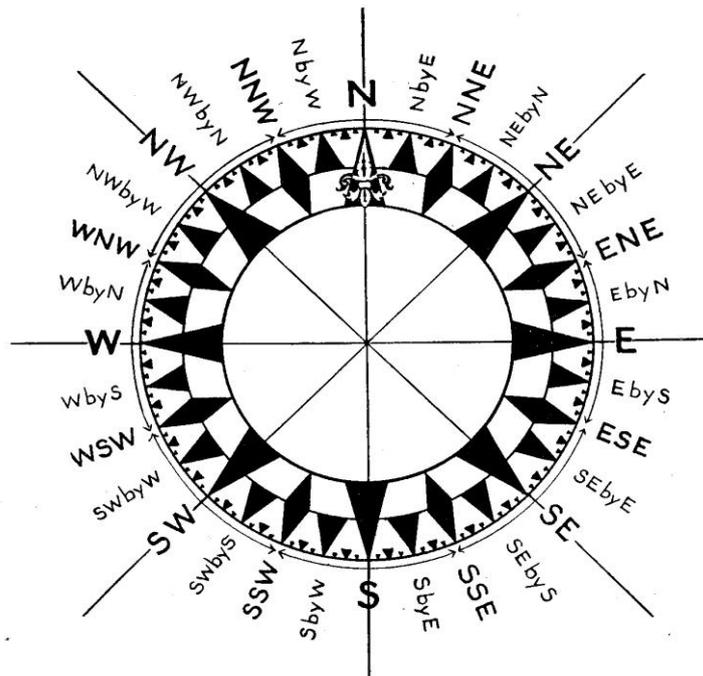




SEPTEMBER 2014

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Editors Note

Our thanks go to Phil Hughes of the UK for bringing to our attention the visit of the frigate Shtandart to Ramsgate.

Next meeting 30th November 2014

Skippers Log

Hello to all our landlubbers. Hoping this fine weather finds you all fit and well.

Our last small meeting had a few of our shipmates gallivanting around the World. So we must welcome back Mick and Jill after their working holiday to the UK where Jill's Mum puts Mick to work with home repairs etc. They go back next year to finish the painting!

Jack and Anne have also returned from the UK but you will have already met up with them before you get this newsletter.

Val and Phil are holidaying in Europe and the UK but will be back for the November end of year meeting. A few others were missing due to illness or an influx of cats!

****Thank you to those who have promptly paid their subs. For those who have not this will be the last request before Christmas to retain your membership.****

Earlier in the month we had some good rains which did the gardens good. Now we are into fine and glorious days once again. Anne's garden is bright and colourful - mine, what little I have, has an abundance of broad beans, mint, coriander and zucchinis. I have bottled the last remaining chillies as the plant - or rather the little tree it has become, has gone to sleep for a while. If anyone wants chillies please let me know.

Always needed are raffle prizes (unused please) and more information for the newsletter. For those who do make the effort with both our thanks go to you.

I wish all of you who are having health problems a speedy recovery. I would also like to say how much I appreciate your support and friendship. We have a very special group of fine people.

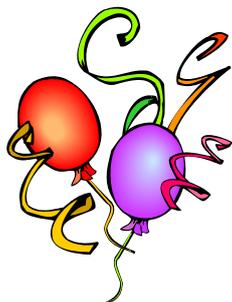
Regards Tony.

From the Almoner's desk

We welcome springtime after a long we chilly winter. It's great to feel warm bright sunny days again and to shake off any winter ills.

Good new that Les has recovered after his fall mishap and our thoughts have been with Shirley who has missed a couple meetings due to being unwell.

Several Vindi members left behind our dreary weather and ventured overseas, mainly to the UK. We look forward to catching up with the adventures of Jack and Anne, Mick and Jill, Ken and Evelyn and Phil and Val.



On the birthday list I make special mention of Bert Bowen who recently celebrated his 90th birthday. Bert lives in Walleroo and trained in catering on the Vindi in 1940.

Birthday wishes to our members for the following months.

July – Jack, Eunice and Jan celebrated.

September – Margaret Maddocks, Peter Rix and Bill Robinson.

October – Jill and Marlene.

November – Mike Day.

December seems a way off yet but Mick and Keith finish off our birthday year, Happy birthday guys.

The frigate *Shtandart* was built on the order of Peter the Great and became the flagship of the Russian Navy some 300 years ago. As Russia lacked the expertise in ship building Peter the Great travelled to Holland and England to gain this knowledge. The building of the new navy began in 1702-1703. Working long hours, the men of the Olonstsky shipyard produced ten ships in five months, the *Shtandart* was the largest.

Shtandart was in service for 16 years but during that time due to the hurried construction her timbers deteriorated and had to be replaced. In 1719 she was taken out of service to be preserved as the first ship of the Russian Navy. She was taken to the Kronwerk Canal along with other ships to be stored.

In 1727 the *Shtandart* was to be brought ashore to be restored, upon inspection it was apparent that there was too much damage. On the orders of Katherine 1st she was taken apart with the promise that she would build another in honour of Peter the Great.

In November 1994 the keel was laid for the replica *Shtandart* and the work began and a dream was to be realized.



As there were no drawings for the building of the original ship there was a lot of research to be done. First the ship had to have the structure and appearance of the original but also the updated requirements for modern day sailing. In the hold two 560hp Volvo diesel engines, tanks and water pumps would now occupy the space that once stored anchors, cannonballs, gunpowder and water. The crew accommodation, messroom and galley were also placed here. To keep it historically correct everything above the gun deck was to be a copy of the first *Shtandart*.

With the first oak rib completed and installed in April 1995 a small celebration was held where the keel and rib were blessed. There were still 44 more ribs to be made. There didn't seem to be a shortage of labour as the news spread quickly of this venture. As the ship was to be built in the same way as her predecessor there would be no machinery available. Plenty of labour was needed to fell the trees and dress them, ready for installation, not to mention transporting them to the shipyard.

By April 1996 the ribs were completed and it was time for the next phase, planking. Larch is the best timber as it does not rot in water and permission was given for 30 trees to be felled from a forest planted for future ship building by a forward looking Peter the Great.

Using the traditional way to bend long pieces of timber, the 12 meter lengths of planking were put into a special long box connected to a furnace for several hours. The heated planking was then quickly attached to the ribs, the tightness of the fitting was essential to the waterproofing of the frame. As the building progressed new skills were required to maintain the quality of the work, special nails and metal parts were made in the new smithy. New workshops were built to accommodate the making of the rigging and wood carving.

The 22 meter pine masts were too long to be man handled so an extra long flat bed truck was used to transport them. The decking was also made from pine. As the flagship of the Russian Navy the *Shtandart* was adorned with wood carvings, the replicas were carved from lime trees. A compromise had to be made with the sails and rigging, as sailcloth and hemp would be too hard to maintain synthetic materials were used. There are five working cannons on board that are regularly used at battle re-enactments and shows.

The Governor of St Petersburg Vladimir Yakovley and the Duke of York, Prince Andrew who are patrons of the project attended the naming ceremony on 30th May 1998, presenting the captain of the new *Shtandart* with the royal standard.

Shtandart was officially launched on the 4th September 1999 but work continued on her as the engines, and navigation system required for 21st century sailing were installed. The interior and furniture along with the rigging and sail completed the replica ship. Now she was ready to take to the seas.

June 2000 and the new *Shtandart* set sail, she would follow the route taken by Peter the Great more than 300 years ago in his endeavour to gain the knowledge of shipbuilding.

Some of the builders of the *Shtandart* became her first crew.

Once upon a time a young 15½ year old arrives at the Vindi which was a massive shock for a little old country boy. After many weeks of starvation, and brought down to the lowest form of life I finally escaped to sea. Ho Ho Ho and a bottle of rum (maybe two), dusky maidens and generally lock up your daughters. The Vindi boy has been let loose on the world.

Having joined my first ship in Southampton more shocks were in store, 0530 knock knock who's there, a loud voice screams outside of the boy's cabin, 'Hands off ##### and put on socks, get your asses in gear and turn too.

After my first full day of bewilderment and graft it was time to hit the showers and loo. Firstly no doors on the loo's, it was a sight to see people reading a book or newspaper or just talking as if it was the most common thing in the world. And of course communal showers, where does one look, a young skinny kid surrounded by big and I mean big hairy stokers and deckies. The next big question that needed answering, one hand holds the soap the second hand does the lathering, where do you hang your flannel? Only the ladies need to answer this conundrum, the men already know the answer, providing it's not too cold. Anyway being surrounded by nude bodies that looked like walking talking picture galleries it was the first time that I can ever remember seeing tattoo's, certainly at very close quarters, sometimes a bit too close for comfort. Looking back that was the time the die was cast, a must have for showing all the girls my body, (I'll show you mine if you show me yours). Anyway I'm still dreaming of a long time ago.

Over the years and many, many showers later with all those bare bodies I became fascinated by all the different works of art, some were magnificent; some were like the Rocky Horror Show. A couple of the best ones was a full English hunting scene which started at the neck with a hand holding a huntsman's horn, three mounted men on horses jumping over a fence surrounded by the hounds. All you could see of the fox was its tail disappearing down a hole, of you know where. The next standout was a pitched battle at sea with galleons and guns blazing, another sea scene was a battleship going at full speed through rough weather. At the other end of the scale was a big 'W' on each bottom cheek so when the owner bent over it spelt out WOW. One other which still makes my eyes water when I think about it and that's sixty years later. This one had to be done while standing to attention, if you know what I mean, lettering down both sides of his manhood ending with either a star or a rose on the end. Under normal circumstances nothing was obvious and I didn't get too close to read the writing. I told you there were some big boys around, if anybody owns up to these tattoos please step forward, I would like to catch up for a chat about old times.

But I digress, like most boys I always fancied having a tattoo but what design. Being a clean living young man I never got too hissed to end up in a tattoo parlour. I know a few people who wished that they didn't have that last glass of amber fluid. To see their faces, not to mention their arms, legs and backs the next morning, still nursing the mother of all headaches, some in shock or horror or both, knowing that they were branded for life. What had seemed magnificent and beautiful the night before meant that they might have to get undressed in the dark for many years to come.

Once again I lose my train of thought; I must be getting old, back to the most serious of soul searching thought. After 55 years of indecision should I get a tattoo and if so what? It had to have meaning and style, me and only me, not to be paraded on the beach as such. Anyway after much deliberation I came up with two designs of which I am really proud of and probably the only ones in the world. For a couple of years only my masseuse and a few nurses saw my works of art. It was quite a shock when I finally showed my ex wife and kids, but I must say they were most impressed. So finally I am getting my gear off to show all of my Vindi mates that I wear these with pride.



I hope you get enjoyment seeing them as well. I have sent this story to Mick and Jill of the South Australia branch newsletter as they publish a lot of funny snippets of their own membership. I'm sure if anybody else can follow on to this of similar stories they would only be too happy to publish them. Thank you from one old/youngish Vindi boy.

Anonymous



MV MORIALTA

Little did the Adelaide Steamship Co. know that when they ordered a new ship for the South Australian coastal run in 1938 that they would not see her until May 1946. The Caledon Shipbuilding & Engineering Co. had been given the contract to build the 1,365 ton passenger-cargo ship to be named *Morialta*. Captain Dick Tobin was sent by the Adelaide Steamship Co. to supervise the construction in September 1939 and to bring her home on completion. This did not happen as she was requisitioned for troop service by the British Ministry of War Transport as a DEMS – Defensively Armed Merchant Ship.

It would be six years before Captain Dick Tobin returned to Adelaide as he was to take command of the *Morialta*. As a DEMS she was equipped with degaussing coils laid on her deck, with large electrical currents running through them, the chance of detonating magnetic mines was reduced. She was sent to Northern Scotland where she ferried soldiers from Scrabster on the north eastern tip to the Royal Navy fleet base at Scapa Flow. The *Morialta* continued to carry troops and cargo around the North Sea, sometimes in a convoy for safety.

After a refit in 1944 she was transferred to the Mediterranean where she was later mined and was towed to Alexandria for repairs that were completed in June 1945.

With the war over *Morialta* left Alexandria sailing for Colombo and Singapore where she was engaged in dumping explosives.

In May 1946 *Morialta* arrived in Adelaide to be refitted and become the passenger and cargo ship that she was intended to be in the South Australian Spencer Gulf.

Morialta was sold to John Burke Ltd in 1957 and renamed *Waiben*.



I pulled into the crowded parking lot at the local shopping centre and rolled down the car windows to make sure my Labrador puppy had fresh air.

She was stretched full out on the back seat and I wanted to impress upon her that she must remain there.

I walked to the kerb backwards pointing my finger back at the car and saying emphatically, ‘Now you stay! Do you hear me?’ ‘Stay!’ ‘Stay!’

The driver of a nearby car, a pretty young blonde, gave me a strange look and said ‘Why don’t you just put the handbrake on?’



My 16 week training course at the Vindicatrix, started after I met some of my old school chums dressed up in Merchant Navy Cadet Officer uniforms and being told of their wonderful experiences they had on their trips abroad. I was into my third year as an indentured apprentice electrical engineer for the National Coal board, with four more years to go. So I sent away for the information on how to join and received a reply in the next post, the problem was to get my father to sign the acceptance forms and then tell my boss what I was proposing to do and break my contract with the National Coal Board. I found it easy to get my father to sign the Merchant Navy form, by just covering the heading, as he never read what I put in front of him. I was accepted and given the details and a rail pass to

get to Sharpness and report to the Master at arms at the compound. My next problem was to confront the apprenticeship board about terminating my apprenticeship and joining the navy. I must have put up a good argument, as they released me without a costly penalty being put on to my family. Next was confronting my parents and telling them my good news and that I would be leaving home and about to start my training in Sharpness and going off to sea for a spell. This did not go down well, but they had to come to terms with my decision.

I got onto the train in Wolverhampton and travelled to Sharpness and was surprised to find how small the station was and how many boys of my age got off the train to be met by a Bosun from the camp, who ticked off our names. On arrival at the camp, we were sent over to the stores to be kitted out, this guy just sized you up and the following equipment was hurled at you, it consisted of a pair of hob nailed black boots, a V necked uniformed top and a pair of 22 inch bell bottom pants and a black Beret. We also had 2 work shirts and dungarees, 2 pairs of socks, a tooth brush, bar of soap, a towel and face cloth, pencil and note pad and made to sign for the lot, amazingly most of it fitted, but we soon changed with our fellow internees, once we were allotted a billet. These consisted of 20+ double steel framed bunks and steel locker separating each set of bunks. On the bunk was a mattress, a sleeping bag and a blanket and pillow, which became your home for the next 16 weeks and wow betide any one who lost or damaged any of this gear. At the entrance to each billet was the officer's in charge accommodation and the only heating we had was a coke stove in the middle of the hut and trying to get 20+ bodies around it at the same time was difficult and caused some friction to start with and the ones who could defend themselves soon made it known, I had done a fair bit of boxing and was given way to very early in the training. We had lads from many different part of the United Kingdom, a Scottish lad had the bunk above me and his pal opposite with a guy from the Northern Ireland and another from Southern Ireland, who were at each others throats from day one, but on the whole we all got on fairly well throughout the course. We soon came to a decision on religion after the first weekend and the long march we had to get to the church in Berkley for our tucker. They put on a real spread for us boys, it was either going to church or fatigues (Jankers) cleaning the galley. I often ended up in this department during my stay, me not being one to take discipline too seriously and giving to wrong answer to the officer in charge. I also spent time in the boxing ring for being caught fighting other blokes from the other billets.

After being kitted out and having our finger prints taken, we had to stand against the wall and have our photo taken and then off to get our hair cut. This was a shock to our systems, it was the period when the Tony Curtis and DA style were in fashion and to have it all shaved off was the saddest time in my life. The food took some getting used to (or the lack and quality of it) so our trips to church on Sunday, did help and the food parcels my family sent me kept my health and strength up. We were awakened by the wailing of a bugle, the owner it appeared had no ear for music, and the billet officer came around hitting each bunk with a big stick and shouting for us to get out and get washed. We had seven minutes to do our ablutions in cold water and be back by the sides of our bunks which had to be made up to a set standard, with the blanket folded correctly. Our day started with a quick inspection by our billet officer and we then reported to the Vindicatrix for breakfast, we picked up a tray that had several indents in it and as we passed the galley the food was literally dumped on your tray, it was hard to make out what it was, because it overlapped everything else and a mug of doctored tea. Having seen the meals being prepared often put you off eating them, but some of the lads would eat any left over's on other peoples plates to stem the hunger pains. Sunday tea is one meal I vividly remember, it consisted of two slices of bread, one yellow in colour(butter) and the other coloured red(jam) a slice of meat so thin, it had no taste and a tea spoon of chutney and a slice of cake so thin, you could not pick it up but we got over this by spreading the chutney onto the slice of meat and sticking it to the cake and placing a piece of bread either side and making a sandwich of the contents on your plate, your right it did not improve the taste but at least you did not leave any on your plate either. Weekly inspections found dust accumulated under our bunks and on top of our lockers and ash from the heating stove, we soon learned to keep our billet and equipment dust free and cut down on the time we spent on jankers, cleaning windows with our tooth brushes and peeling mounds of spuds in the galley.

After a few weeks and passing set exams I was made up to a bosun's mate, which gave our billet some advantages over the other billets in camp, I was made in charge of the stores. This allowed me to increase the cleaning supplies and equipment to our billet, by cutting the amounts supplied to the other billets, they knew not to complain. After each weekly inspection our billet was awarded "the best billet award" a large fruit cake, which shared between 20+ starving young guys did not go far. I believe we held the record for the most inspection wins. We had many laughs on lights out, some

one would put coke ash in the sleeping bags or tie a knot half way down the bag, so when you tried to get in to your bag it could be painful and the noise would have the billet officer rushing in to investigate and punish the offender, who would be sure to return the favour. The floors were made of concrete and had been polished over the years by the many boys attending; we found a good method of polishing the whole floor without moving the bunks. I had found a torn blanket in the stores and we rolled the smallest member of the billet tightly into it and swung him under each bunk and around the floor until it shone, he did not complain as we let him off a lot of other duties. One day going to a lecture aboard the Vindicatrix, I had my hands in my pockets climbing the gangway and an officer standing at the top complemented me on my agility and then made me repeat the feat 50 times both forward and backwards up the gangway as a punishment. Needless to say I was never found with my hands in my pockets again. We had to do guard duty and I was placed with the Scottish lad, who had the bunk above me, he was a bit like Fagin and he was a good hearted bloke, but I always had to cover for him when he would go missing on watch, usually to the galley to scrounge food scraps which he would put down his uniform top. The officer on watch used to ride around the compound on a push bike wearing the top half of his uniform over his pyjamas shouting instructions to us as he rode by and bellow out where the hell was my missing partner. I never did tell him the truth and got away with it

On completing my stay I was given a rail pass to Liverpool and instructions to register with the union to get a berth. I had never been to Liverpool before and was shocked to see so many derelicts sleeping on the benches in the station and the stench that went with them. I went to this large building to find out where I could sign on and was amazed to find it full of men waiting to get a ship, the clerk jumped onto the bench holding a list of ships and places to be filled, he would call out a position and a ships name and a load of hands would raise. He would know by sight the fellows and pick out the ones he wanted and tell the others he knew to be black listed to bugger off. This continued until all the positions had been filled and then he started on the young ones who had not sailed before and ask if you were a decky or a stewy and gave you a ticket and told you where to report

My ship was the three year old tramp ship the MV Ripley, berthed in Birkenhead and was bound for Swansea and the Far East with a cargo of supplies for the Egyptian armed forces. When I arrived, I found the stern of the ship with piles of rubbish and old straw bedding still not cleared by the shore crowd. All the cabins had been freshly painted and new bedding fitted, I had to share a cabin with a first year chap like myself, our cabin was right next to the ships steering gear and was a very hot and noisy place to spend the next 27 months away. I was put on the 4 to 8 watch and to work with the most feared guy aboard, who was not only a big bloke but so strong it took a dozen cops to hold him down after one of the many fights a shore. He was an excellent sailor and stood no messing and one day he saved the life of an Egyptian on a tug boat On taking on our tow, the tug veered hard over and trapped the man against the bulk head and the steel wire was digging into him and would have cut him in two if Corris had not used the fire axe to sever the wire in half and free the Arab. Another time he was doing his duty on the drum end and me as back up taking up the slack, when the tug shot off at speed dragging him over the drum end and along the deck towards the bollards, he let go just in time only to find it had torn skin from his arms, legs and chest, but he went over to the gunnels (ships side) and shouted to the tug skipper to get back along side, so we could get our ship attached, he finished his shift without complaint and then and got himself seen to. On many occasions after a drink (lots) you would have to keep out of his way, he was an angry man sober but a very angry drunk, with fists so big; he could belt the living daylights out of any person who got in his way.

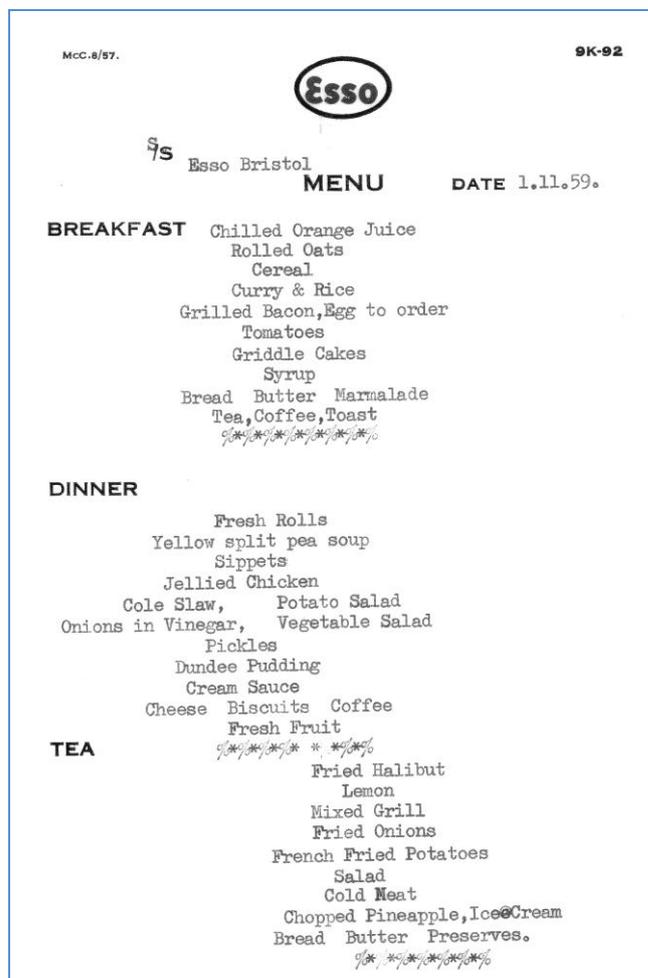
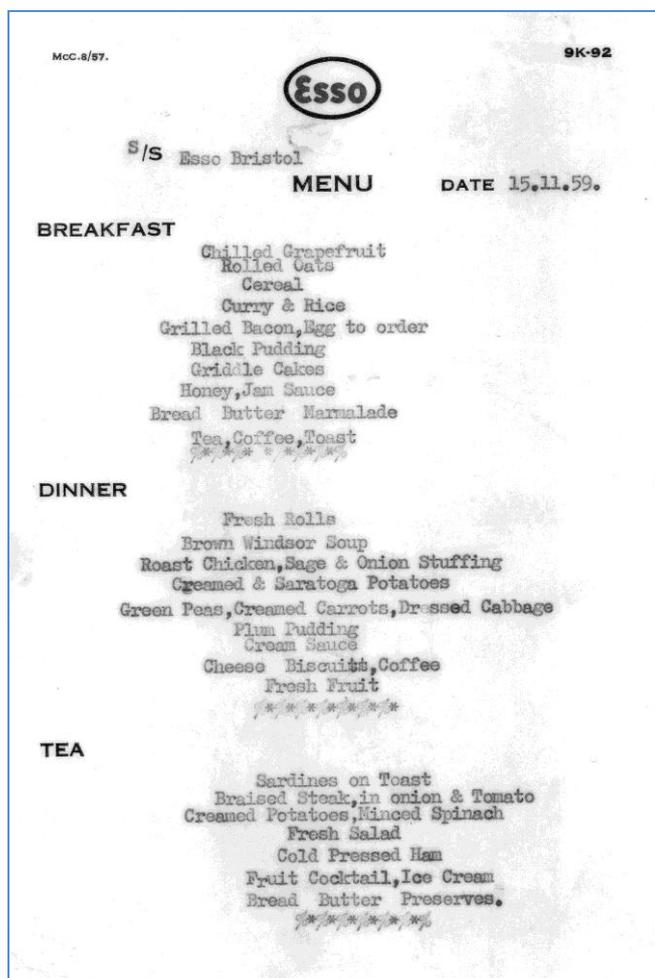
Our ship discharged its cargo in Egypt and loaded cotton for China; we called in Aden for a top up of water and fuel and arrived in Shanghai, just as the leadership changed hands. We had these young people with AK47 and their little red book swarm all over the ship and make us all stand with our arms raised above our heads against the bulkhead, while being shouted at and repeatedly hit with the butt of the gun if we moved or spoke. We had to stick this kind of treatment for several weeks until they found some other entertainment elsewhere, so after discharging our cargo and a trip ashore to check out the(so called) longest bar in the world at the seaman mission and a well earned drink of the local beer before our hasty departure to Japan.

We carried varied cargoes to Vietnam (mainly arms and bags of cement) we anchored off shore to unload, while the war was going on around us. We then went to India several times to pick up coal or iron ore (which took up to 10 weeks to load) for the many Japanese ports we visited and back to Vietnam and then we went to Bell Bay in Tasmania for more ore for the Japanese and finally back to India. I spent my first Christmas away. In the morning the Captain and his wife visited every cabin and gave all the men a tot of rum except me and my cabin mate, we got a bottle of cordial, for being under age. But we had the last laugh, as the men returned with over proof spirits, it was our cordial that made it drinkable and we got our fair share as the day rolled on. Our long stays in India made me appreciate their food and the crew often sat with these workers out on deck and ate with them, this was not a hardship as our food on board was unbelievably bad. I am not sure if the death of the Irish cook was due to a mishap or a seaman taking it into his hands to get rid of him, but we dropped his body off in Egypt, but the food did not improve at all. We would eat ashore with the locals as much as possible or with the foreign crews who came aboard.

One trip to a Japanese port that had not had foreign seamen call in before ended up with us having to leave very quickly due to four stewards going ashore and stealing several large items (TV, radio and record players, pictures, statues and other gear). This happened while all the deck hands were on duty and could be accountable. These men brought their stolen haul aboard and bragged to anybody who would listen as to what they had done. But when the police, shop keepers and customs approached the ship these men threw the gear into the harbour, while we were being questioned about the thefts. The ship left right away and as we departed the divers were entering the water to try to retrieve the stolen property. The captain called these four men to his cabin and fined them several weeks pay and cancelled their leave, needless to say we were not welcome to that port again. These men found it hard to get on with the rest of the crew ashore and many a fight was had between the two groups and a lot of damage to property was caused during these fights and on a couple of times I was sent by the captain to bail them out. One time in Japan during a time when General Macarthur was visiting to renew the base agreement, riots broke out in the city we were in. I was not aware of this as I had time in hand and was on shore leave and was asked to buy up as much grog as I could as the skipper had refused to replenish the liquid stocks. My taxi driver had taken me to a number of cut priced establishments and we had a fair stock of grog about the vehicle when we heard this loud chanting and were confronted by crowds of people linked arm in arm across the road moving towards us. My taxi driver leapt out of the car and ran off, leaving me to guard my stock of grog. As they approached the taxi all I could do was try to shout above the noise (chanting out with the Yanks) that I was not an American. They withstood water cannon and baton charges and swept everything away in their path, but left me alone and after an hour or so my driver finally came back and took me to the ship, where the crew sent down a rope sling and I loaded it and it was soon whisked away to their cabins, while I was summoned to report to the captain for over staying my shore leave.

Phil Mason

To be continued.



All you ex tramps and cargo boys eat your hearts out. As you can see we did it really tough on tankers, where God didn't wear gold braid on his cap. God and son of God and his little helper (galley boy) were the people who walked on water, provided the grub was up to scratch. Even the captain knocked on the galley door and asked permission to enter on Sunday's inspection. He knew his place in the pecking order. The moral of this story is never piss off the people who cook your food. Husbands beware.

One happy second cook and baker Brian Toogood.

THE NAB TOWER

With the heavy loss of shipping in WW1 by German U-boats, a proposal was put forward to sink towers between Dungeness and Cap Gris Nez in France with steel boom nets strung between them to protect the Dover Straits.

The huge task of building the towers began at once in a backwater of Shoreham, some 3,000 workmen were employed to start construction on two structures. The idea was to erect a 90ft cylindrical steel tower onto an 80ft honeycombed concrete base that could be flooded sinking them to the seabed in the correct location.

By the time the war ended in November 1918 only one tower had been completed, the remaining one that was only half finished was demolished in 1924.



It was decided to make use of the tower. In 1920 it was towed to its new site by two paddle wheel tugs, it was to replace the Nab light vessel, by sinking it at the eastern approaches to the Solent. It was a calm day and the tower was installed with no mishaps apart from a 3degree tilt towards the northeast, it still stands at the same angle to this day.

Anti aircraft guns were mounted during WW11.

The structure was under the control of the Ministry of Defence but Trinity House occupied part of the tower as it replaced the Nab Light Vessel. There were three lighthouse keepers who were relieved at monthly intervals until 1983 when it was fully automated. In 1995 it was converted to solar power.

In May1984 the MoD built an internal reinforced concrete caisson and helicopter pad before it handed over the freehold to Trinity House.

In November 1999 the freighter Dole America loaded with a cargo of pineapples and bananas collided with the tower. Both the ship and the tower were severely damaged, but were both successfully repaired. Weather conditions have taken their toll over the many decades, thus major upgrades have been undertaken to keep the historic tower in good repair and to keep shipping safe for the foreseeable future.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RNLI LIFEJACKET

In 1854 the RNLI Inspector Captain Ward invented a cork lifejacket. Narrow strips of cork were sewn onto a canvas vest to make it flexible enough to move with the body. In 1861, when one of Whitby's lifeboats capsized on a rescue, just one of the crew survived thanks to this lifejacket.

In 1904 the kapok lifejacket was introduced. Kapok is a vegetable fibre that doesn't absorb water and is much more buoyant than cork. The first kapoc lifejackets were not very popular as they were too bulky. After improvements were made they were standard issue for nearly 70 years.

With development of synthetic foam in the 1960's, the Beaufort lifejacket was introduced to the RNLI in 1970. Extra buoyancy around the neck made sure that the wearer would float face upwards at all times. However it was still bulky, making it difficult to move around the wheelhouse of the latest classes of lifeboats.

Today's RNLI crew members wear lifejackets developed in the 1990's for maximum comfort and safety. There are two styles – one for use on all weather lifeboats and one for use on inshore lifeboats.