



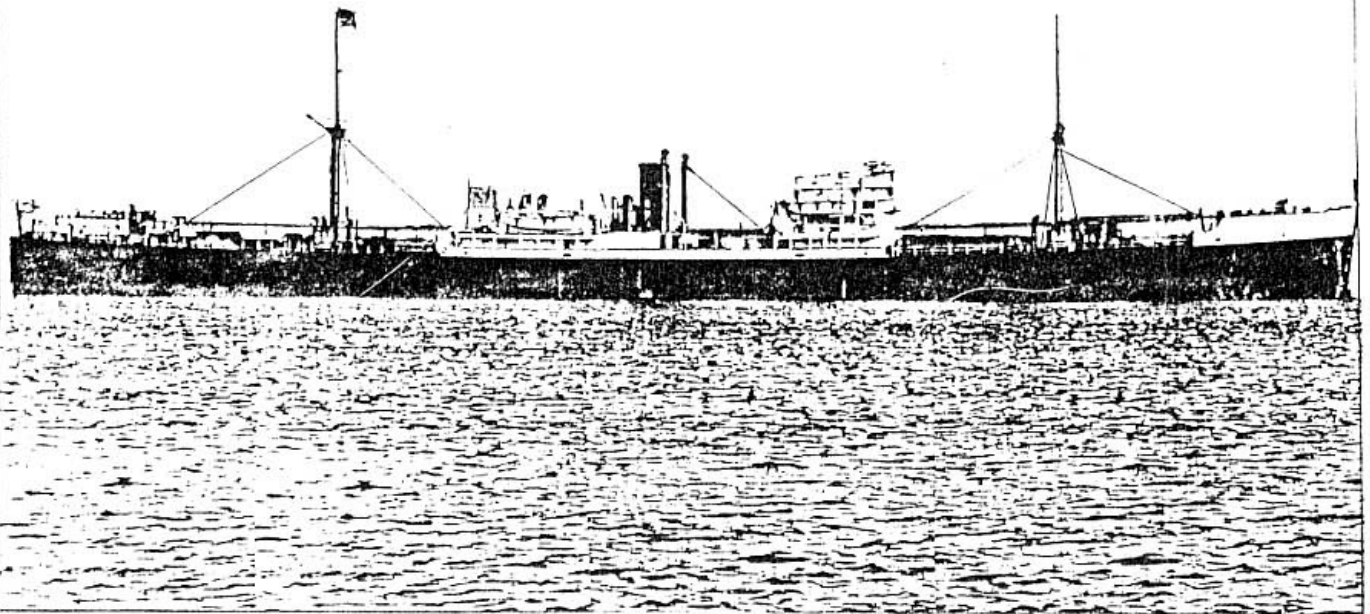
SHIPMATES

Reardon Smith Seafarer's Newsletter

Issue No.8 September 1998.

"HOMER CITY" (No:2)

AT ANCHOR



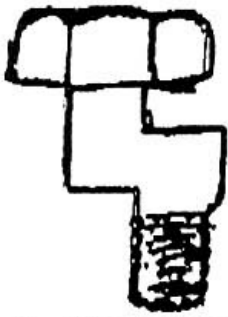
CHRISTMAS 1998

With 2000 looming shortly, it was decided that rather than have a calendar for 1999, it would be more appropriate to have a calendar for 2000 with Christmas Cards for 1998 ending - these would be of RSL Ships and would be for sale Christmas 1998 & 1999 - With a calendar for 2000, at least that way we can celebrate with affection that some of us made it to the year 2000, even though our affection and loyalty was to :-

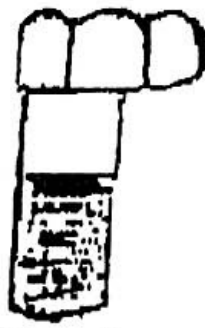
"STARVATION SMITH'S"

However the Editor is not alone - most of us have put on a few pounds

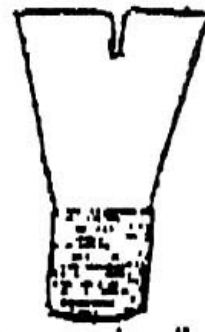
SPECIAL Marine Bolts for Shipboard Uses



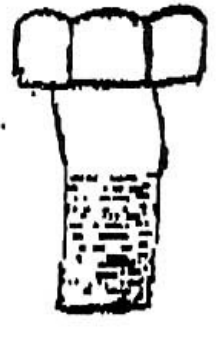
For Mismatched Holes



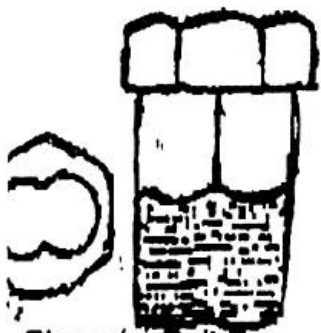
For Holes Too Near The Edge



For Holes Counter Sunk Too Deep



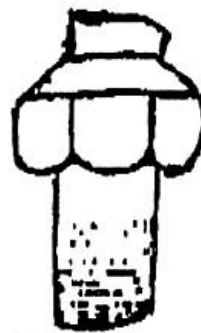
For Holes Drilled Crooked Then Straight



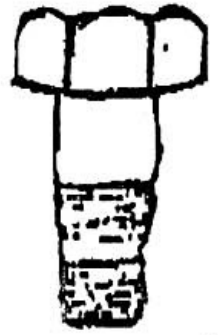
Binocular Bolt For Double Drilled Holes



For Holes Not Drilled Straight



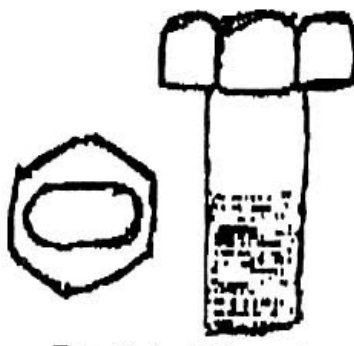
For Holes Counter Sunk on Wrong Side



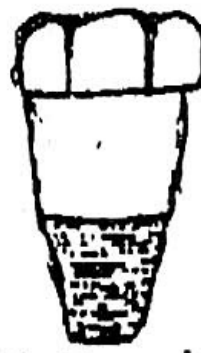
For Holes Drilled Big then Right Size



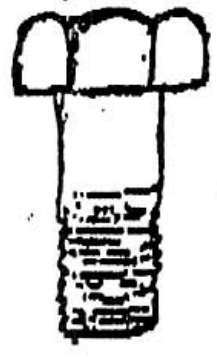
For Double Counter Sunk Holes



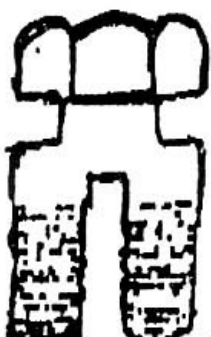
For Out of Round Holes



For Tapered Holes



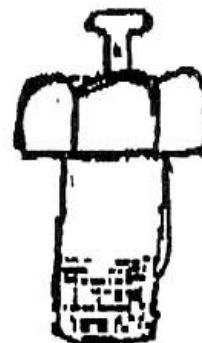
Pre Stripped for EASY overtorque



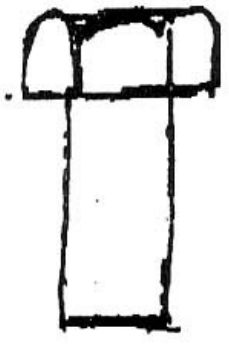
For Redrilled Holes that still don't match



Serrated Head for Molegrip torquing



Hammer Head for hard to start holes



For Threadless Holes

M.V. "Homer City"

G.R.T. 6988.

Built during 1944 by Harland & Wolff Ltd, Belfast, and engined at Harland and Wolff's Engine Works on the River Clyde, where a six cylinder B & W type engine was fitted. The vessel was built for the Ministry of Transport and named "EMPIRE RANGOON", with appointed managers T & J. Harrison. Ltd of Liverpool.

In the tradition of T & G Harrison the crew comprised of Indian Ratings and British Officers. Also with the wartime addition of DEMS ratings. Later in 1944 the management was transferred to Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons Ltd. During 1946 the vessel was purchased by the Reardon Smith Line Ltd., and renamed "HOMER CITY" and joined a fleet of over twenty owned vessels. This was the first ship in the R.S.L. fleet to have Indian Crew Ratings and were found to be suitable to the pattern of trading and extended length of voyages on which the ships were employed.

Consequently, all R.S.L. new tonnage ships were manned by Indian Ratings.

For fourteen years the "HOMER CITY" traded successfully and was a popular vessel. In the 1960 she was sold to Grosvenor Shipping Ltd., London and re-named "GROSVENOR MARINER", six years later she was again sold to Tat On Shipping and Enterprise and renamed "RED SEA". On the 17th August 1971 she was driven aground at Hong Kong, a victim of the typhoon "Rose", later she was refloated and broken up in the Hong Kong area.

The writer served on board the "HOMER CITY" 1950 to 1951.

Master :- Captain A.E.Ward.

Chief Engineer:- A. Lester.

Chief Officer :- O.J.Lindsay. (the writer)

Second Engineer:- Mr. Charlton.

2nd. Officer :- Mr. Davies (Mortision)

3rd. Officer :- V. Jones.

Apprentice:- J. Murry.

" Mr. Corbett.

The 1st December 1950 found the "HOMER CITY" at Lourenco Marques (Maputo) loading a cargo of coal for Melbourne.

Whilst in Lourenco Marques news was received of the death of Sir Willie Reardon Smith the Chairman of the company . A mauve mourning band was painted around the hull of the vessel

Vessel arrived Port Phillip Bay on Christmas Day to find about twelve ships at anchor awaiting berthing. However the "HOMER CITY" with the cargo of coal proceeded inwards and priority berthing. On berthing Melbourne a request was received from the Consignee's for the crew to assist with the discharge of the cargo.

The Australian miners had been on strike for sometime and the Victoria State Railway was desperate for coal for their locomotives.

There was a shortage of waterside workers over the holiday period and the efforts of the crew in commencing the discharge on Boxing Day was appreciated.

Whilst the vessel was in Melbourne a cricket test match (for the ashes) took place, Captain Ward (well known for his generosity) arranged, at his expense to take the four apprentices to see the full game. He felt that they may not get the opportunity again.

O.J.L.

MEMORIES OF THE "HOMER CITY".

This tribute was presented to Mr.Sukiennik by Mr.Major In 1977.

Quote:- Mr. T.Sukiennik readers will be saddened to learn of the death of Mr. T .Sukiennik suddenly on Thursday , 21 April at the age of 67.

Mr. Sukiennik graduated as an Electrical Engineer at Warsaw University. Prior to the second world war he was an officer in the Polish Navy. He was seconded to the French Navy War supervising the construction of a submarine being built in France for the Polish Navy. At the outbreak of hostilities he rejoined the Polish Navy serving under the general British command and took several engagements receiving the "VIRTUTI MILITARI" (Highest Polish decoration for Gallantry), also the British DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS. He reached the rank of commander.

His mathematical and electronics knowledge made it natural that he should be selected for the new science of radar and he preserved the secrecy of the new development long after it had become common knowledge. After the war he settled in this country becoming a British citizen and marrying a British girl, the present Mrs. Sukiennik.

He used his considerable manual dexterity to set up a watch repairing business, but later decided there was greater outlets for his ability, as a sea-going engineer.

He joined the company as 3rd Engineer of the "HOMER CITY" in March 1952 serving continuously for 22 months. A few weeks off to obtain his Second Engineer's Certificate (he wrote and spoke English, French and German as well as his native Polish), then off again as Second Engineer. He did the same with his Chief Engineer's Certificate leaving the "Great City" gaining his certificate, and leaving again as Chief Engineer, all within one month. We have a record where Mr. Sukiennik did one continuous voyage of 28 months as Chief Engineer on the "Devon City" (what a contrast with present day leave conditions). His loyalty to the company was total.

His great intellect and ability meant that all who sailed with this quite modest "man of many parts" will have a favourite story to tell. It is perhaps all summed up by saying he lived his life as an "Officer and a Gentleman". We offer our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Sukiennik on her bereavement.

After the death of Mrs. Sukiennik in 1981, published in a Stafford newspaper was the following:-
War hero's medals to be auctioned.
Decorations and the naval uniform of a Polish war hero who lived in Stafford are to be auctioned.
Commander Tadeusz Sukiennik who died four years ago aged 67, was awarded the DSC and the Virtuti Militari - Poland's highest award for gallantry.

The medals, his uniform and some antique furniture will go under the hammer next month, following the death recently of his widow Mrs. D. Sikiennik of Copenhall, Stafford.

"There has been quite a bit of interest shown in the war mementoes, although it is impossible to say what kind of price they will fetch", said auctioneer Mr. Brian Lloyd.

Commander Sukiennik served with the British forces during World War Two. After the war he settled in Stafford and joined a shipping company.

The auction will take place on September 8, at Stafford.

WEDDING.

We have pleasure to announce that David Litson married Juliet Jordan on the 8th of August at Clearwell Castle. The Bride was given away by Tim Carmichael and the best man was David's brother in law.

Clearwell Castle is situated in the village of Clearwell, in the Royal Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. The ceremony was held at 1.30 p.m. and at 3.30 p.m., the wedding breakfast took place followed by a reception in the evening.

Many of the guests were Reardon Smith and Cardiff Ship Management personnel with their partners, so it was very much like a mini reunion.

The castle was the guest's for the day, the rooms and grounds at their disposal, the weather was perfect so the guest made full use of the grounds, especially the children.

The previous owner of Clearwell Castle was the person who adopted a young boy from Nepal and the British Government would not grant the boy British citizenship, so the boy had to leave the U.K.. The owner then sold Clearwell Castle, and the new owners decide to utilise the Castle especially for Weddings and special functions.

CHINESE CHOP SUEY.

A tale from a TMM voyage by Richard. Alford.

October 1980-----Master :-M.Bellamy----Mate :- R.Alford.

The following incident occurred probably in late November or early December of 1980 on board the m.v. "Samia". I have to think hard when recalling any incident on board either this vessel, (formerly m.v. "Elena"), or her sister, the m.v. "Amparo", as I sailed for five consecutive voyages on one or the other of these two ships. Apart from one or two minor differences in the accommodation, the vessels were true sister ships, built in Germany (about 1965) for the Cheery Heering Line of Denmark. All of the various mishaps and mini disasters associated with voyages on these ships tend to merge into one after the passing of almost twenty years. Therefore apologise in advance for any errors or omissions and stand to be corrected by anyone with a better memory of events.

This particular voyage began in Malta where the ship was in drydock. (Possibly for her third special survey?), amongst all the other work, extended repairs were carried out to the pipework in the DB ballast tanks.

With no pipe tunnel (duct keel), on these ships all the pipework ran back to the engine room through the DB tanks, including all the bilge pipes. The bilge lines which ran out of the bottom of the bilge well, were not fitted with non return valves in the holds. Years of corrosion, and holed pipelines, meant that strange things could happen when ballasting - press up, say, No.3 DB , and you could fill No.1 at the same time !!! or even put water into the holds if the respective bilge line was holed !!! . All good exciting stuff, but that is another story.

"Samia" at the time ,was employed on the Mexican Gulf coast/North European service for TMM. Due to the fact that she made a regular call at Liverpool on this run as part of the service, she had been re-registered under the Red Ensign, and in order to appease the N.U.S., had on board a British crew. This consisted of a British Master, deck and engineer officers and cadets, Radio and Electrical officers, Somali Bosun and deck crew, Yemeni Arabs in the engine room as ratings and a mixed British/Chinese catering staff under a British Chief Steward.

The voyage began somewhat inauspiciously for the Chief Mate when I inadvertently locked the RSI, engine Superintendent (Mr. Gough Griffiths) in the foc's'l head one evening. Having found the entrance wide open about 19.00 hrs., whilst checking around the deck, I padlocked the door in order to safeguard a recent large delivery of seastock paint, not realizing that said Super had returned on board to check on extensive repairs work being carried out in the forepeak tank . Being unable to attract the attention of either the yard or the ship night watchman ,the Super eventually managed to crowbar the door open and effect his escape. Not surprisingly, he subsequently flatly refused to put down the renewal of the broken hasp as an extra drydock repair !!!.

The ship duly left Malta and proceeded to load a full general cargo at the usual NW European ports, with a final call at Liverpool, before proceeding on to Vera Cruz, the normal first discharge port on that run. I presume there were no real problems with the E.R. ratings , at least nothing startling, after adjusting to, (becoming resigned to !!), the eccentricities of the bosun and the crew, and their interpretation of the term 'seamanship', the two departments functioned in a more or less satisfactory manner.

However, the catering crew were a motley mix of young and old, English and Chinese, who, had they been running an hotel, would have been lucky to have been awarded a positive number of stars !!.

Considerable ill feeling developed between the Chief (Chinese) Cook and one of the young assistant stewards, mainly due I think, to the fact that the Chinese are accustomed to respect and obedience from their younger people; two qualities somewhat in scarce supply as far as the steward was concerned.

Things came to a head when the assistant steward went into the galley one mealtime, and in a sing-song accent, ordered a "lubbish omelet" from the Cook. The latter, taking great umbrage at the double insult to his linguistic and culinary abilities, flew into an immediate and great rage, and picked up a boning knife, slashed out at the steward, catching him a glancing blow just above the eye.

The injury thus caused, turned out eventually to be not as serious as it first appeared, but of course, at the time, with the unfortunate steward pouring blood and holding his eye, it was a most unnerving sight for the Chief Steward, who was first called on to deal with it.

Captain Bellamy (on his maiden voyage in command) was informed immediately, and as the ship at the time was proceeding southward in the Florida Strait, the decision was made to land the steward ashore with the assistance of the United States Coastguard. Summoning this assistance (via the VHF) was not a simple matter. Normally, this body of worthy men are only too willing to descend in great numbers upon one's vessel, at no notices, and take great pleasure in harassing the poor shipmaster for offending against a great variety of obscure statutes. On this occasion, the U.S. operator seemed only interested at first in establishing our 'area of financial responsibility' (who is going to pay, guys??), and it was not until proof of this was provided via various phone calls to Agents and P and I representatives, that the call was sent out for a coast guard cutter.

This duly arrived, seemingly manned on deck by sufficient crewmen to have run a battleship, all of whom appeared to shouting 'go go go' as it hurtled towards us at full speed.

The weather at the time was fine and sunny, with no wind to speak of, and a 'sea' of about 3" high wavelets, if that. Nevertheless, it still took us some time to persuade the coast guard vessel to come alongside our pilot ladder (which was viewed with some suspicion), and further convince the two paramedics that they should board at once in order to attend to our injured man.

The still bleeding steward was seen by the medics and his injury was attended to. It was agreed that he be taken off and landed ashore for further treatment in hospital. This caused further consternation to Captain Fearnought of the USCG cutter, who decided that the large 'swell' running (i.e. 3" wavelets !!) was too high to enable safe transfer by stretcher via the ship's side onto the deck of the cutter.

Therefore it was decided that we must lower him in one of our lifeboats and they would then pick him up direct from our the boat. This was done without incident, it being (sardonically) noted that the injured man was able to sit in the lifeboat (no stretcher required), and eventually stepped, unhindered by the "swell" directly from the lifeboat to cutter, almost unaided. It was also noted that the lifeboat had to go to the cutter, some distance away, as the CG Commander did not want to "risk" his vessel too close to the "Samia".

During all this excitement (not to say 'semi-farce'), myself and the Chief Engineer were despatched by Captain Bellamy to round up the Cook and lock him up in the jail. (The "Samia") had a small strongroom in the accommodation, on the main deck level, forward, which was actually on the plans as a jail, but was currently in use as a mail/special locker.

By then, having calmed down, he caused no fuss, and was duly kept locked up until we got to Vera Cruz. He was taken off the ship on arrival, (by the Agent as far as I recall, and not with the Police), and ended up lodged in an hotel near to the central square. From there he was able to sally forth in the evenings and could be seen seated at a table in Los Portales, no doubt discussing his misdeeds and gossiping with his friend, the Chinese 2nd Steward. Signs of repentance did not seem to be too much in evidence.

As far as I know, he was repatriated shortly thereafter, but I dont recall whether or not we found out if he faced criminal charges after arriving back in the U.K.. The Assistant Steward, I believe, suffered no permanent damage from his wound. I trust that subsequently, if he was not put off returning to sea after his experiences on this voyage, he at least learned to be more circumspect in his dealings with galley staff !!

As a postscript to the above transfer of the injured Steward to the coastguard cutter, it was discovered

on trying to hoist the lifeboat back onboard, that the winch was wired the wrong way round, and would only lower, and not heave. The Electrician, with his trusty bucket of tools, was summoned to reverse this planned maintenance casualty, the coastguard cutter was probably too far away by then to notice our embarrassment.

The voyage ended in some confusion, (some might say quite normally so for a TMM vessel!!!), when, after loading European cargo in Vera Cruz ; on arrival in Tampic we were informed that this was to be discharged and we were being switched onto the South American service, proceeding to Rio and points south.

P. S.: The author claims no copyright on this article- Captain Bellamy, faced with such unnerving incident during his first voyage in command, no doubt recalls it more clearly, and I apologise in advance for any inaccuracies.

P. P. S.: I should be pleased to hear from Mike Bellamy, as about 2/3 years ago he "suffered" a voyage on one "Delmas" vessels run by my old company, Coldwell Ship Management of Hong Kong, latterly known as Griffin Shipping Asia. As a matter of interest (to Some!), Griffin Shipping have recently left Hong Kong to go back to their parent company, Unicorn, in Durban, South Africa. I survived three voyages on the Damas vessels, on the Far East/West Africa run, before being forced to retire last August for medical reasons. *A.A.*

News for Ship Navigators.

See the Light. A church at Fairhaven, Lancs. is to be fitted with a navigational light to guide ships into the River Ribble.

Malacca Straits. A new vessel monitoring system for ships using the Straits of Malacca will start on 1st December 1998. The operational area is from Malacca to Singapore Between longitude 100°-40' East to 104°-23' East, this area is divided into nine sectors. Ships in sectors 1 to 6 are required to report to the Klang and Johor Vessel Traffic Services in Malaysia. Ships in sectors 7 to 9 must report to the Singapore Vessel Traffic Services.

News for Engineers. Aioi, Japan, some of you will know Aioi, the Welsh City and Cornish City were re-engined there, and, their Pielstick engines were built there. At the same engine works they also made Sulzer engines turning them out like nine pins, and were being dispatched to shipyards all over Japan. In the Lloyd's List on on the 10th June 1998 there was an article written by Mr. David Tinsley, saying, that recently the largest Sulzer engine was built at Aioi, its a 12 cylinder RTA96C engine and produces 89,640 bhp.. The paper says its the world's most powerful diesel engine.

On the 13th February 1998 the same author wrote about the latest MAN B&W K98MC-C engine where the 12 cylinder engine produce 93,350 bhp. The engine builders have lengthen the stroke to 2,600 mm, where the earlier engines had a stroke of 2,400 mm. The crankshaft speed is 94 rpm, fuel consumption is 125 grams/bhp/hr., that is roughly 287 tonnes per 24 hour day. So the battle for the most power is still on.

On the 9th November 1998 **Mr. James West** is booked to give a lecturer at the South Wales Branch of The Institute of Marine Engineers entitled "**Developments in MAN B&W Engines**". **Mr. West** is the Managing Director for MAN B&W, U.K.. The meeting is at the Taff Suite, Welsh institute of Sport, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff. (off Cathedral Road). The meeting starts at 19.00hrs and coffee and biscuits are available before the meeting. After the meeting refreshments will be provided, a bar is available, and you can chat to Mr. West about the technicalities of the latest K98MC-C engine. All are welcome, engineers and others.

From the Sunday Telegraph: "Call of the Deep". "Wave FM, a radio station based in Fareham, Hants, has abandoned its jingle of waves crashing on a beach after listeners complained that it made them want to go to the lavatory." Can't recall having that problem when I was at sea. *A.A.*

SHIP'S PIPE SPECIFICATION

1. All pipe is to be made of a long hole surrounded by metal or plastic centred around the hole.
2. All pipe is to be hollow throughout the entire length- do not use holes of a different length than the pipe.
3. The I.D(Inside Diameter) of all pipe must not exceed the O.D (Outside Diameter) otherwise the hole will be on the outside
4. All pipes to be supplied with nothing in the hole,so that water,steam or other stuff can be put inside at a later date
5. All pipe should be supplied without rust:this can be more readily applied at the job site.NOTE: Some vendors are now able to supply pre-rusted pipes.If available in your area this product is a recommended one as it will save a great deal of time at the job site.
6. All pipe over 500 ft(150mtr about) in length should have the words LONG PIPE clearly painted on each side and end,so the contractor will know it's a long pipe.
7. Pipe over 2 mile(3.2 km about) in length must also have the words LONG PIPE painted in the middle so that the contractor will not have to walk the entire length of the pipe to determine whether or not it is a long pipe or a short pipe.
8. All pipe over 6ft(1.83 m) in diameter must have the words LARGE PIPE painted on it,so the contractor will not mistake it for a small pipe.
9. Flanges must be used on all pipe.Flanges must have holes for bolts,quite separate from the big hole in the middle.
- 10.When ordering 90deg,30deg elbows,be sure to specify left - hand or right hand,otherwise you will end up going the wrong way.
- 11.Be sure to specify to your vendor whether you want level, uphill or downhill pipe. If you use downhill pipes for going uphill,the water will flow the wrong way.
- 12.All couplings should have either right hand or left hand threads but do not mix the threads,otherwise,as the coupling is being screwed on one pipe,it is being unscrewed from the other.
- 13.All pipes shorter than 1/8"(3mm) are very uneconomical in use,requiring many joints.They are generally known as washers.
- 14.Joints in pipes for piping water must be water-tight.Those in pipes for compressed air,however need only be ait-tight.
- 15.Lengths of pipes may be welded or soldered together.This method is not recommended in concrete or earthenware pipes.

* * * * *

SALT IN YOUR VEINS!

by
Catherine Boyer-Besant
(youngest daughter of Captain Bryan Boyer)

MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY
This is FISHING VESSEL.....
OFF THE NORTH EAGLE BUOY
TAKING WATER
OVER.

I left school when I was 16, didn't know what I wanted to do, where to go. All I knew was, at least I wasn't at school anymore! I started working for a High Street Bank, it was ok for a year or so, but soon I felt that there must be more to life than this! Then I thought I had found it. I started working in the Agricultural Department for a Cargo Superintending company. It was great, liasing with all the Agents for the ships we were to attend. Even the odd trip to Tilbury and the grain silos, to assist my colleague taking samples and completing the Customs documentation. Going to Tilbury was always "special". When I was a little girl, Mum, Alison my sister and I would go to visit my Nan. We would drive along the A12 and when we passed the Tilbury slip road we'd all say, "I wish we were going to Tilbury!", as that would mean driving through the dock in a taxi and watching the sky line for that first glimpse of a red funnel with a big black S on it! Anyway I digress.

So life was very happy for me at Inspectorate, and I realised I liked work that involved shipping somewhere along the line. Unfortunately, all good things must come to an end and I was made redundant just about two years later. I managed to get a position with a competitor, but it wasn't the same, basically just completing reports, never given decisions to make and no trips to Tilbury! Again I was made redundant. Steven, my husband and I moved to Harwich, a great little town, steeped in history of all kinds, including shipping, and I started working for Scandinavian Seaways, a Danish passenger ferry company. Yet here I was office bound, the consolation being I could look out of my window and see all the ships alongside at Parkeston Quay. Harwich is fantastic at night, with the lights and sounds from Parkeston and Felixstowe Dock bringing back memories of kneeling on my bunk and looking out of my porthole in distant places, when I was supposed to be asleep.

Life was good at Scandinavian Seaways, but I still knew something was missing, so I transferred to DFDS Transport Ltd, but this move only took me further away from the "Window". Things went from good, to bad, to worse, you know that feeling? Then one night, in the local Chinese Takeaway, Steve and I were browsing through the local paper. There it was. An advert for a job, but in my eyes not just any job, an appointment with H M Coastguard!! A sharp intake of breath, the closing date for applications hadn't passed. I had only one question, would I have to grow a beard! The owner of the takeaway let us tear his paper to bits, and we rushed home, prawn crackers an' all.

A letter arrived notifying me of an appointment for a Practical interview! That went smoothly, understood a compass, knew what port and starboard were, read out a weather report, knew my phonetic alphabet and few other minor points, and yes the interviewer had a beard! Then came the second letter, a formal interview. This was horrific, but somehow I managed to untie my tongue. When I was asked the question, "Why do you want to work for H M Coastguard?" I replied "Fortunately my Dad never had an occasion where he required immediate assistance from a Coastguard authority, but they were there if he had. I would like to repay this and be in the position that should someone at sea call for help, I may be part of team able to offer not only the seaman but also his family assistance." Afterwards I thought, maybe that wasn't the best thing to say maybe it sounded a bit, well, "girlie". Oh well it had been said, it was how I felt, and yes one of the interviewers had a beard, the other was almost bald! Not looking good on the hair front!

Then a letter landed on my doormat, I opened it and immediately threw all the relevant paperwork in the bin, they didn't want me! I was devastated. I didn't care about the drop in salary, the idea of shift work. I loved ships, studied marine biology, scuba dived, sea kayaked, had a bit of back ground knowledge, knew what it was like on large merchant ships and knew how the family of seamen felt. Why didn't they want me, I knew for the first time that this was something I really wanted to do.

Time went by and I resigned myself to the fact I would probably still be at DFDS until I retired. No, don't think like that you'll go crazy, I'd tell myself. Several months passed then one morning another letter arrived. Another position had become vacant, was I still interested, would I like to go to the station for another interview? Needless to say the appointment was made ASAP, and once again I found myself sitting in Reception, stomach churning, waiting to go in. The District Controller came and introduced himself and we went into his office. Yes he had a beard, and was balding!

I started working at H M Coastguard on the 19th May 1997. A year has passed, and my final exams are the 3rd August 1998. The money is poor, but I'm happy and that means an awful lot to me. The work is so interesting, and I like the shift work. Friends ask what does Steve think when I'm on nights, he loves having the bed to himself! There is an awful lot of studying, but I have my own walking reference book, Dad just loves to sit with me and talk about weather, buoys, charts, tides you know the kind of thing.

The district I work in is Thames District and the MRSC, Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre is based at Walton on the Naze in Essex. We are responsible for Search and Rescue for the sea and coastline from the River Blyth, just south of Southwold, to Reculver Towers on the North Kent Coast. The Thames District is the 3rd or 4th busiest District in the UK.

There are four watches based at MRSC Thames. I'm on D watch, which consists of 1 Watch Manager, (ex-Royal Navy), 2 Watch Officers (both ex-Merchant Navy) and 2 Coastguard Watch Assistants (1 ex-Pilot boat Coxswain and myself). Three of which have beards, two are balding, myself not included ! The work relies heavily on the local knowledge of the Officers on watch. To assist this we go out on familiarisation visits to various areas and authorities. On one such visit to Southend, I met a Foreshore Inspector who used to work on the docks at Tilbury. He remembered Reardon Smith Ships with great affection and was very complimentary about the crews he had worked with. It is such a great feeling to go somewhere and hear people remembering something in the same way that I remember that big red funnel and the large black "S"

Clive Welch, one of my watch officers also knew Reardon Smiths and has sailed for TMM before coming ashore. Needless to say during the night watches the old lantern starts to swing.

The first MAYDAY I received, whilst listening watch on VHF channel 16, was from a fishing boat off the North Eagle Buoy, in the Blackwater Estuary, taking water. The adrenaline started to pump and the team leapt into action whilst I was obtaining further information from the casualty. West Mersea Inshore Lifeboat was tasked and arrived on scene, stabilised the casualty and towed her back to Brightlingsea. In the end a small job, but I felt so proud.

We as a team along with the R.N.L.I had assisted him and saved his livelihood from sinking. Now that's what I call job satisfaction !

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We have received a request from Captain B. Hodges who served as an apprentice on the "Cornish City" from October, 1941 up till December, 1942 under the command of Captain D.C. Lennie with the chief mate Idris Williams as to the whereabouts of the other apprentices :-

Apprentice : Bucholtz
 : Sharpe
 : Kennedy

anybody that may know what happened to these three, please advise the editor.

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MEMORIES - SHIPS OF THE FLEET

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HOMER CITY (No:1)

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- 1915 Built by Ropner and Sons Ltd for the Great Steamship Co.
- 1917 Transferred to the St Just Steamship Co.
- 1928 Company restyled Reardon Smith Line Ltd.
- 1929 Sold to Wyn Shipping Co.(W.A.Young & Co.)London and renamed "WYNDYKE"
- 1932 Sold to Ath.Coulouras of Greece and renamed "COULOURAS XENOS"
- 1941 April,1941 sunk by air attack off Gavde Island

HOMER CITY (No:2)

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- 1944 Built by Harland & Wolf Ltd,Belfast for the Ministry of War as "EMPIRE RANGOON" and managed by T & J Harrison.
- 1944 Managers changed to Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons.
- 1946 Transferred to Reardon Smith Line, renamed "HOMER CITY"
- 1960 Transferred to Grosvenor Shipping of London and renamed "GROSVENOR MARINER"
- 1966 Transferred to Tat On Shipping & Enterprises Co and renamed " RED SEA"
- 1971 Whilst at Hong Kong in August 1971,was driven aground by Typhoon "Rose" and later refloated and broken up.

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