



From the Bridge

The Newsletter of the Company of Master Mariners of Canada

May 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,

Most of our members will be reading this on the Web page of the Company (www.mastermariners.ca) and will therefore need no introduction to the new site. The site is much improved, and I urge our members and friends to view and utilize the site. Captain Jim Parsons and Mr. Dan Hyde deserve our thanks for this.

Captain Ratch Wallace will attend the Council of American Master Mariners' AGM in Reno this year (www.mastermariner.org/). It is important to us that the developed ties with CAMM are maintained. The International Federation of Ship Masters' Associations (IFSMA) is holding its Annual General Assembly in Bremen this month, and I shall be attending representing the Company. On the international front, it is important the CMMC has representation and the initiatives and positions adopted by Master Mariners internationally are carried forward to such bodies as the IMO and the ILO. IFSMA has a number of initiatives before these bodies, and CMMC supports these. I urge our members to review the IFSMA web site either connecting through our links or directly. (www.ifsma.org)

Transport Canada, with the assistance of the Canadian Whale Institute has sought and obtained approval from the IMO to designate an area south of Nova Scotia as an area to be avoided (ATBA) in order to protect the North Atlantic right whale. The area, in the Roseway Basin (see Page 9), will be seasonal and while not mandatory, it is expected that Masters of vessels with a gross tonnage greater than 300 will avoid navigating in this area from June to December. I mention this for two reasons: the protection of the North Atlantic right whale, a species at risk (SAR), is a requirement to be complied with by all mariners; and the need to educate mariners about the environment in which we work is essential to the future of SAR and understanding the transgressions for which the mariner may be liable. CMMC is a strong supporter of the position that mariners must be provided legal representation when charged with offences, but does not support any deliberate transgression by mariners of the laws of any State.

Our industry is fast approaching a period where the number of seafarers required for ships outnumber the available seafarers. On 9th May, Lloyd's List reported from the conference in Singapore that there were 10,000 ships being built requiring 400,000 seafarers. Along with the vessels requiring specialised training, the industry is facing a shortfall in trained and qualified personnel to crew the world fleet. This is not a sudden or new problem, but one which is at a critical stage. Training alone is not enough. The industry must make itself more appealing to prospective seafarers, and attractive enough to retain the seafarers it employs. Changes in the industry are inevitable, and it is beholden upon the senior members of our industry to identify the needs of seafarers, particularly those in senior positions aboard, as they relate to initial and continued employment at sea. I urge the members to discuss this further at their Divisional Meetings.

A couple of reminders: please ensure that dues are paid; and book your passages for the AGM in St. John's, taking advantage of any seat sales.

On a more pleasant note, I hope that the summer allows you to shake off the "blues" of our long Canadian Winter, that the season brings a extended period of fine weather, and that you enjoy the year in good health.

Sincerely,

Peter Turner, National Master

CROSSED OVER THE BAR

Captain Beverley Richard (Dick) Wilson passed away peacefully on February 19, 2008 in Vancouver. Dick was born in Vancouver on May 22, 1918. He was lured to sea for a life of adventure that most people only dream of. He started as an apprentice seaman and eventually became a Master Mariner as he served under the ensigns of Great Britain, America, Panama, Australia, New Zealand, and New Guinea before finally sailing under a Canadian ensign in 1946. While in the Merchant Navy, Dick experienced first hand many historical events such as the 1940 evacuation of Dunkirk and the 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbour. Near the end of the war, Dick was commissioned as an officer in the USNR and captained a Standard Oil of California tanker used to fuel British warships. Dick also held jobs as marine superintendent for the Columbia Cellulose Co., instructor with the D.O.T. Navigation School, shipping inspector with the Shipping Federation of BC, instructor with the Pacific Marine Training Institute, and volunteer with the Sea Cadet program. Dick was a long time member of the Company of Master Mariners having joined in 1969 and was member number 43V. He was Master Vancouver Division from 1979 to 1981 and National Master from October 1986 to October 1987. He was made a Life Member in 1993.

Position of National Treasurer

The position of National Treasurer for "The Company of Master Mariners of Canada" becomes vacant in July and applications for this position are requested. This is the third time the position has been posted. Please consider applying for it. It is an interesting and worthwhile undertaking. For more information read Page 6 of the February FTB or contact Captain Andrew Whitelaw at **604 986-8526** or **<andyandbetty@shaw.ca>**

Applicants should be familiar with Microsoft Word and Excel, or equivalent type programs. Knowledge of "Simply Accounting" would be beneficial, but could be learned at a later date. The current space requirements are for a 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.

The National Treasurer attends all Annual General Meetings held during October. This is an executive position and worthy of your immediate attention.

A Misty Spectre....

The *S/S TRICAPE* had just departed the anchorage of Sierra Azul, Peru, in June 1948, bound for Panama. We had loaded our 'tween decks with coffee and cotton from barges. The lower holds were chock-a-block with over 7,000 tons of Sodium Nitrate. I was on Day Work, whereas the rest of the Deck Crowd was split into three watches of three men each watch, eighty minutes each at the wheel, look-out and stand by. There was little to no wind, but the long Pacific swells caused slow lazy rolls. Visibility was from less than a mile to three miles, caused by the usual morning Pacific mist, which meant there was one long blast on our whistle every two minutes. The Look Out was on the bridge, the stand by watchkeeper was with me and the Bosun on the hose, washing over the side the garbage left by the stevedores.

At 10:00 we were having Smoko in the Seamen's Mess aft, when the whistle sounded three long blasts instead of the one. We couldn't understand why so we hurried on deck. In the mist, forward, on the port side, about 2 cables off like a spectre from the past, was a square rigged sailing vessel, a large steel four masted barque. Her hull was rust streaked and her sails limp. She was becalmed. She acknowledged our signal with lesser, reedy toned squawks from her manual fog horn, three blasts followed by a short one from us. We had slowed down. She was certainly a ghostly apparition and in very poor condition. Her sails were torn and were also patched in various hues of grey and tan. Ratlines were missing in her shrouds. Irish pennants were hanging everywhere. She was deeply laden and rolled heavily & the large blocks on a length of chain with their sheets to the clues of her lower sails were swinging across her deck on each roll. Our speed was now slow ahead and we had altered course and steamed along her side. Her crew too had come out of the deck cabin amidships. They were short, swarthy and of sallow complexion. On her poop by the large wheel were few figures but a white bearded, age bent figure, came to their taffrail and waved half heartedly. He was the Captain, a real, live square rig Captain!

I looked amidships on our ship. Many of the off-watch officers and engineers were peering out their portholes, and some came to the rail. The Captain and most of the bridge accommodation officers had joined him on the wing of the bridge. The recognition whistles and slowing of the ship's speed had made them curious. The Bosun was at the rail on the boat deck and behind him were the other two POs coming out of their mess, the Chippy and the Donkeyman. The Bosun was totally absorbed in the old barque, and was not a part of the conversation of his two mess colleagues. He watched the vessel until it became enshrouded into the mist on our port quarter and disappeared entirely from view followed by two long, receding blasts on her foghorn that signified she was not making way.

Our ship had returned to our old course and speed. The Bosun came aft to finish our hosing down. I detected a sniffle and a glistening in his eyes. Noting my awareness of his sentiment - which was completely out of character - he choked a little saying, "A damned crime. She should be either scuttled or burned!" "That old square rigger", I questioned. "First one I have ever seen at sea! Did you know her?" The Bosun looked over the quarter towards the last sight of her. "Och aye! Well, I remember her!" He blew his nose. "She was a smart looking vessel then. Criminal the shape she is now! She's an old lady and allowed to be more decrepit is cruel. All rigging aloft is rotten."

"How could you tell if all aloft is rotten?" I asked. The Bosun gave me a paternal look, paused and then said, "All aloft were bleached lines with no more, or little, tar left in the hemp or manila ropes and servings. Rusty footropes too. There are missing ratlines in the shrouds. The fumes from the cargo rot everything aloft!

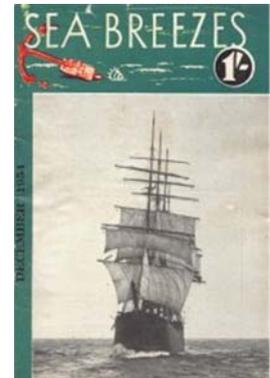
"And what cargo is that?" I asked my mentor. "She is carrying bird shit! Guano. The droppings from millions of seabirds, feeding in the rich Humboldt Current through which we are now sailing have built layers of their droppings on the low islands off the Peruvian coast. This is the Guano. It is scraped up and bagged. Very rich fertilizer that is also very rich in ammonia. It is the ammonia fumes that rot everything aloft. Stand on deck of one of those Guano carriers and you will soon be crying from the ammonia fumes. I then vaguely recalled a mention of the South American industry from my school geography which I had terminated only three years previous that was not nearly as educational as from the old Bosun. "Fumes or no fumes, rotten rigging or no rotten rigging, I would give just about anything to make a trip on a square rigger. That is the highest one can go in seamanship!"

The Bosun stopped what he was doing, turned and gave me a look of exasperation that lasted many seconds. Then that paternal look again with, "The highest in seamanship, yes, but also a long fall from the topgallant yard to the deck! Lost a few good shipmates. But your's is the same attitude that I once had, preferring sail over steam. For better or worse it is highly unlikely you will ever experience going round the Horn all square rigged. Cape Horners are all gone". Looking to the vanished barque, he paused, then, "Ah-h! Do you know what her name is?"

Somewhat crestfallen that the Bosun did not share my enthusiasm, and that he failed to recall anecdotes on the subject other than falling from the yards, I replied, "No! Couldn't make it out for the rust. What was her name?" "Go and open the deck line valve", he said. "Her name is the *OMEGA* which is Greek for the end! "And God she certainly is!"

A decade later, in Northern Ontario, I was watching a then popular TV program, entitled "*I Search for Adventure*". An adventuring type had made a trip on the *OMEGA* in the early/mid 50s', and filmed, in 16mm, a round trip with 'guano'. The photographer explained that the workforce was obtained from the mountains in Peru, Inca Indians, some sentenced to guano mining, for minor offences. Being from the mountains, they found work at sea level created weakness when they exerted themselves. High in the Andes, the air was low on oxygen and pressure. Their physiology was adapted to the high altitudes, short and barrel chested. The forced Inca labour was also crew of the *OMEGA* with the island based workers scraping off the guano from the rocks and bagging same. On the Guano rich islands, they lived in make shift hovels, erected with the bagged guano, and old sails for a roof.

The host of the program intervened after every dissertation from the film maker. The producer/director's cant was one of empathy for inhumane and dangerous conditions in the collecting and carriage of the Guano more so than a tribute to the last barque and her Conradian lauded sisters and predecessors. The host accented the conditions aboard and ashore with exclamations of dismay, and except for a Bucko Mate laying out belaying pin-enforced orders, the scene aboard was described as one of cruel despair for unsafe sailing on deck and aloft though the crew were a smiling a lot whenever panned by the 16 mm camera. The guest tried to narrate the voyage as an "Out of Time" Adventure but the host did not have an ounce of romanticism for the last of commercial sail. The Captain was German, a very elderly ex *Flying P* Cape Horn Master. The host dramatized the fact of rotten rigging aloft, by a statement suggesting the captain tried not to look aloft, for fear of seeing a sailor plunging to his death. As I said, "Over Dramatized" for how could a sailing ship Master not look aloft to the set of his sails? But falls from aloft were not uncommon aboard!



As I watched the TV program in 1957 my reverie of Scotty the Bosun (or J.C. Phillips, OBE), came back loud and clear. He had sized up the condition of the old barque, and was visibly moved by memories and his sailor's eye for detail.

The *OMEGA* burnt in a Peru harbour about that time which finally put an end to the END!
This picture of the *OMEGA* appeared on the cover of the Christmas 1955 edition of "Sea Breezes".

Bill Shields.

Submitted by **Captain Doug Wilson, Great Lakes Division.**

A Poem by Charles Dibbin: The Sailor's Consolation Submitted by **Captain Gary Kassbaum, Great Lakes.**

One night came on a hurricane,
The sea was mountains rolling,
When Barney Buntline turned his quid,
And said to Billy Bowline:
"A strong nor-wester's blowing Bill;
Hark! Don't you hear it roar now?
Lord help 'em, how I pities all
Unhappy folks on shore now!

"Fool-hardy chaps who live in town,
What danger they are all in,
And now are quaking in their beds,
For fear the roof should fall in:
Poor creatures, how they envies us,
And wishes, I've a notion,
For our good luck, in such a storm,
To be upon the ocean.

"But as for them who're out all day,
On business from their houses
And late at night are coming home,
To cheer the babes and spouses;
While you and I, Bill, on the deck
Are comfortably lying,
My eyes! What tiles and chimney-pots
About their heads are flying!

"And very often we have heard
How men are killed and undone,
By overturns of carriages,
By thieves and fires in London.
We know what risks all landsmen run,
From noblemen to tailors;
Then, Bill, let us thank Providence
That you and I are sailors!"

MSC Napoli

The August 2007 edition of FTB contained an article about the refloating of the container ship *Napoli*. The 53,409 gross tons vessel had been deliberately grounded on the south coast of Devon in England. A recent report states "Following a complex and wide-ranging investigation, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) found that the failure to the hull in the region of the ship's engine room was due to the vessel's design rather than her material condition or construction. The MAIB concluded that this, along with the ship's speed and her loading, had caused the vessel to break her back as she headed directly into high seas. It has therefore recommended a review of the technical rules used in container ship design. <http://www.mgn.com/news/dailystorydetails.cfm?storyid=8738&type=2>

The MAIB says several factors contributed to the failure of the hull structure, including:

- The vessel's hull did not have sufficient buckling strength in way of the engine room.
- The classification rules applicable at the time of the vessel's construction did not require buckling strength calculations to be undertaken beyond the vessel's amidships area.
- There was no, or insufficient, safety margin between the hull's design loading and its ultimate strength.
- The load on the hull was likely to have been increased by whipping effect.
- The ship's speed was not reduced sufficiently in the heavy seas.

The MAIB examines and investigates all types of marine accidents to or on board UK ships worldwide, and other ships in UK territorial waters. The sole objective of MAIB accident investigations is to determine the circumstances and causes of the accident with a view to preserve life and avoid accidents in the future, not to apportion blame or liability. In this case the MAIB worked closely with the leading classification societies to identify any other vessels that may have the same design flaw as the MSC Napoli. Out of 1500 vessels screened, 12 required structural work; until such work can be completed, their safety will be ensured by operational limitations.

THE ARCTIC

Shipping in the Canadian Arctic

The Challenges and Opportunities

This one-day Seminar on February 27 2008, in Halifax, Nova Scotia was an initiative of The Company of Master Mariners of Canada, Maritimes Division. The Company had support from Dalhousie University for the auditorium, full to its capacity of 150, from Det Norske Veritas for lunch, from the American Bureau of Shipping for the coffee breaks and from Lloyds Register for the useful bags for conference papers. The objective of the Seminar was to bring up-to-date Arctic issues discussed at the previous seminar, December 6 2006, to focus more on the Human Aspects of Arctic shipping and to hear the viewpoint of the Inuit people who live in Nunavut. The National Master, Capt. Peter Turner, made introductory remarks following the welcoming address by the Divisional Master, Capt. Jim Calvesbert. Format for the seminar comprised four panel sessions each with three speakers and a half-hour for discussion for each session.

The Challenges

Dr. Richard MacDougall, Director, Law of the Sea Project for Dept. Fisheries and Oceans, provided an overview of the current work delineating Canada's continental shelf and the extension beyond the 200 mile limit, which Canada will claim. The work is challenged by seasonal accessibility, the weather and ice conditions north of the Beaufort Sea. Data collection is progressing and Canada's claim in the United Nations will be made by the deadline in 2013.

Mr. Doug Bancroft, Director, Ice Services, DFO, Ottawa, described the nature of Arctic sea ice and its impact on the safety and economic efficiency of Arctic shipping. Mr. Bancroft foresees an increase in shipping to Arctic destinations but not in through traffic. He predicted that the Northern Sea Route (NSR) along the Siberian coast and the transpolar route would be in use by transit shipping long before the Northwest Passage is fully viable.

The speaker for Det Norske Veritas, Mr. M. Crawford-Brunt, outlined risk factors associated with Arctic shipping and added that risk mitigation may be achieved by a vessel's ice class and level of "winterization". Also important is the "human element" as crews will be severely challenged by Arctic conditions. In conclusion, the speaker suggested that the industry, regulators and enforcers should up-date Arctic marine transportation regulations and prepare for an increased risk of ship casualties and an increase in S.A.R. in that region. He too, has the opinion that the N.S.R. and the trans-Polar route will be open to transit shipping long before the NW. Passage.

Economics and Opportunities – Nunavut's Position

Mr. Richard Hodgson, on faculty in Dalhousie's Marine Affairs Program, spoke of a current study, an Arctic Shipping Assessment which is being done for the Arctic Council, which comprises states with coasts on the Arctic Ocean. Environmental impacts related to shipping would include oil spills, pathogens from ballast water, toxic emissions from ships' exhaust and the effect of seismic work and increased shipping on living marine resources. Risk management through Government policies would clarify the position on the exploitation of oil and gas, on response to accidental oil pollution, on the installation of navigation aids, on the up-grading of hydrographic data and compulsory ice navigators as well as the provision of ice-breaking services.

This presentation was followed by a particularly significant one, by Mr. Alan Johnson, a senior official of the Nunavut Government. Nunavut is the area embracing the Eastern Arctic, including the Arctic Archipelago. As the Arctic becomes open to increased ship traffic and resource exploitation, there will be challenges for the 30,000 inhabitants, spread out over 25 communities, many of which are isolated and lacking easy access. A transportation strategy is being developed to assess the need for infrastructure such as roads, seaports and airports. Mr. Johnson pointed out that there is a lack of full and up-to-date hydrographic coverage in the Arctic which increases risks to ships and the possibility of accidental oil pollution. He noted the increase in "adventure" cruises to the region but many of the passengers were elderly, landing is difficult and many communities too small to accommodate large numbers. Another economic boost to the region is the increase in commercial fishing. This would be more beneficial with the construction of docks for landings and plants for processing. A major road link to Manitoba is planned and this could be, in addition to facilitating transportation, a corridor for hydro power and polar gas.

Polar Star Expeditions operated by Halifax shipowner Mr. Martin Karlsen, whose polar cruise ship, formerly a Swedish ice-breaker can take 100 people on "expedition cruises" to the Antarctic and Arctic, according to the season, called for more infrastructure in the Arctic such as a port facility and an airport which could handle a change-over of passengers and crew. Some Arctic communities are in areas where the water is shallow, making it essential to ferry passengers ashore in small craft.

Responsibilities of Coast Guard and Transport Canada

The speaker for the Canadian Coast Guard, Mr. Brian LeBlanc, Director, Operational Services, Central and Arctic Region provided an interesting overview of the Coast Guard's current strength and its roles in the Arctic. These include, supporting the government's scientific and hydrographic work as well as ice-breaking and the support of shipping. Challenges for the Coast Guard would include an increasing need for its Arctic services as well as the physical environment. Coast Guard has no clear mandate to maintain security and sovereignty but is well placed to support other government agencies which do. The good news Mr. LeBlanc revealed was that government had "promised" funding for 16 new vessels over the next several years to replace those reaching the end of their long lives.

The Marine Safety (and regulatory) branch of Transport Canada was represented by Mr. Ross MacDonald from Ottawa. He spoke of the government's role in regulating shipping in the Arctic. Safety requirements for shipping in the Arctic, in addition to those found in the Canada Shipping Act, the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act and related regulations are found in the IMO Guidelines for Ships in Arctic Ice-covered Waters. He pointed out that Canada was instrumental in the creation of Clause 234 in the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which permits countries to make non-discriminatory rules for shipping in ice-covered waters. The types of Arctic shipping likely to increase include, tug/barge, oil industry support vessels, oil and gas tankers, bulk ore ships, commercial fishing vessels, "adventure" cruise ships, community re-supply ships and those employed in government services. Mr. MacDonald did not foresee container ships in transit, in fact, only 120 transits of the Northwest Passage had been made since 1906 and some of these had been adventurous yachts. He predicted that Canada's Polar Guidelines are being developed. Transport Canada is responsible for oil spill preparedness and has aerial surveillance looking out for oil pollution. Inuit rely on Arctic wildlife for basic nutrition; their needs and their environment must be protected, a challenge indeed, in the face of increasing commercial and industrial activities.

Military Capability; Jurisdictional Issues

The Canadian Forces (CF) was represented by Cdr. Paul Dempsey who opened his presentation by showing a diagram to demonstrate that the melting of the Polar cap allows easier access to resources. This increases concerns of environmental damage, security threats and sovereignty disputes which would require a reaction from the Government of Canada. To mitigate the effects of these issues and to support other government agencies, the involvement of Canadian Forces would be critical. The Navy will continue its annual summertime deployments to the Eastern Arctic. The deepwater port on Baffin Island, Nanisivik, will have additional operational capability for the planned ice-strengthened naval vessels by 2012 and full military capability by 2014. Churchill in Hudson Bay will be used for aircraft deployment and for intelligence gathering. Helicopters will be used for personnel movements. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with Coast Guard to allow for CF personnel to be deployed on Coast Guard ice-breaking vessels for familiarization with Arctic conditions.

Crew Training for Arctic's Hostile Environment.

A presentation by American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) entitled "Training to Reduce Risk" referred to the IMO's Arctic Guidelines which emphasize the need to ensure that all ship systems are capable of functioning effectively under Arctic conditions and that safe operation requires specific attention to human factors, training and operational procedures. ABS published its own Guide for Vessels operating in Low Temperature Environments, a large part of which deals with crew safety and training. The speaker pointed out that an essential element in any Arctic training program is survival and what to do in extreme situations such as ship abandonment. If not properly trained and equipped, crews, like a ship's systems and their components, may at times be functioning at their physical limits.

An interesting paper on training was presented by Lt. Chris Richter of the Navy's Damage Control School in Halifax. The speaker pointed out that for any Navy ship being deployed to the Arctic the crew would be given an intensive damage control course and the ship would be supplied with the necessary materials for plugging holes, shoring bulkheads, dealing with ruptured pipes etc. A bergy bit or a growler, hard to detect, can inflict damage to a ship.

Damage Control could be an added emergency course for merchant seafarers on Arctic voyages, where there are no tugs and repair facilities, and owners should supply the necessary materials.

At the Centre for Marine Simulation, Marine Institute, St. John's NL, instructors can create a suite of scenarios for Arctic navigation and its hazards. Capt. Chris Hearn, Director, Simulator Centre, said that the ice navigation course includes how to cope with ice-breaker assistance, hull stress, ice accretion on superstructure, stability, effects of wind and currents, plus ice identification and ice reporting. The Ice Navigation Simulator is used in modeling, strategic ice operations planning and the simulation of towing icebergs; it is a state-of-the-art training facility.

Complete proceedings of the Seminar may be seen on the Company's website: www.mastermariners.ca
Summary written and submitted by **Captain Angus McDonald, Maritimes Division**

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4,000 specialised ice seafarers urgently needed

About 4,000 seafarers with specialty in ice class ships are currently needed to meet rising global demand. This was disclosed at the Arctic Shipping 2008 held in St Petersburg, Russia by DNV senior principal surveyor Mr. Morten Meilaender-Larsen. He explained that to avoid structural damage from ice, it's essential to carry out risk analysis based on the specific operation and ship. Ice conditions are very different from area to area, year to year and season to season. If you're going to operate year-round, for instance, you'll need high ice class, a lot of power and possibly support from icebreakers, so you have to design accordingly. In addition there are crew issues including an extreme shortage of ice experienced personnel. There are estimates that an extra 2,000 to 4,000 seafarers will be required to crew all the ice class ships currently on order. Specialist academy courses have been set up and ice training is now available via a very advanced ship manoeuvring simulator in Trondheim, Norway, but there needs to be more hands-on training.

On top of this, human fatigue increases due to 24-hour darkness, extreme cold and the noise and vibration caused by ice. These factors will influence the ability to be alert when on duty and to relax when off duty.

Some 200 delegates discussed the latest issues at Arctic Shipping 2008 – the fourth annual conference in the world-leading series from Lloyd's List Events – which took place in St Petersburg, Russia in April 2008. About 50 government and industry-wide operators attended the training workshop. <http://www.flyingship.com/story.aspx?sid=211327>
http://www.vanguardngr.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=6723&Itemid=0

.....
USCG to assess Northwest Passage

Fairplay

WASHINGTON, DC 15 February - Prospects for commercial shipping use of the Northwest Passage brightened yesterday when the USCG said it will begin assessments of the Pacific-Atlantic shortcut in the spring. Following his annual State of the Coast Guard address where he reiterated his "Honour the past, don't operate in it" message, Adm Thad Allen said he plans to send vessels and aircraft to the North Slope area following the seasonal thaw to assess the waterway's use for commercial transits. He said the taskforce will be led by a 210-foot (64m) cutter and will be joined by a team from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the federal agency charged with marine charting. The commandant said the "prototype deployment" of USCG vessels and aircraft will test their viability in the icy climes, while the primary mission is to access the navigability of the passage. "We have to look at bottom contours, aids to navigation and the overall usability of the passage," he said. He noted that with the melting ice, the channel appears an attractive alternative for vessels passing between oceans. "We have to make sure it's safe," he cautioned, however.

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Melting Arctic ice has U.S. military considering more northern border patrols

WASHINGTON - As the Arctic ice cap shrinks, the U.S. military is eyeing the expanding navigable waters as possible entry points for security threats that must be monitored more closely. The word comes from the chief of the U.S. Northern Command in an interview with The Associated Press.

Air force General Gene Renuart also says U.S. defence officials are working with the Federal Aviation Administration and Canadian authorities to determine how unmanned aircraft can be used to monitor the northern border without interfering with busy commercial air traffic routes.

For much of the last 18 months, the military has been more visibly focused on the country's border with Mexico - dispatching National Guard troops to help patrol there while additional border guards were trained. But Renuart says there will be increased military activity along the expansive northern boundary and beyond.

That could include efforts to use more high-tech sensors and cameras like those developed for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, he says. "The Arctic is a new area that is important to us because of the changes in ice flows," said Renuart. "The shift", he said, "means that Northern Command will beef up its maritime surveillance".

Renuart's comments came as U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates was travelling Monday to Colorado Springs, Colorado, for the 50th anniversary of NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defence Command.

Scientists have said the ice in the north shrank to a record low last summer, a change many attribute to global warming. And as the ice opened up, traffic in the Arctic region grew, particularly along the Northwest Passage.

"Last year, during the summer months, where the ice had retreated we began to see some tourist ships, cruises, in the region," Renuart said during the interview on Friday.

For ships headed from the Pacific to Europe, travelling through the Northwest Passage saves time and valuable energy costs. That traffic increase has coincided with greater international interest in potential energy resources in the Arctic, prompting more exploration. "All of this has implications that there could be security concerns," Renuart said.

The United States and Canada have already said there are plans to use unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) along the more than 8,000-kilometre-long northern border. Renuart said the effort has been slowed a bit as officials try to resolve air traffic congestion issues, and train UAV operators on how to fly the drones in the north's more heavily wooded terrain.

"There's some extensive work that has to be done with the Federal Aviation Administration and Transport Canada," said Renuart, "to ensure that we also use these systems in a way that doesn't provide a challenge for our general aviation friends." He said officials are planning UAV exercises, and hope to have UAVs in service along the border later this year.

NORAD is the bi-national Canadian and American command responsible for the air defence of North America. Northern Command was set up in 2002, in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, to oversee homeland defence. Both are located in Colorado Springs.

By Lolita C. Baldor, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

<http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Canada/2008/05/12/5543336-ap.html>

THE PITFALLS OF LIFE AT SEA

<http://kiwi-at-sea.blogspot.com/>

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2007

After thousands of years of crossing oceans mankind has bred a certain type of person that could exist on very little information for prolonged periods. For centuries seamen walked out of the house and disappeared into the deep blue sea for years at a time, before turning up unannounced, a completely different person and a misfit in society.



Fast-forward to the present and in some respects this has not changed. We still walk out of our home lives and return world-wearier, more distracted, and less able to settle. The main difference for the modern seaman is the ability to communicate with anyone at anytime. On ships like the *James Cook* it is possible to phone my cabin for 2p a minute, talk on Skype or even have a web cam. One can read the daily newspapers, download movies, update websites, listen to terrestrial radio stations, or just idly surf the web to pass the time. It adds a whole new dimension to seafaring and allows you to lead an almost normal life – rather than that of a grumpy hermit.

It is with this in mind that you can imagine the uproar when the Internet and phone service decided to expire terminally only a few days into the first science trip. Plans for Christmas shopping on EBay and Amazon had to be discarded, e-mails sat written but gathering dust, and people paced back and forth – unsure what to do with all the free time thrust upon them. Some of us revelled in the freedom, and returned to what sailors do best – entertaining ourselves with silly games, engaging in long conversations on any subject under the sun,

and drinking tea as if it was beer. The after watch gatherings in the coffee shop became the focal point of the day, and you turned up to work an hour early rather than fester in your cabin chained to a PC.

It was interesting watching people who have never known a world without the Internet slowly adapting, and eventually realising just how liberating not having it can be. We enjoyed the lack of pressure that communication with shore places on your shoulders, and focused on life within our micro society. The time spent isolated from the world allowed crew and scientists to bond much more quickly than might otherwise have been the case and by the end we didn't even miss the real world. Ultimately it is nicer to have the Internet and choose not to use it, but it was with mixed emotions

that we headed back to Antigua to change our scientists (who had turned into friends) and fix the problem with our communications.

The *RRS James Cook* operates worldwide from the tropics to the edge of the ice sheets, enabling leading-edge multidisciplinary research. The vessel can undertake both continental margin and deep ocean projects. The ship's design enables it to work in higher sea states than the National Environment Research Council's existing dedicated research vessels.

Vancouver Maritime Museum – A word from the Executive Director. April 2008

(See FTB August 2007 for an earlier announcement on the Museum) <http://www.vancouvermaritimemuseum.com/>

The Province of British Columbia announced in its 2008 Budget further funding for the proposed North Vancouver National Maritime Centre (NMC). We are expecting a decision on federal funding for the new museum by summer. Transition planning to the NMC is underway and the Museum is actively engaged in preparing for a successful transition.

At a recent meeting, the Vancouver Maritime Museum Society (VMMS) board of trustees declared support for this exciting new venture and passed this resolution:-

- The VMMS initiated the new vision for a national maritime institution on the Pacific Coast.
 - The VMMS will bring its collection expertise, history, energy and network of community supporters to the ongoing development of this concept.
 - With the intent of realising a Class A Museum, the VMMS will work with its funding partners in government and the community to develop and manage a smooth transition to the new museum.
 - The VMMS is the trustee and steward of the entire collection and will work diligently to protect the integrity of that collection.
-



The BC Ferry *Coastal Renaissance* is seen here at the Horseshoe Bay Ferry Terminal. The *Coastal Renaissance* is the first of three new double-ended ferries to enter service between the mainland and Vancouver Island. The three are the largest double-ended ferries in the world. The second ferry, the *Coastal Inspiration* is just commencing service on the Tsawwassen – Nanaimo run. The third vessel, *Coastal Celebration* is currently en route from Europe to British Columbia. Each ship can carry 370 vehicles and 1,650 passengers. The photographic images on the hull are the largest marine application of printed graphics ever undertaken. They represent sports that will be featured in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games to be held in British

Columbia. http://www.3m.com/intl/ca/english/centres/graphicarts/documents/BC_Ferries.pdf

This picture was taken from in front of Ya Ya's Oyster Bar in Horseshoe Bay. That is where the Conway Club of Vancouver frequently meets for lunch, generally on the last Thursday of the month. If anyone is interested in attending any of those lunches, contact **Captain Don Tranter, Vancouver Division**, for details. He can be reached at <donaaldranter@telus.net> or at 604 929-2880.

River Class Destroyers of the Royal Canadian Navy (New book released in April 2008)

This book is an updated and revised edition of Ken Macpherson's history of these ships originally published 20 years ago. Over the intervening years more historical information has come to light on the war years enabling the authors to correct some previous inaccuracies and expand on the operational histories of each ship.

The "Rivers" were not old ships by ordinary standards, but wartime demands aged them rapidly. The fourteen hard-worked ships did not survive to serve in the postwar navy. This book helps show the large contribution these ships made towards the cause of victory in the Second World War.

"River Class Destroyers of the Royal Canadian Navy" by Keith Butterley & Ken Macpherson is published in paperback by Vanwell Publishing Ltd. ISBN 978-1-55125-093-9 Cdn\$29.95

North Atlantic Right Whale & the Roseway Basin Conservation Area



The North Atlantic right whale is one of the most endangered of all large whales, with a long history of human exploitation and no signs of recovery despite protection from whaling since the 1930s. It is now mostly found along the Atlantic coast of North America, where it is threatened by entanglement in fishing gear and by ship collisions. The North Atlantic right whale can reach 18 m for females and 12.9 m for males. The species may weigh up to 96,000 kg. Between 300 and 350 individuals still exist, but despite seven decades of protection efforts, no population growth has been observed.

In December 2002, a collaborative effort between government agencies, the shipping and fishing industries, and the scientific community was rewarded by the adoption by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) of an amended traffic separation scheme. The full implementation of the change occurred on July 1st, 2003.

The Roseway Basin Conservation Area is shown above. The coordinates of the area are:-
NW 43°05'N, 65°40'W; NE 43°05'N, 65°03'W; SW 42°45'N, 65°40'W; SE 42°45'N, 65°03'W

WESTERN MARITIME INSTITUTE.

Maritime Education Associates (MEA), the retirement project of Captains Bob Kitching (ex BCIT Marine Campus) and Brian Silvester (ex Camosun College) has taken the next major step in marine training by opening a Marine Training Institute on Vancouver Island. The college's aim is to meet as many of the training needs of the coastal marine industry as possible. With this in mind Bob has purchased a 10,000 square foot school in Ladysmith, near Nanaimo (Brian has subsequently retired a second time).

The new training facility is being refitted to accommodate the courses for the Bridge Watch Rating program, MED A1, A2 and A3, plus courses for Master Limited and Fishing Master certificates. Additionally the Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boat, Advanced Fire Fighting and the new STCW Basic Safety plus MED for Senior Officers are in the development stages and should be ready later this year when a pool capable of holding a lifeboat, and the mock-up of a ship's superstructure for firefighting, are completed.

Western Maritime Institute (WMI) will start offering the courses required for the Master 150 gross tonnage, Mate 500 ton Domestic and Watchkeeping Mate certificates commencing September 2008. Maritime Education Associates will continue to offer the Small Vessel Operators Proficiency Certificate for vessels under 5 gross tonnage, the Simulated Electronic Navigation (SEN) Ltd courses as well as the GMDSS Courses for General Operator and Restricted Operator radio certificates. Additional Electronic Navigation courses are in the offing.

Maritimes Education Associates has an excellent team of instructors who travel extensively throughout Western Canada and the Arctic providing training in Nunavut, the North West Territories, Yukon, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. They take training to rural areas not serviced by established marine training institutes. MEA is also starting to offer on-line courses for those people who want to have the advantage of a computer based course with rapid on-line access to an instructor. MEA's Ship Construction and Stability level 3, Signals and Orals prep are available through MEA's web site at <http://www.maritimeed.com/>

Anniversaries British Columbia's Centenary – 1958

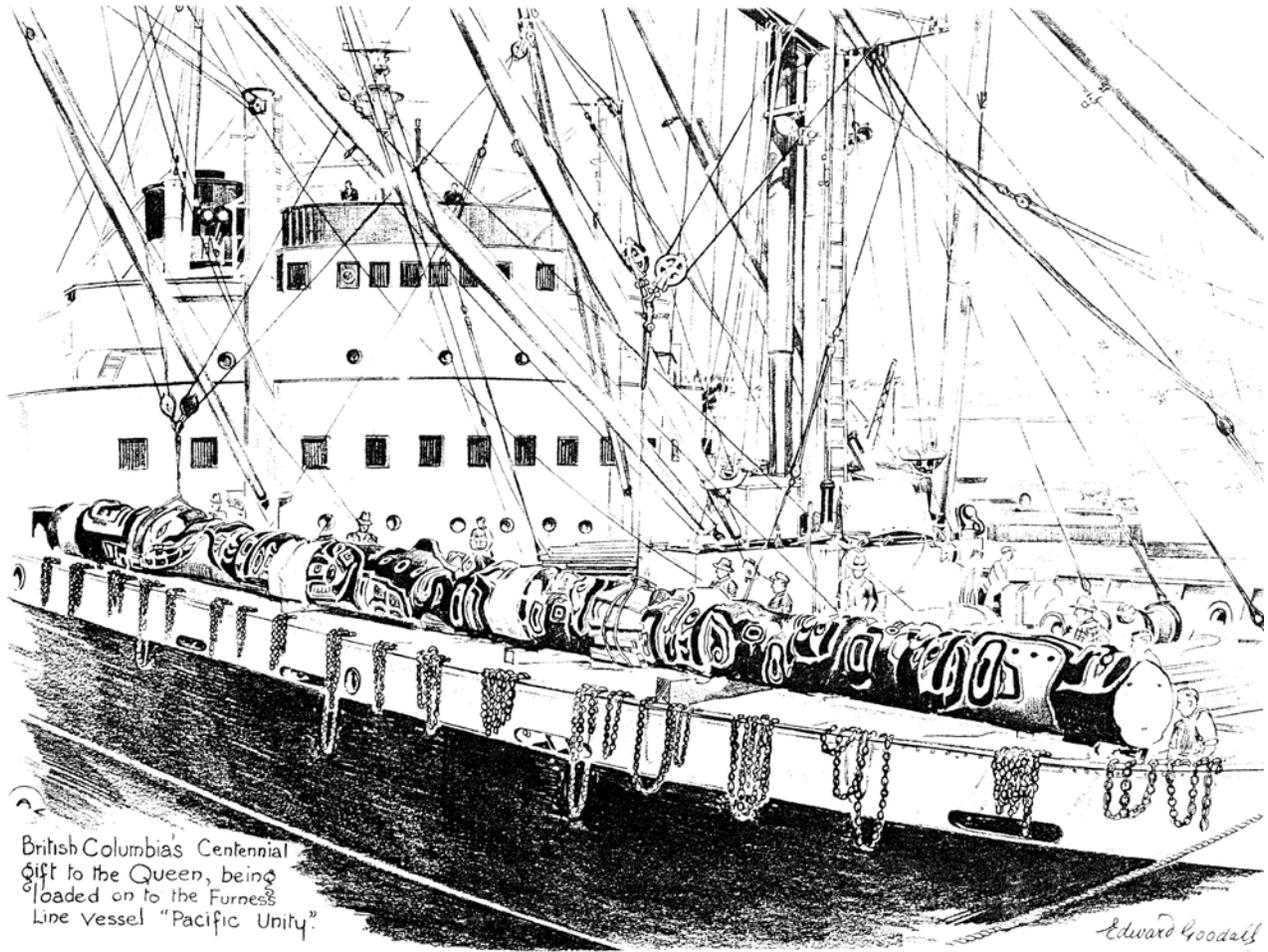
In March of this year I travelled to Seattle to meet with a couple of old shipmates including one who I had not seen since 1958. That was the year when British Columbia celebrated its 100th birthday. Our ship, the *Pacific Unity*, carried a gift, a Totem Pole, from the people of British Columbia to HM The Queen.

The Pole, now situated in Windsor Great Park in England, is 100' high, one foot for every year of British Columbia's centenary. It was carved from a single log of Western Red Cedar and weighs 27,000lbs. The log came from a 600 year old tree in the forests of the Queen Charlotte Islands.

It was 50 years ago in April 1958 that Furness Withy's *Pacific Unity*, partially loaded with breakbulk commodities and bulk grain in Vancouver and New Westminster, called at Ogden Point in Victoria. There, lumber was loaded on the wings of the main deck (loose lumber - packaged lumber had not yet been developed). On the starboard side of the foredeck, cradles were placed on the partial deck load and on to these went the Totem Pole. More lumber was then stowed beside and over the Pole. Deck cargo was only on the wings of the fore and after decks because more cargo had to be loaded underdeck at other ports



down the west coast of the USA before the ship was full. In the picture on the previous page you can see that the Pole has a top hat. This had been crated and stowed in No. 5 upper 'tween deck. In London the Pole was discharged to a barge at Surrey Commercial Docks and then towed up river to its final destination.



Information about the Totem Pole can be found at: <http://www.thamesweb.co.uk/windsor/info/totem.html> The website describes the Pole's current setting. A similar Pole is located close by the Maritime Museum in Vanier Park, Vancouver.

This drawing appeared in the "Canadian Stevedoring Company" Calendar for 1959. It shows the Totem Pole being lifted aboard the vessel in Victoria using the four sets of the ship's gear at Hatches 1 & 2.

50th Anniversary – The Removal of Ripple Rock

In the late 1700s, Captain George Vancouver called the channel at British Columbia's Seymour Narrows, "one of the vilest stretches of water in the world." Its deadliest features were the twin peaks of *Ripple Rock* lurking just below the surface of the swirling water. *Ripple Rock* menaced shipping for years, sinking or damaging 119 vessels and claiming almost as many lives. But on April 5, 1958, the world's largest non-nuclear peacetime explosion removed the hazard forever. The video of the TV coverage of the explosion can be seen and heard at http://archives.cbc.ca/on_this_day/04/05/ This was one of the CBC's first live nationwide broadcasts.



Many attempts had been made to destroy the menace. In 1943 and 1945 barges were sent to drill holes for explosives. The water tossed the barges about the strait so much that cables holding the barges in place from the shore were snapped. So these efforts were abandoned. In 1953 the National Research Council studied the possibility of tunnelling down from Maud Island, under the Seymour Narrows and up into the Rock. Work on the project began in November 1955 and lasted for 27 months. On April 5th 1958, 1270 tonnes of explosives (10 times as much explosive as would have been needed for a

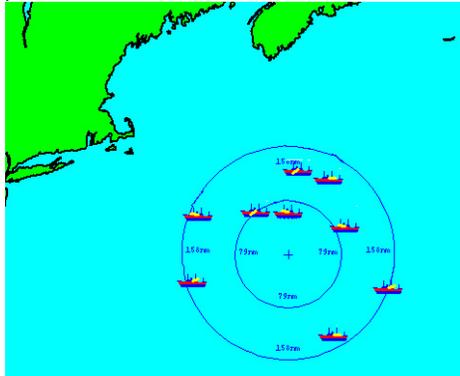
similar blast above water) displaced over 630,000 tonnes of rock and water. *Ripple Rock* now lies 14.3 metres below the surface at low tide. Removal of the Rock ultimately opened up the Inside Passage for cruises to Alaska. <http://www.crmuseum.ca/exhibits/riplerock.html>

50th Anniversary – Amver

<http://www.amver.com/amverhistory.htm>

The genesis of the *Amver* system really finds its roots in the *RMS TITANIC* disaster of 1912. Ships passing within sight of the ill-fated passenger liner were unaware that it had hit an iceberg and was sinking. Upon later investigation, those who had seen the distress flares from the stricken ship admitted they thought they were merely part of the maiden voyage celebrations! However, the resultant idea of a ship reporting system that could identify other ships in the area of a ship in distress, which could then be sent to its assistance, would not become a reality until the advent of computer technology. As late as the mid-twentieth century the world's commercial shipping fleet and burgeoning air transport system lacked an available full-time, global emergency reporting system. On April 15, 1958 the United States Coast Guard and commercial shipping representatives began discussions which led to the creation of *Amver*.

Originally known as the **A**tlantic **M**erchant **V**essel **E**mergency **R**eporting (*AMVER*) System, it became operational on July 18, 1958. *Amver* began as an experiment, confined to waters of the North Atlantic Ocean. Vice Admiral Alfred C. Richmond, Coast Guard Commandant at the time, called on all commercial vessels of U.S. and foreign registry, over 1,000 gross tons and making a voyage of more than 24 hours, to voluntarily become *Amver* participants. The basic premise of *Amver*, as a vehicle for mariner to help mariner without regard to nationality, continues to this day.



In 1971, the system was formally expanded worldwide. But at this point, the *AMVER* acronym was so well known in the industry that the Coast Guard was reluctant to change it. Instead, the title was changed to the "Automated (computerized) Mutual-assistance (its basic premise) Vessel Rescue (its stated purpose) System. Today, due to its global acceptance and familiarity, it is simply called *Amver*.

Ships' sailing plans, position and/or diversion data reported to the *Amver* computer is used to produce a SURface PICture, referred to as a SURPIC of an area of the ocean. This indicates the relative position of all *Amver*-participating ships around a specific point, usually the ship in distress.

Amver took its place in the history of the 1960s and 1970s by playing an important role in the U.S. space program. *Amver* was a part of the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo and Skylab Programs, providing the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) with a prospective maritime support plan in the event of a space flight emergency. Today, some 12,000 ships from over 140 nations participate in *Amver*. An average of over 2,800 ships is on the *Amver* plot each day. Over 2,000 lives have been saved by *Amver*-participating ships just since 1990. The success of *Amver* is directly related to the extraordinary cooperation of ships, companies, SAR authorities, communication service providers and governments in supporting this international humanitarian program to protect life and property at sea.

Lloyds Open Form – One hundred years old

The only international standard form of salvage agreement in use is Lloyds Standard Form of Salvage Agreement or Lloyds Open Form (LOF). Other national standard forms exist but are generally used by vessels and salvors that are in the waters or who are nationals of the particular countries concerned.

LOF came into use over 100 years ago in the early 1890s. At that time a number of salvage services were being rendered to ships in the Black Sea and Dardanelles. The London underwriting market became concerned about the manner in which cases were being resolved by the courts there. They therefore entered into an arrangement with a number of salvors who operated in the Dardanelles whereby any salvage services rendered would, in the absence of an amicable agreement, be determined by way of arbitration in London in accordance with the principals of English law.

The arrangement was successful and resulted in LOF being standardised and available for use on a worldwide basis. The first printed form was in 1908. That form and its successors have proved to be a popular contract. Since first established in 1908 the contract has been regularly revised and adapted to meet the requirements of ship owners, cargo owners, their insurers and the salvage contractors.

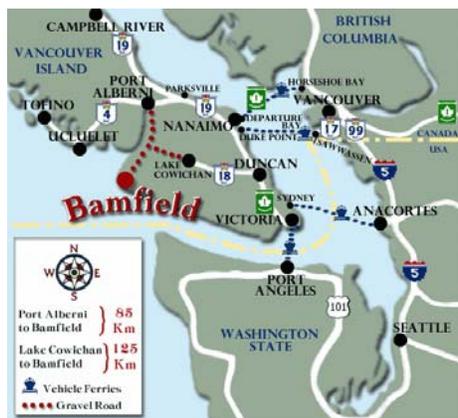
Bamfield Lifeboat Station

At the beginning of 1908 the new Bamfield Station received a 36 foot, self-bailing and self-righting, pulling and sailing motor lifeboat (MLB) purchased by the Dominion Government and constructed to a United States Life-saving Service (USLSS) design by the Electric Launch Company of Bayonne, New Jersey. This large rescue craft, state of the art for its time, was the world's first purpose-built motorized lifeboat. Hundreds of 36 Footers would be constructed in the United States and Canada over the next fifty-odd years, with the auxiliary oars and sails eventually being phased out in favour of motorized propulsion only.



Since that time, the Bamfield Station has had a series of self-righting motor lifeboats including two more 36 Footers (the last of which is on display at Port Alberni), CG 104, a 44 foot Waveney type MLB and now the latest Canadian version of the 25 knot 47 foot MLB. The Bamfield Station has also been instrumental over the years as a location to experiment with and train on the most popular type of rescue craft in the world today, namely the rigid hull inflatable, or RHI.

CCG Station Bamfield today operates a 47 foot MLB and the 7.33 metre RHI Bamfield 1 with two crews of four personnel working a 2-week on/2-week off rotation. These crews are also augmented by volunteers from Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary Unit #53 (Bamfield) who carry pagers for call-outs when additional personnel and/or both vessels are required. The station handles approximately 100 search and rescue cases a year as well as over 200 other marine related tasks.



Where is Bamfield? It is a tiny, resort hamlet nestled in a protected inlet on the south shore of Barkley Sound on Vancouver Island. It is best known for its superb salmon fishing adventures. The tiny fishing village is heavily populated by marine biologists.

The Bamfield community, with a population of about 200, is surrounded by Crown Land, Indian Reserves and portions of the Pacific Rim National Park, ensuring protection of unspoiled marine environments from excessive development. <http://www.bamfieldbc.com/>

The Bamfield Station and the community of Bamfield will be holding a Centennial Celebration from June 13 to 15th, 2008 to celebrate 100 years of saving lives at sea as well as the arrival a century ago of that first purpose-built motorized lifeboat, the *MLB Assistance*.

This year does seem to have its share of centenaries. Quebec City is 400 years old. "Anne of Green Gables" is 100 years old. Are there any nautical connections with these to provide a story for a future FTB? If so please send them to me. What about other anniversaries? There must be many. If you have any anniversary stories or anything else to include in the FTB, send them to me at **13375 14A. Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V4A 7P9** or via e-mail at **whitknit@shaw.ca**

The deadline for submitting articles for the **August FTB** will be **July 28th**.

David Whitaker

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