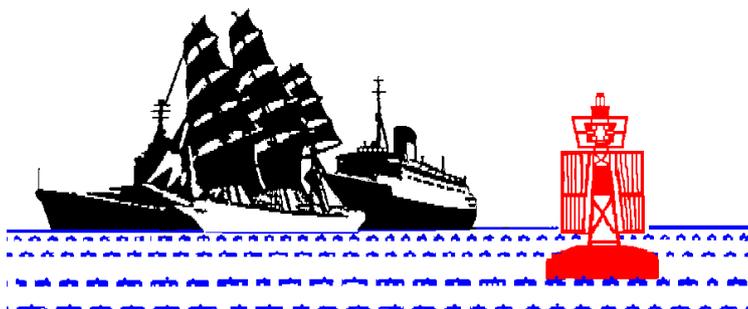


# Black Jack

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH  
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY

[www.sotonwss.org.uk](http://www.sotonwss.org.uk)

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Issue No: 167

Summer 2013



**Heritage Corner?** The newly restored steam tug **Challenge**, flagship of the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships, arrived at her new home in Southampton during the Southampton Maritime Festival held on May5th/6th. She has joined the tug/tender **Calshot**, **Shieldhall**, the Calshot lightship, and the Southampton tram restoration project – the latter is housed in the small silver-roofed building beyond **Challenge** at 49 berth. photo by Nigel V Robinson

## Black Jack – Summer 2013 No. 167

Editorial team

Mick Lindsay, Nigel Robinson and Editorial Assistant Michael Page. Website – Neil Richardson

**Black Jack is the quarterly newsletter for the Southampton Branch of the World Ship Society.**  
Four editions available for £5 inclusive of postage.

### Branch Meetings

Venue:

St James Road Methodist Church  
St James Road  
Shirley  
Southampton SO15 5HE

All meetings commence at 19.30 and the meeting room is to be vacated by 21.30. Meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month.

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## 2013 Branch Meeting Programme

July 9th **Around the Horn** – Ken Dagnall

August 13th **Digital Image Competition**

September 10th **The Ten-Eleven Collection** – Bernard McCall

October 8th **21<sup>st</sup> Century Casualties** – David Hornsby

November 12th **AGM & supporting programme**

December 10th **Convoy WS-6** – Bill Lawes



### The Vosper Boys can finish on time

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All contributions to *BJ* either by post, email, floppy disk or CD are most welcome. Any article with a connection to the Solent area would be much appreciated. The *BJ* Editors could reproduce magazine or newspaper articles but preference is given to articles 'by the branch – for the branch'.

**Would members please ensure that any changes to their postal and/or email addresses are notified to the Branch as soon as possible.**

## MONTY'S NOTEBOOK

A round-up of new or infrequent recent callers to Southampton Docks. Details and photographs supplied by Monty Beckett. Photos top to bottom: **CMA CGM Fort Ste Marie, Melusine, Puffin Bulker**

### Berths 204 - 8 Container Ships:

MOL Competence 86692/08, Santa Balbina 2861/06, Skirner 7852/06, APL Yangshan 128929/12, Qingdao Tower 39941/03, Hyundai Ambition 140979/12, Vega Stockholm 7464/06, MOL Charisma 86692/07, Norjan 8407/07, APL Temasek 151963/13, Chicago Express 93811/06, Santa Bettina 28616/07, CMA CGM Leo 131332/10, Meta 32322/01, Hyundai Tenacity 141770/12, CMA CGM Fort Ste Marie 26342/03, CMA CGM Laperouse 152991/10, Hyundai Together 141770/12, APL Qingdao 113735/12, OOCL Brussels 141003/13

### Ro-Ro Vessels:

Canadian Highway 59447/10, Demeter Leader 61804/09, Pгна 47057/10, Sunshine Ace 58917/09, Marguerite Ace 60067/09, Glovis Challenge 58288/12, CSCC Shanghai 41009/08, Marvelous Ace 59422/06, CSCC Asia 57692/09, Morning Classic 58767/13, Harmony Leader 58767/11, Morning Lena 70687/10, Morning Midas 46800/06, Tulane 72295/12, Melusine 23798/99

### Berth 107 – 109, 7 Dry-dock:

Aquarius 1141/96, Myrte 6046/08, Antwerp 2451/08, Swift 794/89, Puffin Bulker 33045/11, CFL Penhar 4106/10, Ronja 2979/08, Baltic Carrier 2280/97, Sormovskiy 53 2466/86, Frisium 1786/92, Ultra Colonsay 34778/11, Celtic Explorer 1990/93, Ilis 1525/85, Ostgard 2868/01, Blue Stream 2829/01, Bornholm 4967/06, Lady Alexandra 2544/12, Baccara 2887/98, Grona Biessum 3500/10, Alina 9611/10, Bomar Moon, 1867/10, Capella 2780/99, Ultimax 43591/06

### Berth 104:

Lagoon Phoenix ,7313/93, Iberian Reefer 5084/91, Silver Bergen 3817/97

### Marchwood Bulk Berth:

Lady Kirsten 2561/95, Fingard 2997/00, Hekla 2281/08, Kati 3454/98

### Berths 36:

Grona Biessum 3500/10, Nicole C 2990/08, Karina C 4151/10, Gerhard G 4255/11

### Prince's Wharf:

Arklow Venture 2829/99, Norderau 2461/05, Arklow Rambler 2999/02, Muros 2998/08, Elbetor 2351/90, Arklow Rally 2999/02, CK Pearl 1801/12, Arklow Rose 2999/02

### Dibles Gut & Wharf:

Niklas 2452/10

### Other cargo vessels:

Flevogracht 8620/11, RMS Vindava 1307/89, Singelgracht 16641/00, Normed Antwerpen 8407/08, Flintergracht 5057/07, Muntgracht 9524/12, Grietje 8397/00

### Passenger Vessels:

Saga Sapphire 37049/81, Aidastella 71304/13, Europa 2 42830/13, Mein Schiff 76522/96, Adventure of the Seas 137276/01, Silver Whisper 28358/01, Grand Mistral 47900/99, Norwegian Breakaway 145655/13



CMA CGM FORTE STE MARIE



MELUSINE  
23798/99



PUFFIN BULKER 33045/11

# SHIPS FROM THE PAST

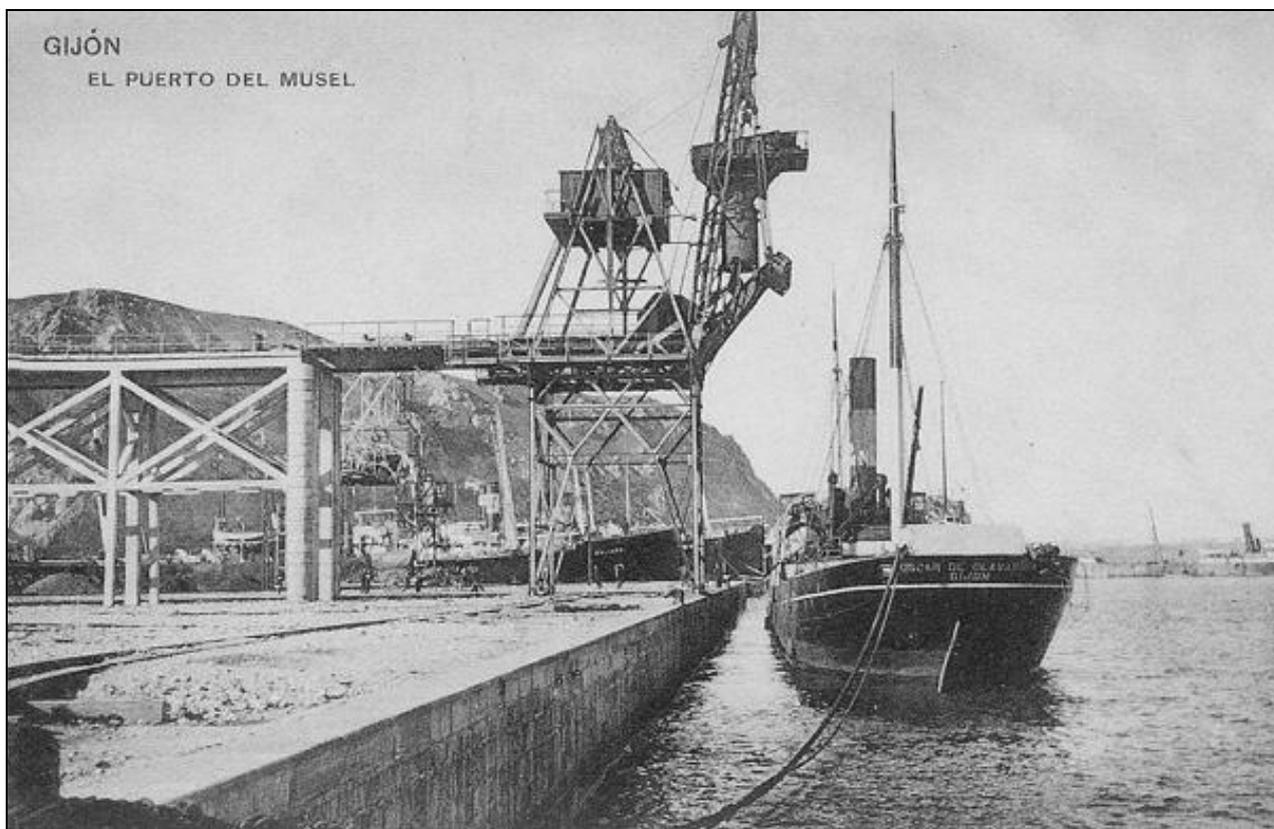
by David Hornsby

## BENITA of 1887

During the course of his April talk to the Branch on the fleet and history of Compañia Trasmediterranea, Jimmy Poole made mention of the above locally-built ship.

The steamer **Benita** (ON 5614191) was the first steel hulled vessel to be built at the Woolston yard of Oswald Mordaunt & Co (yard no.242) and was launched on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1887 and delivered in November that year to Spanish-owners Línea de Vapores Serra (Serra Steamship Line) and registered at Bilbao. The vessel had tonnages of 1,505 gross and 1,945 dwt with an overall length of 261 feet (79.55m), a beam of 34.3 feet (10.45m) and a moulded depth of 22.2 feet (6.76m). Her machinery was constructed by the builders and comprised a 150 HP coal-fired triple expansion engine, the single screw gave a service speed of about 9 knots on consumption of 14 tons/day with a bunker capacity of 300 tons.

She initially transported general cargo between Spanish Basque ports and Liverpool. On 21<sup>st</sup> September 1904, she was involved in a collision with the French fished vessel **Le Matia** and had to put into La Coruna with damage to the port side.



A postcard showing **Oscar de Olavarria** docked in the port of Musel (Gijón)

In September 1910, after her owners acquired newer vessels, she was sold to Antonio Lopez de Haro Zárate S. en C. and renamed **Oscar de Olavarria**, after a prominent Spanish shipping businessman, who had died in 1902. Now with a tonnage revised to 1,509 gross and registered in Gijon, she was mainly involved in coal transportation on the Asturian coast of northern Spain, but occasional visited the UK. Retaining this name, she was resold in 1915 to Compañía Gijonesa de Vapores (Gijonesa Steamship Company). In 1916 Gijonesa was acquired by Ferrer Peset Hermanos of Valencia and the ship traded mainly to Mediterranean ports after being renamed **Felix Pizcueta**, after a doctor, politician, journalist and writer born in 1837.

The World War was a tough test for the Spanish merchant fleet, which despite the country's neutrality, suffered heavy losses in both men and ships. Early in 1917, the German authorities ordered an unrestricted campaign by its submarines, forcing many Spanish merchant vessels to take refuge in the foreign ports where they loaded or unloaded. One of those affected was the **Felix Pizcueta**, which was only able to return to Spain after fulfilling conditions imposed by the Germans.

On 25<sup>th</sup> November 1916, Trasmediterranea was incorporated when five fleets were merged and this company contributed 13 ships to the initial fleet of about 53 vessels, which commenced trading at the start of 1917. In 1919, now with a tonnage of 1,520 gross, the vessel was again resold being renamed **Ampurdán** by Hijos de Enrique Gironelle (managed by Sociedad Anónima Franco-Española de Navegación) and now registered at Barcelona. On the night of 25<sup>th</sup> April 1923, she sank at the entrance to Almeria after a collision, but was refloated and after several months of repairs returned to service early in 1924. However, after the demise of this owner in 1924, she was renamed **Maria R** by Hijo de Ramón A. Ramos carrying cargo and passengers from Barcelona to Cartagena, Aguilas, Almeria, Motril, Algeciras and Malaga, as well as other domestic and foreign ports. She retained this name until sold on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1936 to Barcelona breakers Tomás Herrería y Construcciones SA, Barcelona, after her owners had purchased **Alhambra** and **Navarre** from Trasmediterránea, the former continuing the name **Maria R**.

Information from Lloyds Register, Trasmeships, Miramar, TheShipList and other sources.

## Naval Vessels in Southampton by Bill Lawes

Towards the end of April, Southampton saw the arrival of two naval auxiliaries, following a large NATO exercise. These ships were an interesting comparison between the old and the new. The elderly ship was the Canadian **Preserver**, the newer the German **Frankfurt Am Main**.

As a comparison the main details of the vessels are shown below:-

	<b>PRESERVER (AOR 510)</b>	<b>FRANKFURT AM MAIN (A1412)</b>
Built	St. Johns Dry Dock	Flensburger
Launched	29-5-69	5-1-01
Commissioned	30-7-70	27-5-02
Full Load Disp.	25,679 tons	20,240 tons
Engines	Steam Turbines 21,000hp	Diesel 14,388hp
Max. speed	21 kts	20 kts
Capacities	13,000 tons fuel	9,500 tons fuel
	500tons aviation fuel	?
	350 tons dry cargo	250 tons dry cargo
	300 tons ammunition	160 tons ammunition
		450 tons water

In addition to this data, **Frankfurt Am Main** can also carry 26 containers which can be arranged in two layers on the upper deck and can also include a containerised Hospital Unit for 50 people. A sister ship has the simpler name of **Berlin**.

Both ships can also carry two *Sea King* helicopters – **Preserver's** are the Sikorsky version, whereas the German vessel operates the Westland aircraft.

Despite her advancing years, **Preserver** has been a very useful ship for the Canadian Navy, as in addition to her supply duties she has also acted as a Flagship and a Troop Transport. Her sister ship **Protecteur** is based on the Pacific Coast of Canada.



**Preserver**



**Frankfurt am Main**

photos by Bill Lawes

# Frank Henry Algernon Mason RBA, RI, RSMA

by Nigel V Robinson

In the next of our articles on artists we look at Frank H Mason, who was born in Seaton Carew, County Durham on 1 October 1875 the son of a railway clerk. He was well known for his maritime, shipping, coastal and harbour paintings and as a creator of art deco travel and railway posters.

After two years training on HMS Conway in the Mersey he joined Parsons and trained as a marine steam engineer working at Hartlepool, Leeds and Scarborough. He finally settled in Scarborough around about 1894. Although he had no formal art training, Scarborough was at that time a centre for an art community and he studied at Scarborough School of Art with Albert Strange<sup>(1)</sup> and made regular trips to Staithes to meet and socialise with the artists there. Even by 1890 Frank Mason's work had advanced to the point where he received commissions from art dealers, and around 1898 he decided to quit marine engineering and take up art full-time. In 1901 he became a founder member of the Staithes Art Club. Frank married his wife Edith in 1899 and they made their home in Scarborough.

During 1914–1918, Frank Mason was appointed a shipping war artist in the RNVR as lieutenant in command of a motor launch in the North Sea, and in Egypt. On returning from the war he worked with the community at Ebberston Hall near Scarborough and he also travelled abroad undertaking an extended European tour. He painted many subjects generally in water colour. During the 1920s and 1930s he designed poster artwork for Great Northern Railway, Great Western Railway, London, Midland and Scottish Railway, North Eastern Railway, London and North Eastern Railway, British Rail and Underground Group railway companies and shipping companies including Cunard, P&O and Royal Mail and post-war a splendid group of paintings for F T Everard portraying their coaster fleet. He also produced a series of cigarette cards for Players.

In 1904 he was elected to the Royal Society of British Artists and to the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour in 1929. Frank H Mason had exhibitions of his work at the Royal Academy from 1902 onwards. His work has been included in an exhibition in Liverpool and in 1973 there was an exhibition of his work at the National Maritime Museum. As well as the Imperial War Museum, which holds 56 of his paintings from his WWI RNVR time his work can be found in numerous galleries around the country – at Cartwright Hall Bradford, in Dundee, Hartlepool, and at Whitby.

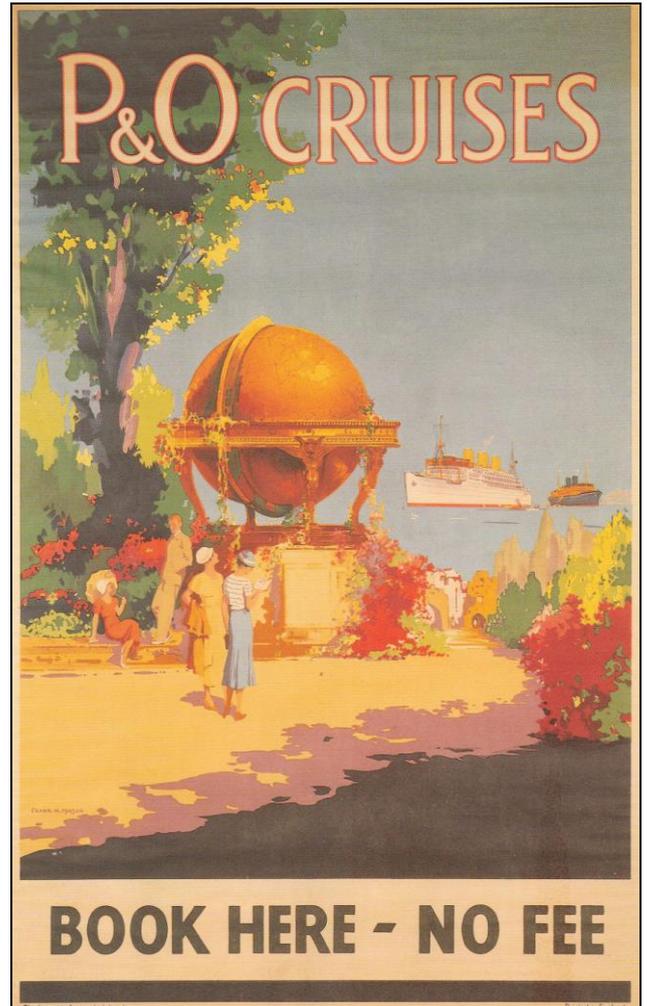
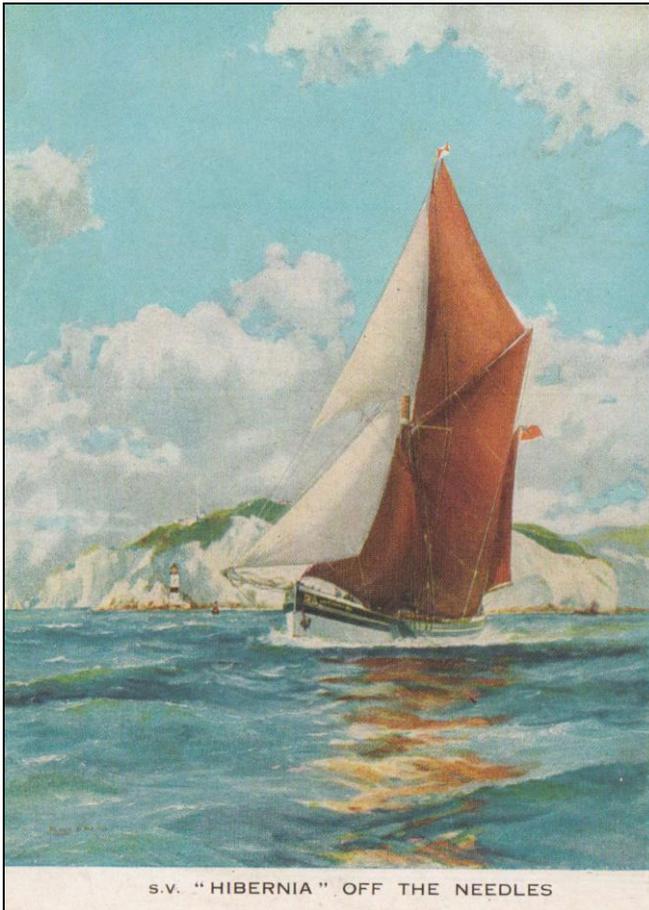
Frank wrote the book *Ashore and Afloat* (1929) about his water colour technique. With Fred Taylor, who also worked for shipping lines and was a friend of Kenneth Shoemith (whom we will feature in a future article), Frank also wrote a book entitled *Water Colour Painting*.

Frank H Mason died on 24 February 1965 aged 89.

<sup>(1)</sup> Albert Strange (1855-1917) was one of the foremost designers of small cruising yachts, but also had a lifelong career in art, exhibiting many times at the Royal Academy.



A well known and splendid Frank H Mason portrait of the then new **Mauretania** of 1939



A selection of Frank Mason's varied output including **Andes** of Royal Mail Lines, along with **Cambria** off the Needles and **Suavity** off Portland as examples of his work for Everards, a sample of his naval work, together with a P&O poster of the 1930s featuring two of the ships in the background.

all pictures Nigel V Robinson collection

# A - Z OF SAIL

by Michael Page

## “S” is for the elite clipper “SOBRAON”

The letter “S” presented a real challenge as I have records – some very limited – for 42 sailing ships. However, I settled on the Elite Clipper **Sobraon** as a very interesting vessel and one for which I have a fairly good picture.

The **Sobraon** was built by A Hall of Aberdeen and launched in November 1866 at a cost of £43,965. She was the largest composite ship ever built, her construction being iron frames with teak planking and copper sheathing, and it is interesting to note that a royalty of £173 was incurred in the building costs to cover the patent held by George & Henry Jordan on iron-frame construction.

She was originally laid down as a screw driven steamer, but she was altered during construction with the propeller aperture being filled in, resulting in a long run which combined with a fine entrance made her a very fast clipper. In her early days she carried 250 passengers in first, second and intermediate classes, plus steerage for single men. The crew at that time was between 60 and 70 in total. The **Sobraon** had lower masts of wrought iron while the topmasts and lower yards were of steel with a total sail area of 87,120 sq feet, enough to cover a two acre field.

For 25 years she sailed under the Devitt and Moore flag, chartered for the first six years and then in 1872 she was purchased outright. Her second Captain was J.A. Elmslie who commanded her for 24 years and was a well respected seaman.

Her first five voyages were to Sydney and then in 1872 she was put on the Melbourne run, carrying general cargo on the way out and wool and grain on the return trip to the UK. However it was as a passenger ship that she gained her reputation. Outward times were consistently 70–80 days and Melbourne was 68 days. Despite being a flyer, she was a steady ship which made her very popular with passengers, especially as she only made one return trip a year. Food was good as she carried live cows, bullocks, sheep, pigs, geese, chickens and ducks with all the necessary animal food. In addition she had a 10 ton capacity ice box, and, remarkably, a condensing plant for conversion of salt water into fresh water.

The **Sobraon**'s last trip as a passenger ship was in 1890/1 from Plymouth to Melbourne – a run of 13,325 nautical miles with a best day of 303 miles and lowest of 30 miles. On arrival in Melbourne she was sold to the New South Wales Government for use as a Youth Reformatory facility – a sad end for such a noble ship. But in 1911 she was purchased by the government as a boy seaman training ship for the Royal Australian Navy. She spent 16 years renamed as HMAS **Tingara** (aboriginal for 'open sea'), which was more in keeping with her proud past. In 1927 she was finally broken up after 75 years of service.



Additional details;  
Length .....317 feet  
Breath.....40 feet  
Depth.....27 feet  
Deadwight....3,500 tons

A dramatic portrait of the **Sobraon** at sea.