

Melbourne Branch

The Log
The Monthly Newsletter of the Melbourne Branch of
The Company of Master Mariners of Australia Limited

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Victorian Regional Channels Authority



NEXT MEETING 26th February 2020

Speaker Capt. Kell Dillon

Melbourne Harbour Master

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Victorian Regional Channels
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From the Branch Master

Congratulations to Captain Nigel Porteous who was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the Australia Day Honours List for services to the community and to the shipping transport industry. Nigel has served as Deputy Chairman of the Board of the Mission to Seafarers for 20 years. When Nigel joined the board the Mission was in deep financial trouble and may well have closed had it not been for his efforts and leadership. Mission Chairman Neil Edwards described Nigel as the heart and soul of the mission and Chief Manager Sue Dight credited Nigel with saving the Mission. Nigel joined COMMA in 1996 and has been a member of the Branch Court since 2002.

Regular monthly meetings resume on 26th February. As was the case last year our meetings will be held on the last Wednesday of the month at the Mail Exchange Hotel. Cost remains unchanged at \$50 for a two course meal and coffee.

The speaker at the February will be Captain Kell Dillon who has taken over as the Melbourne Harbour Master following the retirement of Captain Roy Stanbrook at the end of last year.

The Branch AGM will be held during the March meeting. There will be a telephone Federal Court meeting on the 28th February when arrangements for the Federal AGM will be finalised. At this stage the expectations are that it will be held in Melbourne.

Membership subscription notices were sent out in January and so far about half of our members have paid. It would make the Treasurers job easier if all members could be paid up by the end of the month.

I look forward to seeing a good turn up at our February meeting.

Maritime Response to Gippsland Bush Fires

With the roads in and out of Mallacoota cut by bush fires and the town itself under threat the only way of evacuating large numbers of people and bringing in much needed supplies was by sea.

The Navy sent the amphibious landing ship HMAS Choules and the multi role training ship “Sycamore” which between them evacuated 1000 people. Later the Navy also sent HMAS Adelaide to assist as required.

The first ship to arrive at Mallacoota as part of the relief effort was the oil rig tender “Far Saracen” which Esso sent at the request of Victorian Emergency Co-ordinators. MIA Chief Executive Teresa Lloyd described “Far Saracen’s” contribution as “invaluable”. The vessel provided facilities for medical care, diesel to replenish local fire trucks and food and water and remained on station until HMAS Choules arrived. A number of Police boats have been involved in bringing in supplies and paramedics to support local teams and a medical barge was sent from Sydney that has beds for 25 patients.

Local charter vessels have also played a role in the maritime response to the bush fire emergency.



AMSA Media Release

The master of a ship has been convicted after failing to report without delay a main engine breakdown off Queensland, Australia that affected the safety, operation and seaworthiness of his ship.

The incident that led to this conviction dates back to Thursday 31 January 2019 when the tanker “Asphalt Spirit” was en route from Korea to Australia carrying 14,000 tonnes of asphalt.

The ship suffered a main engine breakdown at 4pm local time and began drifting 30 km northeast of Point Lookout on North Stradbroke Island.

The ship’s master reported the incident via email to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) just after 10pm that night- six hours after the initial breakdown.

Modelling predicted the possibility of the ship running aground at the southern end of the island within the next 17 hours if it continued to drift without power.

AMSA began making arrangements to intervene with an emergency tug from Brisbane.

The ship’s master responded to AMSA at 1.30am on Friday, 1 February and confirmed the engine damage could not be repaired at sea.

Following discussions with technical experts, the “Asphalt Spirit’s” insurer UK P&I Club entered into its own commercial arrangement with Svitzer who tasked its tug “Clontarf” to intervene.

“Clontarf” arrived later that day, securing the “Asphalt Spirit” and towing her to Brisbane.

On Monday, 9 December 2019 the master pleaded guilty in the Brisbane Magistrates Court to one count of failing to report a marine incident to authorities without delay, as required by section 11(1) of the Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983.

He was fined \$3000 and a conviction was recorded.

50 Years of Membership Captain Richard Clarke



Richard Clarke was born in Belfast and spent his seagoing career with Union Castle Line in the East Africa trade. Richard obtained his Extra Masters Certificate in 1965 and commenced studying accountancy and economics at Belfast University but before completing the course he migrated to Australia and enrolled at Melbourne University to complete his studies.

Richard joined ANL initially in the accounts department then moved to the container division and worked in terminal development. He held a number of positions both in Australia and overseas. From 1974 to 1976 he was in Japan representing ANL's Searoad Service. This was followed by periods in Hong Kong and London. From 1979 to 1981 he worked on establishing ANL's role in the iron ore trade to Japan. Richard started his own consultancy business and was involved in the replacement of the "Empress of Australia" and the establishment of TT Line.

Richard was presented with his 50 year membership plaque at the Branch Christmas Party.

Captain Barry Redmond



On Thursday 22nd November I had the pleasure of meeting Captain Barry Redmond at his home in Geelong and presenting him with an award for 50 years membership in the Company of Master Mariners.

Captain Redmond started his sea-going career as an apprentice with Australian United Steam Navigation Company (AUSN) in August 1951.

After completing his apprenticeship he carried out his National Service at Puckapunyal in the position of Cook.

Captain Redmond then went onto study at Sydney Nautical School and on receiving his ticket went straight into employment with British Phosphate. The remainder of his career was within the fertilizer industry at sea and then later ashore.

His shore career spanned many positions over the years starting with managing the stevedores for British Phosphate, building to his appointment as Shipping Manager for Australian Phosphate where he remained until his retirement in 2000.

Captain Redmond remembers his work life fondly believing it to be a golden era in shipping with great people and an abundance of good work. One of his favorite vessels to work with was the "Ormiston" and he recalls with humor how the passengers used to have to take salt water baths. He also mentioned enjoying time on the "Triona" and 'Triaster.

Captain Redmond is well and enjoying his retirement, staying connected to his work life via the COMMA LOG and a Geelong based group of seafarers he socializes with a few times a year, aptly named The Old Salts.

He was both delighted and honoured to have received the award and passes on his thanks.

By Captain Patrick O'Sullivan

2019 Christmas Party

The Christmas Party and final meeting for the year was held at the Mail Exchange Hotel at the end of November. The guest speaker was Associate Professor David Goodwin who gave a very entertaining talk about his life in the law. David has worked both in Australia and overseas in maritime law and is President of the Maritime Law Association of Australia and New Zealand.



