

## Group results still 'full ahead': Half year profits more than doubled on last year

Pre-tax profits for the group for the half-year ended 31 March were £26,284m — over twice the figure for the same period last year and only £8,000m short of the pre-tax profits for the whole of 1973. Profit after taxation is £23,452m (£11,983m). These figures maintain at all levels the substantial improvement in the results of the second half of last year. All divisions, except Passenger — hard hit by fuel costs, and Energy — still in the early stages of development — have made significant contributions. The major constituents of the associated companies' profits were OCL, Anglo-Nordic and Mundogas.

No Bovis results for the period have been included in the half-year figures but when they are taken into account at the end of the financial year it is expected that these will be reasonably in line with the assumptions made by P & O at the time of acquiring Bovis. The level of profits in the second half of the year is expected to be somewhat lower than that of the first half, but in the absence of

unforeseen circumstances the results for the year to 30 September 1974 should show a very substantial improvement over those for the year ended 30 September 1973, in spite of the downturn in the tanker market. In the case of Passenger Division increased cost of fuel will not be fully recoverable over this period, but bunker prices have largely stabilised and supply is no longer a

problem. The dry cargo market has however remained very firm, and the second half of the year will of course, benefit from the contribution made by Bovis. The interim dividend announced — 3.0p — represents, in terms of gross dividend, an increase of 20 per cent over that paid last year — 2.5p. Under the legislation presently in force the total gross dividend for the year cannot be increased by more than 5 per cent (which because of the increased basic rate of income tax is equivalent to an increase of only 0.5 per cent in the cash dividend payable to stockholders), so that the final dividend may have to be limited accordingly. Even if this is so, however, the P & O board are of the opinion that stockholders will welcome a more even allocation between interim and final dividend.

## The move that isn't (—yet)

A team headed by F E Heenan, Head of Management Services Division has been appointed to carry out a feasibility study of moving group offices out of the London area.

In a memo to all staff, A B Marshall, managing director said "I am conscious of the need to look again at the possibility of moving group office accommodation out of Central London and therefore, I have appointed a team to conduct this investigation, which will probably take several months."

The team headed by Mr Heenan includes R F Folley, GCD, Mr Colin Lawrence, PSD and J F Cook, Finance Division.

Relocation is by no means a certainty. Mr Heenan told Wavelength that he expects to report to the Board in the autumn on the advisability of moving or staying in London based on such factors as cost, trading advantage, staff reaction, etc. and only then, if the decision is made to move, will a suitable location be sought.

It has not been decided yet whether all or only some of the headquarters staff in London would be affected or whether they would

go to a new centralised location or be dispersed throughout the country.

The problems to be considered in an investigation of this kind are wide-reaching and, at times, highly sensitive.

In addition to the economics and practicability from the company's point of view, any investigation must necessarily consider the effects of office re-location on staff. In any situation where an office move is in the offing, staff — given that they will be retained in the new location — will be looking at relative house prices — even the availability of houses — in any new area, the effect of moving school-age children, family associations stretched country-wide and, to a certain extent, likes and dislikes of the new area chosen.

These are among the factors which will be carefully weighed by the investigation team. No doubt information and advice will be sought from all levels.

### You and your Wavelength

Regular readers of Wavelength will have noticed a slight shift of style and presentation in their newspaper over the last three months — and this is part of an editorial plan to up-date Wavelength from a house-journal style into a more modern newspaper whilst retaining these elements which make it essentially a P & O newspaper — by and for the people employed in the group.

This month we complete the changes by setting out all news and features on pages according to their merit or importance — as distinct from the previous "divisional" pages.

With so many elements going to make up P & O — land and sea transportation, retail travel, offshore supply, insurance, civil engineering and construction, ship repair, ships' store and furnishings among them — the concept of breaking the newspaper up into a number of sections has become not only out-dated but impractical in terms of production and un-interesting in terms of readability.

We hope you will find the new-style Wavelength to your liking and that its new layout will add to your enjoyment of what is, after all your own — your very own — newspaper.

## Seamen's pay increase

Acceptance by the National Union of Seamen's Executive Council and approval by the Pay Board is being awaited by P & O to increase in pay and allowances for Seamen following negotiations between the Union and Shipowners in the British Shipping Federation.

The offer which negotiators on behalf of the NUS agreed to recommend to their Executive Council, is summarized in an 11-point offer.

A pay increase for all ratings of £9.60 per month (£2.24 per week), with a consequential increase in overtime rates;

A special cash payment of £5.25 per month (£1.22½ per week) for all adult ratings and £2.55 per month (£0.59½ per week) for Ordinary Seamen and Boys; this to be subsequently consolidated into pay, with resulting increases in overtime, as soon as permitted by Government legislation;

An increase in annual leave of 5 days per year served, with two additional days from the 1973 settlement as soon as permitted by Government legislation;

The introduction of weekly rates of pay for all ratings on the basis of 7/30ths of the monthly rate;

The introduction of guaranteed minimum weekly earnings for ratings while in employment, namely a minimum of 7 days pay when signed on a Crew Agreement to be paid at the rate of one-fifth of the weekly rate;

An increase in the food allowance when on leave to 60p per day.

An extension of loss of sleep payments to deck and engine-room ratings on Home Trade 3-watch vessels and on Foreign-Going 2-watch vessels with a special payment of £2 per week to deck and engine room ratings in Home Trade 2-watch vessels who do not receive the benefit of these payments.

An increase in the maximum compensation payable for loss of or damage to Crew Effects resulting from Marine Peril as follows:

- Personal Effects      £300
  - Uniforms              £200
  - Instruments and Books   £150
- Items such as transistors and taperecorders to be regarded as coming under the heading "Personal Effects".

An increase in the payments made under the Air Travel Agreement as follows:  
Petty Officers:

from £1,600 to £5,600  
Ratings:  
from £1,600 to £4,200

A threshold Agreement providing for an additional payment of 38½p per week when an index of Retail Prices reaches 7 per cent above its level for October 1973 together with a further such payment for each additional 1 per cent increase in the Index up to October 1974. These payments to be consolidated and taken into account in the 1975 settlement.

Subject to Pay Board approval the settlement would be effective for at least 12 months from July this year.

### 'Welcome aboard, Sir'



Lord Inchcape being piped aboard ORIANA for the P & O pensioner's reunion luncheon. Doing the piping are Cox'n Cyril Smith, Cox'n Eldor Harris and Cox'n Charles Lane. (See Report on page 5).

# New drive-on/drive-off service between Fleetwood and Ireland

A new all-freight drive-on/drive-off ferry service between Fleetwood and Ireland is planned by P & O at the end of this year. The twice-daily service will operate from the new non-tidal berth now being built by the British Transport Docks Board at Fleetwood.

Introduction of the new link will involve the transfer of part of P & O's services from Preston, but P & O plan to continue operating lift-on/lift-off services from the port.

Board approval has already been given for the purchase of two new fast, freight only drive-on/drive-off vessels and negotiations for these ships are now in progress.

Commenting on the new service Mr Rodney Leach, Head of European and Air Transport Division said, "We believe the progressive move from lift-on/lift-off to drive-on/drive-off will continue and it is our intention to develop a large-scale service to Northern Ireland and the Republic, operating from this new non-tidal facility being built in Fleetwood."

A date to remember!!  
29 June 1974

**\*  
Gala  
Day**

at Maori Club, Worcester Park  
The day for you and your family

# P & O and the Oxfam Travel Group

by Jeremy Hamand

Most of us who work for P & O have some kind of contact with the developing world. In the case of sea staff, the contact is direct, often stark. For shore staff, it's all more remote and intangible: contact with agents and shippers in India or Africa, perhaps, or dealing with the discharge of cargo from the Third World, or even selling a cruise to the West Indies.

Sometimes our conscience prods us and tells us we ought to try to "do something" about the appalling poverty and living conditions that exist in some of the countries we have contact with. But how can a small contribution make an impact on such a vast problem? And how can we know what exactly our money will be spent on?

A practical answer has now come from Oxfam in the form of the Oxfam Travel Group, which has been set up to raise funds from individuals within the travel, shipping, airline and freight industries to finance specific Oxfam projects in developing countries.

The Travel Group Project 1974 will provide a mobile health unit for Ethiopia. Every penny collected will go entirely towards the cost of this project, direct to the people doing the job; no cuts or kickbacks for middlemen.

One of the areas of Ethiopia worst hit by the disaster drought affecting the lands south of the Sahara is Awash Valley. With practically no health service, the semi-nomadic Afars are suffering badly, and that's where the health unit will go to work.

The aim is to buy a Landrover in 1974 (£2,380); run the vehicle; and pay the salaries of a five-strong medical team (£3,666 p a) for three years until 1977 when hospital facilities should take over. The Awash Valley unit will provide maternity and child care, attack the problems and causes of malnutrition, prevent disease, and improve sanitation.

The Travel Group's 1974 target is to raise £13,378 to finance a mobile health service for 50,000 human beings who badly need it, from small regular monthly contributions by individuals within the industries concerned. Suggested contribution is 5p a month - modest enough in all conscience.

But the first priority is the recruitment of volunteers in as many departments and ships as possible to collect these shillings once a month. I am Oxfam Travel Group representative in P & O, so if you are able to help in any way, contact me as soon as possible at the Information and Public Relations Department, P & O Building, Leadenhall Street, London EC3V 4QL (extension 2616) or Oxfam direct (12 Crane Court, Fleet Street, London EC4A 2EL).

## New fleet personnel manager



Mr F M Marchant has been appointed fleet personnel manager for General Cargo Division with effect from March in succession to Mr R F A Hosking.

Mike Marchant began his career as an apprentice with the Hain Steamship Company and was promoted to Master in 1967. He then commanded various ships of the Company - later reconstituted as Hain-Nourse Ltd - and his last command was ATHERSTONE. For the 12 months before the group re-organisation in October 1971, Mike Marchant was seconded to a work study with Hain-Nourse and on the formation of General Cargo Division was given the position of Work Study Co-ordinator.

Mr Marchant is married with two children and lives in Woking, Surrey.

## Jim gets a good send-off

When L G (Jim) Kitney retired from P & O (NZ) Limited recently there were no less than three farewell parties to see him on his way - such was the esteem in which Jim was held by those with whom he came into contact at Auckland.

Jim Kitney joined the New Zealand Shipping Company - now P & O (NZ) Limited - in October 1962 as stores superintendent/clerk and was promoted to department head in 1962 deputising for Mr C S Craker, superintendent purser at head office, Wellington.



Mr R S Webster, right, on behalf of the sea staff, presenting a silver salver to Mr Jim Kitney.

Prior to joining NZSC Jim was in the Royal Navy and saw service on Admiral's and Commander-in-Chief's staff, Plymouth as steward and only left the service to go to New Zealand to get married. During the war he saw service on ACHILLES (Battle of the River Plate) under Captain W E Parry, whose son, Mr Peter Parry, was

until recently head of New Zealand Passenger Division. Promoted to Chief Petty Officer, he was transferred to the Royal New Zealand Navy when it was formed in September 1941, and while serving in H M S LEANDER he was torpedoed in the Battle of Kolombangara 1943.

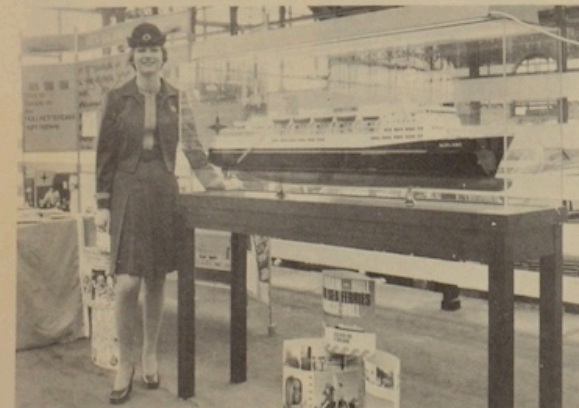
In 1944 Jim was seconded for duty with the Commander-in-Chief (NZ). His Excellency the Governor General at Government House as butler houseman.

During his 21 years of service with NZSC and later P & O (NZ) as it became in 1971 Jim became a much-liked and respected person by both sea and shore based staff alike, often fulfilling many 'strange' requests made by company ships visiting Auckland.

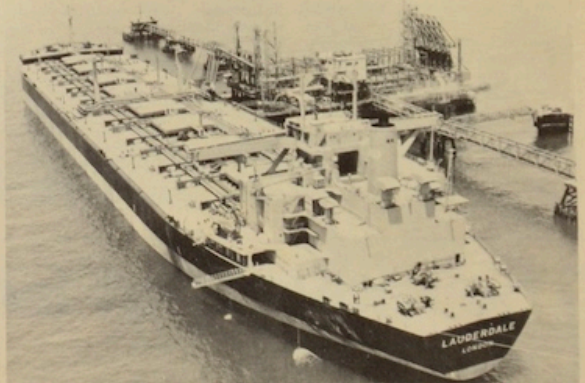
On his retirement no less than three farewell parties were held. The China Navigation Company held one on SHANSI by the courtesy of the captain Captain Cornforth. The port of Auckland laid one on at the port building to which members of the police, stevedores and many other waterfront organisations were represented.

At the official farewell at Auckland office presentations were made on the behalf of the company by Mr R S Webster, Mr J Highfield (representing sea staff) and Mr C S Craker representing Wellington, Head Office.

## New look for NSF hostesses



Pat Hepton, North Sea Ferries' senior hostess, wearing the company's new-style navy blue and orange uniform. She certainly rivals the model of NORLAND, the first of North Sea Ferries' new vessels which made her maiden voyage Hull to Rotterdam (Europoort) on 10 June.



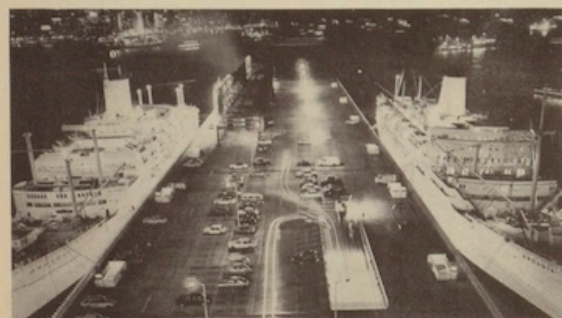
This piece of technology can carry over a quarter of a million tons of crude oil. Its vast size cuts the cost of transporting energy. It needs a crew of 30 and 12 officers, it cost about £10,000,000 to build.



This piece of technology can carry enough water for one day. It can knock 48 woman-hours off the job of transporting water from a distant well to the village. It saves 200 miles of fetching and carrying and needs no fuel. It cost £1.

# Dateline ...

## Dateline Hong Kong

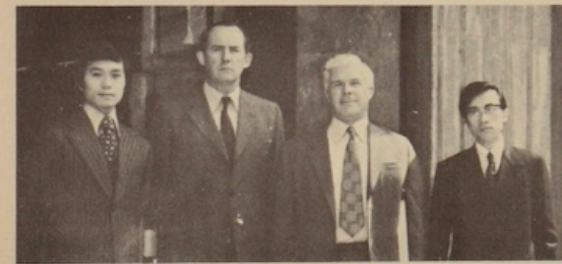


Not for a long time has Hong Kong been so well represented by P & O's Passenger Division ships. On 10 April, both ORONSAY (24 hours late) and ARCADIA were berthed at Ocean Terminal. They were operating 'Cherry Blossom' cruises, ARCADIA for the west coast of the United States with 700 passengers and ORONSAY from Australia with more than 1200 passengers.

Mackinnon Tours, who were handling the shore excursions for the two ships, report that, in all, 2,400 seats in 50 air-conditioned coaches were taken on local tours in only two days.

Mr Oliver Brooks, Head of Finance Division and his wife, paid a visit to Mackinnon Mackenzie & Co in Hong Kong. He had general discussions with the company and saw at first hand all the Mackinnon Mackenzie activities in the Colony, including Mackinnons Godown in Tsun Wan.

He is photographed here at the entrance of their offices with (from left to right) Mr K Tsang, Operational Manager Mackinnons Godown; Mr R J G Nicholls, Managing Director Mackinnon Mackenzie & Co; and Mr E Au, General Manager Mackinnons, Godown.



## Dateline Wellington



Mr Stuart Beattie and Miss Susan Wicks are shown following the church service at their marriage at St. Vincents, Kelburn, Wellington on Easter Saturday. The bride is the personal secretary to the managing director of P & O (N Z) Limited, Mr G Hunter. The bridegroom also works at P & O (N Z) Limited's head office as a statistical and trade flow researcher.

## Dateline Vancouver



Streaker and friend - the streaker is on the left, and the friend is Captain Dallas of ARCADIA.

This ship claimed another "First" three days before Yokohama on a Cherry Blossom Circle Pacific Cruise when on Passion Sunday, 31 March - it happened. One of our own buds blossomed, shed her bonds and brought a tingle of Spring and a stirring of something to an awestruck floating geriatric ward. Halfway through a very mundane fancy dress parade, with the ballroom packed and judges seated - the streaker struck. Moving swiftly from aft, by way of the Dorchester Room - headlong into the ballroom up the starboard side and pell mell out through the fore end. Having skill the envy of any rugby threequarter she wove her way in and out between the tables and the startled onlookers. An astounded hush fell over the whole ballroom for a few seconds

and then with electrifying suddenness into the stunned atmosphere the apparition again appeared travelling at great speed in the opposite direction. She had made a circuit of the Lounge, and unchecked, disappeared back into the Dorchester Room, Pool Bar and into the waiting lift to be whisked off back to 'E' Deck. The whole thing was extremely well stage managed, the timing excellent, the subject most suitably proportioned, and she well earned the renowned \$200 put up by a syndicate of backers. Shortly afterwards, along with the winners, she was presented with a silver teaspoon for having so effectively stirred up the evening. Unfortunately, the only photograph of the escapade is jealously guarded by an ardent admirer, so I can only send the enclosed clothed one.

Captain A H W Dallas  
Captain, ARCADIA

## Dateline Hong Kong



The P & O Challenge Cup, which was run at the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club's Happy Valley racecourse on 26 January and won by Fantasy was the reason for a celebration dinner held on CANBERRA on 15 March. Pictured here from left to right are Mr P G Williams, managing director, Dodwell & Co Ltd; Captain Derek Hasing; The Hon Sir Sik Nin Chau, CBE JP; Captain John Chester (standing); The Hon Sir Kenneth Ping-Fan Fung, CBE JP; Mr R J G Nicholls, managing director, Mackinnon Mackenzie & Co; Mr A Murray, operations manager, OCL (foreground).

## Dateline Karachi



## Dateline Auckland

Thirty-nine Containers of Kiwifruit - Chinese gooseberries - were loaded on to REMUERA at Auckland on 22 May.

Although this is not the first time containers have been used for this fruit the quantity being shipped has risen so sharply in the past couple of years that the whole method of transport packaging and marketing is being revised.

P & O (NZ) Ltd and ACT (NZ) Ltd have been working closely with the importers and DSIR on the carriage of Kiwifruit in containers and making recommendations on stowages of the different packs being used. It is expected that these five packages will be standardised in future seasons, to obtain better stowages.

This season it is expected that approximately 2,500 tonnes will be exported to twelve overseas countries. The importing countries being first Japan, second U.S.A., and third Australia - with U.K. featuring about seventh on the list.

P & O are carrying most of the Kiwifruit to Japan this season on ZIRA and ZAIDA which operate a monthly service to Japan from New Zealand.

## Dateline Niuafo'ou

On ARCADIA's Round Pacific Voyage from Alaska, a block of ice from Glacier Bay was presented from No 2 Lifeboat to the natives of Niuafo'ou (Tin Can) Island. By all accounts, they were last seen happily paddling their dug-out back to shore looking both cool and surprised.

Could this be the beginning of something big, asks ARCADIA? Perhaps GCD should investigate the possibilities of this new trade.

This photograph taken in Karachi anchorage may be of interest. The ship on the left is DWARKA, and on the right, KARANJA. These ships still operate with a B.I. funnel, although when this picture was taken, in August 1973 there was also RAJULA. Stewart S. Cook AEO, ZAIDA

## Dateline Singapore

A shallow-water catamaran, GEMEAUX, used for seismic work along the West African coast, was shipped on IOS vessels to Singapore recently. GEMEAUX was loaded by crane on to the after deck of LADY FLORENCE in Port Gentil, Gabon, but between there and Cape Town, LADY FLORENCE developed a leaking propeller stern tube and had to put in for repairs.

## Dateline Melbourne

MORVADA called at Melbourne in February, her first visit there since her maiden voyage and for her cadets their first sight of Australia. The highlight of their stay was a day spent in Sydney.

But back in Melbourne, there was quite a gathering of the GCD clan. MANORA, MANAPOURI and OTAKI were all in port at the same time as MORVADA. Football was the order of the day, but MANAPOURI failed to raise a team and OTAKI, with her reputedly strong side steamed out of port before the starting whistle could be blown, much to the relief of the remaining MORVADA and MANORA.

The first match was refereed by Captain Severs of MANORA, a fact which, we are assured, had nothing to do with the final score - MANORA 3 MORVADA 0. The return fixture four days later (after tired limbs had had time to recover during the free weekend in Melbourne) was a much more professional affair and resulted in a 2-0 win for MORVADA.

Fortunately, another IOS vessel, LADY VALERIE, had just completed her dry docking in Cape Town and the catamaran was simply transferred from one ship to the other and completed the journey to Singapore on time.



# Pandor Southampton car rally

On Sunday 21 April, Stan Mollett (a former mainstay of Hotel Services Department) organised another rally for the Motoring Section of the Pandor Club in Southampton. As usual, Stan did a marvellous job in organising the route, check points and even as far as choosing a beautiful day!

If anyone was interested in the delights of Spring, they would have had a field-day as there were lambs by the score, the occasional baby 'moke', even an Arabian foal which kept everybody's attention for some considerable time. If two members had been quick enough, they would have had pheasant for dinner.

The route took us along many lovely lanes between Romsey, Salisbury and Winchester and there was obvious surprise on the face of many a yokel as to why so many "strange" motorists were fixated in a particular house, church etc especially when peering

at tombstones for any length of time.

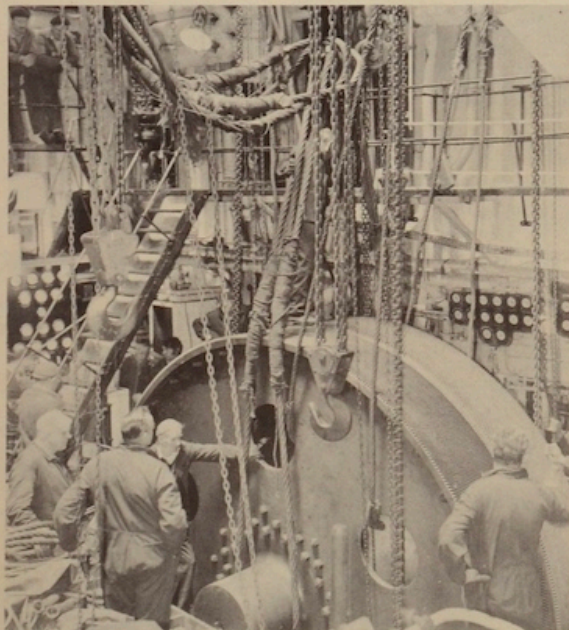
Most of us managed to reach the finish although some seem to have "dallied" a bit too long and got themselves lost!! We have it on good authority that one particular family got so heated about the clues that on arrival at the final check point nobody was speaking to anybody else - we assume this also means the dog!

For the more fortunate, there were prizes: 1st - Bernie West, 2nd - Captain Kidd, joint 3rd - Sheila Robottom and Cindy West (thankfully not related to the winner).

(Report by Cindy West)



Stan Mollett, left, presenting prizes to, left to right, Liz Goffe, Cindy West, Sheila Robottom and Bernie West.



## Big wheel at Falmouth

At Silley, Cox's Falmouth shiprepair yard recently, was the 45,000 dwt BP tanker BRITISH AMBASSADOR, for overhaul of the ship's gear train and diesel generating equipment. The ship was one of several passing through the yard at an exceptionally busy period.

An unusual feature of the gear train overhaul was the removal of the main wheel for replacement. The photograph shows the wheel, 14 feet in diameter and weighing 39½ tons, being lifted out of BRITISH AMBASSADOR.

## Save the Children Fund cargo



Top. Loading the trailer are Tom Bulley, standing, and Ernie Webber, driving the fork-lift, at Thomas Trapp's East London depot. Below. En route to Cambodia, the trailer is loaded on to the Normandy Ferries' LEOPARD at Southampton.



Thomas Trapp & Sons in close association with Gellatly Hankey & Co, recently handled the movement of 100 tons of Heinz baby foods and 300 bales of clothing for the Save the Children Fund from London to Cambodia. The supplies were part of the relief programme provided by this country to the child victims of the Vietnamese war.

As far as the UK to Europe part of the journey was concerned, it was entirely a P & O Group operation. Thomas Trapp operated the service and loaded the trailers. These were shipped to Le Havre on Normandy Ferries' LEOPARD where another Group company S C M Franco-Britannique arranged the transfer of the cargo to the Chargeurs Reunis vessel, NOR-BELLA which carried it to Kompong Som, Cambodia. Gellatly Hankey are the UK agents for Chargeurs Reunis.

### Mr D K Albany

Retired purser, Donald Keith Albany of Chislehurst, Kent, died on 27 May. He joined the company in February 1932 and became a purser in 1949. Before their marriage, his wife as a Children's Hostess with the company from 1949 until about 1952. Mr Albany was cremated and buried at sea.

### Mr KW Jackson

Friends of Kenneth William Jackson, late of NOWSHERA, will be distressed to hear of his death on STRAIGHTSMAN which capsized and sank near Melbourne on 23 March. Mr Jackson, aged 27, only left the service of P & O on 12 February this year to return to Australia where he had hoped to settle. He joined the company in 1968 as a Junior Engineer and was promoted to Third Engineer late last year.

### Mr G M Hopper

George Mandeville Hopper, who died on 4 May at the Highlands Hospital, Southgate, had worked with Escombe McGrath & Co Ltd, and their subsidiary Stapleton Shipping Ltd, for more than 45 years, retiring in June 1972. Towards the end of his career, he was made executive director of Stapleton Shipping and was concerned with the new fields of activity into which the company ventured in the 1970's. The funeral was at Southgate Cemetery and many of Mr Hopper's friends and colleagues attended the service.

R M L

### BOOK REVIEW

## Ike said 'OK, let's go' and they went into Festung Europa

The Allied invasion forces landed on the Normandy beaches on 6 June 1944 - the greatest armada of all time. Now, thirty years later, one cannot help but wonder how much more can be said and read on Operation Overlord. Surely it has all been said before?

But in D-DAY, by Warren Tute in conjunction with John Costello and Terry Hughes, the blood and sweat, frustrations and elations of that day - regretted only by those who weren't there, someone once said - come vividly to life.

Reading D-DAY - the setting of the strategic and tactical scene, the planning, the hopes and fears of the planners, the international rivalries and the overwhelming success of the whole business - one cannot help but continue to marvel at the enormity of the provisioning, timetables to be worked out, interlocking of landing areas and objectives and follow-up supplies. But all this has been said before.

What is new - to me, at any rate - are things like the stories of pre-D-Day reconnaissance, the background to what really went wrong on Omaha Beach (it was apparently because the Americans turned down British advice for tank support coupled with the loss of best part of the first wave in the heavy seas), the production of tactical photographs and sketch plans of the German defence works, and the excellent maps and photographs.

It is really the pictures which set this book apart from any others which have been published on the subject. They are picture journalism at its best and it is surprising how good colour photography was thirty years ago. What I found just slightly disconcerting was the captioning of the photographs. Trying to find what some of the pictures were portraying, it seemed that clarity was sacrificed for design.

The authors are to be congratulated on their research for material and the way it has been set out - taking periods of time and areas of the operation and making them into separate "chapters". This book is very readable - and will be enjoyed by anyone who wants to make up for the fact that for one reason or another they were not there.

(D-Day, by Warren Tute in conjunction with John Costello and Terry Hughes, published by Sidgwick and Jackson, £3.95).



Two interesting vessels into the agency of G S N/Strick, Edinburgh, are the sailing schooners SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL and MALCOLM MILLER of The Sail Training Association. First into Leith this year was SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL which embarked an all-girl trainee crew for a voyage to Norway. Our photograph shows Norman Parry, director of G S N/Strick, bidding "Bon voyage" to Captain Patrick Collis and "les girls" shortly before sailing for Stavanger.

# P & O Pensioners lunch on ORIANA

## Regional reunions in the future?

### Pensions increase in October

An announcement by the managing director, Mr A B Marshall of an increase in pensions met with rather more enthusiasm than the hint given by the chairman, Lord Inchcape, of a "de-centralisation" of the P & O pensioners' re-union when the 1974 lunch took place on ORIANA on 15 May.

In the splendour of the Drake restaurant, 400 P & O pensioners sat down to lunch after a reception by Lord Inchcape, Mr Marshall, Mr H F Spanton, Head of Passenger Division and Captain J F Wacher, Captain of ORIANA. Among them were Commodore Philip Reed, in command of ORIANA until his retirement last year, and Mr W C O Taylor, 92 this month and the most senior pensioner present.

Below: "How nice to see you". Guests were welcomed by Lord Inchcape, Mr Marshall and Mr Spanton. Far right, Commodore Philip Reed with Mr William Taylor, P & O's senior pensioner present at the reunion. Right, the ship's staff were on hand, too, to make everyone feel at home.



Referring to the problems which had faced Passenger Division last year and the restructuring of the operation which had taken place, Lord Inchcape said it had been decided that CANBERRA should be retained in service, and she was currently engaged in UK cruising having just returned from a round world voyage. That decision as part of the reorganisation of the group's passenger business held out much hope for progressive movement and an early return to full profitability and many would have noted from the annual report the progress made in this direction. The division was particularly seriously hit by the fuel oil crisis which had severe financial implications for the big ships. This unexpected blow - at a time when they had hoped for smoother sailing - necessitated an entire review of their programmes in order to maximise economies. "Sadly", said Lord Inchcape, "it does not help to have ageing steamships which burn large quantities of fuel and so, albeit reluctantly, we have been forced to decide upon the withdrawal from service of both ORSOVA in November last and HIMALAYA in October next - almost entirely due to the very heavy additional costs to which I have referred.

"Notwithstanding the many problems, our cruise markets continue to flourish - in Australia and the UK in particular - whilst SPIRIT OF LONDON continues to offer every reason for confidence for the future on the West Coast of America."

Lord Inchcape said that the management had been looking at the organisation of pensioners' reunions throughout the group in the light of the changes that had taken place in P & O activities in recent years and the way the group was developing.

"There are an increasing number of pensioners from within the Group", he said, "who do not have an opportunity to meet their old friends because they do not come from companies which have had a pensioners' lunch organised for them in the past. We do not think it right to leave these men and women out in the cold and for this reason are suggesting organising lunches on an area basis in future. This would mean having perhaps four or five P & O pensioners' lunches spread throughout the summer months, each taking place in a different part of Britain and each open to all the P & O pensioners living within a specified geographic area.

"We would still do our best to ensure you meet your old friends by giving you company labels and arranging seating accordingly. This is still only an idea and we would welcome your reactions either here today or by letter."

There was applause as Lord Inchcape concluded: "I have little doubt that many of you would prefer to leave things as they are but I am sure you would not really be averse to sharing this enjoyable event with other P & O pensioners."

Mr Marshall outlined the group's progress over the past year and went on: "All these efforts which must continue should demonstrate to you that P & O is now beginning to use its inherent strength effectively, but I would like to stress the word 'beginning'. We have already stated publicly that the new level of profitability is only a starting point for future growth. But this does not mean that we are blind to the difficulties facing us.

"Perhaps the biggest problem which will require all the strength and managerial skills we can make available is that of inflation. With the current runaway rates of inflation it is vitally important that we ensure the generation of sufficient funds to replace the

ever-increasing costs of ships, trucks and other capital equipment."

Recalling the announcement last year that the board had decided to provide a mechanism by which pensions were not left lagging far behind this inflation, Mr Marshall said that the arithmetic had not been done for the current year partly because the re-union was taking place earlier this year and partly because the board wanted to take into consideration the latest possible increase in the cost of living.

"But I can assure you," he said, "that in line with the chairman's announcement last year your pensions will be increased again in October, and that increase is unlikely to be less than a year ago

when pensions were increased by 10%."

Mr Peter Jackson, replying on behalf of the guests, regretted the passing of P & O ships which had gone and HIMALAYA which was to be taken out of service later this year.

He had, he said, been doing some calculations, and he hoped that the chairman and managing director would be "suitably impressed" with his estimated figure of 12,000 years' service being represented at the tables that day!

It was gratifying to hear of the progress being made by the group against the problems of business in the present day. But it was certain that the name of P & O continued to reign supreme in world shipping circles.

## It all came back to Ivy Cousins



Ivy is welcomed by Lord Inchcape on board ORIANA

Few pensioners can have received their invitations to lunch aboard ORIANA with more pleasure than Mrs Ivy Cousins (née Lundy). This was her first opportunity since her retirement ten years ago to meet some of the many friends she made during her 37 years service with P & O and the BI.

Ivy Cousins joined P & O as a stewardess/nurse in 1924, serving first on KAISAR-I-HIND and latterly on NEURALIA before returning from the Far East in 1941. She returned to service in 1952, this time with BI, on EMPIRE TROOPER for several years and then NEVASA until she had to retire in 1962 at a mere 70 years young.

Now a spritely 81-year-old, Ivy Cousins would love to be working

on board again, and indeed she has many good memories to draw on. Life aboard then was very hard and the hours long. She remembers one trip in particular on EMPIRE TROOPER when sleep was difficult to come by. On this occasion, one case of measles recorded on leaving England, blossomed into a full blown epidemic with more than 100 cases by the time they reached Singapore.

Life was much more enjoyable, however, in port, especially since they stayed for two to three weeks at a time in those days, and she and her fellow stewardess, Mrs 'Robby' Robinson, now living in Ilford were able to explore foreign lands. Mrs Cousins lives now in Southampton surrounded by the souvenirs she collected from all over the world.

## TALAMBRA wins Geddes safety award

The high standard of safety maintained aboard TALAMBRA throughout 1973 was rewarded on 29 May with the presentation of the Geddes Shield to the ship. At a small ceremony at P & O Building, Leadenhall Street, Lord Geddes presented TALAMBRA's Master, Captain William Dwelly with the shield, a replica of which will be hung in the ship's wardroom. The Chief Officer, who on BSD vessels acts as Safety Officer, in this case Nigel MacDonald, also received an award - the interest from a trust fund, which he may spend as he wishes.

Although the award bears on the ship's safety record over the whole year, the officers and crew of TALAMBRA responded particularly well in a potentially dangerous situation late last year. Whilst in ballast off Algiers, TALAMBRA was seriously on fire forward and less seriously aft and, in addition, a man fell overboard. Both fires were quickly brought under control and the man found and picked up some four hours later.



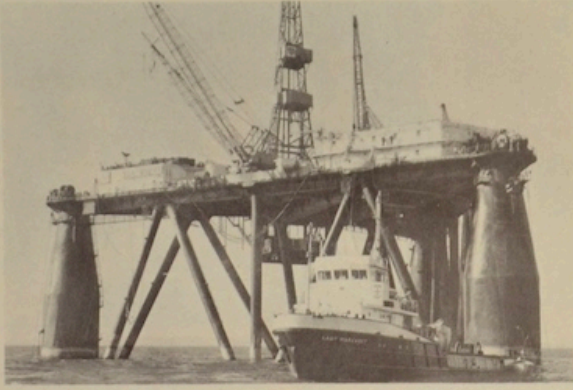
The Geddes Shield was instigated when Lord Geddes was Chairman of Trident Tankers and on re-organisation into the present BSD, the award was continued. All vessels in the division are eligible and assessments are made by consultants from Marine Safety Services during their annual voyages

and from reports from the ships themselves and shore staff concerned.

There was fierce competition this year between TALAMBRA and ARDYAR and ARDTARAIG which she beat into joint second place, and only nine points separated the top 15 ships.

# Centre Spread

## IOS has an essential role in the offshore oil and gas industry



Getting together. A meeting of senior staff at Great Yarmouth with, left to right, office manager Maurice Illiffe; Bob Lapping, technical manager; Nigel Evans, chief accountant; Captain Sallis; area marine superintendent Tony Barley, personnel manager Bart Moltzer, and purchasing manager Eddie Philpot.

Captain Bill Grant is port captain at the IOS base at Aberdeen . . . .

. . . . and Captain Neil McNab, is the area marine superintendent.



The fight for North Sea Oil and the energy crisis have brought this 1970's growth industry very much into the public eye, yet surprisingly most people have little concept of what working on an oil rig in the North Sea is really like. Even fewer realise that the North Sea is, for most of the year, the most treacherous expanse of water in the world, and calls for a particular kind of seaman who is prepared to live and work in appalling conditions when the situation demands.

The cost of running an oil rig has been placed in the region of £20,000 a day, and a rig depends entirely on shore supply for all its needs - both for men and machinery. Every bit of food, every drop of water, fuel oil, drilling equipment, medical supplies, the chemicals used in drilling and drilling mud (yes, even mud has to be taken out for drilling into the sea bed) are conveyed from shore bases - usually at Great Yarmouth, Aberdeen or Shetland - to the drilling platforms by small but very strong and, in proportion to their size, very powerful supply ships.

International Offshore Services - a P & O group company in the Energy Division - has 26 offshore supply vessels operating in UK waters, off West Africa, Australia and Canada and, in fact, in any part of the world where offshore drilling operations are being carried out.

In addition, the supply boats are employed as tugs when platforms or drilling ships have to be moved from one location to another. And this can mean from one part of a field to a spot not too many miles away, or from one side of the world to the other involving a tow of anything up to 15,000 miles.

IOS operations are controlled from North Sea House in Great Yarmouth, where Captain Vic Sallis presides over an operational and admin staff dedicated to keeping IOS ships fully employed, looking after officers and crew and giving the best service to charterers. Drilling platforms are usually owned by oil companies - in an industry which, because of the enormous capital involved, is known to be a tough, demanding,

unforgiving task-master. So, the people at North Sea House and at the operational base at Aberdeen must constantly and un-remittingly ensure that IOS vessels are always on call and ready to go at a minimum of notice. Supply ships off charter can be likened to a taxi rank - waiting for the call that can come at any time - night or day. When that call comes "today" means 'now' and 'now' means 'immediately'.

The peak of Great Yarmouth as an operational base is now almost past as the search and production of oil has moved farther north, and where Aberdeen's fishing boats used to moor and where there was once a busy port used by vessels plying between Aberdeen and the north of Europe or the Isles, there are now offshore supply boats manned by crews from practically anywhere - the United States, Holland, Spain, France, Norway - as well as the United Kingdom.

IOS has its share of international flavour with crews from Holland, France and Spain working alongside British seamen. With the run-down of the Aberdeen fishing industry, offshore supply has come along at the right time to fill the employment gap, and there are many seamen and officers running these tough little ships who gained their experience on the Aberdeen trawlers far into the fishing grounds towards Iceland, Greenland and the North Pole. Typical of this international flavour is the LADY MARIANN, 662 dwt, with a Dutch skipper and Chief Engineer and a Dutch and Spanish crew. Captain Jack van Dorp - one of two brothers in IOS - is a seasoned

Meanwhile, down in the crew mess . . . . George Stewart, Louis Ross and Frank Yule wait for grub up.

Captain Tom Copping, Master of the office. With him are Superm Chief Engineer Sam Taylor and



# supply role in gas industry

offshore skipper who has done most things with a supply boat in most parts of the world.

When he is on leave Captain van Dorp likes to get home and spend as much time as possible with his family in Leiden. He is happy enough working for a British company, but worries about the lack of reciprocal social security and pension arrangements between Britain and Holland against the time when he must eventually leave the sea.

Tied up at the Town Quay in Aberdeen, LADY MARIANN had returned from a charter with Decca — placing marker beacons which are used to mark with extreme accuracy the location of sea-bed wellheads or drilling locations.

Round the corner in Torry Dock, LADY PAMELA, 866 dwt, built in Holland but with an all-British crew, was preparing to go on charter to a Staffo platform 140 miles out in the North Sea.

Even while the ship was taking on supplies her crew were carrying out the constant maintenance which is essential in port so that the ship is kept at operational readiness. One of the problems in maintaining the IOS fleet is lack of standardisation between ships of similar size and displacement. Main engines vary from one ship to another and there are also differences between auxiliary engines and on-deck cargo handling equipment. Skippers and engineers are hoping that the new ships coming along will not have this shortcoming. And with so many variations of engines and equipment it is not practical to hold a level of spares for all the ships, so the marine superintendents will not be sorry either, because it will ease their spares and replacements problems.

At sea, in anything except flat

LADY PAMELA, has a pre-sailing briefing in his tiny Master Tom Grimes, Chief Officer Dick Maclean, and Engineer Dave Teasdale.

calm — and it is not often calm in the North Sea or anywhere else, for that matter — offshore supply boats are wet, uncomfortable and, in spite of all the care that is taken by officers and crew, dangerous to work in.

Typical of the kind of hazards that these men face are rig towing and anchor handling.

These are two operations which once started, must go on despite any deterioration in the weather.

Up to twelve or sixteen rig anchors — each weighing up to 16 tons — may have to be lifted or placed in heavy seas, and howling gales, freezing cold with ice forming as fast as it can be axed off the steelwork. The operation is, of course, nearly always started when weather conditions are right. But who knows what the weather will do? Similarly, once a rig tow gets under way it has to go on, and frequently the crew only see the top of the rig — which will be a tow of anything between 20,000 — 30,000 tons — as it rises on the wave crest.

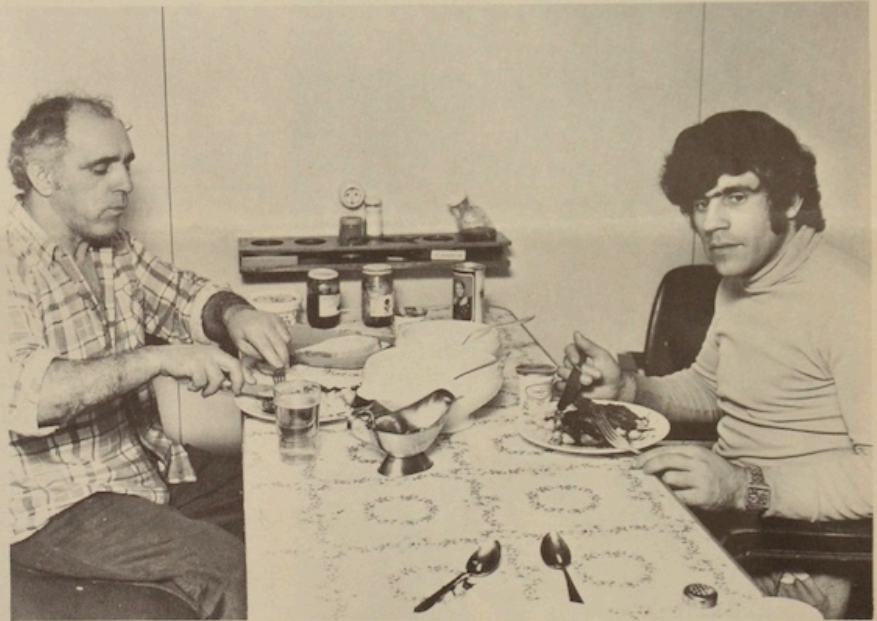
Quarters in supply ships are made as comfortable as possible, with ample drying space, showers, air conditioning and plenty of good food. But these are "lively" little vessels, and sometimes the crew, for an entire voyage are not able to sleep in their bunks — preferring a sleeping bag on the deck to being suddenly thrown out as the ships rides, practically flat-bottomed, over the pitching sea.

But the pay is good and the leave is frequent. For the particular kind of seamen it takes to do this highly important job in the offshore oil industry, working on supply boats is a way of life which cannot be replaced by anything ashore. Even if, as seamen do, they complain loudly, frequently and very, very vociferously.

LADY MARIANNE's crew are either Dutch or Spanish. Chief Engineer Teun Berhoeof comes from Gorkum . . .

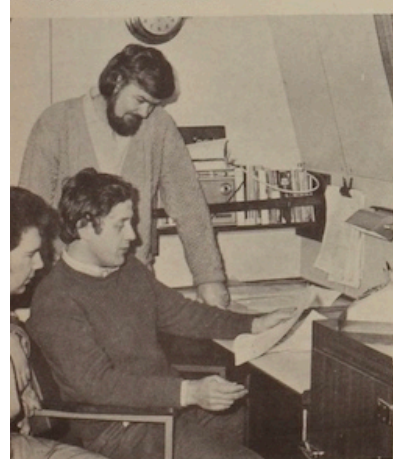


Skipper of LADY MARIANNE is Jack van Dorp from Leiden, Holland, whose brother Bill is also with the company. Captain van Dorp is married and has two teenage sons.



and two of the seamen are Manuel Santome-Gayo from Vigo, Spain and Antonio Dominguez from Pontevedra in Spain.

The menu was big steaks with spinach and onion soup . . . . cooked by chef Bertus Verleg, another Dutchman, from Breda.



# Comex-P & O/Hyco to enter into co-operative link-up

## Most advanced underwater technology now becomes available

A Letter of Intent has been exchanged to form a new joint co-operating agreement between P & O Intersubs Ltd and the Comex Group, which will make available to the offshore industry the most advanced underwater technology yet developed.

P & O Intersubs companies, now in the process of formation, will be jointly owned by Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P & O Group) of London and International Hydrodynamics Company Ltd (HYCO) the Vancouver-based submersible manufacturer.

Comex, whose headquarters are in Marseille, France, is a world leader in the development of deep diving operations and systems.

It is intended that the two organisations promote the operation of specialised submersibles and new underwater techniques that they have under development. Applications will be worldwide with special emphasis to be placed

on the North Sea. Under the terms of the proposed agreement, P & O Intersubs Ltd will be responsible for special support vessels and submersibles and Comex will supply deep diving equipment, personnel and life support technology for lock-out submersibles.

As part of the proposed co-operation agreement P & O Intersubs Ltd and Comex will undertake joint research and development activities to improve dry transfer and self-contained power systems for lock-out submersibles. HYCO is presently under contract to design and develop two such vessels with Comex support.

## Cadet successes

P & O Cadets scored some success in the 1973-74 session at Glasgow College of Nautical Studies and received their rewards at the prize giving on 17 May.

R Blair (GCD) third prize, Marine Engineering Technician's Course Phase I; I D Brunton (PD) third prize, Marine Engineering Technician's Course Phase III;

S M Robinson (GCD) first prize and A C Marshall (Container Fleets Ltd) second prize Ordinary National Diploma Phase I; H Reid (PD) first prize, Ordinary National Certificate Course Phase I.

J A McCullough (GCD) The Imray, Laurie, Norie and Wilson Prize (Phase I ONC)

R E Wilson (PD) and S M Robinson (GCD) Denholm Sports Cup - Sailing.

## Scholarships for seamen

Scholarships worth up to £150 each are now on offer to young men of British nationality serving on deck in the Merchant Navy to help them become navigating officers.

These scholarships will be known as The Honourable Company of Master Mariners' Memorial Scholarships, and the money comes from a number of funds established in memory of members of the Company which have been consolidated.

The scholarships will be administered by the College of the Sea, and the money may be spent on correspondence tuition, textbooks, shore courses or special coaching ashore.

Application may be made at any time to The Secretary, College of the Sea, 207 Balham High Road, London, SW17 7BH.

## Viscount Craigavon dies

A familiar and well known figure on many of the former Orient Line cruise ships, Hon James Craig, later Lord Craigavon, has died aged 68. Lord Craigavon joined the Orient Line as a cruising host in the mid-1930's and sailed on a number of cruises before the war. He attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander RNVR during the war serving in the paymaster branch, and returned to the Orient Line in 1951 as a passenger liaison officer.

When it was later decided to carry entertainments officers on each cruise ship, Lord Craigavon became the first such officer on ORIANA and sailed on her maiden voyage. He remained in the company until he retired in 1966, serving on other ships including ORSOVA and ORONSAY.

He was very well known to passengers throughout the world, but particularly to those in the UK, the United States and Australia.

He was the elder son of the first Viscount Craigavon, the first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland from 1921-40. His son, Janie Fraser Craig, succeeds to the title.

## Change in training system has advantages to cadet & company

A major change has taken place in the cadet training administration of P & O which will streamline the company's deck cadet training methods. Previously the responsibility for cadet training was divided between the company's headquarters and staffs of the fleet personnel departments of the three deep sea divisions - Bulk Shipping, General Cargo and Passenger. Cadet training now becomes the sole responsibility of the group's fleet recruitment and training department of the Fleet Personnel Division.



The purpose-built cadet training ship OTAIO will continue to be used for deck cadet training. OTAIO, 13,314 grt, is also a refrigerated cargo liner, and carries up to 50 cadets.

Under the new organisation cadets will, at the outset, no longer be recruited specifically for one of the deep sea divisions. Instead, the group fleet recruitment and training department will recruit cadets for the future manning needs of the P & O fleet as a whole, decide which colleges they will attend and also the ships in which they will serve at sea throughout their cadetships. This rationalisation plan is intended to provide cadets with better overall facilities in pursuit of efficiency skills at sea, by making use of the variety of ships and trade operations which the growing P & O fleet offers.

The changes have been implemented as a result of a study by Patrick Stuart-Williams who, until a year ago, was fleet manager of Bulk Shipping Division. Mr Stuart-Williams' career with P & O spans some 40 years, during which time he became Chairman of Hain Nourse Limited, which was disbanded on the formation of Bulk Shipping Division two years ago.

All deck cadets entering the company in future will undertake a common training during their first nine months at sea making use of OTAIO and six other cadet unit ships in the P & O fleet with a further capacity for some 50

cadets. In any full year these ships can provide facilities necessary for the whole of the annual intake of deck cadets for their initial sea period training. The supervision of training in each of the ships will be carried out by specialist cadet instruction officers and P & O is seeking additional experienced deck officers for this purpose.

Later on, further periods at sea - away from the training and training units - will be provided in a variety of ships so that they can gain further experience both in terms of equipment, trade and operation areas. As a result each cadet can expect during his training to serve in four or five different types of vessels - including tankers, gas carriers, bulk carriers, refrigerated cargo and passenger ships - as opposed to two or three ships under the old system.

Previously deck cadets were recruited for individual deep sea divisions and would serve all their sea periods in ships of that division. Now, the division in which the cadets will ultimately serve will depend of the individual manning needs of each division in any one year, and of the wishes of the cadets themselves. The decision as to the division in which a cadet will finally serve will be taken during the latter stages of their cadetship. Once this decision has been taken the cadets will serve during the latter stages of their cadetship in ships of the division to which they have been appointed.



## 'E' boat Alley veteran retires

Captain J M Sinclair, Master of Burns & Laird's Ardrossan/Belfast car ferry LION retired at the end of April after nearly half a century at sea.

Captain Sinclair first went to sea as an ordinary seaman in 1929 with Furness Withy; his first ship being the PACIFIC PRESIDENT, a cargo passenger vessel employed on the UK/Vancouver trade.

In 1936 he obtained his Mate's coastal certificate with Wm Robertson of Glasgow and sailed as mate in the ships OLIVINE, AXINITE and GEM.

At the outbreak of war in 1939 Captain Sinclair was mate with Blyths of Sunderland operating up and down the East Coast to

London, Portsmouth and Southampton in the notorious stretch of water known as "E-Boat Alley". Later in the war he sailed in ammunition ships supplying the Fleet at Scapa Flow.

In 1944 Captain Sinclair joined Burns & Laird and was appointed Master in 1955; his first command being the general cargo vessel LAIRDSFERN. After commanding all Burns Laird vessels he was appointed relief master and subsequently master of the new car ferry LION.

All his many friends in the old Coast Lines Group wish Captain Sinclair a long and happy retirement.

## Lucky Lancashire Lass



Ron Beedle, Passenger Division's promotions executive, hands over first prize, a P & O cruise for two, to "Miss Lancashire Evening Telegraph 1974". The winner, Elaine Danson, was chosen from 12 girls in the final which took place at "The New Cavendish" club in Blackburn on 2 May. Ron Beedle was one of the judges. Elaine will be cruising on ORIANA on 18 October to Gibraltar, Casablanca, Lanzarote, Tenerife, Madeira and Lisbon. Lucky Elaine - lucky ORIANA!!

# 150 years of GSN history that includes first ocean going steamship, two world wars and the poaching of Queen Victoria

This year, the oldest of the constituent parts of P & O Short Sea Shipping, the General Steam Navigation Company, celebrates its 150th anniversary, recalling that this was the first ocean-going steamship operator in the world. Although the name is changed to GSN (Trading) today - its progeny thrives in the form of European Unit Routes and Normandy and Southern Ferries.

The General Steam Navigation Company's claim to be the oldest ocean-going steamship operator in the world is derived from the fact that the other contenders for this coveted title were coastal or river operators. In fact, the company's founders included many of the Thames packet operators trading between London and Margate, as early as 1820, before eventually forming the General Steam Navigation Company on 11 June 1824.

Of the two main instigators, one, Thomas Brocklebank, was a wealthy timber merchant who operated the packet EAGLE on the Thames, while the other, William Hall, traded his vessels as far away as Hull. This was, however, a time when sailors generally despised "bought wind", or steam, and it was true that the early steamships could move much faster using their sails - providing, of course, that an exceptionally favourable wind was good enough to present itself at the right time!

In spite of ambitions to trade as far away as India and the United States the company soon settled down to concentrate on the equally important short sea services from the United Kingdom to the near-Continent. One of the first of these was a service to Antwerp in 1824, and it must be remembered that the company was operating steamships a year before the first steam railway came into being between Stockton and Darlington in 1825 and sixteen years before Europe received its first steam railway. By 1833 GSN was operating a comprehensive network of East Coast services, as well as sailing from London and some other ports to Dunkirk, Hamburg, Ostend, Calais, Antwerp, Boulogne and Rotterdam. The area of operations was later extended to the Mediterranean.

Naturally the Thames pleasure trade formed an important part of GSN's activities from the outset. At first, and until 1936, GSN operated in competition with the New Medway Steam Packet Company, and in a good year the two rivals could expect to carry 1½ million passengers between them.

## Larger than a frigate

Although the Margate trade and eventually the cross-Channel trade was to be very important, as an interim measure in 1832 a joint coach-ship service from Dover to London via Margate was operated. There were other services, for in 1833 the new paddle steamship, MONARCH, was described as being "larger than any of His Majesty's frigates, and longer than our 84-gun ships"; this was for the London to Edinburgh passenger service, which was still the civilised alternative to the stage coach.

A moment of early glory came when the directors offered the use of the 971-ton, schooner-rigged, paddle-steamer TRIDENT to Queen Victoria for her visit to Scotland in 1842. The offer was declined in favour of the Royal Yacht, but nevertheless the directors instructed the captain of TRIDENT to accompany the Royal Yacht and warships. The ploy worked, for Her Majesty indicated that she wished to return from Scotland on the GSN vessel.

Obviously the right impression remained while on board, for in her

diary the Queen said of the ship: "the accommodation for us was much larger and better than on board the ROYAL GEORGE and was beautifully fitted up". Queen Victoria also remarked upon the speed of the vessel, which took just 48 hours to London and with which only another GSN ship, MONARCH, could keep up.

Crisis also found the GSN far from wanting. DRAKE was at Messina, Sicily, over Christmas 1908 at the time of the terrible earthquake which destroyed the city and killed many of its inhabitants. Captain Carter and his crew rescued 317 persons and transported them to safety at Syracuse, where they received hospital treatment.

In January, 1933, another ship, BALGOWNIE was at Oporto when the Lampont and Holt Line's VERONESE ran aground in exceptionally severe weather and BALGOWNIE's crew were instrumental in the rescue of her passengers and crew.

## The Great War

World War I saw a number of the company's ships, their crews, and some of the overseas staff interned by the Central Powers, including the Hamburg manager, Mr Robert Kelso who later became a director. GSN provided crews for moving interned German ships from Antwerp to London, but this operation was mysteriously abandoned on Government orders. The company itself suffered the loss of 23 of its own ships - including DRAKE - with the lives of many fine men. While the cargo vessels carried vital supplies, often well away from their usual trades, the passenger vessels ferried troops to and from France - with one, GOLDEN EAGLE, carrying something like half a million soldiers.

In 1920 came the association with the P & O Group, with GSN offering not only valuable feeder and short sea services to complement the far-flung operations of its new parent, but also a valuable Continental agency network as well. GSN itself made a number of notable acquisitions between the wars, including the East Anglian concerns of Great Yarmouth Shipping and Thomas Trapp, followed by the New Medway Steam Packet Company in 1936. Largest of these acquisitions, however, was the Liverpool firm of Moss-Hutchison, acquired in 1935 with its fleet of sixteen ships. In fact, by the late 1930s GSN had no less than 31 subsidiaries.

Technical development was not neglected, with the company wisely refusing to allow its early connection with the steamship to cloud its judgment, so that after 1932 an increasing proportion of the fleet consisted of motor ships.



The ROYAL SOVEREIGN made six trips to Dunkirk, and brought back 11,000 to 12,000 troops.

Amongst the advantages of the new vessels were improved weight distribution and relatively greater cargo capacity. Most motor ships were cargo vessels, of course, but others, such as the famous ROYAL DAFFODIL, were passenger vessels.

GSN's World War II started early - partly because Mr Robert Kelso, by this time a director, was determined to avoid the internments of the previous war, and in this he was highly successful. Care was also taken to provide additional protection on the bridge of the company's ships, and, as soon as it was permitted, to provide some armament. Apart from this, before the outbreak of war the passenger ships were all chartered to assist in evacuating school-children from the London dock areas to East Coast resorts.

Eleven General Steam Navigation Company ships were lost to enemy action during World War II, and after the war one vessel struck a mine. Another ten vessels owned by subsidiary companies were lost. Many of the company's vessels played an important part in the Dunkirk evacuation, with another vessel well-known to the public, ROYAL SOVEREIGN, built just before the War, alone carrying some 17,000 British and Allied troops to safety. She was sunk in December 1940. Throughout the war ROYAL DAFFODIL carried some two million troops. Many of these were returning ex-POWs or BAOR men on leave, and the company was not slow to draw their attention to the fact that the ship would soon be returning to her normal business, hopefully enjoying the patronage of the war-weary.

Nevertheless, times were changing, and even new ships for the pleasure cruises could not guarantee their future, as the post-war period saw not only a renewal of coach and railway competition but also, and most serious of all, from the private car. The new ROYAL SOVEREIGN eventually passed to new owners, and after conversion traded to and from Dover as the 'Autocarrier' with new cars - possible adding insult to injury.

GSN throughout its history had learned to live with change and they did so now. New developments included Southern Ferries, for roll-on/roll-off traffic, particularly holidaymakers' cars, and European Unit Routes, operating lift-on/lift-off container services from Tilbury to the near Continent. These thrived, perhaps even out-shining their former parent with whom they have been, since October 1971, members of the P & O European and Air Transport Division. It was at this time that P & O increased its previous 86 per cent shareholding in GSN to 100 per cent.

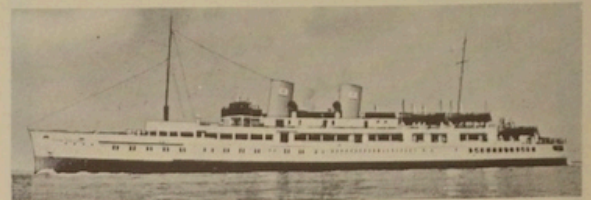
Today, GSN (Trading) Limited, operates a network of services from Shoreham and Felixstowe to France, Portugal and Italy, and from London to Hamburg. A major item in the traffic is wine, and GSN has played a part in making Shoreham Britain's leading wine importing port. The fleet, which at one time numbered more than eighty vessels, is now down to six, ALBATROSS, AVOCET, DORSET COAST, ORIOLE, ORTOLAN and PETREL, but the company still enjoys its agency position, handling traffic for other E & AT members, such as Coast Lines, Tyne-Tees Shipping, Bennet Steamship, Belfast Steamship and EUR.

This may seem to be something

of an anti-climax, but few companies have managed to remain in a prominent position for more than a century, as GSN did, and the

memories of a great tradition now linger on while contributing much that is worthwhile to a larger and more widespread undertaking.

David Wragg



The ROYAL DAFFODIL which rescued more than 8,500 troops.



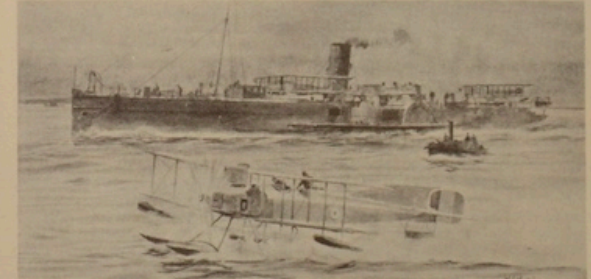
The GOLDEN EAGLE, which brought back over 2,000 troops.



Presentation of Lloyd's War Medals to Captain T J Aldis, Boatswain A J Webster, and Assistant Steward J Thomas, by the Mayor of Rochester.



The arrival of Her Majesty, H R H Prince Albert, and Suite, at Woolwich, on board the General Steam Navigation Company's TRIDENT, of 1,000 tons, from Scotland, on the 13 September 1842. From a colour-plate, 1843.



G S N C steamship GOLDEN EAGLE converted to a seaplane carrier and under charter to the Admiralty, 1916. Drawn by W L Wullic, R A.



Sinking of the G S N Company's SS LAPWING, after being mined in the North Sea, on 11 November, 1917. From a photograph taken on the spot.

# Wavelength

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## POST BAG

Dear Sir

In the April issue of Wavelength (Awards to the two employees of A S Jones) reference was made to Bromborough Pool and the false vision it may conjure of a clear, cool idyllic spot and not the evil-smelling deep-water pond it really is.

The following may be of interest, especially to Merseysiders. My grandmother, born in 1835, possessed an etching which in due course became the property of my parents in Wallasey. Eventually their home was sold and the contents dispersed.

The etching depicted a rural scene of a young woman, with petticoats and skirt well tucked up, washing clothes in a pool backed by trees and this was said to be Bromborough Pool - idyllic, indeed.

In 1948 or thereabouts the etching was offered as a gift to the curator of the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight, but he was not interested. One wonders what became of it.

F. Mara  
(Retired Master, Coast Lines Ltd)  
Kronsaagen/Kiel  
West Germany

Dear Sir,

I served with the Orient Line for over 20 years, my last ship being ORION, which I joined in July 1935 whilst she was being built in Barrow and left her when she was returned to the builders in May 1946 to be rehabilitated after her war service.

A few weeks ago I came up to London and wandered around the exhibition in the basement of the P & O building, thence to the 9th floor and gazed with mixed feelings at the model of ORION, remembering that she sailed at the head of the first troop convoy after war broke out. This was from the Clyde on the evening of 5 September 1939 and the battleship HMS RAMILLIES was part of the escort.

She was the Commodore ship again when the first troop convoy left Australia and New Zealand in January 1940, once more HMS

RAMILLIES being part of the escort.

Alongside the model is a caption which states she was broken up in 1960, but I thought she went to Holland to be broken up in either 1961 or 1962.

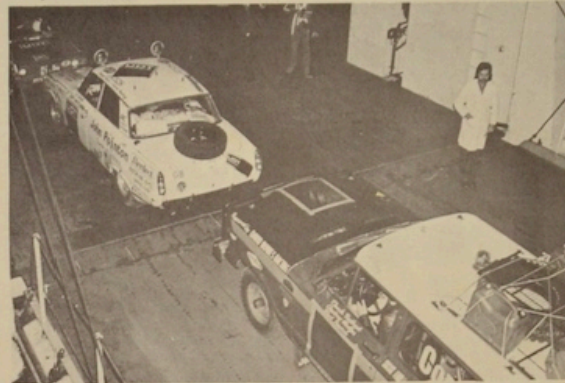
In a public house in Fenchurch Street is a plaque depicting the hunter Orion. This plaque was presented to the captain, officers and crew of ORION for their part in taking aboard nearly 500 passengers from DORIC (Cunard-White Star). This was after answering an SOS from that ship, when she had been badly holed as a result of a collision with a French ship off the coast of Portugal during a thick fog, on 5 September 1935.

I am sure that only about one in every thousand of the customers who use that pub are aware of the reason for the plaque, surely the directors could have found a niche in their exhibition because that rescue brought very welcome publicity in the press for the Orient Line. ORION was returning to Southampton after her maiden cruise and the ship was not completely fitted out in the tourist section of the ship where the passengers from DORIC were accommodated. Incidentally, we were all granted or awarded nine days pay as life salvage money.

Glancing through the letters in the March Wavelength, I was very amused to read a letter from Mr H Richmond of Co. Down, where he states he sailed in the Orient liner OTRANTO during the war from Capetown to Liverpool without escort or in convoy. ORION frequently returned to England without an escort. Just to quote a few examples - after discharging troops in Alexandria in September 1939 we returned to Tilbury calling at Gibraltar and Plymouth, several voyages from the Cape, and the most important one when we escaped from Singapore in January 1942. As a result of a collision with the battleship HMS REVENGE in the Atlantic South West of Freetown in September 1941 we eventually entered drydock in Singapore for repair to our bows. We left Singapore carrying women and children and a draft of Australian wounded soldiers and had an escort of one destroyer for 12 hours, then we proceeded on our own to Fremantle, Melbourne, New Zealand, Panama thence to Bermuda where we joined another troopship the Bibby liner LANCASHIRE. From there we

## London to Munich (via Sahara)

Competitors' cars in the 1974 UDT World Cup Rally boarding the Normandy Ferries' vessel, LEOPARD, at Southampton for the overnight crossing to Le Havre on the second day of the Rally, Sunday 5 May. The crossing provided competitors with a chance of a good night's sleep before starting the long drive down through France to the Spanish boarder to start the next competitive stage.



The Rally finished at Munich in time for the start of the World Cup series at the end of May, by which time the starting total of some sixty contestants were much reduced by the long and arduous course through Spain, North Africa, Italy and Eastern Europe.

In the photograph the Rally markings have been blanked out, as there is a ban on rally events in France in the aftermath of the fuel crisis.

## Well done, Larry!

Second Officer Larry Bridgmont, who was on ARDSHIEL before going on leave, has won the 1973 Captain Charles H Brown prize which is awarded by the Association of Navigation Schools for the highest marks gained by a candidate sitting for the Second Mate's Certificate of Competency in that year.

Mr Bridgmont, who studied at the Plymouth Polytechnic, gained 83.7%. He was a Bulk Shipping Division cadet from September 1968 to September 1973. The prize takes the form of book which is inscribed in gold lettering.

## Congrats

Congratulations to two BSD officers and their wives on the birth of sons.

Roger Boydon, Chief Officer and his wife Theresa on 4 May Colin Edward. Roger was on leave at their home at Broughton Gifford, Wiltshire.

Alastair Preece, Second Officer on IRFON, and his wife Adele on 10 May, Giles Dylan. Their home is at Blackwood, Monmouthshire.

## GCD Promotions

General Cargo Division are pleased to announce the following promotions to Master and Chief Engineer Officer.

Captain R C Anderson has taken command of HERTFORD in New Zealand. He joined the New Zealand Shipping Company Limited as 4th Officer on 1954 and was promoted to Chief Officer in July, 1960.

Captain Anderson is married and lives in Kenilworth, Warcs.

Captain D T Hughes has taken command of TRENEGLOS at Cape Town. He joined P & O Lines in 1953 and was promoted to Chief Officer in 1960.

Captain Hughes is married with two children and lives in Eastbourne, Sussex.

Mr F R De Souza has been promoted to Chief Engineer Officer, JELUNGA. Mr De Souza joined the British India Steam Navigation Company as Junior Engineer Officer in March 1961 and was promoted to Second Engineer Officer in October, 1964.

Married, Mr De Souza lives in Bombay and is General Cargo Division's first locally-engaged Chief Engineer Officer.

Mr A B McLaren has been promoted to Chief Engineer Officer with effect from 1 June. Currently serving on STRATHARDLE, he joined the British India Steam Navigation Company as a Junior Engineer Officer in 1959.

Mr McLaren is married and his wife and 6-year-old daughter live in Japan. Mr McLaren holds a First Class Combined Certificate.

Mr B P Rao has been promoted to Chief Engineer Officer with effect from 1 June, 1974. Mr Rao, a locally engaged officer, joined the British India Steam Navigation Company as a Junior Engineer Officer in 1962. He lives in Visakhapatnam.

Mr A H McAuley has been promoted to Chief Engineer Officer with effect from 1 June. Currently serving on MULBERA, Mr McAuley joined the British Steam Navigation Company in 1967 and holds a First Class Combined Certificate. He is single and his home is in Dundee.

Mr M Richardson has been promoted to Chief Engineer Officer with effect from 1 June. Currently serving on ARMANISTAN, Mr Richardson joined the British India Steam Navigation Company in 1967 and holds a First Class

Combined Certificate. Mr Richardson is single and his home is in Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Mr W F Murray has been promoted to Chief Engineer Officer on CUMBERLAND. Mr Murray joined the New Zealand Shipping Company in 1969 and holds a First Class Combined Certificate. He is a New Zealander and lives with his wife and two children in the Isle of Man.

Mr P J Brockington has been promoted to Chief Engineer Officer with effect from 1 July and joins HERTFORD. Mr Brockington joined the New Zealand Shipping Company as an Engineer Cadet in 1959. He has recently completed a tour of second duty with TSD and lives with his wife in Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire.

Commenting upon this list of promotions to Wavelength, Mr F M Marchant, fleet personnel manager in GCD, said that these were only the first of a rapidly increasing number and it was hoped to promote a further two Chief Engineers in July and at least five more Masters and Chief Engineers during the remainder of the year.

"I am confident," said Mr Marchant, "that promotion will continue at this rate for the foreseeable future."

## Bigger and younger merchant fleet

In the past 18 months the British merchant fleet has risen by 6.5m tons - 14% - and is now the largest and youngest in history.

A report by the British Chamber of Shipping shows that there are 2,204 British-flag vessels with a total tonnage of 49,538,000.

This is now the largest merchant shipping fleet that Britain has ever had - and the youngest. The average age of vessels is 6½ years and 55% are less than five years old.

The fleet is dominated by the supertankers - with 590 vessels with a total tonnage of 27,700,000 tons, and container ships - 91 of them - total 1,266,000 tons.

## Energy Division appointment



Mr Michael Denchfield, 35, who has been appointed to the new post of financial controller, Energy Division. He was previously financial controller, Passenger Division, and since joining P & O in 1962 has held posts as group management accountant and management accountant, Passenger Division.



Model of H.M.S. INVESTIGATOR

The intrepid navigator who was the first to sail around the entire Australian coastline has long been honoured on the continent he discovered and named.

Now, two hundred years after his birth in a small English fenland town, his native county of Lincolnshire is to ensure that the Anglo-Australian celebrations of Matthew Flinders' bi-centenary establishes this remarkable untutored genius in his rightful place among Britain's great maritime and scientific pioneers.

This enterprise is long overdue. While South Australia has as its own living, vibrant memorial to the explorer the state's Flinders University, Britain has virtually ignored the mariner who proved that Australia was a single land mass.

One of his shipmates aboard BELLEROPHON during this battle was Henry Waterhouse who, later the same year, was given command of RELIANCE to carry Captain Hunter to Port Jackson to become the second Governor of New South Wales.

Flinders wrote to Waterhouse expressing "a passion for exploring new countries" and in 1795 he sailed in RELIANCE to Port Jackson. With him went his younger brother, Samuel, and the ship's surgeon George Bass.

It must be remembered that at this time Australia, unlike the

Diemen's Land were regarded as separate land masses.

It was Matthew Flinders' great achievement that he was the first to circumnavigate Australia, completing the discovery of Tasmania and establishing that New South Wales and New Holland were parts of one vast continent to which he gave the name by which it is known today.

Flinders and his friend Bass undertook a number of daring voyages of exploration around Port Jackson, the first two in a tiny, eight foot boat, appropriately named TOM THUMB.

Flinders was not with Bass in 1797 when the surgeon discovered the strait which now bears his name. In 1798, however, Flinders discovered the Kent group of islands and in the same year, sailing with Bass in the sloop NORFOLK, he circumnavigated Tasmania and discovered the site where the state's capital Hobart was to arise.

During these voyages Flinders did much careful charting and collected new information about the natural history of the area. This brought him to the attention of another eminent Lincolnshire man, Sir Joseph Banks, then at the height of his influence as President of the Royal Society.

When Flinders returned to England in 1800 to propose a complete circumnavigation of what he believed to be one continent, the support he received from Sir Joseph was probably decisive in gaining approval for the expedition.

he arrived off the south-west coast of Australia at the end of 1801.

Ignoring instructions from the Admiralty, who expected him to make first for Port Jackson, Flinders was determined to survey the unknown southern coastline in meticulous detail, and this objective he put above all others.

For the next 17 months he carried out a painstaking survey of this coastline, and from a hilltop he saw companies of kangaroos and emus and the deserted fires of aboriginals on the spot where Melbourne was later to arise. And he was the first explorer to visit the eventual site of Adelaide, state capital of South Australia.

With pumps working overtime, Flinders returned round the western and southern coasts of Australia. When he put in at Port Jackson INVESTIGATOR was found unfit for further service.

Matthew Flinders had now circumnavigated Australia and proved that it was a unified land mass; he had proved that Tasmania was an off-shore island; he had charted hitherto unknown coasts and had improved on the charts of previous navigators.

But he had not fulfilled his self-imposed task of charting the continent he named Australia "so thoroughly that it would never need doing again."

## Disaster

In August 1803 he sailed as a passenger aboard PORPOISE to return to England to seek another ship in which to complete his task. Disaster struck about 700 miles north of Port Jackson when PORPOISE was wrecked on a coral reef.

Flinders' powers of leadership and seamanship put him in command of the situation.

Under his direction most of the passengers and crew escaped to a sandbank and were able to rescue sufficient stores to survive and build a small boat. In this boat Flinders and a small crew made a hazardous voyage to Port Jackson for help. It was accomplished in only 13 days and Flinders returned with three ships to evacuate the survivors.

In one of these vessels, the 29-ton schooner CUMBERLAND, Flinders decided to set sail for England. When he put into Mauritius for water and repairs, not realising that France and Britain were again at war, Flinders was taken prisoner as a spy and detained for seven years. During his imprisonment he wrote a detailed paper which was the first to announce and prove the error of navigational compasses because of the iron in ships.

Released at last, his health ruined, Matthew Flinders devoted the last three years of his life to writing an account of his voyage. He died, aged only 40, on April 19, 1814, without being able to read the book which was received from the printers and placed on his bed a day or two earlier.

His reunion with his wife brought happiness after years of worry and hardship. Their few

years together saw the birth of a daughter, Anne, who became the mother of an explorer in another field - William Matthew Flinders Petrie, the renowned Egyptologist.

Adversity dogged Flinders in death, as in life. His widow had to find the £51 loss on the publication of his book; she was granted no Admiralty pension; unlike Cook and Bligh, Flinders was not elected to the Royal Society.

Now the county of his birth, through the Lincolnshire Association, is making amends for his shameful treatment - and appropriately Australians will figure prominently in the Association's spring and summer commemorative programme.

Lincolnshire and Australia will also be linked by the financing by the county association of a Flinders Memorial Fellowship in Literature. Selection arrangements are being made by the Flinders University of South Australia and the Fellow chosen will live in Lincolnshire for one year and take part in the region's literary activities.

Tangible commemorative items recalling Flinders are a special medal in gold, sterling silver or oxidised brass, issued by The Mint, Birmingham; a limited edition of engraved lead crystal goblets; a memorial Wedgwood plate; and a limited edition of handmade goblets with glass bowls and engraved silver stems produced by two Lincolnshire craftsmen, glass maker James Roddis and silversmith Derek Birch.

## Lincs remembers its sailor-scientist

# Matthew Flinders—explorer of the Australia coast

by Robert Hedley

The great navigator's most striking recognition in the United Kingdom has been but a single window in Lincoln Cathedral. This depicts Flinders with one of the many Lincolnshire men to come under his command, George Bass, who discovered the Strait now named after him and which proved that Tasmania was an Australian off-shore island.

Yet Flinders' was a life of so much romance, hardship, deprivation and heroism - and such a short one - that it is an overdue celebration of his achievements that 1974 will commemorate, both in the country in which he was born and on the continent on the other side of the world whose existence he proved and charted.

Flinders' career had a storybook beginning - quite literally. The son of a doctor, he was lured from the profession of his father and grandfather by reading Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe". Thereafter his own life took on all the elements of a fictional adventure story; except that he translated his dreams of exploration from fantasy to fact.

Born at Donington in south Lincolnshire on 16 March, 1774, Matthew joined the Navy in 1789, much against the wishes of his family and friends. At 16, after the mutiny on the BOUNTY, he sailed on the ship in which Captain Bligh made his second, and successful, attempt to transport breadfruit trees from Tahiti and plant them in the West Indies.

## "A passion for exploring...."

After his training under this famous mariner, Flinders experienced naval warfare when, in 1794, he fought in the Battle of the Glorious First of June when Lord Howe defeated the French fleet off Brest.

Americas, had no obvious commercial or strategic value and was outside normal trade routes.

In the early 17th century the Spaniard Torres discovered the straits dividing New Guinea from north-east Australia.

At about the same time the Dutchman, Dirk Hartog, made a chance landfall on the western coast. This was followed by other Dutchmen chancing on the unknown continent while voyaging from the Cape of Good Hope.

The first planned voyages of discovery by the Dutch were those by Abel Tasman between 1642 and 1644 during which he discovered stretches of the north coast and the southern part of what he named Van Diemen's Land, after the Dutch Governor-General of Java, now more justly called Tasmania.

## First British colony

It was not until the British Admiralty, in 1769, took advantage of a scientific expedition promoted by the Royal Society - the nation's leading scientific body - to observe the transit of Venus across the sun at Tahiti. James Cook, then in command of HMS ENDEAVOUR was instructed to explore the continent which was believed to exist.

Cook, the first navigator to approach Australia from the east, landed at Botany Bay, discovering a much greener, more fertile land than the Dutch had encountered. Cook named the eastern coastline New South Wales and annexed it to the British Crown. In 1788 the first British colony was established at Port Jackson, near the site of the present city of Sydney, as a penal settlement.

Even at this time New South Wales, New Holland and Van

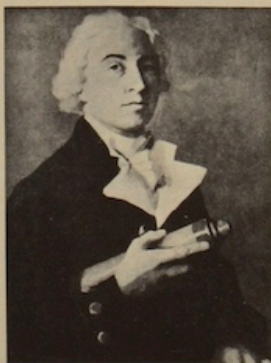
But Britain was still at war with France - and finding a suitable ship proved difficult. Flinders, however, was delighted when in 1801 he was given command of a rotten, leaky vessel of 334 tons, renamed INVESTIGATOR.

While this ship was in no fit condition for such a major undertaking it was well equipped for a scientific expedition in those times, both in men and equipment.

Among her complement were the botanist Robert Brown, artist William Westall, and a botanical draftsman, Ferdinand Bauer. All three achieved renown for their works resulting from this voyage.

Lincolnshire was well represented. The crew included not only Lt Samuel Flinders and Lt Robert Fowler from the county, but also Midshipman John Franklin who later became Governor of Tasmania and a celebrated Arctic explorer.

Although he sailed several months later than a French expedition under Nicholas Baudin, Flinders was ahead when



George Bass



Matthew Flinders

## NZ farmer comes to town



Winner of the Farming Cadet Travelling Scholarship 1974 - sponsored by P & O in New Zealand, Mr David Barrowclough, is greeted on arrival at P & O Building, Leadenhall Street by Mr Alan Bott, New Zealand trade manager, GCD.

Mr Barrowclough, 20, works on a 200-acre dairy farm at Morrinsville, near Hamilton. He will spend seven months in this country studying British farming methods and generally improving his own farming knowledge. For the first two months he is to attend an agricultural college in Warwickshire and will then spend the remainder of the time working on farms - where he will live-in with the family - in various parts of the UK.

As part of the scholarship, Mr Barrowclough travelled from Wellington to Sheerness on CUMBERLAND - and enjoyed all 36 days of the voyage.

# At the sign of the Humming Bird

## Bovis is housing, property and construction on an international scale



The acquisition of Bovis by the P & O group broadens the commercial and industrial operations of what is primarily a transportation group into the international field of housing, property and construction. Yet it is only in the last six years that Bovis - now recognized everywhere by its humming bird trade mark - has grown from a traditional building company to its present stature.

Today Bovis are developing town centres, housing estates, office blocks, stores and supermarkets, industrial sites, motorways, bridges, tunnels and harbours in this country and abroad. The group is British-based, with companies operating in Canada and South-East Asia, as well as property activities in France, Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands and a housing company in Australia.

During 1967 outline plans were made for re-structuring the group by moving into housing and expanding property development activities.

The outcome of these plans was to divide Bovis into four distinct fields - housing, property, construction, and later, banking.

The first step came in that year, when Bovis acquired a large housing company based in the South-East. Over the next six years they acquired three more



A row of detached houses on the Bovis Homes Heatherside Estate at Camberley, Surrey. Prices range from £12,000 to £19,000 and house styles vary widely on this 1,000 home estate.

The history of Bovis dates back to 1885 when C W Bovis acquired a small London building firm which had been established about 30 years earlier. Under his ownership the company flourished and was ultimately bought by Sidney Glyn and Samuel Joseph in 1909, and in 1928 it went public.

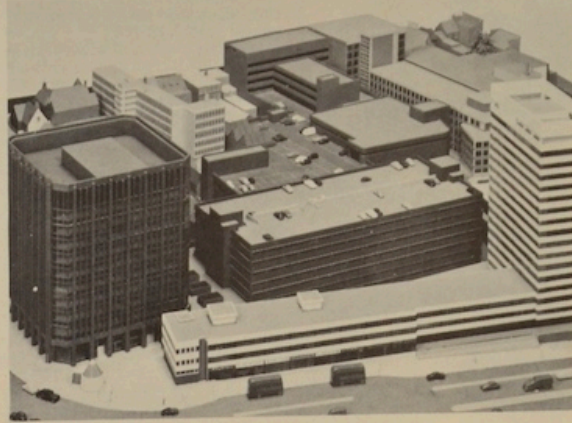
Bovis survived the economic depression of the early 1930s and the materials and labour shortages of World War II to become a successful, medium-sized construction company relying almost exclusively on traditional building activities for its profits and also holding a small property investment portfolio.

housing companies based in the Midlands, the South-West and Scotland thus giving themselves national coverage. Bovis Homes Division is now one of the largest housebuilders in Britain, providing around 3,000 new homes every year. As well as the British-based building programme, there are Bovis homes developments in Canada and Australia.

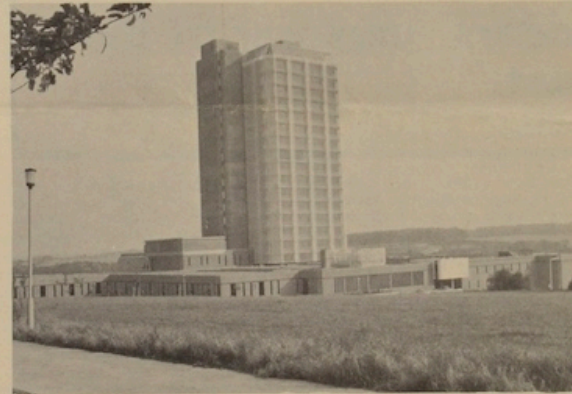
Bovis Property Division expanded through the injection of key management and today is developing town centre schemes in Reading, Durham and Sunderland as well as shop, office and industrial sites in England and Scotland.



Bovis Construction Division was awarded a Management Contract worth £7½ million to supervise the building of the John Player Horizon Factory at Nottingham. The two storey factory occupies a 30 acre site and its power supplies are generated totally by Natural Gas. The whole building programme - from initial planning to completion - took just 31 months.



An architect's model of the £7.5 million town centre scheme at Reading, Berkshire, being carried out jointly by Bovis Property Division and Equity and Law Life Assurance Society Limited. When complete the scheme will comprise a 12 storey office block, two storey supermarket, three storey department store, a 1,000 space multi-storey car park, nine shops with offices overhead, and a public house.



The new headquarters of the Automobile Association at Basingstoke, Hampshire, built by Bovis Construction at a cost of £4½ million. The offices, with 253,000 square feet of accommodation, occupy a seven acre site. The 220 feet high tower is the tallest in Hampshire.

On the mainland of Europe, Bovis Property Division has major industrial and office developments in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain. These operations are controlled from a head office in Paris, with subsidiary offices in Amsterdam and Antwerp.

### Fee building

Until 12 months ago Bovis had two construction companies - Bovis Fee Construction, operating the fee system, which they pioneered in the 1920s and used to build every Marks and Spencer store in Britain since 1926 - and Gilbert Ash, traditional builders using the tender system. In April 1973 these two companies were merged to form Bovis Construction Limited.

The high risk area of tendering was eliminated and Bovis now concentrates exclusively on the more profitable fee system. Under this type of contract a fee is agreed at the outset between Bovis, the client and his quantity

surveyor. All subsequent building work is then charged to the client at cost and during the contract Bovis books are open to the client to inspect at all times.

Based at Westbury in Wiltshire is the Bovis Civil Engineering Division, whose current projects include the building of a supply boat base in the Shetland Isles and large sections of the M3 and M5 motorways.

Civil engineering covers a wide field of work from bridge-building and tunnelling to the construction of water treatment and refuse disposal works. In the past, much of the work has been for public authorities but the advent of Britain's offshore oil and gas industry has added fresh scope to the market.

Bovis went into banking in 1971, with the acquisition of Twenty Century Banking Corporation of Brighton. The bank operates by lending money to commercial and industrial borrowers, particularly for property and building projects.

This border base of operations resulted in Bovis pre-tax profits rising from £1.1m. in 1968 to £13.4m. in 1972.

## P & O hold fares for 1974

P & O has guaranteed its cruise fares for the rest of the 1974 season for cruises sailing from the United Kingdom.

Passenger Division said that, because of more stable conditions in the international bunker situation, P & O felt sufficiently confident to extend its "no rise" guarantee from July to the end of the season. This means that all current P & O fares for cruises leaving up to 31 December are now pegged and will not be increased.

The surcharge of 10 per cent levied on cruises up to July and a further 5 per cent for sailings from July to the end of the season remain in force.

## Medical services re-org in London

The medical services for London-based shore staff have been transferred from Personnel Services Division to the Medical Department under Dr T W Poole, Chief Medical Officer, and the combined department becomes part of Passenger Division. This took effect from 1 May.

Dr G E S Stewart, previously head of medical services for London shore staff and now Senior Medical Officer, will continue to be responsible for these people, while Dr Poole will deal with matters concerning sea staff throughout the Group and be in overall charge of medical services, incorporating the role of Group Medical Adviser previously the province of Dr J H L Newham who retired in April this year.

Dr Poole is now also responsible for all aspects of health of sea staff, both Asian and non-Asian, and for hygiene on all ships in the Group. In addition, he will give specialist advice on any new projects where medical considerations have particular importance.

## Six minutes in the drink

Mate on the International Offshore Services supply vessel LADY ALEXANDRA, Mr I Pringle took an unplanned and chilly swim in the North Sea on 7 May. Whilst mooring alongside the rig Sedco 3, LADY ALEXANDRA broke away in the swell before she was fully secured and Mr Pringle was flung backwards overboard. Captain Mossman immediately set her pitch controls on a very slight pitch forward and declutched both shafts.

It was fortunate that LADY ALEXANDRA's sister ship LADY VIVIEN was also moored alongside the rig, for she immediately launched her MOB boat and it was crewed and in the water within three minutes. Mr Pringle was back on the deck of LADY VIVIEN within another three and was attended to by one of the rig's medical staff. He was airlifted to Lerwick with shock and concussion but was released from hospital after a couple of days to rest at home.

Mr Pringle is now back on LADY ALEXANDRA, thanks to the swift actions of both ships in the emergency.

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