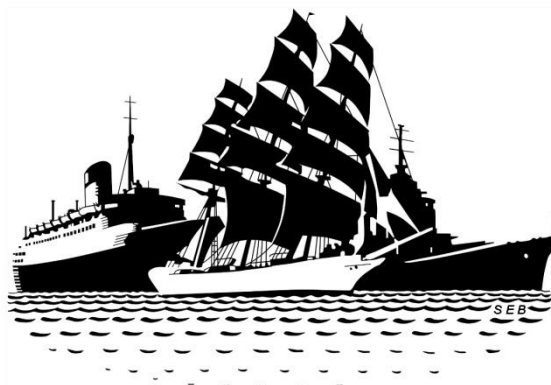


Black Jack

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY
www.sotonwss.org.uk



Issue No: 208

Autumn 2023



Southampton had an unusual visitor in June in the shape of the new Isle of Man Steam Packet ferry **Manxman** which is seen here arriving in the port from her builders Hyundai Mipo Dockyard Co., Ulsan in South Korea on 24th for some final fitting out and taking on stores. She left on 30th June bound for Douglas and entry into Irish Sea service. photo by Andrew McAlpine

Black Jack – Autumn 2023 No.208

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***Black Jack is the quarterly magazine of the
Southampton Branch of the World Ship Society.***

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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2023 Branch Meeting Programme

September 12th Far East Shipping

David Hawkins

October 10th Italy part two

David Oldham

November 14th AGM and Photo Competition

December 12th Cruising Again

Bill Mayes

All contributions to *BJ*, by post, email, memory stick or CD are most welcome. Any article with a connection to The Solent area would be much appreciated. The Editor 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.

Andrew's Note Book

Some new or infrequent callers to Southampton Docks by Andrew McAlpine

Welcome to the latest notebook from the port of Southampton; here are some updates on the most noticeable comings and goings and other news from around the port.



Cruise News:

On 20th May Regal Princess arrived at the start of her summer season from the UK, she joins fleet-mates Sky and Island Princess which are both based in Southampton for the summer season.

Left: **Regal Princess** (built 2014)

On 22nd July **Disney Dream** made her first ever visit. Following the success of **Disney Magic**'s first Southampton season following the pandemic Disney Cruise Line's Fantasy class ship will be offering a range of UK based cruises during the summer.



Right: **Disney Dream** (built 2010) as she sailed up Southampton water for the first time.

Container News:



On 22nd July Ocean Network Express first megamax containership made her maiden visit. **ONE Innovation** is the first in a series of six 24,136TEU being built in Japan and now holds the record of the largest box ship to visit the port of Southampton she is deployed on the The Alliance FE3 service.

left: **ONE Innovation** (built 2023) arriving with Svitzer tug escort.

General News:

On the 24th June the brand new Isle of Man ferry **Manxman** made a one-off technical visit to Southampton while on the delivery voyage from South Korea to Douglas (IOM). The visit was to allow some final fitting out work to be carried out and load stores. See also photo and text on front cover.



On 11th June the general cargo vessel **Asian Naga** made an adhoc visit to the container terminal. The visit was to discharge a number of dangerous goods containers.

Left: **Asian Naga** (built 2011)

until next time stay safe
and happy ship spotting
Andrew

all photos by Andrew McAlpine

TOWAGE CHANGES AT FAWLEY

by David Hornsby

On 1st July 2023, the towage contract at Fawley Refinery Terminal changed after 30 years, when Svitzer took over towage support from Ostensjo Rederi AS

In 1993, Esso Petroleum moved their towage contract away from local operators and awarded a 7-year contract to deep-sea and offshore operator Ostensjo Rederi AS, based at Haugesund in Norway. In February 1993, just before the contract came into force, the new operator set up a wholly-owned UK subsidiary, Solent Towage Limited, to operate the contract, which was to be the first of three consecutive contracts awarded with the most recent £62m 15-year contract expiring at the end of June 2023.

During the 30 years of Ostensjo operations, a number of powerful tugs were operated, normally with three tugs based on pontoons at the seaward end of Esso Berth 5, supported by smaller line handler launches. In recent years, under the revised Port Regulations, operations have been extended to Escort large tankers from the Nab area through the Solent and round the Bramble Bank before berthing.

Earlier this year, a new 7-year contract was awarded by Exxon-Mobil to Svitzer, who already operate the five largest ship-handling tugs in Southampton Docks. The award of the contract to Svitzer – part of the Moller-Maersk Group - was not totally unexpected, as in June 2021, Svitzer Europe Holding BV had taken ownership of the three tugs, although operations had continued under Ostensjo management. The existing crews were given the opportunity to continue their contracts with Svitzer, who have confirmed that the vessels will soon be repainted in Svitzer colours and logos, but there are currently no plans for renaming. At the time of the Branch Cruise on 17th July, only Ostensjo logo and tugs numbers had been removed.

The five vessels now operated by Svitzer are

- APEX** a pair of Robert Allan design AVT 3700, twin screw Voith tractor tugs built 2007/8
PHENIX by Astilleros Gondon at Asturias in Spain;
643 gross, 445 dwt; 37m loa x 14m beam with 6.8m draft; 7,040 bhp from twin Rolls-Royce Bergen diesels to twin Voith Schneider units; 67 tons Bollard Pull, FiFi 1 fire-fighting and oil spill response capability
- LOMAX** Robert Allan RAstar 2800 design azimuth stern drive (ASD) tug built 2012 by Sanmar in Turkey as **SANMAR TERMINAL VII** and acquired 2013;
426 gross, 120 dwt; 28m loa x 12.6m beam x 5.6m draft. Twin screw, 6392 bhp from two Caterpillar diesels, 80 tons BP, A1 Escot tug with FiFi 1 fire-fighting installed.



left **APEX** and below **LOMAX**

*photographs by Author
taken during Solent Cruises*



IBEX Damen StanTug 1606 design small tug/mooring launch ordered in 2013.
90 gross tons, 16.6m loa x 5.54m beam, twin screw Caterpillar diesels (1200hp) with 14.9t BP

ORYX small tug/mooring/line-handler launch built 2009 by Newbury Engineering, Newhaven as **ELSA** for Thameside Services, Sheerness and acquired 2016;
19 gross tons, 13m loa x 5.4m twin screw Cummins diesels (720hp) 9t BP

Other tugs used at Fawley during the Ostensjo era have included **SILEX**, **TENEX**, **THRAX** and **VORTEX**

Other mooring launches used by Ostensjo included the original **ASTERIX** and **IBEX**. These were replaced by Damen-built vessels with the same names ordered in 2013. However, the replacement **ASTERIX**, a Damen StanTug 1205 design tug/mooring launch (600hp with 8.3t BP) had a short life, as on 30 March 2015, she became a Total Loss, after sinking while assisting the coastal product tanker **DONIZETTI** departing from the Jetty, fortunately without loss of life.

Prior to 1993, the towage contact for supporting tanker movements at Fawley was awarded to the Red Funnel Group. The Company's towage division based two tugs at the Terminal with crews being changed daily on launches owned by Williams Shipping. When necessary the Terminal tugs were supplemented by tugs from the Docks fleet.

The Red Funnel Towage tugs normally based at the Fawley Terminal between late 1970 and 1993 were

GATCOMBE A pair of tugs built on the Humber for Red Funnel in 1970 by R. Dunston (Hessle) Ltd
VECTA 269 gross tons, 32.54m loa 9.35m beam with 4.88m max draft aft; single screw/nozzle powered by 2,500 bhp 6-cylinder Mirrlees-Blackstone diesel giving 13 knots and 32 tons bollard pull. The superstructures were Initially painted green, being repainted cream in 1986. Both were subsequently sold to Multratug at Terneuzen in Netherlands.

Prior to the delivery of the above tugs in November and December 1970, the main Terminal tugs were

ATHERFIELD A pair of tugs built locally for Red Funnel in 1956 by John I Thornycroft at Woolston
CULVER 248 gross tons, 34.14m loa 9.02m beam with 2.97m draft; twin screw with 1,340 bhp from two 6-cylinder Crossley engines giving 12 knots. The tugs were subsequent fitted with fire-fighting towers. In May 1971, shortly after the newer tugs ere delivered, the **ATHERFIELD** was sold to Atlantic Towing in Canada, but **CULVER** remained in the Red Funnel fleet for another 15 years, until sold to the same Canadian owner in 1986.



Above **VECTA** (1970)
Right **CULVER** (1956)

Images from IOW Collection

Also see **BLACK JACK 183** (Summer 2017)



As a follow-up to David's article here is a photo of the ex- Red Funnel tug **Gatcombe** as **Multratug 6** seen at Terneuzen. NVR



The wreck of Europe's first commercial steamship the **Comet** has been designated as a scheduled monument by Historic Environment Scotland. **Comet** was launched in 1812 and operated for eight years on the Clyde and the Firth of Forth before running from September 1819 on a new Glasgow to Fort William service. She was eventually wrecked off Craignish Point west of Crinan on 19th December 1820. Her remains were discovered by divers in 2020 and a survey in September 2021 by Wessex Archaeology confirmed the discovery. The **Comet** was originally designed to carry passengers between Port Glasgow and Helensburgh, where her owner Henry Bell owned a hotel. The **Comet** was carrying no passengers when she was wrecked and Bell and the crew managed to get safely ashore.

The name was a direct reference to the Great Comet of 1811, a celestial event in which a comet passed by the Earth and was visible to the naked eye for 260 days.



**CSCL
NEPTUNE**
departing
Southampton on
23rd June

On 8th May 1984 I joined the **Gardline Tracker**, ex **Tracker**, **Ryfylke** IMO 5302738 GBR 1953 431grt (my first vessel as Master in July 1980) in Plymouth to survey Lyme Bay, or at least ½ of it as another Gardline vessel was doing the other half, for the Admiralty. It was a Tuesday afternoon; our remit was to survey the seabed in Lyme Bay to



update the Admiralty charts. We used to sail every other Wednesday and return to Plymouth on a Tuesday, thus having 24 hours alongside for stores, water and fuel and some R&R. The **Gardline Tracker** was to survey the Eastern half of the Bay from Sidmouth to Portland Bill, down to a line from Portland Bill to Berry Head.

Technology was rather primitive and we had to tow sonar 5 metres above the seabed along lines 125 metres apart, then where the depth was less than 40 metres we had to run echo-sounder lines in between these, all at a speed of 4 knots. Navigation was also primitive in that we used Decca Main Chain and at night time the system was a bit chaotic, one night whilst steering a perfectly straight line (we always did!!) a horse's head appeared on the plot of where we had been, this was due to, apparently, a bored observer at Decca twiddling control knobs!

There was a lot of fishing gear down that continually got caught up on our sonar tow line, the fishermen would not remove it as the MOD and Gardline would not pay to have them removed as was the case a few years previous when Western Geophysical paid through the nose to have them removed. When we caught a line of pots we would have to recover our gear and disentangle the pots, a few free lobsters and crabs were obtained this way. We would then relay the pots and continue on our way. This relaying of the pots caused some problems with the local fishermen as they were then not sure where their pots would be. This was cured by myself calling the same fisherman each morning to inform him of where we had picked up the pots and re-laid them; it was the vessel **Branscombe Pearl**.

We had a very thick book of wrecks supplied by the Admiralty that contained a lot of information regarding the wrecks in Lyme Bay giving us information, the approximate position, what the name and type of vessel it was and how it sank. One of them was a target towing tug that was sunk by a NZ Navy vessel by mistake, leaving the target floating. We also had to wire sweep any wreck with a depth of less than 40 metres over it at low water. The Royal Navy always used 2 vessels for this with a wire stretched between them, Gardline decided to do this with one vessel, us. Firstly we had to fix the position of the wreck by using sonar and echo-sounder. When we knew where it was we had to rig a piano-wire along the side of the vessel and lower it down so that when we slid over the wreck it would break the wire, and continue doing this, lowering ½ a metre less each time until we cleared the wreck. We had a bit of a problem doing this as the vessel was a single screw vessel with no bow-thrusters, so the wind and tide had to take us over it at a speed of less than ½ a knot, if the vessel was a large one we would have to do this over each high point. There was a wreck off Brixham that showed a depth of 15.3 metres (if I remember rightly) that we eventually cleared at 6.8 metres, this caused much panic as the Brixham pilots used to board and land pilots there from deep-drafted vessels. We informed the Admiralty at Taunton, and then Trinity House and the Navy swung into action. It turned out to be floating steel buoys on the wreck that a diving company from Christchurch had a licence to dive on; they nearly lost their licence over that!

The only other wreck of note was a WW1 German submarine that had its periscope stuck up, we only found this out by a passing day-angling boat who also did summertime diving.

A – Z of Sail

by Michael Page

For the letter “I” I have chosen the INVERNEIL

She was launched by Russell & Co of Port Glasgow in 1895. Inverneill was one of a series of steel barques built for the “Inver Line of George Milne, the Aberdeen Shipowner for the Inver Line. With a length of 238 feet and a beam of 36 feet, she had a tonnage of 1470 Net. Her sail plan was for double topsail, single topgallant sails and topsail, single topgallant sails and royals, with a spike bowsprit. Like all Milne vessels, she had a light grey hull with a thin white line along the sheer strake and a white figureheads.

Inverneill and her sister were small compared with the four masted barques already being built, but they were good carriers for their size. Successfully employed in world-wide trades they were well found vessels, breaking no records but making steady passages.

Milne was a conservative owner who stayed with sail longer than most of his contemporaries. However, he sold many of his vessels during World War 1 and ***Inverneill*** was one of five vessels which passed into the ownership of Sir William Garthwaites Marine Navigation Co—the sale for £13,000 took place in 1916. This company was officially based in Montreal and many of his ships were registered there, but Garthwaite himself was a Londoner and the fleet seems to have been managed from the London Office.

Still under her original name, ***Inverneil*** traded safely through the remaining war years, and in 1919 discharged in Melbourne, where she began one of the most remarkable passages in her career. Chartered to load a cargo of jarrah in Bunbury, Western Australia, for Cape Town she sailed in ballast but was unable to make any headway against a series of westerly gales in the Australian Bight and ran back to Sydney for shelter and refit.

Setting out again she struck another succession of westerlies and eventually put her helm up and ran right across the South Pacific, round the Horn and across the Indian Ocean to arrive in Bunbury from the west, 76 days out of Sydney, having sailed more than 14,000 miles.

It was in Sydney again in 1921, that she was finally renamed ***Garthneil*** in line with the owners policy. She continued to trade largely in the Southern hemisphere - South Africa, Mauritius, Australia, New Zealand and Chilean ports - with two passages back to England with guano.



*A fine view of ***Inverneil*** under sail*

She was one of only four British square riggers still in commission when in 1912, she carried her last freight of coke from Grangemouth to Melbourne, where she arrived on 5th November. After discharge and being laid up for some time, she sailed in July 1926 to Adelaide, to be unrigged and converted into a storage hulk in which capacity she served. I believe at least until World War 2

Not a famous nor a glamorous ship, but a modest good looking and a hard worker, typical of many - such as Garthneil or, for that purpose of our alphabet – ***Inverneil***.