

## Melbourne Branch

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

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**NEXT MEETING 25th September 2019**

**Speaker Tim Ryan**

**Operation Hannibal and Wilhelm Gustoff**

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## From the Branch Master

On the 4<sup>th</sup> October there will be a Federal Court meeting and amongst the items to be discussed will be the four papers that were distributed to members earlier this month.

They were letters from two Western Australian members on the Coastal Trading Amendment Bill, a request from Stuart Davey for feedback on changes to training packages for seafarers and a proposal from Queensland Branch that we should consider what level of Masters Certificate should be required for ordinary membership of COMMA.

The two letters on the Coastal Trading Bill were written in June but not passed on to the branches until the end of August. The qualifications and training packages will be of interest to those who have experience in these matters.

The question of what are the appropriate qualifications for membership is one where we want your views.

There is no denying that our numbers are falling and that those remaining are getting older. Without an Australian Merchant Fleet the traditional source of members is not there. We have seen the Newcastle Branch close and South Australia is just hanging on. What is needed is an injection of younger enthusiastic members.

The arguments about lowering the entry qualifications were raised when the issue of Associate Members was debated 15 years ago. Associate Membership has proven to be very positive and so could allowing other professional mariners albeit with lower qualifications to join the Company. That's my view but what we want to hear is what you think about the proposal.

Please send your comments to the Branch Secretary or to me at [icfrench@bigpond.com](mailto:icfrench@bigpond.com)

*Capt. Ian French*



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## Applications for Membership

The following Applications for Membership were read at the August meeting:

JOHNATHON WILLIS- ORDINARY – WA. John obtained his Master Class One in 2017 and is currently Master on the Siem Offshore vessel Siem Thima, the first LNG powered Supply vessel operating out of Dampier.

KEITH WILLIAM HAGEN – ORDINARY – MELBOURNE. Keith obtained his Master Class One in 2010 and is currently Master on the INCO ships Tankers, ICS Integrity and ICS Reliance

YAZDI KHAMBATTA – ORDINARY – WA. Yazdi was born in India and holds an Australian Masters License which was issued in 2015. He is currently a Woodside Marine Pilot/Load Master in Western Australia.

BRENT GRAHAM WARHURST – ORDINARY – SYDNEY. Brent was born in Sydney and holds a Masters Certificate issued in Australia in 2016. He is currently operating as a Senior Marine Technician on the BHP FPSO Pyrenees Venture positioned off Exmouth in Western Australia.

JOSH GONSLAVES - ASSOCIATE – WA. Josh holds a Chief Mate Unlimited issued in 2018. He has experience with dredgers and cruise vessels. He is currently working as an Assistant Harbour Master for Fremantle Ports.



## Speakers Summary

The Speaker at the August meeting was Captain Ravi Nijjer. The rather intriguing title of his talk was “My improbable Marine Navigation Odyssey with a detour on the history of Navigation”

Ravi started by making the point that we live in an evidence based world where transparency and integrity are essential and yet many marine pilots still entirely rely on eyeball navigation and not the electronic aids that are available.

Ravi told how his interest in navigation began while he was on the training ship “Dufferin’ and has been a continuing passion throughout his life. He related some stories of his adventures and misadventures including an amusing tale of a voyage from Fiji to Melbourne.

Ravi passed his Masters Certificate in 1970 and was awarded the Longmore Bequest prize for the highest marks in the examination.

Ravi then traced the development of navigation starting with the Board of Longitude which was set up following the grounding and loss of four ships under Vice Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovells in 1707.

He spoke of the competition between the astronomers with their method of lunars and Harrison and his chronometer. The next major contribution was from the now largely forgotten 19<sup>th</sup> century Captain Thomas Hubbard Sumner. The principle of his “Sumner Lines” for position finding was later modified by Marq Saint Hilaire to develop his method of sight reduction which is still used today.

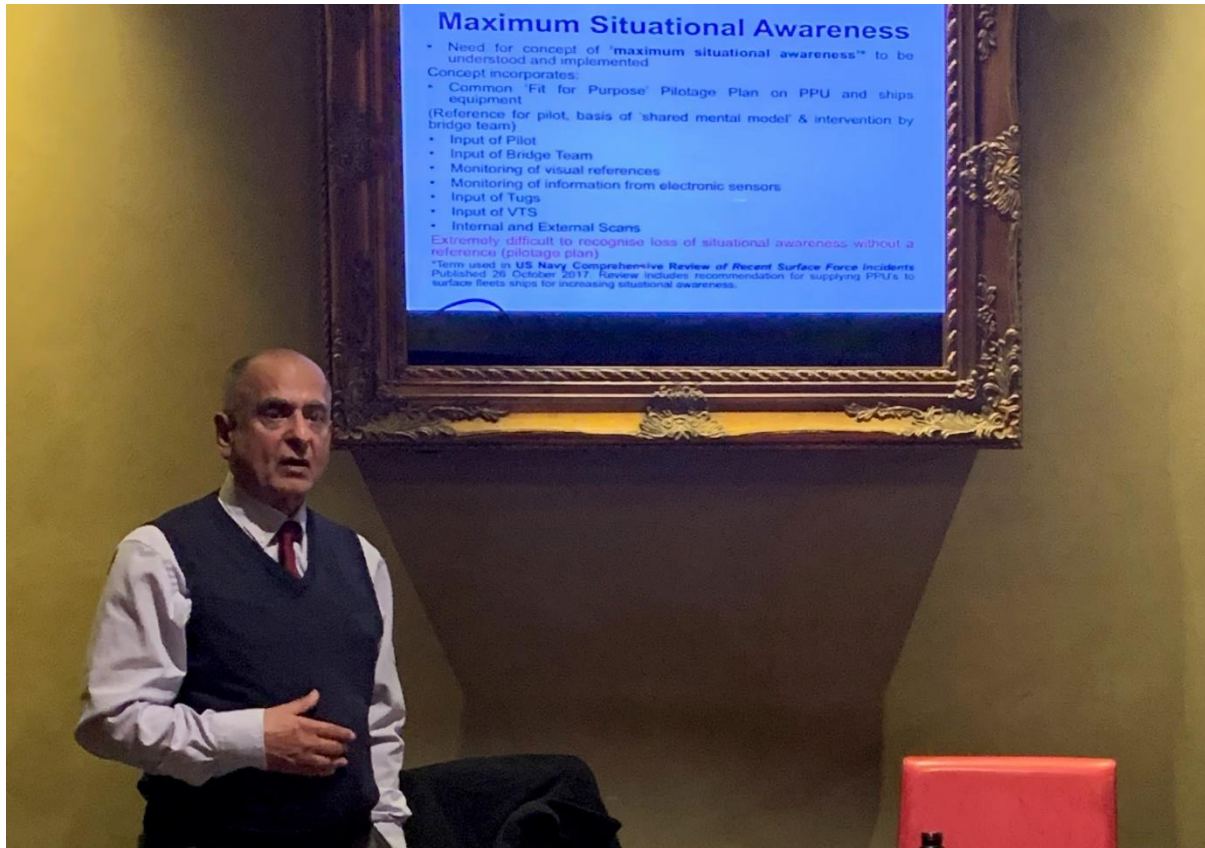
It was on a trip to Japan that Ravi was introduced to GPS and he later produced a paper on Navigation by GPS in Port Philip Bay. During an overseas study trip he met Captain Kasi Larijo who showed him how electronic aids can be used in pilotage.

By 1995 Ravi had left RMIT and started his own consultancy Company conducting BRM courses.



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A study of pilotage accidents showed that a reliance of visual aids and local knowledge could lead to a lack of situational awareness.

Ravi believes to improve pilotage a "fit for purpose" pilotage plan must be developed incorporating all available information and aids both visual and electronic. The aim is to maximise situational awareness. This has been accepted and trails will start with P&O passenger ships this year.

Ravi gave a very interesting and thought provoking talk which was well received by the members.



## Merchant Navy Day



The auditorium at the Shrine of Remembrance Education Centre was full for the commemoration of the loss of ss "Iron Crown" on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 1942. The audience included over 30 descendants of crew members of the ship.

The speakers were Dr. Barbara Musso, the Marine Programs Director for CSIRO and Dr. Emily Jateff the curator of ocean science and technology at the Australian National Maritime Museum and the chief scientist on "Investigator" when the wreck was located.

The talk and video presentation covered the torpedoing of the "Iron Crown" by the Japanese Submarine I-27 with the loss of 38 of the 43 man crew and how the wreck was located and identified in 700 metres of water 44 miles SSW of Gabo Island by the CSIRO Research Vessel "Investigator"



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## Merchant Navy Day



About 80 people who were at the “Iron Crown” commemoration stayed on and attended the Merchant Navy Day Service which was held under the canopy of the large Oak which is the Merchant Navy Memorial Tree.

Speakers at the service were Ken Shenan, Paul Lacey, Terry Makings, John Mansfield and Rev Onofre Punay offered prayers.



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