The CACHALOT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MASTER MARINERS' CLUB

No 114 **March 2026**

Post Captain's Log

Hello all, and welcome to my last report for the Cachalot, having handed over the captaincy to Bill Hargreaves at the Sea Pie Supper on February 6th.

A round up of activity since the last edition begins with the Christmas lunch which was held at the RBL on December 10th. Cachalots, partners and guests enjoyed a fabulous meal prepared by chef Sam.

December 10th was also the date of the Mission to Seafarers' Christmas Carols. Another very well attended event, organised by ABP and this year held in the Ocean Cruise terminal.

In early December the Southampton port community sadly lost June Bradley. June was a wonderful person, always bubbly, welcoming to all, and well known to all as a long time 'family' staff member at Williams Shipping and secretary of the Southampton Shipowners' Association.

June Bradley (right) and at a summer "Management meeting" of the SSA (left).

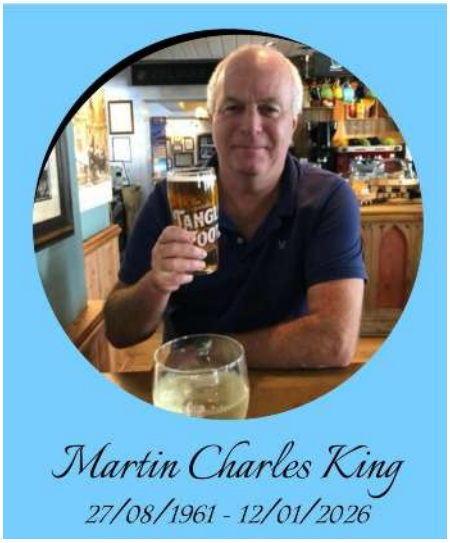
We welcomed the arrival of the new year at St Michael's Church for the Docklands Service on January 5th which was well attended by personnel from our port environment including Cachalots, Southampton Shipowners, the MNWB, Port Agents and ABP.

On January 8th we held our AGM at the RBL, minutes from which have been posted.

A meeting of the Southampton Wardroom took place at the White Star, Oxford Street, on January 16th. Another well attended gathering of Cachalots and Warsash Cadets. It is pleasing to note that these informal events are gaining traction and we are also seeing an increase in our membership as the word spreads around the college.

On January 29th over 50 Cachalots joined family members, friends and many former work colleagues at the funeral of veteran Cachalot and Honorary Club President, Captain Reg Kelso. Not surprisingly, it was standing room only at Wessex Vale Crematorium.

Two days later we returned to Wessex Vale for the funeral service of Southampton pilot Martin King. Martin was a very well liked and respected member of the port community, both on the river and as an independent lecturer for masters and mates. I personally know several officers who benefitted from orals' prep with Martin.



The evening of February 6th brought us to the flagship event of our calendar! The much acclaimed Sea Pie Supper was once again a sell out at St Mary's Stadium.

Reports and photographs of the evening are included within this edition of the Cachalot so I won't repeat the details here.

For me, it marked the end of my term as captain as I handed over to Bill Hargreaves. I have enjoyed a great year at the helm. We have achieved a few notable things, raised a considerable amount of money for my chosen charity – the Solent Dolphin - and, as a result of the generosity shown by attendees at the SPS, raised a respectable sum for each of the port's seafarers' societies.

I wish Bill the very best for his term in the chair!

As I take up my position as Post Captain, I am also relieving Ian Odd of his duties as storekeeper. Many thanks to Ian on behalf of all of us – he has managed our accounts for many years but is now happy to be retiring the calculator!

As well as being storekeeper, I plan to remain involved with the inner workings of the club in whatever way I can, but for now, that's it from me. Over and out.

Captain Nick Jeffery MNM

Some words from your new Captain

When I asked Bill Hargreaves for some words to introduce himself to you I was expecting something like what's in the box below, which is exactly as he posted in his personal details page in the Members' Area/ Directories section of our website. What I got was a much more personal account which I found as interesting, if not more so, and I have reproduced it on the following page…… Ed

Captain William J M Hargreaves
CMMar MProf, MSc, BA(Hons),
Master Mariner
FHEA, FNI, FRIN

My sea-going career, from cadet to master, was spent entirely with Bibby Bros., Liverpool, (though I was seconded to Silver Line and state-owned companies in both Libya and Trinidad and Tobago).
I served primarily on tankers, (both product and crude oil), and LPG carriers. Coming ashore, I worked for a little under two years for the Dept. of Transport Marine Directorate, (now the MCA), before joining ABP Southampton as an authorised pilot.
I spent 28 years as a Southampton Pilot, specialising initially on large container vessels and then VLCCs and ULCCs. Having "retired" at the end of 2020 I was subsequently asked to be a relief pilot in Portsmouth International Port.
In my spare time, I've been an Associate Lecturer at Warsash both on the academic courses and more recently at the Ship Handling Centre. I also act as an Expert Witness in maritime legal cases.
I enjoy hiking, cycling, kayaking, motorcycling...and try with difficulty to stay upright on a paddleboard!

To all Cachalots

Thank you all for the honour of selecting me as Club Captain for this year. I hope I am a worthy successor to Nick and the contribution he's made to the Club in the past year.

At the Sea Pie Supper my instructions were clear. Make a short (!) acceptance speech and thank all the corporate tables for coming. But I didn't want it to be just a list and realised, during my long career, that I have had connections with just about every organisation there. From A to Z! From the A of Associated British Ports to, and you'll have to indulge me here, the Z of the aZimuth Stern Drives of Svitzer Tugs. Made me think back to what a satisfying and rewarding career I have had and am having. (I'm not considering full retirement just yet!).

My career started one day late. (All flights from Ireland, where I lived at the time, had been cancelled because of the 1974 Birmingham Bombings. So I didn't get to Fleetwood until the Monday evening). I wrote a letter to the Cadet Training Officer explaining and apologising for my tardiness. Fifteen years later, as Master, I wrote my letter of resignation. The Personnel Manager replied and enclosed a copy of that first letter. He thought I might be interested. When I was 17, I had thought I was erudite, well-read and, of course, knew it all. The more mature me, looking at that letter, saw both childish handwriting and composition. I always think of that letter when I'm working with young officers. They're keen but have a lot to learn. And they often need guidance.

For me, in parallel with the marine element of my career, education has been a big part of my life. And not just the statutory courses I've been required or needed to do to progress my career. At sea, worrying about my job security, I studied for an Open University degree. The aforementioned Personnel Manager, when I told him about my studies, said "I know, you're looking for a lifeboat". The Marine Society arranged for me to take some of my OU exams at sea, and it is partly for this reason that I have chosen them as my Captain's Charity.

I also commented in my speech that there were certainly people in the room who I had prepped for one or more of their MCA Orals examinations. I thoroughly enjoyed my time working with students at Warsash, though I'm not sure the enjoyment was always reciprocated! Over the years I have been able to give guidance to junior, and not-so junior, officers both at sea and ashore. There's a slightly cliched quote: "the past is a foreign country; they do things differently there." That letter I wrote is just a small example of how one's perspectives change. I would say, with experience, one's horizons become bigger.

There is a wealth of experience and talent within the Club and in my year in office I would hope to explore how, for those members who are willing, this can be used to help mentor young officers and the like.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible during the coming year. — Bill

Bill Hargreaves, big ship pilot

The Cachalot newsletter

Cachalots are reminded that this newsletter is produced in both a digital format, and as a printed copy which can be collected from the clubroom or sent by post to those without email facilities or who just prefer to read a hard copy (and why not). The default now is for us to post it on our website and to send a link to all those who have supplied us with their email addresses so they can view it online. I think this is the equivalent of the postman knocking at your door to tell you that there is a letter down at the sorting office for you to collect, or not, as the mood takes you. But if you would like a printed copy please let us know and you will be added to the postal distribution list.

The two versions are usually identical, the online one is just the pdf copy of the printed one. Sometimes there may be an edit after the copy is sent to the printers and before the online copy is promulgated.

Each edition is also posted on our website in the members only section where you will find ALL the previous editions too.

Copies are also emailed to certain non members such as widows, contributors and similar maritime clubs and associations.

Ed.

Boatsteerer's Locker

Meeting's at RBL – our meetings at the RBL Club room on a Friday continue to attract the usual suspects with some additional faces now and again.

Cachalots Bar – our bar lady Karen, continues looking after the bar upstairs.

Zoom gatherings – Generally available on a Wednesday from 1030. I will contact the usual attendees to confirm at the beginning of each week. Please contact me if you wish to join us and I will send the log in details.

Subscriptions – thank you to all who registered with GoCardless on the new web portal. Unfortunately, there were still a number who did but did not cancel their Standing Order mandate with their bank, resulting in a double payment. These are being identified and resolved. We would hope and expect that all Standing Order arrangements will be cancelled by the time of the next subscription round in January 2027.

Functions – We have still not received any offers by a member or a group to manage the functions of the Club. Terry Clark and I are co-ordinating events for the time being. Julia Whorwood has offered to make the bookings and liaise with Everest Cuisine for the curry lunch events on Saturdays. Please drop an email to boatsteerer@cachalots.org.uk and to office@cachalots.org.uk if you wish to attend.
A programme of events is posted on the noticeboard in the Club room and is available on the Cachalots website for 2026-2027. Curry lunches resume on Saturday 14th March so please advise your interest in attending soon. We are still waiting for a cost for each lunch but will be circulated as soon as known.
Remember, there is a newly installed chairlift fitted to the stairway which has been a great advantage.

Sea Pie Supper – Friday 6th February 2026
Three-hundred and ninety-one people attended the Sea Pie Supper at St. Mary's Stadium in what seems to have been a well received and successful evening. See separate report of the evening elsewhere.

Club Supper – Wednesday 13th May 2026 at RBL.
Menu yet to be confirmed but the price will be retained at £38 each. Your Captain will give us a post dinner talk with an insight into local pilotage.

Shipping Festival Service – Thursday 11th June 2026
This event will be held at St. Michael's Church, Southampton commencing at 1900 with the ringing of the Penda bell. We will have Bishop Geoff Annas, retired Bishop of Stafford and Honorary Assistant Bishop in Winchester Diocese to lead the service. The post service reception is yet to be confirmed.

Forthcoming Meetings

Management Committee – will be held in the Club room of the RBL on Thursday 5th March.
If you are one of our 'younger' Cachalots, you may wish to consider, and we would really like to encourage you, to become involved in the management of the Cachalots. Initially, this can be arranged on a mentor basis, but we really wish to encourage our younger members to take a more active role in the Club. If you have an interest in taking this forward, please contact the Boatsteerer in the first instance.

Annual General Meeting – the AGM in accordance with Rule 11, was held in the lower room of the RBL on Thursday 8th January at 1900 with eleven attending in person and seven by Zoom. The minutes are posted on the Club room noticeboard and on the Cachalot's website.

Following the confirmation by the meeting of the Past Captain's we welcomed our Captain for 2026, Bill Hargreaves who sadly was away in Patagonia, and our Staff Captain Bruce Thomas.

A list of the Club Officers and Harpooners for the coming year can be found on the notice board on pages 8 & 9.

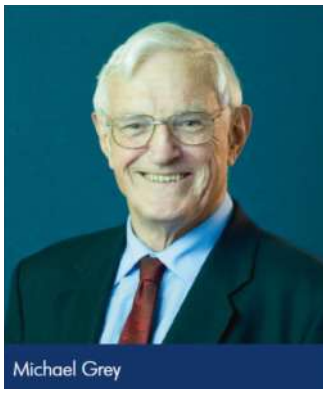
Hopefully winter will loosen its grip in the next few weeks, and I hope you all enjoy a time of spring sunshine and growth.

Robin

Captain Robin Plumley MBE
Boatsteerer

boatsteerer@cachalots.org.uk

Price of productivity


Michael Grey

The Maritime *Advocate* online Issue 901 February 13th 2026

By *Michael Grey MBE*

There can be few who were even remotely surprised at the guilty verdict and six-year gaol sentence for the master of the container feeder Solong, which plunged like a misguided missile into the side of the anchored Stena Immaculate off the Humber last March. There seemed to have been no rational explanation for the incident, which killed one of the Solong's crew and wiped out his ship, which failed to make any alteration of course before the fatal collision.

Nobody would suggest that the sentence was unduly harsh, the Russian master, who has been held in custody since his arrest shortly after being rescued, doubtless being thought a "flight risk". The fact that the tanker was US registered and carrying a military cargo may well have weighed upon the minds of police investigators, and others. But geo-politics aside, there are perhaps wider questions that this incident, among the worst of recent navigational calamities, should provoke.

It might, for instance, be asked why the master of a sizeable ship, was keeping a navigational watch as a matter of routine. In the world of containerships, this was just an insignificant feeder, but was nevertheless the dimensions of an ocean-going ship which, in an earlier age, would have had a deck department of at least three officers to keep the watches and sufficient ratings to assist. The answer is quite obvious; in the "normalisation" of such manning in these trades; something that has come about without any proper discussions, driven purely by the need to stay competitive. If company A can make do in such a "schooner-rigged" fashion, then companies B,C,D etc must follow, if they are to satisfy charterers looking for their pound of flesh and keep their business.

Is it reasonable for the master of a ship, which is being driven hard in an unremitting service in which the maintenance of a schedule is paramount, to be expected to act as an OOW? It is also worth considering what will be expected of masters, additional to their watchkeeping and supervisory duties before, during and after the vessel's numerous port calls, with innumerable calls upon their time, from the terminal staff and all the other well-rested officials who demand attention. An unending requirement for reporting, bureaucratic demands whizzing into the email inbox, all wanting instant answers.

Masters of these ships, in regular trades, are often expected to hold pilotage exemptions and to handle their ships, in what may be long, estuarial pilotages. Might fatigue just possibly be a contributor to some – even most – of these navigational accidents, which now seem to be almost accepted as part of the price of progress in keeping the logistics chain bar-tight? In the current journal of the International Federation of Ship Masters' Associations is a sad observation about the premature retirement of a ro-ro master, whose health was breaking down due to the pressure of multiple port calls. The current Nautical Institute Seaways, in its current issue, has a whole collection of accounts of fatigue-related accidents, along with some thought-provoking articles about the reality of life at sea today.

There is nothing even remotely revelatory about all this; there have been warning after warning, but beyond bureaucratic changes around "hours of rest" requirements which has given rise to creative reporting, little has been done to address the real issues. Clever manufacturers produce equipment that produces precision navigation solutions, but relegates the fatigued OOW to the role of a machine-minder, alarm-canceller and a pair of bleary eyes. Brilliant engineers produce port equipment that will halve the time in port for a turn-round, to huge congratulations from everyone, except perhaps for the ships' crews, who will have to do the same jobs, but in half the time. Bullying greens persuade ship operators to slow ships down at sea to save the planet, requiring ports to look to their even greater efficiencies.

And at the end of all this progress are to be found the human beings who run the ships, the only folk who do not get a full night's sleep, and find that they start nodding off at the controls, as the cumulative effects of sleep loss build up. It is worth noting that it is the health of frail human beings who have paid the price for the astonishing improvement in productivity that is represented in modern shipping.

Who thought it such a tremendous wheeze to get rid of the radio officer, just at a time when bureaucracy was multiplying and ship-shore communications were getting out of hand? The same great financial brains who have halved the manpower available, but doubled the workload of the survivors. The human price has been more than those whose lives and careers have been ruined in accidents and poor health, as the enjoyment has been leached out of seafaring, and that should matter to us all.

Printed here with the kind permission of The MaritimeAdvocate online www.avoarchive.com

and the author, Cachalot Michael Grey MBE ***greyrjm@gmail.com***

Sea Pie Supper – 6th February 2026

Unfortunately we lost two of our distinguished guests ahead of the evening, hence twenty-one on the top table. The main hall accounted for 370 guests on thirty-eight tables. Eighty-three Cachalots attended.

Ready to go!

Terry Clark, Julian Dadgostar, John Mileusnic and the Boatsteerer were in attendance from 1415 to set up tables. With first arrivals from 1730, in the entrance, checking off names was greatly assisted by Richard James with our latest Warsash Maritime School Cadet Cachalot, Julian Dadgostar, escorting distinguished guests to the Press Lounge reception. All other guests assembled in the Mike Channon Suite for a complimentary drink and took opportunity to arrange drinks on their tables.

A photo opportunity of the VIP group was achieved by Terry.

Our Distinguished Guests

Standing, left to right

Mr Christopher D'Alcorn. MCA
Captain John Lloyd MNM, CEO N.I.
Lt.Col Tom Goodall MBE, 17 P&M Reg
Capt Bill Hargreaves, Captain Elect
Mr Matt Burrow, Deputy Master HCMM
Cdr Paul Williams, Deputy Cdr PNB
Mr Steven Masters, So'ton Harbourmaster

Seated, left to right

Mrs Kate Powell, Port Chaplain, M to S,
Clr James Baillee, Lord Mayor,
Lady Mary Fagan LG DCVO Dstj JP, Captain Nick Jeffery MNM, Mr Nigel Atkinson, Lord-Lieutenant,
Rear Adml Iain Lower CB, Principal Guest, Vice Adml Sir Alan Massey KCB CBE

The evening commenced with an excellent topical Grace delivered by the Kate Powell, Port Chaplain with the Mission to Seafarers, and all settled down to the Sea Pie Supper.

The Loyal Toast was provided by Captain Jeffery MNM while the Boatsteerer gave the toast for Absent Cachalots. The room was reminded of the marked envelope on each table and asked to put their place card, with a decent amount of money, preferably of the note variety into them for later collection. The use of a QR Code on the envelopes and table indicator through the Club SumUp account helped in swelling the income for the Prize Draw.

With the meal complete, Captain Jeffery MNM handed over to Captain Bill Hargreaves and Bill handed Nick his 'Past Captains' badge and ribbon. Following Bill's speech of welcome, a toast to the Guests was completed following which Bill introduced the Principal Guest and Speaker.

Our Guest Speaker this year was Rear Admiral Iain Lower, Deputy Master of Trinity House, accompanied by his wife Pippa. Iain provided a well delivered and interesting response, elaborating on the role of the lighthouse through the ages and with memories of a tour of some of those lighthouses managed by Trinity House.

Following a short break, and before the appearance of the ***'Ansome Cabin Boys'***, opportunity was taken to complete the Prize Draw of a large LEGO Space Rocket donated by the Southampton Shipowners Association. One of Whitaker's young ladies drew the place card which belonged to Geoffrey Renshaw, a Cachalot. Well done, Geoffrey. The generosity of those attending was confirmed by a count of £4.288.07 plus a €20 euro note! The proceeds will be divided equally between the three charities of Mission to Seafarers, Stella Maris and Sailors' Society.

The assembly was then entertained and joined in the singing of the Sea Shanties led by the '***Ansome Cabin Boys***. A-Rovin, Blow the Man Down, South Australia, Drunken Sailor and Spanish Ladies were well sung, even two extra verses, clean, for Drunken Sailor not shown on the song sheet! This year, Shep brought along Tim Walker again, a fiddle player who entertained us.

With a resounding rendition by all of Land of Hope and Glory followed by the National Anthem, time was then taken to complete networking and catching up with friends and acquaintances before heading home.

The feedback from the distinguished guests and others in the hall has been very positive and highlighting a very successful Sea Pie Supper. We look forward to carrying the success forward to Friday 5th February 2027. A date for your diaries!

Last but by no means least, I wish to thank all the distinguished guests, VIP's, corporate entities and their guests, Cachalots, Club Officers and Harpooners who were able to attend and those who were able to provide assistance by whatever means.

Compiled by Robin Plumley MBE
Boatsteerer

The Shape of things to come?

This group of young students and cadets from Warsash Maritime Academy, obviously enjoying the occasion, includes two new Cachalots.
In the middle of the back row is Claudia Johnson who is 2nd Officer on Normandie Ferries 'Islander' and currently studying for her Mate's ticket.
Second in on the right front row is Elena Noad Carretero, founder and President of the Warsash Womens' Group, She organised, at short notice, a near tablefull when ABP couldn't make their allocation.
She is our newest Cachalot member

(more pics on page 10)

Club Supper

Wednesday 13th May at the RBL
1830 for 1900

A Club Supper is arranged for the above date

Ham hock & pea terrine, piccalilli. Crisp tuille

Salmon & Spinach En Croute, grilled Asparagus, Dill cream sauce and fondant potato

Deconstructed Black Forest, Pistachio cream & raspberry compot

Our Captain will give an after dinner talk on local pilotage.

And the cost per head £38 with a max of 42, book through the office or online.

250 Club

Nov	G. Angas	T.E. Clark
Dec (£100)	K. Dagnall	I.B. Thomson
Jan	Margaret Grant	Melissa Plumley
Feb	C.R. Kelso	J.N. Mileusnic

Dates for your diary

14th March - Curry Lunch - Everest Cuisine

19th March - ABP Charity Quiz Night - City Cruise Terminal

28th March - Southampton Wardroom Drinks - King Canute

30th April - Cachalots Spring Golf Day - Lee-on-the Solent Golf Club

2nd May - Curry Lunch - Everest Cuisine

13th May - Club Supper - RBL

11th June - Shipping Festival Service - St. Michaels Church

25th July - Curry Lunch - Everest Cuisine

6th September - MN Day Service - Holyrood Church

6th September - Curry Lunch - Everest Cuisine

10th September - Cachalots Autumn Golf Day - Venue tba

23rd October - Trafalgar Night Dinner - The Grande

14th November - Curry Lunch - Everest Cuisine

9th December - Christmas Lunch - RBL

Curry Lunches

EVEREST CUISINE

Now our preferred Curry House, it suits our palates and our pockets as well as our numbers. The stairs may be daunting for some but they are in three flights so you can always rest at Base Camp or Camp I during your ascent.

And they have installed a stair lift for those with mobility problems

It's on the corner of Queensway and Briton Street (Some will remember it as POSH)

The first Curry Lunch in 2026 is booked there for

Saturday14th March

1230 for 1300

The price will be £25 per person, exclusive of gratuity.

Provisional bookings for this year are: 14th March, 2nd May, 25th July, 6th Sep, 14th Nov They are based on the Saints not playing at home on those dates but are liable to change due to Cup matches or their position in the leagues.

Nearest car park is Gloucester Square, off the High Street, and there may be on-street parking available in Queensway.

Curry Lunches are now bookable, and payable, on the website or through the office.

The cut-off date for the next edition

The Cachalot No. 115

will be on Friday 15th May '26

Annual General Meeting – the AGM in accordance with Rule 11, was held in the lower room of the RBL on Thursday 8th January at 1900 with eleven attending in person and seven by Zoom. The minutes are posted on the Club room noticeboard and on the Cachalot's website.

Officers of the Club and Committee Members for 2026

CAPTAIN	Captain W.J.M. Hargreaves
STAFF CAPTAIN	Captain Bruce Thomas
POST CAPTAIN	Captain N. Jeffery MNM
BOATSTEERER	Captain R. Plumley MBE
STOREKEEPER	Captain N. Jeffery MNM
Hon. MEMBERSHIP OFFICE	Captain T.E. Clark
Hon. EDITOR	Captain T.E. Clark
Hon. FUNCTIONS OFFICER	Temp' Plumley & Clark
Hon. BURSARY OFFICER	Captain J. Mileusnic
Hon. CHAPLAINS	Kate Powell, Rev'd F. Sahetapy, L. Phillips Stuart

HARPOONERS:

N. Becket, D. Carter MNM, T.E. Clark, J.M. Noble, M. Phipps MBE, J. Shepherd.

TRUSTEES:

T.E. Clark, B. Peck, J.C. Smart

Boatsteerer and Storekeeper are appointed by the Management Committee and retire every two years and are eligible for re-appointment.

Harpooners are elected at an AGM and retire after two years and are eligible for re-election.

Scene at the SPS

These informal pics are taken from our website without much editing other than I have cropped out a lot of ceiling. I have resisted the temptation to add captions and comment because I know that would probably land me in deep trouble.
Our unique event has always been a mixture of the formal and the informal and I suspect the increase of informality just reflects those trends in our society. What I hope they do convey is the sense of over 400 people thoroughly enjoying themselves.
Long may it continue.

New Members

Andre (Mike) Smith, on the 5th December. Mike is a retired Master Mariner who started his sea career with BP in 1977, progressing to rank of Master via P&O Ferries (North Sea) and Wightlink IOW Ferries. Previously on the Executive Committee of the Warsash Association but still a Member nowadays. Leading Volunteer/ Cox'n with the Southampton Unit of the Maritime Volunteer Service operating patrol boats around Southampton Water and the Rivers Itchen and Test. He is also a Volunteer Ranger with Eastleigh Borough Council Conservation Service maintaining local beauty spots for the benefit of wildlife and the Public.

Jim Mardle, on the 6th Dec. is the Operations Director at Southampton Cargo Handling and is our contact member for them.

Claudia Johnson, on the 6th Dec, says: I am currently studying for my Chief Mates in Southampton, when I am not on study leave I am employed as a Second Officer for Brittany Ferries Guernsey. I would love to join the Cachalots as all the members I have interacted with have encouraged me to do so and are so friendly and it seems like a wonderful group to join.

Mike Beviss, on 12th Dec. Currently employed by the International Parcel Tankers Association, whose members own or operate over 500 Parcel tankers and is their representative in the UK and attends IMO meetings on their behalf. IPTA has been an IMO-accredited NGO since 1987. He first went to Sea in 1977, and has been a Master Mariner since January 1989. He completed his apprenticeship and spent most of his 12 years of seatime with CP ships sailing on VLCCs, parcel tankers, bulk carriers, and the occasional container ship. Since coming ashore in late 1989 he has also worked with Seachem, Ceres Hellenic, Odfjell, Eastport Maritime and Chembulk shipping. Mainly in Singapore and Rotterdam. Initially as a Port Captain, then Operations Coordinator & Chartering. He came back to the UK in 2021 and has been working with IPTA since. His last position before IPTA was with Chembulk Shipping as Vice President Operations (Eastern Hemisphere) in their Singapore office. He has also worked as a Maritime Consultant for over 6 years, specialising in oil and chemical storage. He has worked in the maritime industry for over 49 years. After spending so much time working abroad, his personal contacts are spread worldwide, and the UK-based ones are limited. He has been looking for a like-minded club to join for some time now and our name came up after a chance meeting with one of our members.

Matthew Barrow, on the 13th Jan. Matthew is a solicitor working at Lester Aldridge. He says: I have had the privilege of working at Lester Aldridge for 25 years, having trained and qualified at the firm before joining our real estate team as a solicitor. Over the years, I have developed extensive experience in property matters, with a particular focus on the marine and port sectors. A significant proportion of the work undertaken by both myself and the team involves advising ports and marinas, many of which are located along the South Coast. This has allowed me to build strong relationships within the maritime industry and gain a deep understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by businesses operating in this sector. In addition to my real estate work, I collaborate closely with LA Marine, our specialist maritime practice, to deliver comprehensive legal services to clients across the industry. This integrated approach ensures that we can support the diverse needs of maritime businesses, from property transactions to regulatory compliance. Lester Aldridge has a long-standing tradition of supporting the Cachalots, and I am keen to continue that commitment through active membership. We regard the Cachalots as an integral part of the maritime community that we serve, particularly from our Southampton office. Through my childrens' education, I have come to appreciate Southampton's rich maritime heritage, and I am eager to deepen my knowledge and engagement with this history through the Cachalots.

Linda Jaques, also on the 13th Jan. Head of the shipping and logistics team at Lester Aldridge. LA Marine. She says:

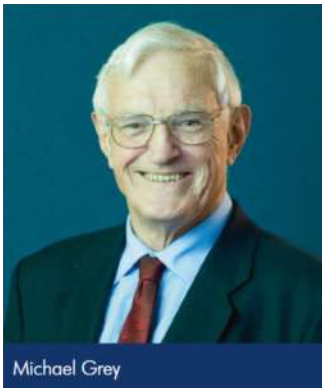
I have been a lawyer for the past 25 years dealing with shipping and logistics disputes for clients around the world. I am recognised in the International directories Legal 500 and Chambers as an expert in my chosen fields. I am one of the few lawyers practising on the south coast with solely specialises in those two areas. I am a member of the International Maritime Law Institute at Southampton University and regularly give lectures and presentations to their students and visitors. I am keen to ensure that Southampton and the surrounding areas maintains, embraces and encourages those involved in the maritime arena as well as the next generation.

Edmund (Ned) Tutton on the 18th Jan. I am Captain Ned Tutton, a UK Master Mariner Unlimited and currently serving as Master with Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours. Since October 2022 I have been in command of Scenic Eclipse and Emerald Azzurra, operating ultra-luxury expedition and coastal cruise vessels in remote, high-profile and operationally demanding environments. These roles combine traditional ship command with expedition operations, dynamic positioning, Zodiac and helicopter activities, and the delivery of a premium guest experience. Before joining Scenic, I served as Master with Windstar Cruises, commanding Wind Spirit, Wind Star, Wind Surf and Star Legend. During this time I led inaugural seasons in Asia and Alaska, oversaw dry dockings and high-risk transits including the Suez Canal, and delivered successful US Coast Guard and US Public Health inspections. I was also responsible for implementing Windstar's Signature Expedition programme. Earlier in my career I was Senior Master with Red Funnel Ferries, where I stood by the new-build Ro-Ro passenger ferry Red Kestrel through construction, sea trials and entry into service, and also served as Master across the wider Red Funnel car ferry fleet. I developed the vessel's Safety Management System and training programmes and was closely involved in port operations and integration into service. I also served as Master with the Jubilee Sailing Trust, commanding the square-rigged sail training ships Lord Nelson and Tenacious, and previously as Captain of the sail training ship Pelican of London. My background also includes service on commercial cargo vessels including AI Avocet, Bert Prior and Goole Star, giving me practical experience of cargo work and port operations with pilots, agents and harbour authorities. Alongside this I regularly skipper heritage steam vessels including Steam Tug Challenge and VIC 32, maintaining a strong connection with traditional seamanship and historic craft. I wish to join the Cachalots to be part of Southampton's professional Master Mariner community, to maintain strong links with the port, and to contribute to the fellowship, professional standards and maritime heritage that the club represents.

Clifford Morris, on the 29th Jan. is also a solicitor, working with law firm Paris Smith LLP. He says: I am a former Radio Officer with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, who I worked for immediately following the Falklands conflict, I then requalified to become a solicitor and Notary Public where I undertake work for several marine and shipping companies, including commercial diving, marina's and where necessary government agencies.

Elena Noad Carretero, on 9th Feb. I'm an aspiring Deck Officer and a recent graduate of Warsash Maritime School, currently working towards completing my OOW. I've spent time at sea on cruise ships, which has given me a real insight into life onboard and what a career in the industry actually looks like. I'm passionate about staying in maritime and building a long term career at sea. Alongside my training, I'm also the founder and President of the Warsash Women's Group (WWG), where I help run events and create a supportive space for female cadets and young seafarers. Through this, I've become really interested in the importance of maritime communities and connections. I'd like to join the Cachalots because I've spoken to some members at recent events and really liked the sense of community and support within the group. It feels like a welcoming, professional network where I could learn from experienced mariners, make valuable connections, and feel more connected to the wider maritime tradition.

The nuclear alternative



The Maritime *Advocate* online Issue 900 January 30th 2026

By *Michael Grey MBE*

A nuclear reactor, I can recall my father, who was a naval engineer, explaining, was just "an advanced form of kettle" and nothing to be too excited about. I can remember him shaking his head at the decisions to fit warships with gas turbine propulsion, about the same time as I was going to sea on motor merchant ships, which could go all the way to the Antipodes without refuelling.

Today we would describe it as the "range anxiety" that deters so many from electric cars.
The first efforts to get nuclear merchant ships up and running never really caught on, and only the Russian icebreaker fleet; operated by the state and taking little account of cost and public opinion, have stood the test of time. But the topic eventually returns, usually driven by fuel price, but more recently by the demands for clean alternatives to hydrocarbons and "net zero." The recent arrival of the UK Maritime Nuclear Consortium is what might be thought of as the latest chapter in this long and fascinating debate.

Under the aegis of Lloyd's Register alongside experienced players, it is hoped that a regulatory pathway to safe and acceptable nuclear propulsion might be developed and that the UK will be in a position to grasp this potential. It was during one of the earlier periods, when soaring fuel prices raised the topic of nuclear power alternatives that I listened to a well-argued exposition by a LR senior surveyor at a presentation in London. It was a long time ago, but I recall him outlining the barriers which, he said would have to be overcome if a commercial nuclear power at sea was ever to progress. There were few technical obstacles, but the development and capital costs, the practicability (availability of expert staff etc) and the need to overcome the concerns of the public as regards safety remained formidable. Between then and now, has anything really changed? It might reasonably be argued that the technology has greatly advanced and it has been proved that small nuclear reactors are a very practical proposition and can be further miniaturised for merchant ship propulsion.

There is ground-breaking research going on in several parts of the world along these lines, for barge-mounted power plants, desalination, and the like. An Australian designer has proposed an interesting concept employing a nuclear-powered ship to work commercially around the islands of the Pacific and when in port charging up the island's battery banks, saving them a fortune in imported fuel. But despite the passage of years, the barriers still remain. Memories of Chernobyl and Fukashima have never entirely gone away and the questions of nuclear decommissioning remain alive, albeit somewhat shrugged off by the experts. In Devonport and Rosyth, the reactors aboard most of the Navy's retired submarines lurk in their darkened hulls, waiting for the Treasury to grudgingly eke out the next tranche of funds to take them to bits, one by one in a process they never ever seem to be catching up on. And that is a government that drags its feet in this fashion – could we ever be certain that the commercial world, in the shape of even the biggest shipping company, could be persuaded to take on such a burden? So many unknowns. Just think of the way that the oil companies, which so eagerly promised the earth when they wanted to plant their rigs in offshore waters, tried to wriggle out of their obligations to restore the seabed when the oilfields had been sucked dry, suggesting cheaper and more expedient alternatives.

Not an attractive analogy, perhaps. The concept of nuclear powered, ships operating at speeds no longer thought acceptable in our planet-saving era, seems hugely attractive to those of us that mourn the death of speed at sea. But even if you could find a major operator – even a consortium – willing to shoulder the cradle-to-grave responsibilities, and convince some progressive ports in some willing countries to admit these greyhounds, there are still so many "buts." They may be fuelled up for a lifetime, but can the ships, let alone the terminal ports, be insured at an affordable cost? Where is the specialist manpower going to come from, when nuclear navies are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain properly qualified and experienced engineering officers? And in terms of personnel, there are no short cuts to be had with such power plants. You would not be able to persuade even the most pliant administration to grant a dispensation, when the holder of a Second Engineer (Nuclear) certificate failed to sign on.

Printed here with the kind permission of The MaritimeAdvocate online www.avoarchive.com

and the author, Cachalot Michael Grey MBE ***greyrjm@gmail.com***

Gone Aloft

Captain Charles Reginald Kelso MBE MNM FNI

President of the Southampton Master Mariners' Club

Reg joined the Club in 1957 after gaining his Master's ticket in Liverpool in 1956. He was then Chief Officer of the Rochester Castle and he continued his membership throughout his sea going career.
In 1967 he took up a 3 year appointment as Asst. Marine Supt. for Union Castle in Southampton – and came to live in Bursledon - and that allowed him to attend the Club on a pretty regular basis.
He came ashore in 1976 to take up his appointment as Chief Marine Superintendent of the British & Commonwealth Shipping Company Limited where his duties were many and varied but included shipbuilding supervisory and recruitment and in 1987/88 he spent long periods in Korea and Chittagong.

Reg at his Investiture of the MBE at Buckingham Palace in January 1996, the medal being presented by the Late Queen Elizabeth.

During his twelve years in that role he had a notice hanging on his office wall which read:

MY JOB
It's not my place to run the ship, the horn I cannot blow
It's not my place to say how far the ship's allowed to go
It's not my place to chart the course, nor even toll the bell
But let the damn thing start to sink
AND SEE WHO CATCHES HELL !

He retired in July 1988 but continued with nautical activities not only with the Club but with the Solent Branch of the Nautical Institute, of which he was a Fellow, as Vice President of the Sailors' Society and as a Committee Member of the Southampton Sea Cadets.
He shared ownership of various sailing yachts *Firecracker*, *Thetis Dolphin* and *Charlie Brown*, with fellow Cachalots Ian Thomson and Gerry Cartwright and they would sail the local waters accompanied by their wives.

Reg was appointed Staff Captain of the Club in 1991, Captain in '92 and became both Boatsteerer and Storekeeper in 1994.

In January 1996 he was appointed MBE in recognition of his services to the shipping industry.

Also in 1996 he was relieved of the Storekeeper role by Douglas Gates and carried on as Boatsteerer until 2000.

In November 2007 he was installed as an Honorary Life Member of the Club by Captain Peter Marriott at the Harpooners' Dinner at the Tudor Merchants Hall.

On the 13th November 2017, at a ceremony at Trinity House, he was awarded the Merchant Navy Medal by the Princess Royal for services to the shipping industry and the Sea Cadets.

At the Sea Pie Supper on 2nd February 2018 the Club was approaching its 90th anniversary (15th February) and so was Reg, who was just 6 days older. The opportunity was taken to bestow yet another honour on him, that of Honorary Club President. There has never been a President of the Club before and no provision in the Rules for one. Not a taxing appointment, more a sinecure, but we were determined to show our appreciation to the man who had been a mainstay of the Club for so many years, supported by his 'Guiding Light', June.
On his birthday that year the Club room was packed for a celebration complete with birthday cake and a rather bemused Reg received a special card with the following words:

From Cachalot to Captain, he then became, A Boatsteerer, to great acclaim,

With Nautical Fellowship of some renown, Honours followed, from Club and Crown,

An MN Medal his latest success, Awarded by the Royal Princess,

Now at 90, he doth consent, To be our Honoured President.

A very special man, one we are all privileged to have known.

Reg suffered a stroke in November 2021 and although the initial prognosis was good and he responded well to therapy, things got progressively difficult and he died at home on the 20th December last, aged 97.

The tribute on the previous page is that which I was privileged to deliver, on behalf of the Club, at his funeral on the 29th January where there was standing room only and with over 50 Cachalot members attending.

Other tributes were made, this one from Michael Morley MNM, a Cachalot and representing the Union-Castle Pursers' Association, He started with gentle parody of Masefield's Sea Fever, from a passenger's perspective:

I must go down to the seas again, where the billows romp and reel,
so all I ask is a large ship that rides on an even keel,
and a mild breeze and a broad deck with a slight list to leeward,
and a clean chair in a snug nook and a nice, kind steward.

I must go down to the seas again, the sport of wind and tide,
as the grey wave and the green wave play leapfrog over the side;
And all I ask is a glassy calm with a bone-dry scupper,
a good book and a warm rug and a light, plain supper.

I must go down to the seas again, though there I'm a total loss,
and can't say which is worst: the pitch, the plunge, the roll, the toss;
but all I ask is a safe retreat in a bar well-tended,
and a soft berth and a smooth course till the long trip's ended.

It's over 60 years since I had the privilege of sailing with Reg, shortly before his days in command, but even then, he carried his authority with a light touch and invariably with great humour. Whatever your rank or rating, Reg always regarded you as an important member of the ship's company to be treated with respect.
60 years on, he remained the same Reg with his endless fund of maritime tales - of storms, passengers at his table, stowaways, tigers on the loose and even a cheetah overboard that was grateful to be rescued, all told in that rich Northern Irish brogue and only the merest hint of embellishment to suit the occasion.
My most recent chats with Reg have invariably had the strong theme running through them of our good fortune in working for a company in which we, together with our shipmates felt that we were part of a large family and Reg of course epitomised that family bond in both his service and his support for his shipmates and friends.
In retirement, Reg and June together were instrumental in helping to maintain that family bond with their annual reunions for both Shore and Sea Staff and last October, almost half a century after the final sailing of our lavender hulled Mail ships, we enjoyed the company of almost 200 former colleagues who had travelled from all corners of the globe to "Swing the Lamp" and recall the glory days of our service.
Reg was not able to join us on that occasion and was sadly missed, but I know that all of those present would agree how lucky we have been, particularly to have enjoyed the privilege of sharing his friendship, together with his fund of tales and his sense of humour.

Thank you, Reg.

And another tribute, this time from Captain Charles Talbut AFNI

1954... I was a nine-year-old farm boy from Transvaal, South Africa. I had never seen a ship or the sea.
I embarked in 'Bloemfontein Castle' at Durban with my parents bound for the UK. That night I was nervous, alone in my cabin and hearing the creaking and groaning. I assumed the worst and wrote a note expressing my fears to the captain and gave it to the steward.
In the early hours of the morning, I awoke to find the cabin flooded and passengers taken to lounges. In charge was third officer Reg Kelso and he had my note and explained to me the noises etc.
A few days later Reg Kelso took me for tea with Captain Ferguson. For the rest of the voyage, he included me in all activities and drills etc, including getting a steering certificate.
By the end of the voyage I was hooked, and it was a career at sea for me.
My parents contacted Reg and it was he who recommended that I attend HMS Worcester for pre - sea training.
He made all the arrangements and four years later, I travelled with him as commanding officer in Kenilworth Castle (Captain Black) to the UK.
Several months later, he delivered me to the ship on the Thames. Some years later I was awarded the Queens Gold Medal, and it was Reg that I phoned with my one permitted phone call.
I went to sea with Reg's words... 'love and respect the sea. Love and respect your ships and love and respect your fellow seafarers.'
My entire career has been based on that creed and ten years after that, Reg was the best man at my wedding
I may never have gone to sea without Reggie's help and advice and in my study I have a large photograph of Bloemfontein Castle given to me by Reg on that fateful first voyage and inscribed by him in his usual distinctive turquoise coloured ink.

Thanks Reg for my career and I am sure that there are many others

Another Royal presentation

This time on the 13th November 2017 when HRH The Princess Royal presented Reg with the Merchant Navy Medal for services to the shipping industry and the Sea Cadets.
HRH, Master of Trinity House, is one of just nine current Stowaway Members of the Club and in this picture can be seen two others, Captain Sir Ian McNaught KCVO MNM FNI, who was at that time Deputy Master of TH, and Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey KCB CBE, then head of the MCA.

Reg was born on 9th February 1928 in Londonderry, as the second son of William and Ruby Kelso. By the time Reg joined HMS Conway as a sixteen year old in 1944 he was well versed in things nautical, having been instrumental, at the age of just 13, in establishing a local Sea Cadets unit in 1941. In '43 he was one of four Sea Cadets from Northern Ireland selected to become Unit Physical and Recreational Training Instructors (P&RTI) and to achieve this accolade they were required to travel to Portsmouth Royal Naval Base (HMS Excellent) for the requisite training. They were based on HMS Foudroyant, a recently re-commissioned training ship in Portsmouth Harbour, (now fully restored as HMS Trincomalee in Hartlepool) and survived one of the heaviest bombing raids of the war. All this is told in 'Days of Yore', parts 1 & 2 which appeared in *Cachalots* 71 & 72 in 2019.

During his final term in 'Conway' Reg applied to join Union Castle Line and, on acceptance, immediately left Conway to take up his new job. So, on April 3rd, 1946, at precisely 0850 hours, he climbed the steep gangway of the ship 'Good Hope Castle' which was berthed at No 2 Ballasting Crane, Queens Dock in Glasgow. As he stepped aboard a young man in a white jacket appeared from a doorway and said "Good morning, Sir, have you had breakfast?" Nobody had ever called Reg "Sir" before and very few (other than his mother) had enquired about his breakfast. He was mightily impressed and aware of a feeling of welcome and friendliness - a feeling that was to remain with him for the next 42 happy years.

Reg met and fell in love with Patricia in 1961, the happy couple were married and a year later their son Paul arrived. Sadly, Patricia was struck by Parkinson's Disease which led to further medical complications and following a long illness she passed away if 1995. Reg threw himself into his work and during his spells ashore, he made the professional acquaintance of June who was a public relations officer within the same company. There was a connection, romance blossomed and Reg and June were married on 28th June 1995, going on to enjoy a very happy 35 years of marriage.

Most, if not all of Reg's career has been covered in these pages previously. See *Cachalots* 83 & 84 for parts 1 & 2 of "Reg Kelso and the Union-Castle Line" from Simon Daniels book "The Wake of the Cachalots".

And it is not only his career that has helped fill these pages. Reg has been the source of a prodigious amount of articles, all well researched and well written, on a multitude of subjects, during the twenty-four year history of this newsletter. I knew that I could rely on him to fill a few blank pages. That's just one of the things he was - reliable.

He was a good man who lived a good life and made other people happy.

You left quietly without a fuss
You always had a smile to share
A laugh, a joke
A time to care

A wonderful nature
Warm and true
These are the memories
I have of you

A beautiful life
Came to an end
You died as you lived
Everyone's friend

You gave years of happiness
Then sorrow came with tears
You left me lovely memories
I will treasure through the years

Dorothy Frances Gurney

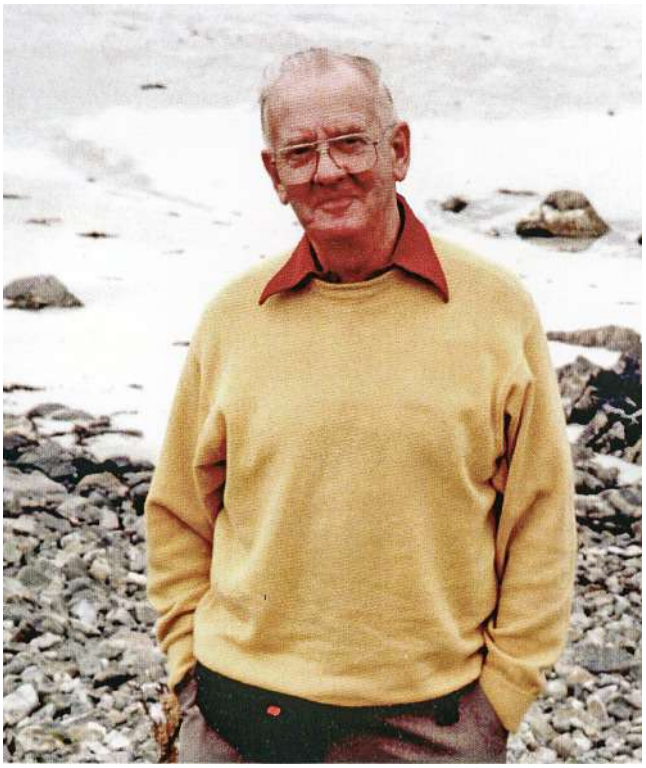
No more a watch to stand, old sailor,
For, you are drifting on an ebbing tide.
Eight bells have rung and the Dog Watch is done,
A new berth awaits you on the other side.

Your ship is anchored in God's harbour,
And though his sailors are of equal rank,
There will be shipmates on the deck to greet you
And pipe as you ascend the plank.

Her boilers with full head of steam,
Cargo stowed and galley stored,
Just waiting to get underway
When the Last Hand comes aboard.

Look sharp, Reg! That hand is you, old sailor
And you'll be sailing out on Heavenly seas.
So may the wind be ever at your back,
Fair weather and God speed.

May you rest in peace,



The World Ship Society WORLD SHIPS SOCIETY DORSET BRANCH

Zoom Meeting

14th March 2026 ~ A Look Back at Shipping on the Fal
~ with Krispen Atkinson ~
Following a great talk on Falmouth in 2025, Krispen explores laid-up tonnage on the river ...

For over a century, the stretch of water between Truro and Falmouth has served as a home for laid-up ships, with vessels from renowned but now-defunct shipping companies - such as Blue Funnel, Blue Star Line, Cunard (and its subsidiaries), and Shaw Savill - occupying berths near the King Harry Ferry. During this time, notable ships have graced the river, including the first purpose-built LNG carriers, the school ships Uganda and Nevasa, and Cunard's sister ships Franconia and Carmania. Krispen has shared his talk on Falmouth … now learn what lies beyond …

Krispen Atkinson is a maritime consultant, director of The World Ship Society and regular contributor to Ship's Monthly & Marine News with a passion for modern merchant shipping. As author of an annual "Maritime Review" series, Krispen is a WSS speaker in demand.

Their Secretary, Steve Pink, says:

There is no need to request an invitation to our events … everyone on our circulation list will be sent a Zoom Invitation Link about a week beforehand.
for more information, visit their website shipsdorset.org

The CACHALOTS

The Southampton Master Mariners' Club
1st Floor, Southampton Royal British Legion Club, Eastgate Street
SOUTHAMPTON, SO14 3HB
Tel: 023 8022 6155

Web site: www.cachalots.org.uk
E-mail: office@cachalots.org.uk
captain@cachalots.org.uk
staffcaptain@cachalots.org.uk
boatsteerer@cachalots.org.uk
storekeeper@cachalots.org.uk
postcaptain@cachalots.org.uk
functions@cachalots.org.uk
membership@cachalots.org.uk
editor@cachalots.org.uk

The Club room is currently open on just one day of the week, Friday, 1130 - 1500. There is no catering on site but there are many sandwich outlets within easy walking distance.
Suggestions for events, for improvements, offers of help, articles and anecdotes for inclusion in this newsletter will all be received with pleasure. We are even prepared to receive complaints if they are constructive.