge, Burbridge, Morrison, Bender, Brooks, McCartney were seen as were colleagues White, Lamontagne and Smith. Most were accompanied by their wives. My apologies to those who I have failed to mention. Captain Stan Morrison laid the wreath on behalf of the Company of Master Mariners of Canada. Captain and Mrs. Burbridge were honoured with seating within the main area.



Captain Tom Brooks

St. Lawrence Seaway Tightens up Ballast Checks.

The St. Lawrence Seaway management Corporation (SLSMC) is to further strengthen its ballast water management practices for the 2008 Season. A Corporation statement says that the initiative by its US partner, the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, to obtain regulatory authority to set ballast water management rules will result in all ocean vessels being subjected to a consistent and rigorous inspection process in Montreal before they enter the Seaway and the Great Lakes.

Since 2006, all ocean vessels bound for a Canadian port have been subjected to ballast water inspections, to ensure that water within the ballast tanks adheres to a minimum level of salinity of 30 parts per thousand. With the harmonization of US and Canadian standards, all vessels entering the Seaway, irrespective of their destination, will undergo the same inspection process.

Beginning with the 2008 navigation season, all ocean vessels, including those with no ballast on board, will have an inspection that covers 100% of the ballast water tanks. This inspection process will ensure that the vessel, while still a minimum of 200km, flushed all of its tanks with salt water. On subsequent transits during the year, the vessel will again

be subjected to a series of inspections, with the objective of ensuring the ship's crew is strictly adhering to the salt water flushing practice.

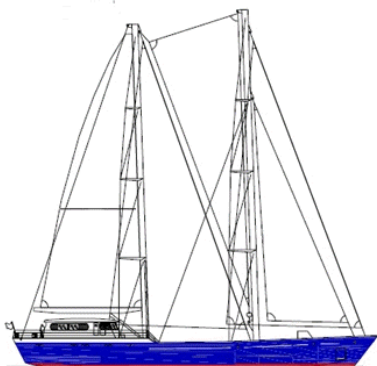
Source: Maritime Global Net

Wine by Sail

At a time when wine drinkers have begun to question the carbon cost of bringing the drink to the table, a carbon-zero way of shipping wine has been launched a 21st century sailing ship. Promoters are pleased that even the proving journey, from Cherbourg to Dublin in late July 2007, generated a contract for a quantity of French wine. The Languedoc-based Compagnie de Transport Maritime à la Voile (CTMV) will ultimately operate five ships, 45m in length, carrying up to 7,500 cases of wine on each journey. The first, costing €6m, will be launched in October 2008.

The project to move wine by sailing ship has been launched by the wine industry veteran Frederic Albert and is also backed by Sud Export, the trade body that represents 55 wine producers in the Languedoc-Roussillon region of southwest France. Albert, who combines experience in the wine industry with a passion for sailing, considers he can combine the two to the benefit of the wine producers and the environment. The seed for the project was sown about four years ago when he was sailing from Waterford, Ireland, to Cherbourg, France, on the three-mast tall ship *Belem*.

Albert met Michel Pery, the *Belem* captain, on the voyage. It was then that he came up with the idea. Six months later, Captain Pery became his partner in the CTMV project. CTMV will work with a professional maritime crew. Captain Pery, who has a background in the merchant marine, will recruit the crew of eight in May 2008.



To ensure that the concept of using canvas does not make the project seem outmoded, the ships will have webcams throughout the superstructure in order to allow customers and backers to follow progress of the sailings via the corporate website.

Routes have been planned from the Languedoc via the Canal du Midi to Bordeaux and on to northern European ports. While traversing the canal or within port limits the ship will use bio-fuel but the promoters are committed to use only sail on the sea leg. To comply with modern maritime regulations a 650kW engine is fitted.

Fairplay. Irish Independent Weekend. <http://www.ctmv.eu/en/home.html>

A Historic First for Women at Sea

In December 2007 the *Horizon Navigator*, a US Merchant Marine vessel, sailed into Honolulu Harbour with, for the first time, a Master, First Mate and Second Mate who are all women. Captain Robin Espinosa, First Mate S. L. (Sam) Pirtle and Second Mate Julie Duchi have known each other for years but this is the first time they have all worked together, heading a crew of 25 that is otherwise all-male.

Robin Espinosa grew up sailing, and loves her work, though she also looks forward to moving to Hawaii when she retires. "I'm really happy... It's been a really positive, fulfilling position," said Espinosa.

The International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots in Honolulu represents about 150 members, 10 percent of whom are women. Thirty years ago, less than 1 percent was women according to the union. So, it was the luck of the union's bidding process that brought the three female officers together on the same ship, as the U.S. Merchant Marine service remains dominated by men.

"It's very unusual," said Espinosa, who is based in Charleston, S.C., and has been sailing for 25 years. "When I first started, I was pretty much the only gal around. I never worked on a ship with any other women for the first 10 years."

Espinosa's classmate at the Merchant Marine Academy was Sam Pirtle, who also has her Master's Licence. Pirtle lives in Honolulu as does Julie Duchi, who's just a couple years behind her sisters on the bridge. As second officer she's the navigator. "I'm still one of the few that prefers to use a sextant -- purely for fun," said Duchi.

Ship's officers get one vacation day for every day at sea. Espinosa, Pirtle and Duchi said all that time off is the best thing about the trade, while being at sea for weeks at a time is the hardest part for them and their families. "It's a great life", they said, "although it's not for everybody."



Horizon Lines, LLC operates a fleet of 21 U.S.-flag containerships and 5 terminals linking the continental United States with Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, Micronesia and Puerto Rico.

<http://starbulletin.com> www.kgmb9.com

POSITION OF NATIONAL TREASURER.

The position of National Treasurer of "The Company of Master Mariners of Canada" will become vacant in July 2008, and applications for this position are requested.

Those applying should be familiar with Microsoft Word and Excel, or equivalent type programs. Knowledge of "Simply Accounting" or any of the "Bedford" programs would be beneficial, but could be learned at a later date. The current space requirements are for a large photocopier, one filing cabinet 15"x 29"x 32"high, 5 cardboard boxes containing old and current files and brochures and several boxes of company regalia.

Applicants should be available to attend all Annual General Meetings held during the second half of October. This is an executive position and worthy of your immediate attention. Applicants would benefit if they are available to "sit in" with the current Treasurer as preparations for the annual audit are underway, during the month of February.

The requirements of the position or job description, as listed in the "company" Procedures Handbook, follow.

NATIONAL TREASURER

- Receives, records and deposits all monies and issues receipts accordingly.
- Examines and approves all bills for payment and prepares the appropriate cheque and records the function in a bookkeeping system.
- Collects the National portion of the member's Dues from the Divisions, after the National Membership Chair has recorded them.
- Maintains full financial records, with the assistance of the accounting staff person, (if one is being used), and arranges an appropriate audited financial statement, for each year ending Dec. 31st.
- Reviews, balances, files and correlates the National's bank statements.
- Presents the Auditor's Report, Membership Chairman's Report and Treasurer's Report to the Annual General Meeting.
- Presents a proposed financial Budget for each year and advises on Dues increases/decreases for each year; at the NCM, immediately following the AGM.
- Receives copies of the financial records from each of the Divisions, on an annual basis and deals with them accordingly.
- Reports to the National Council any changes to the Income Tax "rules and regulations", and keeps them abreast of any other appropriate governmental changes.
- Maintains an inventory of The Company regalia sells directly to the Divisions and buys inventory as required.
- Acts as Administrator for the Capt. G.O. Baugh Memorial Fund, by maintaining financial records, balancing bank statements, issuing cheques, depositing donation funds, arranging an annual audit, receiving applications for scholarships and updating the website accordingly. Presents a report to the AGM re audit and finances of the Fund.
- Liaises with the Company webmaster.
- Acts as a member of the Executive Committee.

Whenever a new National Treasurer is elected, the bank holding the accounts should not be changed unless the National Executive authorizes any such change.

Please contact **Capt. Andrew H. Whitelaw** for more details or to apply for the position:

Phone 604 986-8526 [<andyandbetty@shaw.ca>](mailto:andyandbetty@shaw.ca)

National Treasurer

POSITION OF NATIONAL SECRETARY

The National Secretary, Captain Peter Ireland, proposes to step down at the end of his term in 2008.

Any member of the CMMC who wishes to express an interest in this position should contact Captain Ireland by:

- E-Mail shipmaster@shaw.ca
- Telephone 604 980-3132 or by
- Mail 3335 Norwood Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C. V7N 3P2

National Secretary's duties

Prepares the agenda for all National Council, Annual General & Executive meetings and records, distributes and maintains records of the Minutes of all these meetings.

Receives, peruses and distributes all National Office correspondence, and attends to it, as required.

Maintains records of all National Councillors as the Divisions elect them.

Prepares and distributes the proxy forms for the Annual General Meeting, and then records the proxies as they are returned from the membership.

Maintains and updates the By-Laws, guidelines and the Company brochures.

Acts as a member of the Executive Committee.

P. M. Ireland, Nation Secretary.

BOOK REVIEW

IN COMMAND, by Captain Michael Lloyd FNI.

This is not a text-book on how to be a Captain - the loneliest of jobs - but is an excellent guide for officers aspiring to command and for younger Masters. I like the author's sub-title, "200 things I wish I had known before I was a Captain," but I know from experience that once you become the "Old Man", you learn a lot and you learn fast. Now, the book has been written.

Capt. Lloyd writes with a lively, entertaining style. He is right up-to-date, having retired just last year. In his seafaring career of a half century, 35 years were in command. His cadet years were in "CONWAY" and the P & O fleet; then he sailed on, and ultimately commanded, a wide variety of ships from passenger ships and bulkers to oil industry support vessels. He sailed under various flags and with multi-national crews. Nobody could be better qualified than he to advise on how a master can avoid the rocks and shoals which are not always out at sea.

The book's layout is excellent, easy to navigate due to the good index at the front, easy to read and very well illustrated with photographs and sketches.

The many references to Capt. Lloyd's own experience give the narrative authenticity as well as making you feel as if you were in his shoes in so many situations. This book should also be used by those in the shoreside of shipping, by marine lawyers, maritime administrators and others, to give them some understanding of the complexities of a ship's operation, of its crew and of the awesome responsibilities of a shipmaster. For those at sea, here is a guide to best practice in every conceivable situation.

In Command (ISBN 978 1 85609 353 8) is published by *Witherby's Seamanship International* and the purchase price is £25.00. Full details are available at www.seamanship.co.uk, e-mail <sales@seamanship.com>.

Captain Angus McDonald

Why go to sea?

From the pages of Lloyds List &

<http://seamania.blogspot.com/> (Author: Ieuan Dolby, Chief Engineer)

There have been complaints about the mercenary qualities of modern mariners, mostly by people who can't find sufficient of them at a price they are prepared to pay. Recently, the website of the *Shiptalk Jobs* organisation focused on a paper given at the *Lloyd's List Events Manning and Training Conference* in Manila, where *Wallem's* John Wood upset many with some hard-hitting remarks about mariners being more interested in their package than the job for which they are hired. This address stirred up the delegates although some might suggest he was brave to make such remarks in the very centre of global manning. But ship operators should perhaps be wary of criticising a process of rebalancing the rewards of seafarers, after a long period where they have remained very depressed. Rather than criticising seafarers for their demands for shorter tours of duty, better wages and conditions and far better connectivity with their families, owners and managers ought perhaps to focus upon the productivity increases there have been over the past 25 years or so. Manpower has been squeezed like a lemon during this period; costs have been ruthlessly pared down, with owners demonstrating a disturbing willingness to chase cheap crews all over the world. They have, regrettably, focused too much on cheapness rather than quality.

Now the chickens are coming home to roost, and there is an opportunity to put things right. After an era that has seen the effective death of company loyalty, maybe it is time for some resurrection to take place. Time for employers to value their seafarers more highly and to look at what can be done to select the very best, and encourage them to stay. This is not about indulging mercenary propensities, but showing prudent good sense while looking to the long-term future.

Economics and the confusing world of supply and demand aside, one overpowering theme for 2007 has been the dawning realisation that the shipping industry is running out of people. Last year, there were still serious people around who would look you in the eye and insist that, just like it always did, shipping would find sufficient hands to keep the ships running. A year on, there is a lot less confidence. This may be a thoroughly good thing as it is forcing the industry to look at all the human element issues it has managed to keep on the back burner over the years; issues of quality, because the pressure is on in this department as claims soar, angry people ask why, and the regulators roar; issues of recruitment, training and retention, with too many good and experienced people leaving en masse.

It cannot be denied that the amazing global changes that are happening in the world are having an effect on shipping manpower developments. At one time bright young Indian graduates were happy to go to sea for a career that would establish them financially. Today, the opportunities ashore in that fast growing economy mean that the industry is having to compete for those same bright people, and will probably lose out. In China, there are still some of the biggest maritime colleges in the world but so many of their graduates are finding their way into the shore side infrastructure, doing things with their qualifications in logistics rather than standing on draughty decks in far-off seas.

Yes, the industry has changed and probably faster than when the steamship came along and rang the death knell on sailing ships. Ten years ago everybody decided that seafarers were suffering from stress, that ships should run like shore-based establishments and that people should be accountable for their actions; i.e. a paper trail should be laid. Ten years ago paperwork on ships was nothing more than the daily log; the typing of the monthly stores order onto the telex machine and some night orders hastily scribbled by the captain. Modern communications have brought ships into the civilized world. Ten years ago few ships could afford the large golf-ball satellite dishes on the monkey island, now all ships have them and the companies send e-mails and make telephone calls, not daily but the whole day, to the extent that captains and mates are now short of a secretary or two where once they were short of something to do!

As a result of 9-11 the bureaucrats ashore rapidly suggested that ships might easily be used as potential bomb carriers (a laden gas tanker running up the St. Lawrence Seaway with a bomb onboard could cause untold loss of life and damage) and so ships and the people that sail them suddenly received a whole new host of regulations to follow and associated paperwork to fill in. The Chief Officer now has many hats to wear - safety officer, loading master and the security officer!

Paperwork and bureaucracy have increased tenfold. The nature of the job has changed! Senior officers are now accountable for their actions, the bosses ashore are equally accountable for theirs, and so responsibility tends to lie where it is born and bred. It is not shifted down to the lowest man in the pile! For those entering the business today this is fantastic, a clear cut and structured path ahead where everything is black and white – for those complaining about the change it is often due to an inability to accept the change, to grasp it and to realize that it is for their benefit too and not something forced upon them by non-seafaring types ashore with nothing better to do than make up silly regulations.

Life at sea has changed. Trips are more structured and the seafarers more professional than they ever were - life onboard depends on the individuals and how they accept the life. Modern communications allow for easy access to phone calls home, no more waiting until land is seen and a painful session of calling up land based radio stations is enacted; the future states that all ships will have twenty-four hour internet access, with vessels looking towards wireless access for all onboard. Trips are getting shorter and the leave longer; the laughable idea of going to sea for ten months and having one month at home has been nearly replaced with equal time on and equal time off!

And so why would seafarers go to sea today? They go because it is an honest career that brings the bread and butter on to the table. There might not be a wife in every port, the company may require the same written entries to be made in about six different books and logs and the Chief Engineer might be grumpy because he cannot have a drink but wow, what a life to be had.

So, where did that **25 tonne Hatch Cover** come from? (FTB November 2007). Apparently it belonged to the coaster, **m.v Jork**, which sank after colliding with an unmanned gas platform in the North Sea on August 3rd 2007. Two hatch covers were later found adrift.

Do you have anything to contribute? The cut-off for submissions to the next edition will be May 10th 2008. Please send them to me at **13375 14A. Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V4A 7P9** or to **whitknit@shaw.ca** **Sincerely, David Whitaker**

This and earlier editions of the FTB can be found on the Company's website <http://www.mastermariners.ca>