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Maggie McFarquhar The news has been passed to me that Maggie McFarquhar passed away earlier this month at the age of 84. As Maggie Bell, she was a Stenographer and later Woman Assistant Purser with P&O from 1956 to 1963.

Maggie first joined P&O in 1952 where she served in the Correspondence Department in Leadenhall Street before joining the sea staff in 1956 and sailing in various ships, including "STRATHMORE" and 'IBERIA' where she met the Asst. Surgeon, Dr Iain McFarquhar. They married in 1963 and Iain served as a GP in Elgin where they raised their family of three daughters and one son.

Paul Robinson died in Australia on the 27th January. He also had been suffering from cancer.

Paul was an Electrical Officer with P&O Princess in the 1970s. I have no other information, except that the funeral has already taken place.

Further to my message yesterday, unfortunately I was wrong when I said that Paul had died in Australia and I have now received the following message from Captain Mike Gold:



"The funeral was at The Oaks Crematorium in Havant on Friday 21 February and was attended by me and several of his Engineer colleagues, mostly from Oriana (1).

The wake was held at The Crown in Emsworth and became a celebration of his life and a support for his wife Gill. Many stories from days gone by were shared.

He had had a most interesting life after P&O: emigrating to Australia, running an electrical business, an Indian restaurant, a riding school, and a B&B. They had recently returned to UK to open a B&B on the Isle of Wight where Paul grew up."

Captain Joe Chapman The sad news has been received from his wife Lillas, that Captain Joe Chapman died on 3 February at the age of 92.

Joe went to sea as a Deck Cadet in 1943 with City Line and remained with that company until he had obtained his Master's Certificate and was able to join the Orient Line in 1954. He remained with the Orient Line and later P&O Princess but left in 1976. His last ship was Arcadia.

He was a member of the Royal Naval Reserve, reaching the rank of Captain and receiving the Reserve Decoration.



Edward "Ted" Sapstead More sad news: Edward "Ted" Sapstead died on 5 February at the age of 83.

Ted served with P&O as an Engineer Officer between 1957 and 1962. His first ship was 'Strathmore' and he later sailed in 'Corfu', 'Khyber' and 'Pinjarra'. His last ship was 'Cathay' where he was 3rd Engineer Officer.

Nigel Smout died on the 13th February at the age of 63. He had been suffering from cancer.

Nigel joined P&O Princess in June 1977 as an Assistant Engineer Officer and rose through the ranks to become Chief Engineer. He retired in February 2016 and his last ship was 'Diamond Princess'.

Further to my message yesterday, I have now heard that Nigel will have a private cremation on Monday 2 March in Chichester and his ashes will be scattered at sea off the Plymouth coast.

John Slade I bring the sad news that John Slade died on 23 February after losing a long battle with cancer. He was 68.

John joined P&O in 1969 as a Radio Officer and rose through the ranks to become Chief Radio Officer and Chief Electro-Technical Officer. He was aboard Canberra during the Falklands Campaign in 1982 and in 1984 he was instrumental in setting up the electro technical system and was 1st Electro-Technical Officer of 'Royal Princess' for the maiden voyage in 1984.

He left P&O Princess in 1989, took a degree and went on to hold a number of senior positions in marine electronics companies. He was contracted to the UN for four years designing and implementing their global email system. He then went on to set up his own communications company.

Captain Andrew Tyrrell The sad news has been received that Captain Andrew Tyrrell has died at the age of 93.

Andrew completed his pre-sea training as a Cadet, Royal Naval Reserve, aboard HMS Conway, leaving in 1943 to join The Clan Line (subsequently part of The British and Commonwealth Shipping Company) as a Cadet MN.

He was promoted through the ranks to Captain (attaining an Extra Masters' Certificate of Competency) before transferring ashore with the Company to the post of Personnel Manager (Deck Department). Later he was made a Director of the Union Castle Mail SS Company.



In 1975, Andrew became a partner with Brocklehurst Marine (Marine and Cargo Surveyors) leaving in 1979 to join P&O Princess Cruises as Fleet Personnel Manager, subsequently becoming Director (Fleet Personnel).

He retired in 1989 and, in 1990, he was appointed Chairman of The Sailors' Society, a position he held until 2002. Andrew also held office in The Honourable Company of Master Mariners and The Conway Club and he was a member of The Southampton Master Mariners Club.

Susan Spence I have been advised that Mrs Susan Spence has died.

As Sue Convery, she was an Assistant Purser and later Senior Assistant Purser with P&O Princess between 1972 and 1978. Her first ship was 'Nevasa' and she subsequently sailed in 'Spirit of London', 'Oronsay', 'Oriana'(twice) and 'Canberra'.

She and her husband John were instrumental in starting the biennial series of British India Reunions, of which the next is in Bristol in September.

Richard Esdale The sad news has been received that Richard Esdale died on 17 May at the age of 86.

Richard was born and grew up in Australia and joined The Orient Line's Sydney office in 1953 when he was 19 years old. In 1962, he and his wife Barbara emigrated to UK where he joined the Passenger Department of P&O in the West End Office. During the years that followed, he specialised in Sales and Marketing and eventually became the Marketing Manager of P&O Cruises.

Richard left P&O in 1985 but continued working in the cruising industry until his retirement.

Peter Hodges The news has been received that Peter Hodges died peacefully on the 26th May at the age of 78.

After spending two years at the 'HMS Worcester' nautical college, Peter joined P&O as a Deck Cadet in 1959. During the years that followed he rose to be Chief Officer before leaving in 1972. His last ship was 'Canberra'.

After leaving the sea, he joined the Inchcape Group as Shipping Manager of Gray Mackenzie, responsible for their offshore supply fleet in the Middle East, Far East and Australia, before becoming Shipping Services Manager responsible for Marketing in Europe and Scandinavia.

From 1989 to 1998 he was the Harbour Master in Salcombe, Devon and from 1990 to 2008 he was also Station Honorary Secretary (Operations Manager) of Salcombe RNLI Lifeboat Station.

From 2008 to 2013, he was a member of the Operations Committee of the RNLI Council.

Kay O'Neill I bring the sad news that Kay O'Neill died suddenly on the 27th May in Carlow, Ireland. She was 83 years old.

As Kay Duggan, she was a Nursing Sister with P&O from 1969 to 1973 and from 1976 to 1982. Her last voyage was in 'Uganda' during the Falklands Campaign.

After leaving the sea, she married and went to live in Tasmania where her husband, Richard, had been living for a number of years. They had first met when she was 18 years old.

After Richard died in 2008, she returned to Ireland.

Richard (Dick) Martin I bring the sad news that Richard (Dick) Martin passed away peacefully on 27 July at the age of 79. He had been suffering from cancer.

Dick joined P&O in 1960 as a Radio Officer serving on many types of P&O vessels. In 1968 he transferred to P&O Technical Services Division (TSD), providing support to the fleet worldwide, before joining the standby team for the fitting out of "Spirit of London" in 1970. Dick remained with the ship for three years, including the maiden cruising season, before returning to TSD in 1974.

1977 saw Dick transfer to general management within the P&O Group, holding a number of key managerial positions with P&O European Ferries in Dover and Zeebrugge before becoming Managing Director of P&O European Ferries in Portsmouth in 1989. He retired in 1996.

Mrs Ankie Perry (Breeschoten) The sad news has been received that Mrs Ankie Perry died on 5 August at the age of 79.

As Ankie Breeschoten, she was one of the “Dutch WAPs” – Assistant Pursers who were recruited from Holland by P&O in the 1960s and early 1970s. Ankie joined P&O in early 1966 and sailed in ‘Orcades’ throughout that year before leaving in the November to get married to John Perry, who was a Second Officer at that time.

During their subsequent 53 years of marriage, in the first 20 years of which they loved house 13 times through several countries due to John’s career, Ankie dedicated herself to managing the many moves and raising their two sons.

Ian Hepburn Craig The sad news has been received that Ian Hepburn Craig died on 22 August at the age of 89.

Ian joined HMS Conway in January 1946 for his pre-sea training following which he went to sea as a Deck Cadet with Royal Mail Lines. In December 1953 he transferred to P&O as a Fourth Officer, his first ship being ‘Somali’ and during the years which followed, he served in various P&O cargo ships and passenger ships before leaving as Second Officer in 1959.

Ian then joined Schermuly, a company that produced pyrotechnic marine life-saving equipment. This, over time, then led him to the entertainment side of the industry and in 1972 he set up a fireworks display company called Phoenix Fireworks from where he retired in 2004. Ian was a pioneer in this industry and amongst the first to set fireworks to music for outdoor performances at various venues in UK and around the world, also implementing the use of electrical firing of displays. He also served as an international judge at firework competitions.

Ray Blencowe I bring the sad news that Ray Blencowe died on the 9th September. He was 90 years of age.

Ray joined the Passenger Department of P&O in 1950 in the West End Office in Cockspur Street. During the years that followed he held various positions in Reservations and Marketing before becoming Passenger Reservations Manager. He left P&O in 1983 to join SAGA, from where he retired in 1995.

Captain Barry Thompson News has been received from New Zealand that Captain Barry Thompson died in Auckland on the 24th September at the age of 92.

After pre-sea training at ‘The Nautical College, Pangbourne’, Barry joined Port Line as a Deck Cadet in 1945. After obtaining his 2nd Mates Certificate, he joined P&O as a 4th Officer and sailed in numerous P&O ships including “Empire Fowey” where he was Troop Officer. He left P&O in 1961/2 and emigrated to New Zealand where he had a highly successful career as a Marine Surveyor.

He was also the relief Master of the NZ sail training vessel “Spirit of New Zealand”.

He was the inaugural Regional Director of the International Institute of Marine Surveyors and was made an Honorary Fellow of the Institute in 2016. He was also a Liveryman of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, a Fellow of the Nautical Institute and for a time he was the Deputy Chairman of the NZ Committee of Lloyd’s Register of Shipping.

Bill Connolly I bring the sad news that Bill Connolly died on the 29th September at the age of 84.

After school, Bill served an apprenticeship as a Fitter with the Fleetwood Docks Mechanical and Electrical Engineers Department, part of the British Transport Commission. He completed this in 1957 and then joined Blue Funnel (Alfred Holt & Co) to go to sea as an Assistant Engineer Officer but left after a year to join the Orient Line in 1958. His first ship was "Oronsay.

By 1967 he had reached the rank of Second Engineer Officer when he was asked to transfer ashore to the Engineers Department as an Assistant Engineer Superintendent. He retired as Technical Superintendent of Princess Cruises, Los Angeles, in 1996.



Tony Denton News has been received from Australia that Tony Denton died in Newcastle, NSW, on the 20th October at the age of 81.

After attending pre-sea training at 'HMS Worcester', Tony joined P&O in 1956 as a Deck Cadet and remained with P&O until 1962. During this time he sailed in 'Bendigo', 'Cannanore', Salsette, 'Arcadia' and 'Iberia'.

He then emigrated to Australia and spent the rest of his career working on coastal vessels with several different companies, initially sailing out of Western Australia, but from 1964 onwards he was based in Sydney and Newcastle. He retired in 2002.

James Allan Buntin (Jimmy Dene) News has only just reached me that James Buntin, better known by his stage name Jimmy Dene, died at his home in Spain a few weeks ago at the age of 80.

Although he originally trained as an electronics engineer, Jimmy joined P&O in the late 1970s as a Disc Jockey and Entertainment Officer and stayed until 1984. In 1982, he was on board 'Uganda' during the Falklands Campaign.

After leaving P&O, he remained in the cruising industry for a further two years or so before moving to Spain where he continued to work as a Disc Jockey in the various resorts.

Andy Hiscox I bring the sad news that Andy Hiscox, former Hotel Manager (Purser) with Princess Cruises, died on the 15th November after losing a long battle with cancer. He was 76.

Andy spent his whole career with P&O and Princess, joining as a Steward and working his way up through the various on-board positions in the Bars to become Bars Manager. From there he became Food and Beverage Manager and then Hotel Manager. He retired in 2008.

He and his wife Jenny lived in France, although he died in England.



Gordon Andrews died on the 16th November at the age of 93.

Gordon was a Barman with the Orient Line and P&O in the 1960s and 1970s. After leaving the sea, he became a driving instructor.

Peter Stephen Hoskin Pollitt, MBE I bring the sad news that Peter Pollitt died on the 20th November at the age of 83.

After pre-sea training at the Southampton School of Navigation, Warsash, Peter joined P&O as a Deck Cadet in 1955 remaining at sea until 1967 by which time he had risen to be Chief Officer.

He then stayed with P&O for a further three years as Cargo Superintendent at the Royal Docks, London and Yokohama, Japan, before embarking on a highly successful career in container terminal Management and port management, mainly in Southampton, Saudi Arabia and Dubai. Peter held senior management positions in a number of companies, including OCL, Solent Container Services, Gray Mackenzie, ABP and Marine and Transport Services (MATS).

For eleven years he was the Chairman of the Dubai International Seafarers' Centre and in 2001, he was awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours List.

Mike Lee The news has only just reached me from Australia that Mike Lee died in Sydney on 20 March 2020 after a short illness. He was 85 years of age.

Mike joined the Accounts Department of the Orient Line in Cockspur Street, London in 1955, but left in 1960 to join the Travel Department of the ES&A Bank in Brooke Street, London. In 1962 he was transferred to the Travel Department of the ES&A Bank in Melbourne from where he later transferred to the Travel Department of the ANZ Bank in Sydney after the ES&A Bank became part of the ANZ Group of companies. He retired in 1990.

Mike was a regular attendee at the P&O Orient Reunions held in Sydney each year.

Michael (Mike) Longhurst I bring the sad news that Mike Longhurst died on 30 December 2020 after a long illness. He was 79 years of age.

Mike joined P&O in 1961 in the Passenger Department in Cockspur Street, London. From 1965 to 1967 he was seconded to Mackinnon Mackenzie in Hong Kong and on his return, he became the Sales Representative for London and the Southeast.

In late 1979 he transferred to P&O Ferries as Sales Manager for the Jetfoil operation until late 1980 when it ceased trading. He then had a spell at Fred Olsen in their Sales Department before re-joining P&O. He subsequently held several sales positions including Agency Sales Manager and Sales Events Manager before retiring in December 1999.
