The Hue & Cry

Having spent ten years under sail before piloting, I still get to run away to sea. It was very sad to see one such brief command, brig T/S Astrid, wrecked off Kinsale. Remarkably, it was very close to where the barque “Falls of Garry” foundered in 1911. This is the ship I have sailed on which has gone - Asgard II having sunk in Biscay 2008. Happily, no lives were lost. It is vital to examine such cases in order to learn from others’ misfortune. Interestingly, in the case of the Clyde tug “Flying Phantom” girted in fog in 2007 drowning 3 of her 4 crew, charges have been filed against the tug’s owners and operators. One of the criticisms leveled by the MAIB at all UK ports was a failure to learn the lessons from previous incidents and over-reliance on ISO 9001 QMS audit.

Returning to sail, I helped crew “Spirit of New Zealand” on her August voyage from Gisborne to Wellington via Napier. It was a testing trip weather-wise, but allowed me to catch up with pilots in Napier and Wellington to compare notes and ideas. It is this willingness to share, which promotes best practice and benefits everyone.

The America’s Cup yachts’ hydrofoil design concept was proved by Alexander Bell 100 years ago but lacked funding from the US military. The current race is classic David & Goliath: plucky NZ ingenuity (with modest Government backing) versus the Corporate wealth of Oracle whose CEO Larry Ellison is ‘as rich as Croesus’. Oracle has close origins with CIA and is a vital part of the NSA surveillance machinery. In Greek Mythology, the Oracle of Delphi had a dark side: King Croesus of Lydia misinterpreted the omens, rebelled against the Persian Empire only to lose his own. Let’s hope that Ellison likewise suffers from an excess of Hubris. (Go, Team NZ!). If international conflict could be settled by sailing races, wouldn’t that be better than bombing?

CONTENTS

Please note that the views expressed in this magazine represent only their author’s views - not those of NZMPA.

1. Hue & Cry                  Ed
2. Floating-off Ops, Admiralty Bay  Alan Rabjohns
4. National Insecurities        John Cleese
5. Ports of Call               Embedded Freelancers
9. Drums of War                Ed
11. For Whom Bells Toll        Ed
13. The Deadly Sins of MPX      Katherine Devitt
17. Refugees – Then & Now      Craig Holmes
18. Discharge Books: Half Life of History  Ed
19. The Allotted Span          Barry Youde

STOP PRESS:

1) NZMPA Conference will be held in Wellington on Friday 29th November (See p.2)
2) Peter Liley invites NZMPA members to AMPI Workshop in Melbourne, 21st-22nd November.

NZMPA EXECUTIVE

President: Neil Armitage narm@xtra.co.nz
Vice-Pres: Steve Banks seabear@xtra.co.nz
Sec/Treasurer Mike Birch mikebirch@ihug.co.nz
WebMaster Troy Evans riggettroy@yahoo.com
Editor Hugh O’Neill HughBONEill@xtra.co.nz
Printer Anne Tamati digiartdesign@xtra.co.nz
NZ Maritime Pilots Association
AGM

Presentations by Maritime and Employment Lawyers,
Technical Experts and Government Agencies.

Museum of Wellington, City and Sea
29 November 2013, 0830 - 1700

Drinks and dinner at conclusion of AGM
What makes a good Pilot?

What makes a good Pilot? Everyone reading this will have separate and somewhat subjective opinions on this. Let’s define then, what is a good pilotage? Once again, subjectivity creates a range of opinions but I would venture to suggest that a good pilotage is one that is boring to the point of abject predictability, in which nothing out of the expected occurs, and in the end one whose only paperwork involves a signed passage plan. The end therefore is in the beginning - passage planning and communication. If the plan has been well thought out, well practiced and constantly under scrutiny then there is a very good chance that this is what will pan out. However this is not guaranteed: it takes the knowledge, skill and experience of the person charged with the pilotage to understand, execute and control this plan so as to achieve the required result. It is therefore important that this person has the competence and training to do this. This takes us back to the first question, what makes a good pilot and equally as important what criteria is used in his selection?

My belief and understanding of rule 90 requires that a candidate for the role of Pilot must hold a certificate equivalent to the Master of the largest vessel that can transit the Port and for our major Ports this would be a Master (Foreign Going) Class 1. However for the smaller coastal ports, this would equate to perhaps a Coastal Master or Fishing Ticket. The rationale for this is the command presence required on the Bridge of the Ship being piloted and the confidence thereby instilled in the Master and Crew of the Vessel. I venture to suggest that a person who has commanded nothing bigger than a Harbour Tug would find the Bridge of a large Container ship a rather daunting prospect.

Recently Maritime New Zealand has been looking to review the certificate requirement for pilotage and one could cynically suggest that this has been instigated by Port authorities looking to reduce the cost of their services by distilling the qualifications of Pilots and enabling lesser tickets the ability to enter the profession. The stakes are very high and to put it in perspective, I would suggest that cost of the Rena would pay the wages of every Pilot in New Zealand for many many years to come. So therefore who is responsible for this continued dissemination and why is it being allowed to be pursued - especially in this post-Pike River environment? And in the words of Pete Seeger, “When will they ever learn?”. On a lighter note - and one that I have to share even if the PC brigade burn my house down for the generalisations included below, this (see p.4) is pretty funny:

---

Taking Sights
By
Neil Armitage
President NZMPA

---

What makes a good Pilot?

What makes a good Pilot? Everyone reading this will have separate and somewhat subjective opinions on this. Let’s define then, what is a good pilotage? Once again, subjectivity creates a range of opinions but I would venture to suggest that a good pilotage is one that is boring to the point of abject predictability, in which nothing out of the expected occurs, and in the end one whose only paperwork involves a signed passage plan. The end therefore is in the beginning - passage planning and communication. If the plan has been well thought out, well practiced and constantly under scrutiny then there is a very good chance that this is what will pan out. However this is not guaranteed: it takes the knowledge, skill and experience of the person charged with the pilotage to understand, execute and control this plan so as to achieve the required result. It is therefore important that this person has the competence and training to do this. This takes us back to the first question, what makes a good pilot and equally as important what criteria is used in his selection?

My belief and understanding of rule 90 requires that a candidate for the role of Pilot must hold a certificate equivalent to the Master of the largest vessel that can transit the Port and for our major Ports this would be a Master (Foreign Going) Class 1. However for the smaller coastal ports, this would equate to perhaps a Coastal Master or Fishing Ticket. The rationale for this is the command presence required on the Bridge of the Ship being piloted and the confidence thereby instilled in the Master and Crew of the Vessel. I venture to suggest that a person who has commanded nothing bigger than a Harbour Tug would find the Bridge of a large Container ship a rather daunting prospect.

Recently Maritime New Zealand has been looking to review the certificate requirement for pilotage and one could cynically suggest that this has been instigated by Port authorities looking to reduce the cost of their services by distilling the qualifications of Pilots and enabling lesser tickets the ability to enter the profession. The stakes are very high and to put it in perspective, I would suggest that cost of the Rena would pay the wages of every Pilot in New Zealand for many many years to come. So therefore who is responsible for this continued dissemination and why is it being allowed to be pursued - especially in this post-Pike River environment? And in the words of Pete Seeger, “When will they ever learn?”. On a lighter note - and one that I have to share even if the PC brigade burn my house down for the generalisations included below, this (see p.4) is pretty funny:
John Cleese (British writer, actor and Tall Person) has it about right:

NATIONAL (IN)SECURITY LEVELS

"The English are feeling the pinch in relation to recent events in Syria and have therefore raised their security level from "Miffed" to "Peeved." Soon, though, security levels may be raised yet again to "Irritated" or even "A Bit Cross." The English have not been "A Bit Cross" since the blitz in 1940 when tea supplies nearly ran out. Terrorists have been re-categorized from "Tiresome" to "A Bloody Nuisance." The last time the British issued a "Bloody Nuisance" warning level was in 1588, when threatened by the Spanish Armada.

The Scots have raised their threat level from "Pissed Off" to "Let's get the Bastards." They don't have any other levels. This is the reason they have been used on the front line of the British army for the last 300 years.

The French government announced yesterday that it has raised its terror alert level from "Run" to "Hide." The only two higher levels in France are "Collaborate" and "Surrender." The rise was precipitated by a recent fire that destroyed France's white flag factory, effectively paralysing the country's military capability.

Italy has increased the alert level from "Shout Loudly and Excitedly" to "Elaborate Military Posturing." Two more levels remain: "Ineffective Combat Operations" and "Change Sides." The Germans have increased their alert state from "Disdainful Arrogance" to "Dress in Uniform and Sing Marching Songs." They also have two higher levels: "Invade a Neighbour" and "Lose."

Belgians, on the other hand, are all on holiday as usual; the only threat they are worried about is NATO pulling out of Brussels.

The Spanish are all excited to see their new submarines ready to deploy. These beautifully designed subs have glass bottoms so the new Spanish navy can get a really good look at the old Spanish navy.

Australia, meanwhile, has raised its security level from "No worries" to "She'll be alright, Mate." Two more escalation levels remain: "Crikey! I think we'll need to cancel the barbie this weekend!" and "The barbie is cancelled." So far no situation has ever warranted use of the last final escalation level.
TIMARU
The major news from Timaru this time is of course the recently announced joint venture between PrimePort Timaru and Port of Tauranga. The agreement, which remains subject to local community consultation, is expected to have far-reaching positive economic and social outcomes for the whole region. The main elements of the agreement are: Port of Tauranga will acquire a 50% shareholding in PrimePort Timaru to become the joint venture partner with Timaru District Holdings Ltd (TDHL). TDHL will acquire full ownership of the investment property at the Port. Port of Tauranga will operate the container terminal under a long term lease arrangement. PrimePort will continue to manage and operate all aspects of the Port, including break-bulk such as logs, fertiliser, fuel and all marine services. It will be most interesting to see how this all pans out in the future but it is a most exiting prospect for sure and hopefully we can share in Tauranga’s Marine department expertise if not their largesse!
Other than that, shipping has been steady with the usual mix. Two of our number had a couple of days at the Auckland Nav School simulator with our newly developed port model trying out various cruise vessel scenarios. Thanks to Kees Buckens for his never failing dedication and enthusiasm. It was also good to catch up with Auckland pilot David Payne at the college and to hear some of his words of wisdom (TV)

BLUFF
“Sprinter” (Spring/Winter) is upon us; well it seems to have passed us. Southland, like most of you has had its warmest winter in 100 years and what a difference a 1 degree increase in average temp makes. We have been spoilt with clear days, light winds and I wore shorts and a T-shirt to my boys’ birthday where two years ago we had howling Southwester and 3in of snow on the ground. We are breathing a little easier with a deal on the table for the Tiwai Smelter. Not as long as we would have preferred but still some certainty. And it seems that as soon as the ink was dry on the deal then the number of ships ordered for the smelter has increased, but that might be wishful thinking on my part. By the time this goes to print Dave Edge will have left us, again we are sad to see such an important part of team go. He has a well-deserved reputation of being cool, calm and competent as many a visiting master has commented on when experiencing Bluff’s finest for the first time. In addition, he possesses a quick sense of humour: I remember an early training job with him where despite my best efforts everything had gone wrong, the vessel stubbornly refused to head in even the general direction of the wharf. I asked him quietly for some advice, he replied just as quietly, “don’t do this again”. We have had the Toia for a month or so while the Hauroko underwent surveys and painting. It became apparent that the port of Bluff requires slightly more assertive orders then Toia was used to in Wellington - judging from the pitch alarm settings. It was a near-run thing but I narrowly avoided the return delivery voyage which in even its most optimistic terms was described as unpleasant. She performed very well and we are grateful to have her. Training as always in Bluff continues: Josh has gained his C License and consequently all Korean trawlers’; we consider their idiosyncrasies to be confidence building! Doran awaits MNZ to issue his Class C while preparing the paperwork for his B. Friso’s PEC paperwork has disappeared into the vacuum of MNZ bureaucracy and a timeline for its issue is elusive. We are still waiting to see what sort of share of the cruise ships the summer holds for us, a lot hopefully. Until next time all the best from all of us in rough and tough Bluff. (SG)
LYTTELTON

We will be without the services of Joanne for the next 3 months as she recovers from a recent operation replacing her ankle with an improved French version. Years of wear and tear had taken its toll and she had developed a noticeable limp. Some time in a moon boot coupled with the healing properties of plenty of gin should see her back as good as new and leaping ladders in a single bound.

We welcome back John Clarke to fill the Pilot’s position that became vacant when Doran left. As we have a few less berths in use than when John was last here and with not much changing around the port he shouldn’t take too long to slot back in.

With pilots leaving, having operations and taking leave we have had a couple of weeks with only three fit pilots available to cover shipping. We will all be looking forward to returning to a full roster.

Godley Head light, which marks the entrance to the Harbour, was recently switched off as the steps to the light had fallen away due to the earthquake, leaving no easy access for maintaining the light. The erosion of the head face had left the possibility that the entire structure could fall down the cliff so it was decided to retrieve the light for preservation. Whoever decided on the size of helicopter was unaware that lighthouse glass was thicker than glass found in most other structures and the initial attempt was unsuccessful. The light is now safe on firm ground leaving the entrance to Lyttelton Harbour marked by an empty lighthouse keepers’ house clinging to an eroded cliff face. (FL)

PICTON

Some bad weather in mid winter saw some disruptions to the ferry services. I suppose the most noticeable was the Kaitaki having to abort berthing at its berth and in the end returning to Wellington with its freight and passengers. Personally I cannot understand why she did not berth, when clear of other shipping, at the berth used by Strait Shipping.

John Davis has finally got his B license in his hands. This limits him in size particularly for berthing. He will be striving over the summer to get his supervised jobs in to get his unlimited license.

On that subject Dick King has obtained the inaugural license for Pelorus Sound and Admiralty Bay. Up till now this has been a Pilotage area without a pilot.

On 12th August (ironically the day Dick received his license) the heavy lift ship Blue Marlin entered Admiralty Bay (See photos p.2) On board was the rig Kan Tan IV. In attendance were the tenders Skandi Pacific, Skandi Emerald and Pacific Ranger. A tug each from Taranaki and Wellington were also in attendance. Some comings and goings over the next few days required pilot attendance. French Pass village and the wharf became the base for personnel from MNZ and the Marlborough Harbour Masters team with their oil-spill equipment. Since float off required wind of less than 12 knots it was Thursday 22nd before weather conditions allowed float-off to take place. All ships had cleared the bay by the evening of 22nd.

Pelorus Sound now awaits the arrival of cruise ships as a new destination fro cruising. Recent earthquakes near Seddon may shake a few heads in Wellington regarding any Clifford Bay proposals. (JH)

BAY OF ISLANDS

Winter season here in the Bay, and we have had some fine weather to complete the maintenance of the lights, buoys and beacons. First cruise ship of the season (or a mid-winter one?) with the Sea Princess, and we have a busy season ahead, and for the next few years. Our economically deprived local businesses are getting more noticeably more efficient each year at gearing up for the steadily increasing flux of passengers. Bookings are starting to come in for 2017-18! Overall size also keeps increasing. Here’s hoping the weather is as good as last season. (JL)

OTAGO

It looks like shipping is starting to pick up again in Otago after a couple of quieter months. The Russian trawlers have returned south and along with the laid up Korean fishing boats and the usual tankers and log ships Dunedin is looking quite full at present. The port company has recently announced the name for the new Damen 2411 tug that is due mid 2014. She will be named “Taiaroa” the name Taiaroa having significance for Otago as it the headland guarding the entrance to the harbour. Valdi and Hugh M are off to Aussie next week for manned model course and advanced pilots course, and some of the rest of us are starting to do some STCW short courses to re-validate our masters’ licences. Recruitment of a new marine manager is still ongoing, so maybe by December we will have more news on that front. All in all it has been a quiet last couple of months, but no doubt that will
AUCKLAND

I am really pleased to announce we can again boast 100% membership of Auckland Pilots with NZMPA. This is due in no small part, to the clear sighted decision made by our new boss Allan, to support and maintain our professional development by resuming the membership payment which had been halted under the previous tenure.

We are all now in the process of becoming highly proficient with our PPU’s (some notably more proficient than others!) We have all been issued with our own personal laptops and wireless Navicom units, and apart from a few software and hardware glitches, which are being ironed-out, we are now all packing the technology to add another layer to our piloting proficiency.

To add to the general air of reinvigoration about the place we have also been told we will be getting a 70T Tug to add to our fleet: it’ll be good to have the extra horses to throw at the bigger deeper ships most of us are dealing with now. We’ve had a few more changes in personnel within the Marine Teams: Allan Jones and Paul “Poppa Smurf” Cunningham both recently retired as well as the “Legendary Lenny” from Harbour Control. Leonard’s rather sudden announcement came as a bit of a surprise to us all. I had always imagined that I would probably retire before he did…even though he was already in his seventies. Lenny attacked his job in Harbour control with the gusto of a man at least half his age, and being never short of an answer, was able to offer at least three or four that you could take your pick from. He started back in the days of the Harbour Board after serving a 20 year hitch with the Royal NZ Navy, where he picked up the rank of “Senior Petty Officer”, the “British Empire Medal”, and a voice that could penetrate concrete. The latter achievement proving most useful with his unique ability to simultaneously call ships both inside and outside, of VHF range.

Sometimes, arriving vessels could be subjected to one of his loveable quirks of completely mangling their names. This was due in part to his keen enthusiasm to reply on the VHF as promptly as possible. This enthusiasm was usually hindered by the fact that his desk was often strewn with the detritus of a busy shift, which could include half-devoured chickens, pizza boxes, Chinese takeaways and somewhere within that labyrinth...his reading glasses and dentures (which he preferred to take out between meals). The problem would occur when Lenny needed to reply to an arriving vessel, as he was usually unable to locate his specs before he would commence reading the name off the screen...and having his teeth in to talk was always an unachievable luxury within the time constraints. This would result in the pronunciation of the most unusual sounding names. Some of the more notable being the “FNS La Maqueuse” being hailed as “French Warship LAY ME COOZER” the “Kapitan Artyukh” as the “Captain Artichoke”, and the “MV Egelaniersgracht”…after a long and thoughtful pause, as “Big ship heading to Auckland!”.

He was a real character about the place, and Harbour Control will never be the same. Safe piloting and good luck with the Spring gales.

NAPIER

There has been plenty to keep us busy during the ‘quiet’ season here in Napier. Box boats are getting bigger, 260m will be the average soon. There has been a succession of log ships punctuated with a regular supply of Swires and the Cruise ships are just over the horizon wanting berths they booked a couple of years ago. This is going to be an interesting season, we are going to be busy - but hey - first we have negotiations!

Three of our guys had a successful few days at Smartship in July. Congratulations to Ruslan Mitlash obtaining his ‘A’ Class. Richard Mackie had successful runs for his ‘Unrestricted’ and is now just waiting for specific ship sizes. Congratulations also to Robbie Jenson on obtaining his ‘B’ Class. Robby will join Trevor Morrison and myself at Smartship beginning of October. Apart from Trev and I doing our biannual check and Robbie continuing ‘B’ and ‘A’ Class training we will have intensive berth assimilation for the possible extension of 1 berth. This will depend on our ability to safely turn the larger Box boats with a vessel berthed at the new 1B and what effect the berth will have on the surge in the harbour. Interesting times ahead! Two of our tugmasters, Todd Taylor and George Hawkins, will be joining us for the first time at Smartship; they will be carrying out their own training for the first two days in the Tug Sim and then join us on the third day for some joint
training and simulation runs. Our Voith ‘Te Mata’ has been modeled at Smartship, so with Todd and George on the sticks we should get some very accurate simulations.

We have the Heron Dredger working on deepening the Harbour Basin and working on a new turning area around ‘C’ buoy at the moment. The turning area will enable us to turn the larger Cruise vessels off ‘C’ buoy instead of outside the channel by ‘A’ buoy. The traffic management of the dredger and hoppers will keep all of us on our toes as the season starts to get busier.

We welcome back the “Big G” over the coming months as maintains his Napier Pilot’s Licence for another year in case one of us falls of the perch. Gary will do his required number of runs as per part 90 and then disappear back across the Pond. We look forward to seeing him again albeit for a brief period. So from team Napier ‘Safe Piloting’. Arrivederci. (JP)

WELLINGTON
Over the last couple of months we got a taste of what Lyttelton experienced, but fortunately without the devastation. Two earthquakes have managed to reduce our footprint in the harbour, with a large slice of our reclaimed land slipping into Lambton Harbour. Fortunately it was an area not critical to our operations, however the second quake did manage to damage over 70 concrete piles under the southern end of our container terminal, putting 200 metres of our most utilised berth out of service for the next few months.

If the earthquakes weren’t enough, 20 June saw us hit by a storm which some say is the worst in a century. Beacon Hill’s wind printout showed a line stuck at 90 knots (the top of the scale) for a prolonged period. Mt. Kaukau above the city recorded 130 knots. Although compared to the Wahine storm, this one differed greatly, as the earlier one was a tropical storm which came much further south than normal and passed through relatively quickly. This time the storm hammered us for a couple of days, with swells of 16 metres at the entrance (something the Wahine storm didn’t experience), and seas of 5 metres within the harbour. Inter-island ferry Kaitaki was very close to going aground soon after the storm hit, when stern-lines parted, and only the quick actions of her bridge team got her clear. They did however have a stressful night, trying to stay at anchor under the shelter of Mt. Victoria, with one of our tugs hanging off her stern keeping her steady.

Less than 4 weeks later on 14 June, we again got hit by a Southerly blast, with winds gusting over 60 knots. This wouldn’t have been anything exceptional, but while standing on the wharf next to her, the 200m PCC, TransFuture 7 broke adrift. She proceeded to break or lose off the bits, 12 of her 15 lines. By chance I had arrived at the ship to discuss her postponed sailing, and I noticed 2 of her headlines about 90% chaffed through and the ship about 3 – 5 metres off the berth. I dashed down to the gangway to tell them about their plight, to find the gangway watchman leaning over the rails fishing, oblivious to what was unfolding. Before he could inform anybody the lines started going. Fortunately we had 2 tugs on the harbour, and I was able to get them to assist within 5–10 minutes. This is the first time I have ever berthed a ship with tugs while standing on the wharf, and it went really well considering. Now I think I can see why those standing on the wharf think they could do a better job of it (and no BRM and a master who did anything I asked). From breaking adrift at 1530, it took 6 hours to re-secure the ship at the berth, with numerous rapidly tied bowlines to achieve this. I could talk for hours about what I/we have learnt from this, but this would be an article in itself.

Our tug fleet has seen some new sights over the last couple of months, with Ngahue spending a few weeks in Bluff, on a bareboat charter. Tiaki spent 6 days away in Admiralty Bay assisting with floating off the rig KarTan IV from the semi-submersible heavy-lift ship, Blue Marlin. The crew were away longer than expected due to weather delays, so some fresh blue cod and gurnard helped the rations last.

After I was stood-down by the company for 3 months earlier this year (after an incident whilst driving one of our tugs) and Lew Henderson was hobbling around in plaster and then a moonboot for a similar length of time (after tripping on a cargo lashing), we are close to being back to full strength. The New Year will hopefully see us jump from 3 to 6 unrestricted pilots. This will not only spread the workload and challenges more evenly, but also remove the frustration of being assigned to the office, because our training regime dictates it.

This year’s AGM/Conference will again be in Wellington (Friday, 29th November), so I am looking forward to both an informative and a social experience. At this stage the
venue will again be The Museum of Wellington, City and Sea, which proved a great success last year. I hope there will be plenty of attendees, and we will again be able to share scuttlebutt. Bring your partner and make a weekend of it. See you there. (SB)

TAURANGA
My apologies for no contribution for the previous issue. I was on a more important assignment, topping up the profits of Carnival Cruises in the Mediterranean, namely Ruby Princess, so there wasn't much thought given to matters Port of Tauranga. During the cruise the only time I heard the YES word was people answering the barman! The directors have given approval for 2 new 70T ASD tugs. They can't come soon enough as handling the larger container ships with Sir Robert and Te Matua with any sort of wind can be a rather long exercise. The 2 tugs that will be retired will be the 36-year old 28T tractor tug Kaimai and the 21-year old 40T voith tug Te Matua. The builder has yet to be decided.
On the Rena front, the anchor handler Anglian Monarch arrives here next month from Scotland, together with a crane barge and a larger barge. The next step is to cut off the accommodation block in two pieces, then scrapped ashore. We have been told all this will be finished by the end of the year - but haven't stipulated which year!
On the personnel front nothing has changed: in fact we can celebrate a whole 2 years without anyone leaving - that is a record. (TH)

THE DRUMS OF WAR
&
THE “MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX”

Next year is the centenary for the start of the Great War, the “war to end wars”. The accepted myth of fledgling country New Zealand coming of age on the shores of Gallipoli masks a bitter reality: this well-marketed narrative attempts to make palatable the unpalatable, inventing a reason for the senseless waste. What did Humanity gain from the carnage? How many minds and bodies were forever maimed? Did the war end all wars? Have we learned nothing in the last 100 years? Who profits from all the killing and violence, shattered lives and economies? The key to that question is profit: only arms manufacturers profit in time of war, no matter who wins or loses. Sir Walter Raleigh complained that the Spanish Navy was armed with best quality English cannon. The manufacture of the machinery of war became one of the main drivers of the Industrial Revolution from Crimea onwards. Our NZ shores bristle with Victorian-era gun batteries and torpedo boat ramps - testament to this manufactured fear of war invasion by “the other”. When I point out these gun positions to Russians (the expected enemy) they shake their heads in wonder: why would the biggest country on Earth seek such distant conquests?

With the benefit of historical insight, we now know that industrialists in UK, France, Germany - unbeknownst to their own governments - shared technological ‘confidences’ thus fuelling the arms race (since there is no race if any gets too far ahead) which led inexorably to world war in 1914. Britain finally settled its war debts to America in 2006, which puts a different slant on the much-vaunted “Special Relationship”: war is an expensive business and banks are always willing to lend the billions governments require since there are always future generations to pay the interest. What do mere citizens gain from war other than violent death, trauma and maybe a medal for their sacrifice? The two aircraft carriers currently under construction in the UK are £2 Billion overspent and 4 years delayed. US carriers cost $14 Billion to build, and $2 Billion to scrap!

By 1945, the world had changed forever: The Allies (Britain, Russian and the US) had destroyed the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy and Japan). The once mighty British Empire was a bankrupt ruin, and only Communist Russia and Capitalist America remained as the last 2 “super-powers”. To demonstrate to the Russians who was the more powerful, America dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Russia quickly sought to master these new weapons of mass destruction and was successful by 1949. Major confrontations now had the potential to destroy all life on Earth. It was George Orwell who coined the phrase “Cold War” for this post-war period, in which military-industrialists gained ever more power and in whose interests it lay to foment the fear and loathing between former Allies, Russia and America. Orwell’s dystopic novel “1984” (published 1949) has proved to be a remarkably accurate prophesy. Dwight Eisenhower,
military colossus from WWII, was elected US President in 1952 and served in that capacity until January 1960. Before he handed over to President John F. Kennedy, he broadcast on TV his “Farewell Address”:

In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the machinery of defense...so that security and liberty may prosper together

John F. Kennedy’s 1,000 days in office was the briefest period in post-war world history, when the storm clouds broke, where the United States sought the path for Peace rather than War – despite all the pressures both internal and external. In the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, JFK defied all his military, intelligence and political advisers and avoided any possible escalation of military tensions since a mistake on anyone’s part, would have had disastrous consequences for the entire planet. By maintaining both covert and overt channels for dialogue with Khrushchev, JFK knew he risked assassination by his own military, but thought his own life worth sacrificing if it meant life for those then alive and generations yet unborn. JFK used Diplomacy and Empathy to strive for World Peace in 1962, his goal ever since his inaugural address. His singular greatest achievement was that he was able to extend the olive branch, not just to the Russians, but to his own citizens and those of all the world. Such revolutionary thinking was anathema to the Military Industrial Complex.

As we approach the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President Kennedy on 22nd November 1963, it behooves us to consider who profited from his untimely death. Consider also that the CIA (specialists in assassination and lies) were no friends of JFK, especially after he had sacked their longtime boss Allen Dulles (because of his treachery over the 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco) when he vowed to “split the CIA into a thousand pieces”. Remarkably, Dulles was appointed to run the Warren Commission set up to prove that Oswald (not the CIA) had murdered the president. Three days after LBJ took over the US presidency, JFK’s policy of complete withdrawal from Vietnam was reversed. The (now admitted) false flag “Gulf of Tonkin Incident” was used as legal justification for war in Vietnam, which led to the deaths of 58,000 US troops and 3.8 million Vietnamese. And what did all that human suffering achieve? Who profits from war? Winning or losing in Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, Syria matters nothing whatsoever to those who manufacture weapons of war and munitions: it’s all money in the bank as long as there is conflict.

I make no apologies for sketching the historical context underlying current events: NZ pilots - as former deep-sea mariners - will have witnessed some parts of this global jigsaw (see Discharge Books, p. 18)). I regret having to condense history and can only make amends by recommending James Douglass’ “JFK & The Unspeakable: Why he died and why it matters” published by Orbis Books in 2008. (such books soon acquire a short shelf life!). Whilst contemplating, there is an incident, relevant to events in the Arab World today – the 1967 attack on USS Liberty off Haifa. This 2002 BBC Documentary “Dead in the Water” (YouTube) shows how LBJ wished the ship sunk in “false flag” Operation Cyanide so that he could use its loss as the legal justification to “nuke” Cairo. The embroggerance to LBJ was that the ship refused to sink - thus the nuclear bombers had to be recalled. Can this be true? US sailors killed and wounded to justify the murder of millions of innocent Egyptians? On what scale of moral equivalence is it right that millions should die to “avenge the loss” of dozens? By the same moral calculus today, how can the US justify the killing of thousands to punish dozens who killed hundreds? Meanwhile, families flee in terror, adding to the 8 million Syrian refugees.

Finally, the brouhaha over Chemical Weapons (CW) rings hollow when one considers that the US deploys “White Phosphorous” (burns through skin to the bone), napalm, Agent Orange, depleted Uranium, cluster bombs, anti-personnel land-mines. Both America and Israel support vast nuclear arsenals. The Good News is that all all weapons are rendered useless where hatred of one’s fellow man is replaced by reaching out to acknowledge our common Humanity. We all have one weapon in our arsenal which can defeat all others, costs nothing and has universal benefits. Our common enemy is the Military Industrial Complex. As FDR said: “We have nothing to fear but fear itself.”

Hugh O’Neill
For Whom the Bells Toll

War Poet Wilfred Owen was killed in action on 4 November 1918 exactly one week (almost to the hour) before the signing of the Armistice. His mother received the telegram informing her of his death on Armistice Day, as the church bells were ringing out in celebration’. One of his best-known poems told of a gas attack:

_Dulce Et Decorum Est_

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,\(^a\)Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge.\(^b\)Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs.\(^c\)And towards our distant rest began to trudge.\(^d\)Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots;\(^e\)But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;\(^f\)Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots\(^g\)Of disappointed shells that dropped behind.\(^h\)GAS! Gas! Quick, boys!\(^i\)An ecstasy of fumbling.\(^j\)Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;\(^k\)But someone still was yelling out and stumbling\(^l\)And floundering like a man in fire or lime.\(^m\)Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light\(^o\)As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.\(^p\)In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,\(^q\)He plunges at me, guttering,\(^r\)choking, drowning.\(^s\)If in some smothering dreams you too could pace\(^t\)Behind the wagon that we flung him in,\(^u\)And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,\(^v\)His hanging face, like a devil’s sick of sin;\(^w\)If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood\(^x\)Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,\(^y\)Obscene as cancer, bitter as\(^a\)the cud\(^b\)Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—\(^c\)My friend, you would not tell with such high\(^d\)zest\(^e\)To children ardent for some desperate glory,\(^f\)The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est—Pro patria mori.

Powerful though the poem is - and poignant the poet’s untimely death - the discordant note is that Owen had volunteered because he somehow thought that gaining a medal for bravery would lend credence to his anti-war views. As mentioned in dispatches: “…He personally manipulated a captured enemy machine gun from an isolated position and inflicted considerable losses on the enemy. Throughout he behaved most gallantly…”

On another part of that foreign field, was New Zealand’s Archibald Baxter. According to Wikipedia: “He refused to serve during World War I on the grounds that “all war is wrong, futile, and destructive alike to victor and vanquished.” He was arrested in 1917, imprisoned, then shipped to the western front and beaten, starved and tortured by the army in an effort to get him to put on a uniform and serve. Still refusing, he was given Field Punishment No.1 - in effect, being crucified on a pole in open fire - and later was tied to a shed being used by the Germans for artillery practice. He suffered a complete physical and mental breakdown, but survived, and returned to his Otago farm after the war” (though subject to official harassment for many years thereafter). His story is related in “We shall not cease” published in 1939. In Baxter’s defence, he was an older man who had the courage of his convictions. It is very difficult for young men and boys to stand up to any hierarchy, which is why most soldiers are young. Furthermore, male neurological development makes for immature empathy skills and an illusion of personal invulnerability. Interestingly, the legacy of the 1946 Nuremberg War Crimes Trials is that despite orders from superiors, a man’s conscience must take precedence, thus illegal (i.e. immoral) orders must be refused. (For a recent example of this in action, see singer James Blunt’s 2010 testimony of his refusing American orders to attack a Russian force in Kosovo in 1999).

With the world currently focused on Syria, it is timely to consider the historical perspective. Syria is part of the Fertile Crescent of Mesopotamia, the cradle of Western Civilisation with cities Aleppo and Damascus continuously occupied since 5,000 BC. Empires from Assyrian, Persian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Crusader and Ottoman have all left their mark. The Ottomans fostered peaceful coexistence amongst the different sections of Syrian society for over four hundred years; Shia Muslim, Greek Orthodox, Maronite, Armenian, and Jewish all co-existed in relative harmony. It is this irreplaceable history and culture which is under the greatest threat in its entire existence. Why does the US absurdly claim that bombardment by hundreds of cruise missiles (each costing $1.5M) can bring Peace? How can more violence stem the worst Humanitarian Refugee Crisis since WWII? What might be the consequences for Iran, Lebanon and Israel of an illegal military intervention? There is a real danger of escalation to global conflict. Even Churchill knew it was “better to jaw-jaw than to war-war.”
Moving on to Peace. The single most important weapon in any arsenal is Hate. A man must be made to hate his fellow Human Beings to be able to inflict violence upon them. Hate is the product of ignorance and fear and can be easily manufactured out of nothing. There must be a primal part of our caveman brain which provides fertile ground for the ‘fear’ instinct. Irish poet Seamus Heaney’s last words to his wife were “Noli Timere” Latin for “Do not be afraid”. This simple message has universal resonance. Philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote: “Neither a man nor a crowd nor a nation can be trusted to act humanely or to think sanely under the influence of a great fear.” It is no great leap of logic to understand that if we remove both fear and ignorance of “the other” then hatred will cease and men can throw down their guns. This simple truth became the principal aim of the International Tall Ships Races begun in 1955.

For centuries, merchant ships have been manned by many different nationalities since crew would join and leave ship at different ports throughout the ship’s life. Ports too were microcosms of Humanity for the same reason, and racial intermarriage was common. Sailors the world-over get on well with each other because of this Fellowship of the Sea. In the 1950’s the last deep-sea sailing ships were under Finnish flag, owned by Gustav Ericsson of Mariehamn (Aland Islands). War reparations from both World Wars had distributed ships from the big German fleets to South America, USA, Norway, Russia, Spain and used to train young men for a career at sea. London solicitor Bernard Morgan proposed a race of these ships in 1955, thinking it would be a “Last Hurrah” for the bygone days of sail. Such was the success of that first race (Torbay to Lisbon) that it grew steadily each year with countries from all over the world keen to join, building international friendships between the young crews. Another mark of success is that with new construction, the number of big sailing ships increases, thus reversing the feared demise of one of man’s most beautiful creations. Final proof was Sail Training International (who run the Tall Ships Races) nomination in 2007 for the Nobel Peace Prize.

An imminent example of Tall Ships acting as Peace Envoy will be in October when “Spirit of New Zealand” will be in Sydney with a small international fleet for the Royal Australian Navy centenary in Sydney: Spirit’s crew will be ambassadors for their country whilst in Sydney. The fleet will then race from Sydney to Auckland (Oct 10th-25th) and Spirit will play host in her home port City of Sails. (As part of her crew, I look forward to telling you more of these adventures next issue). The racing fleet will be Spirit of NZ, Lord Nelson (UK), Young Endeavour (Aus), Oosterschelde (NL), Europa (NL), Tecla (NL), Picton Castle (Canada) and Dewaruci (Indonesia). The most coveted prize in Sail Training is nothing to do with winning a race but everything to do with building friendship: from STI’s website: “…the principal award at the end of each race series is the Sail Training International Friendship Trophy. This trophy epitomises the objective of the races and is awarded to the vessel which, in the opinion of the entire race fleet through a secret ballot, has done most to help further international understanding and friendship during the races”.

Returning to the bells: church bells summoned the faithful, and at midday Angelus, to stop and pray. Bells were both time-keepers and messengers e.g. alerting a village to danger. The bell would also announce when a parishioner was dying or had died, hence John Donne’s Meditation XVII:

“No man is an island, Entire of itself, Every man is a piece of the continent, A part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less. As well as if a promontory were. As well as if a manor of thy friend’s Or of thine own were: Any man’s death diminishes me, Because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee”.

Bells transferred to ships in the 15th Century for time-keeping during the watch, for signaling in fog and when weighing anchor, and rejoicing of New Year when 16 bells were rung to “ring out the old and ring in the new” respectively by the oldest and youngest of the ship’s company. The ship’s bell comes closest to representing the soul of a ship, with her name engraved and the year of her birth: it is burnished with pride on sailing ships. Ship’s bells can also double as Baptismal Fonts with the child’s name later engraved on the inside1.

Hugh O’Neill

---

1 Many years ago, our large scary hairy bosun, George, had just had the “Sir Winston Churchill” bell engraved for his latest grand-daughter called “Chelsea”. The engineer Lex donned his glasses to examine the engraving: he asked George why he had named the child CHESEA? The job of engraving may not be the natural career path for dyslexics…
The Deadly Sins of the Master-Pilot Relationship

The Master-pilot exchange (MPX), and the relationship embedded within it, is a key competence featured in the National Operating Standards for marine pilots. There are recent notable examples of accidents involving the breakdown of the Master-pilot relationship (MPR), including the Cosco Busan (2007), the Sichem Melbourne (2008) and the Vallermosa in 2009.

In 2012, The Transport Safety Board of Canada published an insightful report on the operational relationship between ship masters/watchkeeping officers and marine pilots. However, given the importance of this part of the act of pilotage, it is surprising to note that while much anecdotal information is available, I was unable to discover much formal research carried out into this vital relationship.

Southampton Solent University, which incorporates Warsash Maritime Academy, sponsored me to carry out research into this important topic, and interviews were carried out in the ports of Bristol, Medway and Southampton with thirteen pilots and nine Masters. What emerged were some clear trends about what contributed to effective and ineffective Master-pilot relationships, and this article highlights six areas which can affect them, for good or ill.

1. Failure to ask for, or provide, relevant information

Without the right type of information, provided in a timely and understandable way, acts of pilotage are severely compromised. What is conveyed by the pilot will vary depending on factors such as whether pilotage is being carried out on an inbound passage or an outbound one (the former is often seen as the more challenging); whether pilotage activities are out of the ordinary or apparently counter-intuitive; and the Master’s familiarity with the port. Whether additional information is offered will often depend on whether the pilot thinks the Master and bridge team are interested – not always the norm! However, it is important that the pilot does not make assumptions about the knowledge base of the Master and bridge team, but investigates appropriately. The 2008 MAIB accident report on the Sichem Melbourne noted that, “The accident was primarily caused by a failure to exchange an appropriate level of information between the master and pilot before departure from the berth. Assumptions were made by both parties of the other’s intentions.”

The Master should provide all information that enables the pilot to make a safe transit including offering a pilot card, details of any equipment defects and information about how the vessel handles. They should also highlight anything unconventional about the vessel. One of the factors emerging from the research was the importance of honesty about any equipment defects, and timeliness in providing that information. One pilot recalled ruefully that he had learnt early in his piloting career that he needed to be very specific in probing for defects, having initially asked whether the vessel had a bow thruster and been told it had. What he was not told at the time, and discovered later, was that it wasn’t working. Now when he receives an affirmative response to his enquiry about the presence of a bow thruster, he follows through with the question, “And is it working, and to what capacity?” This failure to inform can often be linked back to commercial considerations – loss of a bow thruster might result in the need for a tug with its resultant costs.

If the relevant information isn’t provided to the Master’s satisfaction, he may want to take over the controls. While this is his right to do so, there may be consequent problems. One pilot commented that a Master might “grab the controls and really make a mess of it, which is the last thing you want”; generally pilots interviewed agreed that if a Master wanted to take over, they would concur and if necessary, try and guide them as best they could. One pilot reported an instance when a Master had taken the vessel to the berth at too high a speed, and only then told the pilot it was the first time he had berthed the vessel.

Failure to exchange information by parties involved may be caused by a number of factors such as lack of understanding, whether or not attributable to language barriers, assumptions made and not checked out, distraction with other matters, commercial considerations, personality characteristics (such as “I know better than he does”, “We do it my way”) and fatigue and stress. Some of these factors will be discussed in the following “deadly sins”.

2. Overload of information

If omission of information is the first deadly sin, then too much is the second. Although the MPX should be a continual process, too much information given at inappropriate times will defeat the goal of an MPX – to
acquire the understanding necessary to take the right actions during the act of pilotage in order to make a safe transit. Pilots report that some Masters present the pilot card as soon as they board, even before they have the time to familiarise themselves with the vessel, so that the card can be signed off as quickly as possible. During night time passages, some pilots are not even given time to acclimatise themselves to a darkened bridge, having entered from a brightly lit alleyway, before they are faced with a pilot card.

Pilots interviewed use a drip-feeding approach to offset the dangers of overloading on information, especially if the Master’s and/or bridge team’s level of English is not perceived to be high, and will also employ visual aids to assist with information given. They generally measure level of understanding in terms of appropriate actions being taken and the types of pertinent questions being asked, such as estimated time of arrival, under keel clearance at certain points, traffic density, and whether the berth is clear. The balance of too much information and too little will be individual to the Master and bridge team; it is also interesting to note that some Masters interpret too much information-giving as indicating less experienced pilots.

### 3. Failure to adapt to other cultures and languages

One of the main problems impeding understanding is the skill level of spoken English, and all the pilots interviewed highlighted communication problems with various nationalities. Problems were also identified where the bridge team were talking in their own language, and the pilot was aware that there were issues about the ship that were not being communicated to him. Pilot interviewees spoke of using non-verbal indicators to check whether understanding was present or not, “(They) won’t understand what you’re saying and you’ve got to look to that response, facial expressions and you’ve got to decide whether you think that went in or not. And if you’ve got any realms of indecisiveness, you say it again.”

Even British pilots can cause problems for foreign captains. One Master highlighted difficulty in understanding a Scots pilot with a broad accent, “For ten minutes, he tries to speak English and then blah, blah, blah, I understand nothing... he’s a very good pilot, he’s very nice, he tries to explain everything very good, but he don’t speak English.”

Interviewees commented that dissimilarity in culture would not only impact content of communication, but how it was delivered or received. Differences highlighted included the degree to which Masters and bridge teams would challenge the pilot; the amount of interpersonal interaction that would take place; the quantity and timing of information to be exchanged; and how assertive pilots believed they needed to be with Masters. Although there were individual preferences and perceptions, some trends emerged. Filipino crews were noted as saying, “Yes” when asked if they understood, even though that might not be the case. They were also seen as more deferential to the pilot and less likely to challenge his actions (see Deadly Sin 5!) but some pilots voiced enjoyment at working with Filipinos, highlighting their friendliness and happiness.

Russian Masters and bridge teams are perceived as more challenging in several senses: in the sense of questioning the pilot, generally speaking in their more limited understanding of English, and in their personal style of communicating. Some pilots felt they needed to be even more direct with Eastern Europeans, partly due to a tendency to revert to their native language instead of maritime English.

The above comments might be viewed as stereotypic. However, in an increasingly multi-cultural industry, the ability of a pilot to interact successfully with different cultures, nationalities and linguistic abilities is increasingly important. They also need to assess the speed, quantity and specificity of information exchange, to gather non-verbal indicators in order to check for understanding or loss of concentration, and to adjust their interaction style in order to get the best out of the Master-pilot relationship and these are fundamental to an effective MPX.

### 4. Failure to establish trust and rapport

The European Maritime Pilots’ Association (EMPA) observe, (researcher’s emphasis is highlighted): “The master and pilot relationship is an intriguing balance of mutual trust and respect, largely unwritten, which provides an unrivalled level of safety in a society that expects, and receives, the highest of standards from the shipping industry.” In the ports visited for this research, the act of pilotage tends to be no more than 4 hours. This is not a long period of time to establish mutual trust, especially when there are a number of factors that can influence that trust: these include prior experience, perceived competence, interpersonal skills, and the ability to adapt according to the situation on board and the personalities involved.
If the Master and pilot have successfully worked together previously, trust is likely to be already established. If the Master is not a regular runner to the port, or has had a poor experience with pilotage, this will colour the extent to which he trusts the pilot. A pilot will start to assess the experience he is likely to have on board as he approaches the vessel. He will consider the port of registry, the appearance of the ship and any damage incurred, its cleanliness and state of repair, the appearance of the crew and the welcome offered at the top of the pilot ladder and on the bridge.

How a Master determines pilot competence is often based on a gut feeling about whether he feels the pilot knows what he is doing. His assessment may include how much pertinent information the pilot gives and requests, whether he appears prepared with a plan, whether he communicates regularly and explains what he is doing, the quality of his ship handling, whether he “takes care of the ship” and is operating safely using a safe speed of approach. Masters also assess how relaxed and confident the pilot appears to be, as well as his appearance—the wearing of uniform was seen as evidence of professionalism. Several Masters mentioned the importance of a pre-printed passage plan with plenty of visual information, such as that used in Southampton, as an indicator of whether they would have confidence in the pilot being properly prepared.

The importance of setting the Master at ease was mentioned by many of the pilots, which was seen as influencing the response of the Master to the pilot. Creating rapport was seen as an essential skill in working effectively as a pilot, some saying that the relationship built with the Master was the most important part of the act of pilotage as it allowed them both to work together effectively with the bridge team. This was confirmed by many of the Masters interviewed. One commented, “I am sensitive of interhuman relationships. When a pilot comes inside the wheelhouse and the first thing that he says is “Full ahead Captain”, I think “Hello, are we welcome or are we not?” Interpersonal exchange also needs to continue beyond the initial pleasantries. One Master recognised that he had a part to play as well, and that effective interpersonal communication was the responsibility of both parties, “If I act grumpy, he will act grumpy as well, and then he comes inside and acts grumpy ... at that moment, I try to think (to) myself, “That is not what I want, I want to bring the ship safely alongside.”

As well as showing an interest in the Master and bridge team in a sociable and friendly way, “small talk” about sport or the Master’s home country, pilots emphasise the importance of joking and banter in putting the Master and bridge team at ease, relieving tension and establishing trust. Masters also recognised the importance of small talk and banter, though it was clear that in certain circumstances, such as being fatigued or carrying out complex manoeuvres, this would not be appropriate.

It became apparent during interviews just how much non-verbal communication and behaviour are utilised to determine how the Master-pilot relationship will proceed. Pilots also notice how the Master interacts with his bridge team to ascertain whether it is a happy ship or not. If he is abrupt and rude to his crew, then there is a likelihood that there might be problems on the ship.

Mutual respect and valuing was important to all the interviewees, whether it was pilots needing to recognise a Master’s expertise and ship knowledge, or Masters demonstrating that they valued their pilot. Several pilots mentioned the importance of handshakes, a welcoming smile, whether a cup of coffee is offered. Traditions of hospitality in creating rapport exist all over the world, and form part of seafaring culture. Thus, the lack of these courtesies are noticeable, “If they can’t even be bothered to get a clean cup for you, they’re not really putting any emphasis on the pilot ...they’re not thinking that he’s important to them, they’re just thinking he’s more of an encumbrance than an asset.”

5. Failure to monitor/challenge

Although the size of the sample in this research would preclude well-founded generalisations, it is interesting to note that Masters interviewed said that they did monitor the pilot during the act of pilotage, whilst some of the pilots interviewed commented that this was not the case on many of the ships they piloted. When interviewees were asked how they knew that monitoring was not taking place (other than the absence of the Master on the bridge), it seemed to revolve around the absence of pertinent questions such as failure to ask for tidal information when proceeding over shallow pieces of water in a vessel with a small draft. For some pilot interviewees, there was a correlation between the amount of monitoring taking place, and the nationality of the Master and the bridge team. It was perceived by some that eastern nationalities would “tend
to sit back and do exactly what you say, whereas some of the Northern European Masters … might ask why are you doing that, why do you want that.”

It also appears to vary depending on the size and type of vessel. On the larger ships, such as container ships, monitoring happens more frequently; on smaller vessels, where manning is more minimal, the Master is less likely to be monitoring.

I can’t with certainty explain why there is a deviation of perception of frequency of monitoring between the pilots and the Masters interviewed. It could be that where vessels are regular runners into the port, a relationship of trust has already been built between Master and pilot, and therefore less monitoring is deemed to be necessary. Another assumption might be that no Master would be willing to say he did not monitor during the act of pilotage, either personally or vicariously through the bridge team. There might also be a difference in perception around what monitoring actually entails. Is monitoring watching for deviations by exception? Is it to do with the amount of questions an interested Master or bridge watchkeeper might raise? Is there a correlation between the lack of active engagement and a power distance culture where pilots – seen as the experts in their role – would not be challenged as a matter of respect for their seniority and role expertise? These are areas that would benefit from further specific research.

There appeared to be few occasions when a Master would challenge a UK pilot in the ports surveyed, although the Masters interviewed asserted that they would challenge if they were unhappy with how pilotage was proceeding. It is possible that more assertive pilot monitoring takes place where the Master is also the owner of the vessel, especially if they believe there is no need to take on a pilot.

6. Failure to recognise fatigue and stress

Fatigue and stress can impact both the technical and the non-technical aspects of pilotage. The ability of both Master and pilot to assess each other’s level of fatigue and stress is important due to the impact of these factors on MPX effectiveness. This is often through body language and non-verbal communication: speed of speech, high pitch of voice, excessive movement on the bridge or lack of it, shouting at the helmsman or engine room personnel, lack of acknowledgement of situational awareness, questions being repeated frequently, asking for excessive amounts of detail, yawning, “twitchiness”, and grumpiness/shortness of temper and insensitivity.

Cognitively, if pilots are aware of particularly taxing workloads, port state inspection or cycles of operation on board a vessel, they will generally take extra care with the MPX and monitoring the actions of the bridge team, such as assessing the capability and fatigue of the helmsman to make sure he is putting the right amount of wheel on, steering a good course and communicating with closed loop. One pilot noted that often it was on the outward passage that crew were more tired as they would have often been working for fifteen hours or more. The six-on/six-off watch system was recognised as being particularly tiring, as seafarers would probably only be sleeping for four hours during their time off. The pilots interviewed were also aware of their own susceptibility to fatigue and stress. There were differing reasons for feeling stressed on board, which ranged from orders not being followed and relevant preparations not being made for arrival in port through to constant “wittering” of the Master and bridge team. The journey out on the pilot boat can take its toll if the weather is bad. Sometimes, jobs take longer than others due to waiting for a berth, or fog, or the delayed arrival of a vessel. Sharpness and awareness also diminish so that course alterations are made too early or too late. It was summed up by a pilot, who said: “If I’m tired I know I’m probably going to be a little bit below par, and also if it’s the early hours of the morning … if I know it’s going to be a difficult ship and I’m a little bit tired and it’s in the middle of the night, I would say I’m not going to be as competent as if it was daytime and an easier ship.” Many pilots emphasised the importance of appearing to be calm (regardless of whether that was how they were feeling) and not to transmit stress to the Master and bridge team, and emphasised that it was important to have the right temperament.

Conclusions

When I started this research, I wanted to find out how important non-technical skills are in an MPX. I’ve had the pleasure of teaching BRM to many groups of pilots, and have had lively conversations about whether an act of pilotage can be effective using technical skills only, or whether interpersonal skills figured significantly. What has emerged is the importance of the so-called “soft skills”. Key to an effective MPX are self-awareness of one’s own personality and style, the ability to use non-verbal communications to maximum effect, and adapting communication approaches to suit the situation and the individual being communicated with. These skills form the foundation of creating rapport and trust, and will contribute to a safe transit – something any pilot and Master would surely want.
THE VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE

In October 1978, a 60-foot fishing-boat was sinking in the South China Sea. Aboard were 346 refugees from Communist Vietnam, including 156 children under the age of 15, a two-month old baby and a woman who was seven-months’ pregnant. In fact, the fishing boat contained not only its own passengers but also those from two other similar boats that had already capsized. All those aboard the now grossly over-crowded vessel were convinced that they would drown. They may or may not have known that this had been the fate of thousands of others before them. Many hundreds of thousands of other Vietnamese were to die in similar craft. Some were victims of pirates while others had been sold unseaworthy boats by fraudulent profiteers. But, one way or another, most drowned or died of exposure. All had invested huge sums, knowing they were gambling with the lives of their families, for the chance to escape the repressive Communist régime which had defeated and replaced the violent American occupation of South Vietnam. Just when all hope had vanished, the Wellpark was sighted and the refugees fired their last distress rocket. Under very difficult circumstances a courageous crew from the Wellpark managed to rescue all the refugees and landed them in Taiwan. The crucial decisions made by the master deserve huge respect and proves once again that one man can make the world of difference. Craig Holmes was a cadet aboard Wellpark, thus played a significant role in the lives of others: the plight of refugees has long since been abandoned by politicians of every hue.

Refugees – now and then

“...The radio stations and newspapers, they make us sound like we are killers, criminals, illegal and disrespectful of others. By that... people are scared of us, because the word ‘illegal’ has a big effect on the settled and safe societies. [People] don’t know anything about asylum seekers, there’s no-one to tell them about us.” - An Australian refugee, on a temporary protection visa, in interview.

In late September on the outskirts of Saigon and heading for a secluded spot on the banks of the Mekong, an old man, carrying his 2 year old son on his shoulders, made his way to a rendezvous with his two eldest sons. The two eldest boys were about to embark on a dilapidated fishing boat to escape the new regime that had swept to power at the end of the war. The old man and his wife had sold all their worldly goods, converting everything to gold and paying the fixers involved with the boat in order to get his two boys away to a better life somewhere...anywhere. He and the remaining family would stay in Vietnam and labour at whatever task was allotted by the new regime. The chance of resuming his practice as a qualified medical professional was non-existent.

On arrival at the rendezvous point the boat was there but his sons were not. Unbeknown to the old man, they were hiding from military patrols. Their chance had gone and there were no refunds on this deal. The old man, in hopeless desperation begged the Captain to wait a few more minutes but that wasn’t possible; so he entreated the Captain to take his 2 year old son instead. The Captain, a hard but fair man, took the boy and promised to personally look after him. The boat sailed and the old man watched his youngest son sail into the unknown.

Two to three days later, disabled, drifting & taking on water with 346 people on board - the majority of them chronically sea-sick, weak, hungry and thirsty - the Captain let off a red distress rocket: a ships light’s had been spotted on the horizon.

The Denholm Company owned cadet ship ‘Wellpark’ was on passage to Kaohsiung, Taiwan with a cargo of grain from Bahia Blanca, Argentina. The weather had moderated somewhat in the aftermath of cyclone Lola that had passed through the area some days earlier. The second mate saw the single red flare, called the Master and ‘Wellpark’ altered course to investigate.
Attempts were made by one life boat, manned by the Training Officer and cadets, to rescue those on board but this proved too dangerous due to the 3 to 4 metre swell and the overwhelming number of people that it had become apparent needed to be rescued. Capt. Hector Connell manoeuvred Wellpark alongside the disabled boat and made her fast using long painters to minimise the effects of the swell and all 346 souls were transferred to the heaving main deck of the ship.

In the warm tropical morning light of the next day, as the ship continued her journey, the enormity of the tasks that lay ahead in the days and weeks to come became apparent. But help was closer to hand than was initially apparent. The collective knowledge and skills the refugees possessed became useful as shorthand/touch-typists cleared bureaucratic red tape in short order. Doctors, dentists and nurses set up health facilities on board. Trades people from all sectors of society were spread among the refugees and combined with the stores and equipment generously supplied by the people of Kaohsiung, the processing of the refugees became a slick operation. Diplomatic moves were afoot elsewhere as the Rt Hon Merlyn Rees MP (UK) negotiated and arranged the transfer of all refugees to a holding centre at Kensington Barracks in London.

Since then the Wellpark Diaspora has spread: communities in London, New York, Los Angeles and Montreal all thrive and in 2008 a 30th Anniversary Reunion was held in LA. Children and grandchildren of the original 346 attended and the event oozed prosperity with doctors, lawyers, accountants and self-made business people in abundance. The 35th Anniversary takes place in London in October this year and that too will be conspicuously short of “killers, criminals, illegal and disrespectful” types.

And the 2-year old boy entrusted to the Captains care? Currently CEO of his own company; he’s done alright. His father has no worries about hiring boats these days. He just borrows one of his son’s boats to go fishing off the Californian coast whenever he wants.

Craig Holmes

**DISCHARGE BOOKS: THE HALF-LIFE OF HISTORY**

It may be a symptom of age but one looks back in an effort to find meaning from the seemingly random sequence of life’s events. Like most pilots around the world, I went to sea very young (aged 16 in 1972) and crossed the oceans in a veritable cocoon, surrounded by shipmates who seemed worldly-wise but were in fact innocents abroad. Looking through my old *Discharge Book* however, we were never far from the edge of History and most pilots will have borne witness to some small part of the big picture. I joined my 2nd ship in November ’72 (OBO carrier, “Spey Bridge”) in Valparaiso, Chile where she was discharging crude oil; she would then back-load a cargo of iron ore for Japan, thence in ballast to Persian Gulf where we loaded crude for Chile. This circumnavigation via the Straits of Magellan took 3-4 months and I stayed for 2 round trips, during which time I grew fond of Chile. Four of us left the ship in July 1973 and got stuck for several days in the capital Santiago de Chile, waiting for flights. The country was in political turmoil and we witnessed a brutal militia in action, turning a minor altercation into a potential riot due to their heavy-handed policing. September 11th (Chile’s 9/11) is the 40th anniversary of the [CIA-backed] Pinochet coup against the democratically elected President Salvador Allende.

My next ship was one of the remarkable Gas Turbine container ships (Asialiner) owned by SeaTrain of Hoboken, New Jersey. I joined the ship in Greenock (near Glasgow) and 4 days later we were in New York where the captain proudly pointed out to me the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre. These ships were fitted with twin *Pratt & Whitney* aircraft engines: at 60% power, we cruised at 26 knots! In New York, we hosted a party for sharp-suited tough guys in dark glasses whom we imagined were Mafia. Interestingly, when we arrived at Rotterdam a few days later, the Dutch Military surrounded the ship: apparently our cargo included a quantity of Uranium, but since undeclared on the Dangerous Cargo Manifest, the ship was unaware. Some years later, a sister ship had a similarly undeclared toxic cargo which poisoned 4 crew.

About 1975, we called into New Orleans and I had to accompany the US Coast Guard whilst he searched the ship with a Geiger Counter. When I asked him why the Geiger Counter, he sternly replied: “This ship was in Russia 3 years ago: you could have an atomic bomb on board!” Though politically naïve, this sounded to me like serious paranoia. One year later,
I joined ship in Acajutla (El Salvador). The only sign of trouble then was the casually malevolent soldiers who would wander onto the ship armed with machine-guns and huge machetes, looking for freebies. Such was their demeanour that one felt it better not to argue. El Salvador would soon be riven by massacres led by Contra forces (aided by guess who?)

Some months later, in the Caribbean, I had spotted a red flare which turned out to be a liferaft with one American aboard. He claimed to be FBI and had jumped ship from a Moroccan vessel he was investigating for drugs. After a couple of days in this guy’s company, we did consider reuniting him with his liferaft. Returning to Central America, we arrived in Nicaragua to load bananas in 1978 where a curfew had just been imposed. An American plantation owner came aboard and asked us to get a message to President Carter to send in the US Marines to sort out the rebels. I think he may have been talking bananas.

One of the great links to home for British seafarers was the BBC World Service. I remember observing the stark contrast between their cool measured reporting of events preceding the 1982 Falklands War, and the howling hateful atmosphere evident in their review of the British Newspapers. I first became aware of the role of the Press in creating a frenzy for military action. (How topical is that?).

Finally, in 1983, I was back on a 100,000 dwt OBO (Scandia Team) lightering Iranian crude from 350,000 Dwt ULCC (Wind Eagle) too big for Suez: we took 3 round trips to Syria to lighter each ship whilst passing an American Naval blockade of Lebanon where the PLO were besieged in Beirut by the Israelis. Thus we were a British/Norwegian business supplying Iranian oil to Syria who supported the PLO in Lebanon, skirting past the US blockade which sought to assist the Israeli operation in Lebanon. Confused? There’s worse to come: the mate of our ship was a Belfast Jew, a keen supporter of rabidly anti-Catholic Ian Paisley, and who sported a large Star of David on his un-buttoned boilersuit chest. I did warn him that if the Christian Phalange spotted his Star he would be in serious trouble! In December 1983, we were in the same Suez Canal South-bound convoy as the PLO evacuated from the Siege of Beirut. Helicopters swooped down in the Bitter Lakes to the 3rd ship astern of us to take Yasser Arafat to meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak who was a quasi-ally of both Israel and America. Bernie kept his boilersuit buttoned-up that day.

Yasser Arafat died in 2004, but his body was exhumed in 2012 because his clothing was found to be contaminated with high levels of Plutonium-210 (the same agent used to assassinate Russian whistle-blower Alexander Litvinenko in London in 2006. Perhaps History – like radio-activity - needs time for events to settle before a clearer image emerges: it all depends on the half-life, but that picture is growing clearer with each passing day.

*************************************************** *************************** ... *************************** ***************************************************

The Allotted Span

The Allotted Span The Allotted Span The Allotted Span The Allotted Span

Barrie Youde (the poet turned 70 26th January, 2013)

Three score years plus ten: all things which follow are a bonus.
The allotted span for men: what is the meaning, please, of bonus?
Life has given all its gifts. All pleasures are unwrapped;
All weights and balances and lifts; and nothing now is trapped.
The devil take the hindmost: I’ve been idle. I have striven.
And where I have been blindmost, may I please now be forgiven?
Guide me, O, Thou Great Redeemer, in my foolish ways.
Truly, I am but a dreamer. What is curse or praise?
Grant good health to those I cherish, those I know as friends.
May their kindness never perish. May I make amends
For every trespass I have made, there have been far too many.
In others, may I please pretend I have not noticed any?
Grant me life while I have work; grant work while I have life.
Grant me strength to cater for my family and wife.
May they learn as I was taught; and may they learn much more;
And may they know the gap between the moral and the law.
And may they laugh where I have laughed and love where I have loved;
And may they not sit in the draft; nor yield when they are shoved.
May they be as awkward, born into the Awkward Squad,
And know all footsteps forward should be where the Saints have trod?
And know that some will not be. That some steps will deviate.
May errors thus begot be rectified, before too late.
And may they join the ranks of those whose lives and hearts are light.
And may I be allowed, O God, a moderate dram tonight?