

# GALLEY RADIO

Issue No.2



A MERRY  
CHRISTMAS TO  
ALL OUR READERS

*You are all cordially invited to not one,  
not two, but three pre - Christmas  
celebrations in December.*

*9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Kingston Hotel Trinity  
Square and 16<sup>th</sup> at the Four in Hand on  
Holderness High Road.*

These will be our usual social meetings but Lisa and Mark at the Kingston are promising a special 'pan of shackles' on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

We are also encouraging everybody to visit the Four in Hand on Holderness Road to wish a Merry Christmas to Dennis Shakesby and others who are not able to get into the Kingston pub for our fortnightly gatherings. We hope we will see you at one of these functions.



Our numbers continue to swell and we are particularly pleased that we have new members who are just interested and did not work for the company. One such is Geoff Hoyle who was a ship's agent in Falmouth. We are also pleased to welcome to our throng some of the office team. We have Marlene Whitlam who worked in the Nelson Street office as secretary to the long term Chairman T.C. Spink and is our only female member. A later Managing Director has joined, Mike Lacey was MD 1982 to 1992. He went on to become the Secretary General of the International Salvage Union. Mark Hoddinott has also 'signed on'. He was a Salvage Master with United and also went on to head the International Salvage Union.

We would really like to make contact with the family of those who worked ashore or afloat for United Towing but may have 'passed over the bar'. Part of the story is of those that were left at home. If you know anybody that may be interested in what happened in the office and on the ship's please let them know that we are interested in how it affected them and pass on the contact details or print this newsletter out and pass it on.

Other people that have joined but live further afield are Derek Vanston who was Second and Chief between 1980 and 1985 who now lives in Perthshire, and Roddy Jardine who was with the company for about five years and now lives on the Isle of Barra. If you know any of the above and wish to contact them please drop us a line and we will pass it on to them.



**We have been told of the death of John Bold on 23<sup>rd</sup> November. John was Master in the Company when I joined in 1982. I believe he joined us from Alexandra Towing.**

**I sailed with him a couple of times on the Salvageman, the longest was at the end of the salvage of the Argentinian submarine 'Santa Fe' and it's subsequent scuttling in deep water. Then from Grytviken to South Shields. John was thought of as 'difficult', but that was really on first meeting and I soon warmed to him. Really he just kept himself to himself. If you have any news of those connected with United Towing please get in touch and we can pass it on. I know that we are all getting older but please feel free to let us know about grand kids, awards, or anything else that is worth sharing.**

**The Society's condolences go to his family and friends.**



I noticed in the press the launch of a new tug. I was struck by the size of the new vessel and the differences between the old ships and their modern day counterparts. Modern tugs are designed to do many more things than just tow. As the size of the structures they move grows so does the size of the gear used and so the does the size of the tug. It is truly amazing to think that in 1971 the OCL 'Bay' Class container ships came out at 950' long and carrying 2961 containers and now the largest container ship, the CSCL Globe is 1313' long and carries 19000 containers!



This is the 'Alp Striker' and she has just been launched. She is multi use for anchor handling and ocean towage etc. Her principle dimensions are LOA 88.9mt (291.7'), Beam 21mt (68.9'), max draft 8.5mt (27.9'). Max speed 19kts and bollard pull 306 tonnes with a deadweight of 4250 tonnes.



They are still not man enough to tow this beauty around on its' own though. This is the Troll Platform, 656,000t empty. 1.2 million tonnes full. She has a draft of 369mt and an air draft of 472mts. (The Eiffel Tower is 300mts). It is the largest structure ever moved by man, so far!



This is the 'Seaman' towing Parma in 1933. Seaman was 125' loa, 28' beam and had a top speed of 11.5 kts. Bollard pull would be about 10 tonnes! The Parma was a barque eking out an existence in the grain races from Australia to Europe in the 1930's. She was 328' long and a depth of 26'. Her GRT was 3084t. She may not be anywhere as large as the Troll platform, but she is much more beautiful.



We now have confirmation that the Hull Maritime Museum have reserved space for us to hold an exhibition in the same area we have used previously. We had been asking for space during the City of Culture 2017 but they have been keen to keep their options open until much closer to that date. However they have now agreed to a period of four months from November 2016 until the end of February 2017. As that is a long time we are hoping to hold two different exhibitions so we will have our work cut out. We have also been told that the Museum is to hold another large exhibition with the assistance of the Reykjavik Maritime Museum. I would expect that the Cod Wars will be at least part of the exhibition so we hope that we will be able to collaborate with both museums on this one too.

We are hoping to have some merchandise corresponding to the exhibitions for sale in the Museum shop. We have had an agreement that we will be able to use their shop for this. If you have any ideas about what you think would be of interest to the general public please let us know as we will need to sort out orders etc. over the spring.

If you have ideas about what subjects you would like to see covered by an exhibition please also let us know.



KNOW ANYONE?: Above left and right, these are two of the pictures from the United Towing and Salvage Society archive and chairman Tony Porter hopes someone can provide more information about the people shown. The society welcomes pictures of the company, its employees and its vessels.

This above item from the Hull Daily Mail found its way to London via a circuitous route and we have received a lovely letter from a Miss Juliet Brittain. Her father was UT Chairman T.C. Spink's nephew and Miss Brittain would spend every summer up in Bridlington with the family. Mr. Spink commuted to the Hull office on Nelson Street every day. She would spend most of her time on the 'Yorkshireman' that was giving trips round the bay in the summer.

She identified the girl in the left photograph as Leonie Fletcher whose parents had a butchers shop in Brid'. The girl in the right hand picture is Margaret Clark who worked in the chemists shop by North Pier. Apparently they would make a bit of money by making sandwiches to sell when the tug made longer trips for a day at Scarborough or Whitby. We have had no information about any of the lads. Do you know who they may be?

Miss Brittain has agreed to pass on all her photographs and artefacts to the Society so we look forward to receiving those. She is also taking time to write down all the stories she has from those days so with luck we should be able to read some of those at a later date. Have you any photos or stories to share. Just contact a committee member, come down to the Kingston pub or email us at [UTandSS@gmail.com](mailto:UTandSS@gmail.com).

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My first trip didn't quite start out as I had expected it to. I had joined United Towing from a deep sea company where you were expected to join smartly dressed in collar and tie etc. After sitting for months off Port Stanley in the Falklands with a ship half full of munitions that nobody knew what to do with, and with a company that was apparently in its death throes, I had decided to leave. There had been dire warnings of working for a non-Federated company, meaning that I could never return to deep sea life, but I had taken the plunge anyway.

I had the call From King William House that I would be joining the 'Salvageman' at the end of October, in the Falklands again! I should have realised when I was told that we were to board a bus outside King William House at 2300, I was the only one there at 2245! By the time we were due to set off a few more appeared straight from the pub along with a few wives and girlfriends.

We boarded the bus and the last one to arrive was of course the Captain. I had been working for a Liverpool company since starting at sea so I was a little dismayed to hear the dulcet tones of a scouse accent coming from the mouth of a Captain Pugwash look-a-like. This was Alan Stockwell.

The bus set off for Brize Norton where we were to fly out to Stanley. There were a few comfort breaks on the way!

The first leg was by VC10 from Brize Norton to Wideawake Airbase on Ascension Island. I seem to remember stopping off in Dakar to refuel where the plane stopped at the far side of the airfield and we were just allowed off to stretch our legs, as far away from the terminal as possible as Senegal was supposed to be not supporting the UK in Conflict.

Once we had landed on Ascension in the evening we were herded to a tented site and told this was home for the night. I seem to remember a few beers in a mess somewhere, but the main things I remember were the lines of open toilet seats so that you could converse with the guy in the adjacent trap, and even read his newspaper at the same time! I also remember the early call and the large cooked breakfast that was given us before climbing aboard the Lockheed Hercules four engine plane at first light. We were the last to board as could quickly be seen by the fact that the hold was full of cargo. There was a narrow gap between the camping style canvas seats along both sides of the fuselage with the cargo secured in the middle of the hold. Now I am quite tall, and most of that height is made up of legs, and there wasn't enough room to park them. I was assured that once we were underway we could move about, however the gaps round the cargo were so small this wasn't easily accomplished. We were supplied with ear plugs and a box of supplies with sandwiches, boiled egg, fried chicken, a box of juice etc. This was to be our inflight meal for the twelve hour flight, if we were lucky.



Gary Brown (Chief Eng) on a later Hercules flight when there was more room. Note the shower curtain round the loo.

Once in the air and the all clear was given there was a mad dash to appropriate the best spots on top of the cargo. You could see the old hands as they had brought sleeping bags and settled down on the loading ramp right aft. The draw back with this spot was that it was freezing cold. In fact you could either be boiling hot in the main part of the hold, or freezing cold with very little area where it was just right. It wasn't really worth the effort for a change of scene to go to the toilet as this comprised of a shower curtain round a bucket. Not too bad if it was deballasting liquids, but No.2's meant that aromas in the back became a little ripe at times. There were only two little port hole windows to look out of from the hold if I remember, so not the place for a claustrophobic.

The flight to the Falklands took over twelve hours. As there were very few facilities there at this time planes had to arrive with enough fuel to get back either to Ascension or over to Chile. There was every chance that once arriving over Stanley the very changeable weather conditions conspired against you and you would not be able to land and so would have a very long uncomfortable flight prolonged for several more hours. The highlight of the flight was being able to go to the cockpit to watch one of the daylight refuelings. You would think it almost impossible to ensure that a large funnel on the end of a hose was actually able to be guided over a prong sticking out from the front of another plane, but they did, thankfully, and we landed at Stanley after just twelve hours of pain and discomfort.



[www.raf.mod.uk](http://www.raf.mod.uk)

This is the first part of the first trip in United Towing of Tony Porter in 1982.

Does anybody know where Gary Brown is now? We would love to let him know about the Society. I hope that Alan Stockwell will forgive me after he reads this.

How did your first trip start? Drop us a line about those first impressions that you had, and maybe why you went back for another trip!

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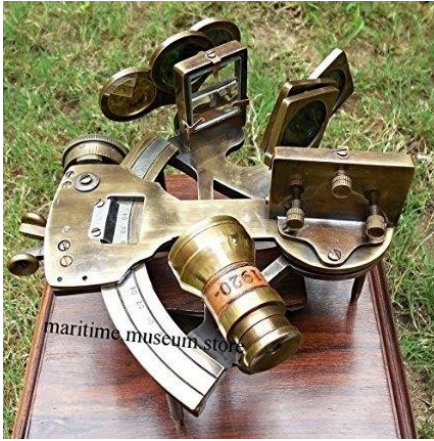
**Just a few gift ideas for those who have everything:-**



Rather than using your teeth, the mantle piece or smashing the neck off the bottle. This zinc alloy, bronze colour bottle opener in the shape of an anchor and rope will only set you back £2-53 with free delivery from Amazon  
It comes in a box too.

When you need to get dressed when you have been out celebrating what better gift than one that makes things easy for you, Port and st'bd socks.

One size fits all at £8-15 from Nauticalia. They can be found cheaper I am assured.



In the arms race to have the best app. on your telephone or tablet confound them all down the pub with this latest satnav. No batteries required. This working RN pattern brass micrometer sextant, 14x13x10cm, in a wooden box will show them the latest in miniaturisation. At just under £90 with free packaging and postage from the Maritime Museum Store, this is a bargain not to be found in Curry's.

This gift would be guaranteed to make your partner smile and maybe gain you a few brownie points. Made of solid English brass, lacquered to avoid having to polish it (yet another good mark). It is 11x4.5x0.3cm and is £12 from UKMade4U



If all else fails this Christmas buy yourself a bottle of British Navy Pusser's Rum Gunpowder Proof.

This is the original recipe of the Admiralty and at the full strength of 54.5%. When the Grand kids start getting you down, or the mountain of washing up is too daunting just crack the bottle take a slug and the world will seem in the correct orbit once more.

£34-90 for 70cl or £49-99 for a litre from Pusser's.

# HEALTH, WEALTH AND HAPPINESS TO YOU AND YOURS FOR THE NEW YEAR WELCOME 2016

PS - Don't forget the Wednesday meetings, 9<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> December at the Kingston Hotel and the 16<sup>th</sup> at Four-in-Hand, Holderness High Road. January's dates are the 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>.