



SHIPMATES

Reardon Smith Seafarer's Newsletter

Issue No.3 June 1997.

Well, we made it to the third edition, having had a nice mention in the "LLOYDS LIST" in "PEOPLE AND PLACES" which read:- Quote:

"We feel privileged to have received a copy of Shipmates, a newsletter produced for the former sea staff of Reardon Smith's of Cardiff-which departed from the list of British Owners in somewhat spectacular circumstances some years ago. Old loyalties die hard and certainly friendships last well beyond the demise of shipping companies. The first edition of the newsletter produced no fewer than 100 letters to the editor, which makes the editor of this newspaper green with envy. a delightful notion in the current edition has been to republish the seniority lists of master, chief engineers and chief officers from 50 years ago, which is almost a social commentary in its own right. The list reveals that the senior master in 1947 was one, Captain B.D. Thomas, who was 55 years old and had joined the company in 1915, being promoted to command four years later. The youngest master was Captain J.D.O. Lloyd, who was 33 and had been in command for two years. Of the 32 masters named on the 1947 seniority list, most had been with the company for 25 years or more. The senior chief engineer had been with the company since 1909 and had been in charge of the engine rooms since 1912. Unquote:

It is a sad day, to note that, one of the officers in those seniority lists of 50 years ago, recently crossed the bar, having having been with the company all his seagoing career.

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"PRINCE RUPERT CITY" - XMAS 1971 - WERE YOU THERE ?
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Well someone was obviously there, as we have just received the crew list for that xmas which shows that all named below spent Xmas 1971 onboard the vessel in the Sembawang Drydock, Singapore with Alec Osborne as Superintendent. It was Alec who gave us the menu signed by all officers and Chris Anderson who sent us the crew list:-

Master	: Capt. Brian Boyer	Ch. Engineer	: Mike Ridley
Ch. Officer	: Mike Jones	2nd. Engineer	: Rod Binns
2nd. Officer	: Paul Haines	3rd. Engineer	: Pat Silcoxs
3rd. Officer	: Brian Richardson	4th. Engineer	: Colin Hughes
Rad. Officer	: Paul Bidmead	Jun. Engineer	: Bob Pringle
Deck Cadet	: "Swansea" Morgan	Jun. Engineer	: Chris Anderson
Deck Cadet	: John Hammond	Jun. Engineer	: Andy Wheelks
Ch. Steward	: Keith Llewellyn	Elect. Engr.	: Kenny Hampton

Mrs Judith Ridley

Mrs Dorothy Binns

Mrs Theresa Hampton

Mr Alec Osborne

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The Ultimate in "No Frills" Flying
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Ian Crawford flew last year from Novorossiysk to Moscow and advised that it was a flight to remember, the seat in front of him was occupied by a large wolfhound, which growled everytime the plane banked.

The two stewardess's (from the weight lifting team ?) served large chunks of bread and ham with 'COKE' from the mini-hostess trolley, which of course, had to be bought. the definition of hand baggage had been changed to whatever you could carry onboard.

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"Breathes there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself has said :- I'll have ten minutes more in bed "

m.s.BRADFORD CITY (No:3)

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Captain W.J.Cross (Bill Cross as he was affectionately known to all in R.S.L.)was in a boat of survivors from the crew of the "Bradford City",which was sunk by the German Submarine 'U-68'in the South East Atlantic Ocean in November 1941.

Bill Cross kept a diary of the events,which is still in existence today,in the possession of his widow,Mrs Alice Cross of Nelson,Lancashire.

The diary lists the crew members in Bill Cross' Lifeboat :-

Mr Loutitt	Chief Mate,In Charge
Name not listed	Third Mate
J.Betley	Radio Officer
J.Nash	Second Engineer
Name not listed	Fourth Engineer
T.Halliday	Electrician
Name not listed	Cabin Boy
J.Scott	Apprentice
W.Cross	Apprentice
'Paddy'Flynn	Apprentice
P.O'Neil	Ordinary Seaman
Name not listed	Steward
Name not listed	Donkeyman

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Lord Moran,in the House of Lords Debate on the European Communities(Amendment)Bill 31st January,1997,observed a small card in a bookshop in Wales saying :-

"There are 56 words in the Lord's Prayer,
297 in the Ten Commandments,
300 in the American Declaration of Independence and
29,911 in the EEC directive on the export of eggs"

M.V. "BRADFORD CITY"

4,953 Gross Tons

Built 1936 by Furness Shipbuilding Ltd.

Saturday 1st November 1941

Torpedoed at 0530 hrs. in position Latitude 22° 59'S., Longitude 9° 49'E., in the South Atlantic Ocean, about 350 nautical miles west of Walvis Bay. The torpedo struck amidships, on the port side, beneath the bridge. Apprentice William Cross, (later Captain Bill Cross), was in the lifeboat launched on the port side. The boat, once in the water, faced great difficulty getting away from the ship's side, owing to a strong swell running on the port (weather) side, and the lifeboat was being sucked into the large hole in the ship's shell plating, made by the exploding torpedo.

A boat painter, (line), was thrown up onto the deck, where the Master, Captain Paul, was supervising the launching of the starboard lifeboat. Captain Paul led the line forward along the well deck and made it fast on the fo'c'sle head.

The boat crew hauled the boat forward until they were clear of the damaged hull. They made away at last, shipping a lot of seawater. They had to throw 2 cases of oranges overboard, as the lifeboat was so low in the water.

The "Bradford City" was now on fire and sinking by the head. The port lifeboat, commanded by Chief Officer, Mr. Loutitt, joined the starboard lifeboat commanded by Captain Paul which had remained alongside the ship, in better sea conditions under the lee of the ship's side, on the starboard side.

Finally, the "Bradford City" sank, going down with her whistle blowing, in about 2600 fathoms depth of water, 25 minutes after being torpedoed.

A submarine was then seen surfacing about 2 nautical miles distant. It closed the two lifeboats and the survivors could see the "Ace of Clubs" painted on the conning tower. The submarine was U-68.

The Germans manning the conning tower asked a number of questions of the survivors including a demand that they identify the captain. No acknowledgement was given by the two boats and Captain Paul was not identified to the U-boat.

The narrative continues in Apprentice Cross' own words.

" The submarine moved off and then submerged. Our position about 350 n.miles from the S.W. African coast, sails set, course easterly. Stores onboard: 3 casks of water, corned beef, biscuits and milk. Both boats agree to keep together and steer for the African coast. Heavy weather blows up, and shipping water as night falls. We are very sick and cold. Night very bad, shipping much water, all soaked to the skin. Lost sight of other boat during night and never saw it again.

Sunday 2nd November 1941 - 2nd Day Very rough sea conditions. Decided to heave to and remained so all day, hove to on our sea anchor, wind from south west. Rations; 2 biscuits, half a dipper of water per man, twice a day.

Monday, 3rd November 1941 - 3rd Day Under way again. No sign of other boat or land. Everybody cheerful, except boatswain who very ill and can hardly move. Sores breaking out on his legs from sea water.

Me and Paddy Neil, apprentice, on 12~4 watch. No sleep for anyone, too uncomfortable. Continuous balling and keeping lookout. Boat taking spray on board.

Tuesday, 4th November 1941 - 4th Day Underway and proceeding. Holding course. Boatswain very bad, calling out for water all the time. We can do no more for him - we have no more medical supplies. Fair conditions, continuous balling. Everybody wet from spray. Tried to catch seabird, & finally accomplished it. Later, sun warm. We take watches at balling, and also Mate Loutitt, 3rd Mate and Paddy Flynn at steering. Mate and 3rd Mate and self caulked up leakages today. Still a lot of water in boat, wind still blowing from south west, our course east north east, making much leeway. Rations now 2 biscuits each per day with half dipper of water twice a day.

Wednesday, 5th November 1941 - 5th Day We sighted land at dawn this morning. Paddy Flynn saw it first, still anything up to 20 nautical miles away. Becalmed this morning - taking turns at rowing - tried to light some paper in a tin to make a smoke signal - no success. Lots of seals around. Boston still ill. Closed land in the afternoon. About 1600 hours, we were near enough to see the bareness of the beach. We were all agreed to attempt a landing notwithstanding; made three attempts at landing, all unsuccessful due to many submerged rocks and heavy surf. Hove to for the night, very loud surf, weather not too bad. Cold during night.

Thursday, 6th November 1941 - 6th Day Lit flares during night. Nothing or no one about. Made an attempt to land at first light at dawn. Unsuccessful due very rocky coast line. After breakfast, saw short piece of beach, sand, about 100 yards wide clear of rocks. Boat steered for it Mate manoeuvred the boat nicely through heavy surf breakers, eased in stern first - as soon as we were through the breakers, I jumped overside first to steady bow, but was thrown over by surf and tossed up on beach and cut about on sharp stones. Other crew members brought line ashore and we pulled her up on the beach as far as possible, without a drop of water getting into her. We quickly stripped the boat of all gear and built a camp with stores and gear from the boat. We constructed a water condenser out of old cans, as our water supplies were running low. The electrician and Joe Belle, Radio Officer volunteered to walk to Walvis Bay, about 200 miles south, to bring help. In the afternoon about 1600hrs, an aeroplane came over, but probably mistook us for a fishing party. The two men cancelled their walk. In the hope of other planes coming over, we lit a big fire, watches were kept. I was on 12 ~ 4. Very cold - made tea.

Friday, 7th November 1941 - 7th Day We wrote S.O.S. in the sand in large letters (6ft high). Very windy on beach, many seals on rocks, but no other living thing. At about 1000 hrs, South African Air Force plane dropped emergency rations and a note saying "be back later". Chocolate bars and cigarettes in the ration. Our water condenser is turning out about a bucket of water a day. The dry tea in the rations came in very handy for our tea. The plane returned dropping plenty of stores from low altitude, including fresh water. Dropped message, gave us our position and asked if we knew whereabouts of the Captain's boat. Message ended "Love and kisses, S.A.A.F".

Saturday, 8th November 1941 - 8th Day During nights two South African Navy minesweepers arrived off the beach. They saw our beacon and anchored off. Two small boats from the minesweepers attempted to come ashore, but the surf was too heavy. They sent a floating line ashore from a raft in an effort to salvage lifeboat but unsuccessful, as the line broke and they gave up the attempt. Later four soldiers arrived, having walked seven miles, the nearest they could bring their lorries. Made a final meal, then packed up all our clothes and gear. One party led by 3rd Mate and 4th Engineer set out early in the day to reach lorries. We rigged up a stretcher out of sail and oars for the Boston.

We set out at 2.00pm for the lorries, carrying the bosun, luggage and stores etc. in turns. Heavy going over soft sand. We carried him 7 miles and then waited for the small lorries to return for us.

We set out at dusk in a small lorry, with about half of our second party with the bosun. The truck took us 40 miles to a dried up river bed. There, we got out of the lorries and walked a further 4 miles carrying bosun to an ambulance and then 2 more miles in the dark to the camp where the heavy lorry was waiting. There was hot coffee waiting for us. We slept out on the desert.

Sunday, 9th November 1941 - 9th Day We got up early to make an early start. First, dig out lorry, stuck in sand. All together now in one big lorry. Bosun gone in ambulance. Stopped at Cape Cross. One man living here, sealing. Went down to Seal station, saw thousands of seals on rocks. A further 200 miles to Swakopmund. Had a good meal, then onto Walvis Bay that night, where we slept. Next, day by lorry over 200 miles to Luderitz, where a train took us to Cape Town."

Captain Cross (Bill Cross)'s narrative/diary ended here.

Bill Cross' diary is accompanied by 13 photographs which were taken by one of the South African soldiers in the rescue party, and given to him after the party arrived at Cape Town.

From Captain Cross' narrative, it is estimated his lifeboat landed on the Skeleton Coast about 20 miles south of Torra Bay in position Latitude 20° 20' south, Longitude 12° 54' East.

The "Bradford City" was torpedoed and sank in Latitude 22° 59'3", Longitude 9° 49' E., so the boat with Bill Cross in it sailed about 310 nautical miles, making good a north easterly course. The prevailing north going Benguela current and south west winds will have driven the boat well north of its intended easterly track.

When the survivors were picked up by the South African Army, the dried up river bed was probably the Ugab River. On their journey south, they stopped at Cape Cross of which Bill always made a joke, that the Cape was named after him.

The bosun survived and the other lifeboat with Captain Paul, the "Bradford City"'s Master and 23 other officers and crew also made a safe landing on the Skeleton Coast, the lonely coast bordering the arid Namib desert, in what was South West Africa , but is now known as Namibia.

With Memories of Josie Taylor, the late wife of Len Taylor, in our minds, we thought it only fitting that all the sea staff that came in touch with "JOSIE" would associate themselves with the poem composed by her Grandson Stephen for her funeral:-

JOSIE - MUM - NANNY

Whenever we think of someone special, someone who really cares,
Whenever we think of joy and happiness, it's your name that's
always there.

The light that shines when you're around always is so bright,
The love you give, the comfort you bring, makes us feel so right.

Never a day goes by, without a kind thought, or word, or deed,
You never take, you always give, in everyone's hour of need.

No matter how hard a day we've had, we've always got you near,
As you walk through the door, we all light up and there's nothing
left to fear.

If we had to sum up the way we feel, words would never do,
Except to say, that best of all, it's the time we spend with you.

So throughout our lives, whenever there's a time that we feel
down,
We'll think of you, your smile and laugh, and know that you're
around.

You are, now and forever, touched in all our hearts.

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"Josefa"
built 1971 as the "TRAJAN", renamed "JOSEFA" 1976, thence "SEA
OSPREY" in 1982, "PHAETHON" in 1985, "QUEEN LUCIA" in 1987, thence
to "TONG HE" in 1987 (Owners: Shanghai Jin Jiang Shipping Corp.
Ltd - China) and sold to Indian Shipbreakers where arrived in
Calcutta 17th, february, 1997

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Dirty days have September, April, June and November,
From January up to May, the rain it raineth every day,
All the rest have thirty one, without a blessed gleam of sun,
And if any of them had two and thirty, They'd be just as wet
and twice as dirty.

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR DIESEL MAINTENANCE

1. Curse not thy engine when it turneth not, curse rather thine own stupidity.
2. Hesitate not when thy engine knocketh in "BASSO PROFUNDO"..
... Stop it !!
One man may examine and restart the infernal machine, but it takes many men and many dollars to repair it.
3. No man knoweth all about diesels, he who knoweth most, exceedeth least and is confident in his knowledge.
4. Be thou not loose in thy jaw hinges about things of which thou knowest not a lot, rather enter into council with thine elders and colleagues and findeth out the truth.
5. God maketh the earth to rotate endlessly, without bearings or oil, not so thy diesel !!
Be thou ever watchful or thy carelessness will be thy undoing.
6. Tend thy engine with care that its days may be many. Unlike man, a diesel sweateth not to keep cool. Keep it well watered and its coolers clean.
7. Keep thy diesel fed upon good food, allow it not to partake of uncleansed matter. Failure to do this resulteth in eternal damnation and plenty overtime.
8. The smoke which issueth from the innards of thy machine, speaketh in a tongue known only to the wise. Treat thy diesel exhaust as thine own. A foul exhaust indicateth an internal disorder.
9. Remember when thou sitteth in the dark, of thine other diesels. Replace not thy senses by those of a device, no button or device worketh for ever.
10. Treat ye thy masters property with respect as ye would thine own, casteth not out parts indiscriminately and thou will be held in high esteem. Thy master will be profitable and thy days in his employ could be many ! Amen !

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Coals to Newcastle ?

The editor received a fax from Mike Slayman advising that his next business was a full cargo of Pulp Logs from Chile to Tofte, Norway - Can you imagine, trees to Norway !

m.v. "CARDIFF CITY" (No.1)

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I expect some of you can remember in the late 1950's, early 1960's, there was a revolution in the Marine Engine Building World. There was a demand for more powerful marine engines for the larger ships being manufactured.

The marine engineers had to reduce the weight of their engines and make them produce more power because the heavier engines were shutting out cargo causing loss of earnings.

m.v. "CARDIFF CITY" was one of the first ships to be fitted with the new range of engines being built by Wm. Doxford, the "P" type which was a four cylinder opposed piston 670m.m. cylinder bore engine with exhaust gas turbochargers. The engine weight was 225 tons and it was supposed to produce 4,900 B.H.P. at 120 rpm.

This engine would produce the same power as the five cylinder "LB" engine which were fitted in the earlier R.S.L. ships. A big weight saving with one cylinder less and no scavenge pumps, and the cylinder bore was 670m.m. against 700m.m. bore, again reducing the weight in casings etc..

The engine was fitted with two Brown Boveri exhaust gas turbochargers, the first to be used in the R.S.L. Fleet. The cylinder was in three pieces, Upper liner, Combustion belt and Lower liner. The first set of liners had their bores chrome plated. The lower pistons were oil cooled whereas on the "LB" engines they were water cooled.

The Doxford "P" engine was designed by Peter Jackson, M.Sc., M.I.Mech.E., thus the prefix "P" for Peter. He joined Wm. Doxford in 1947 and was responsible for the development of the new fuel injection system fitted to the "LB" engines in 1955/6. This did away with the monstrous solid fuel valves and cages, which weighed 2 cwts. (or so it seemed) when fitting them to the cylinders. The new fuel injection system consisted of a timing block operated by a cam on the camshaft which timed the fuel to two C.A.V. fuel valves one front and one back of the cylinder which were nice and light, and easy to handle.

After the vessel was in service for two years, severe engine problems accrued with the white metal in the top ends bearings spreading and the centre top end pads burning out causing explosions in the crankcase, which in turn burnt out and carbonised the crankcase lubricating oil. The chrome plating on the liner bores started flaking off - this gave the engine starting difficulties. In March 1965, the ship returned to Sunderland for an engine refit by the Doxford Engineers. This was a 3 week refit which involved levelling up the crankpins by hand filing, jigs and spirit levels. The crosshead bearings were machined out to carry shell bearings. The centre pads were made with two parts with a replacable shell bearing pad, the crosshead pins were chrome plated, highly ground and polished.

New cylinders were fitted without chrome plating the bores and the piston. Piston ring landings chrome plated. The engine ran reasonably well after this at about 110 rpm and after a few years, the top end bearings settled down and the main engine ran quite satisfactory

MEMORIES - SHIPS OF THE FLEET

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C A R D I F F C I T Y (No:1)

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- 1962 Built by William Doxford and Sons (Shipbuilders) Limited. Sunderland.
- 1972 Sold to Ezekiel Ltd, London, renamed "SARA LUPE", thence to Wm. Brandts Leasing Ltd and operated by T.M.M. Mexico under the management of Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons Ltd.
- 1978 Ownership transferred to Mars Limited
- 1980 Transferred to Tini Shipping Co. Ltd, Hong Kong and operated and managed by John Mcrink & Co. Ltd. Hong Kong and renamed "Alpac Asia"
- 1985 Changed name to "ALPAC OCEAN" and delivered to scrapyard in Kaohsiung November, 1986.

C A R D I F F C I T Y (No:2)

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- 1975 Built by Hayashikane Zosen, Shimomoseki, Japan as "JADE CITY" for Grand East Carriers Inc., Monrovia and transferred to Reardon Smith Line and renamed "CARDIFF CITY"
- 1983 Transferred to Singapore Flag and renamed "EASTERN VALLEY"
- 1985 Ownership reverted to the Bank when Parent Company. R.S.L. went into liquidation - sold onwards and is still trading

The Editor would appreciate any news, notes or stories on the second "CARDIFF CITY".

When the "Cardiff City" (no:1) went to the scrapyard in Kaohsiung, the Second Engineer onboard had the good sense to rescue the plaque, from the Owner's suite, of the coat of arms of Cardiff, drawn by Jim Murray and inscribed :-

Presented To Capt. T.W. Picton Davies and Officers of the m.v. CARDIFF CITY on her maiden voyage from Capt. H. Lloyd Evans and officers of m.v. GREAT CITY - January 1963.

This now hangs on the Editor's office wall. Details of Jim Murray's whereabouts would be appreciated by the Editor.

S O U N D S F A M I L I A R

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Sea Staff Appointments
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ANDY MORRIS works for Lloyds in Hong Kong as a ISO and ISM assessor

DENNIS AMY is in Manila as Superintendent for Jebsens

P.J.PRENDEGAST is now working for UECC,Norway

JOHN HUGHES is now Vice President of P.S.L.(Esso UK) in Southampton

TONY FIELD works for Lloyds in London as a ISO and ISM assessor

P.J.BLOOMFIELD "Bloomers" is still in Houston as Nautical Surveyor for Noble Denton.

EVAN WALMSLEY has been found living on his yacht in San Carlos,Mexico

Belated Congratulations to Capt.Brian Boyer
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Having retired from sea service in 1993, and after a period of study and training which included a number of intensive courses at Southampton, and route training with other pilots, all funded by himself, he successfully passed an examination by the Elder Brethren of Trinity House and obtained a Deep Sea Pilot's licence valid for all sea areas around the UK/Ireland and European coasts, the first successful candidate for a number of years - after a year as a Deep Sea pilot, Brian took up a position of Assistant Manager in the survey department of a large P+I club.

The Editor regrets
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Numerous requests have been made for the identity of the editor to be revealed - well the editor has decided not to disclose his name - however he would appreciate that readers forward any notes, articles or short stories to him at :-

Royale House, 2 Palmyra Place, Newport Gwent NP9 4EJ as at

present he has no intentions of leaving the country.

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O B I T U A R I E S

Captain Joseph Henry Jackson Thornhill, M.B.E. crossed the bar on April, 9th at the age of 83, after a tragic accident.

Captain Thornhill joined the company as an apprentice in October 1929 and was appointed to the s.s. "Quebec City" on his first voyage. He was promoted to Chief Officer in March, 1940 with promotion to Master in May, 1951 on the m.s. "Vancouver City"

Captain Thornhill retired from sea service on the 22nd. September, 1973 but remained with the Company as Assistant Cargo Superintendent until February 1974.

Captain Thornhill (known to all as "Joe") was a quiet, efficient Master who served the Company for all of his seagoing career - Many readers may not be aware that Capt. Joe Thornhill whilst serving as Chief Officer, was at the age of 28, awarded the M.B.E. in 1941.

May we express our sympathy to his wife, Vera and her sons Andrew and Peter and grandchildren.

The Company was represented at the funeral in Garston by Captains Griff-Jones, John Lee, Mike Thomas, John Cann and by Eric Poingdestre.

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Josephine Taylor, Wife of retired Chief Engineer Len Taylor, crossed the bar on the 8th, May at the age of 73.

Josie was affectionately known to most of the company seafarers as "Mum" and may we all express our sympathy to Len, and his daughter, Sandra and son, Keith and grandchildren

The Company was represented at the funeral by Tom Major, Alec Osborne, Terry Davies and Capt. John Lee

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Nick Shilstone, retired Chief Engineer crossed the bar on the 10th May at the age of 50.

"Nick" was the son of the late Captain R.E. Shilstone, who followed his father in the Company but on the engineering side.

May we express our sympathy to Jane, his wife on behalf of all the Company staff.

The funeral in Torquay was attended by Alec Osborne, Malcolm Rayner, Capts John Lee & Brian Hernaman and Paul Hunt.