



No. 6 / 2012

THE MEGAPHONE

June Report

The next meeting of the Sydney Branch will be at 1800 hrs for 1830 hrs dinner,
Wednesday 11th, July 2012 at the New South Wales Sports Club, 10 Hunter Street, Sydney, NSW.



Guest Speaker:

Paul Brunton OAM,
Senior Curator of the Mitchell Library NSW

Topic

Circumnavigation of Australia on Queen Mary 2 with Matthew Flinders Journals

Please confirm your own & spouse/ friend's intentions to attend by contacting

Capt. Frank Pickering
fpickering6@bigpond.com

Phone Mobile 0418 499 166 or if urgent 9520 6976
before 1200 hours, Friday 6th July, 2012

The Company of Master Mariners - Sydney Branch
PO Box A 2534 Sydney South, NSW, 1235



Prior to enjoying the food prepared for our dinner, the Chairman, Capt. Richard Sandeman-Gay, (standing in for the Branch Master) asked for all present to stand and observe a one minute silence for those who had recently *crossed the bar* – Captains Ken Nettleship, Rob Choppin, John Evans and Devon Devenport.

Chaplain to the Branch, Sister Mary Leahy, said grace and the meal commenced.

Presentation of Membership Certificate

The Chairman presented Anthony Richard Dear with his official membership badge and certificate of the Company of Master Mariners of Australia and congratulated him on becoming our newest member.

Photo: Anthony Richard Dear receiving Membership Certificate from Chairman, Capt Richard Sandeman-Gay



Minutes of the meeting of the Sydney Branch of the Company of Master Mariners of Australia held at the NSW Sports Club, Sydney, Wednesday 13th June, 2012.

The meeting opened at 1950 hrs. The Chair welcomed members, Guest Speaker and Guests.

Attendance: As per Attendance Book.

Apologies: Capts. Ted van Bronswijk

Guests: Peter Murphy – Guest Speaker, Jeff Denney, Bill Elton, Tim Wainman, David Whitburn, Rudy Coelo and Elizabeth Sandeman-Gay.

Confirmation of minutes of last Branch meeting as published in The Megaphone.

Proposed: Capt. E. Wilson

Seconded: Capt. R. Whittington

Hon. Treasurer’s Report:

Commonwealth Working A/C	\$ 7,066.64
CU Australia	\$ 7,793.30
On hand to bank	\$ 240.00
Accounts to pay	\$ <u>NIL</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 15,099.94</u>

Matters Arising: One member still to pay subscription for 2012.

Acceptance of Treasurer’s Report

Proposed: Capt. N. Lampe

Seconded: Capt. R. Whittington

Hon Registrar's Report:

Readings: Rodney James Sylvester, Ordinary, WA, Captain CSL, Brisbane – Not Known
Dylan Bennet, Associate, WA, Chief Officer, Maersk Supply Service – Not Known

Federal Business:

1. Anti piracy petition at www.endpiracypetition.org still available to sign. Nearly a million signatures to date.
2. Master Mariner website has been updated. <http://www.mastermariners.org.au/>
3. Save Our Seafarers campaign **Please circulate this press release (attached) as widely as you can. *The success of this venture to raise awareness of Somali piracy, and eventually eradicate it, depends on as many people as possible seeing this film and taking action to send a letter from the campaign website.***
4. The video can be found at www.saveourseafarers.com
The video can also be viewed on following direct link:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLqwVpPALz0&feature=channel_video_title
5. Membership Fees for 2012 are now due; donations to the Branch are kindly accepted.
6. Proposed National Centralised Organisation Power Point Presentation.
7. Vote on National Centralised Organisation.
8. Outstanding Achievement Award 2012 awarded to Peter Murphy. (See below.)
(Due to problems with the projector, the starting time of the Meeting was delayed and it was not therefore possible to follow the full agenda – item No.7 had to be omitted and item No.8 cancelled. Many thanks to those who helped to try and get the projector running. Please see page 3 for web site connection to see and hear the Federal Master's speech.)

General Business:

1. Maritime Day 2012 – members were asked if anyone had ideas or wished to make a contribution. The Chairman said that the Nautical Institute had tried to get support from Sydney Ports Corporation but that this had failed. This made it appear that nothing would be achieved again this year. Maybe next year!!!



Members and Guests at our Hunter Street venue for the meeting of June 13th 2012

Dates for your calendar:

1. **Wednesday 3th July 2012 – RINA/IMarEST Technical Presentation** – at Harricks Auditorium, Engineers Australia, 8 Thomas Street, Chatswood. Speaker: **Josh Sayed**, Thordon Manager, Jacmor Engineering – Topic: **Thordon Bearings**. Refreshments at 1800 hrs and Presentation at 1830 hrs.

2. **Thursday 4th July 2012 – Norton Rose Australia Presentation** – Norton Rose Australia, Level 18, Grosvenor Place, 225 George Street, Sydney. Speaker: **Professor Martin Davies**, Director of the Tulane Maritime Law Centre, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA and consultant to Norton Rose. Topic: **Current Issues in Maritime Law**. 1715 Registration, 1730 Seminar starts, 1845 Seminar ends and then networking, refreshments and canapés.
3. **Friday 10th August 2012 – Shipping Australia’s biennial “Port Kembla Luncheon”** at City Beach Function Centre, Marine Drive, City Beach, Wollongong. Sponsors: Port Kembla Port Corporation and Port Kembla Gateway. Guest of Honour and Speaker: **Hon. John Ajaka, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Roads**. Please reply before COB Monday 16th July to Kushy Athureliya, General Manager Technical Services, Shipping Australia Limited, on Ph.02 9266 9912 Fax.02 9279 1471 or email: kathureliya@shippingaustralia.com.au Cost \$85 pp or \$850 per table of 10 (inc GST).
4. **Monday 16th July 2012 – NSW Coastal, Ocean and Port Engineering Panel and NSW Water Panel** present: Interaction of Catchment and Coastal Processes on Flooding & Inundation. 5:30 for 6:00pm. Register online at: <https://events.engineersaustralia.org.au/ei/getdemo.ei?id=934&s=RWWONNT2H>

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N.B. All Sydney Branch members please note that you can see and hear Capt. Alan Gray’s speech on the Federal Executives’ decision for a ‘need for change’ to the structure and operation of the Company of Master Mariners of Australia. The video (in full colour) of Capt. Gray’s speech can be seen and heard on the CMMA website at www.mastermariners.org.au/video Please try and view this in the next week or two as you will be asked to vote on the matter at the end of July, 2012.

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CMMA’s Outstanding Achievement Award 2011

Each year branches nominate persons who may be of suitable attributes to attain the CMMA’s Outstanding Achievement Award. This year the Sydney Branch’s offering was accepted and the winner, therefore, was Captain Peter Murphy. Below is the wording of the submission that went with the branch’s nomination.



Peter Murphy receives award from Capt. Nick Lampe



Peter Murphy and Outstanding Achievement Award

THE COMPANY OF MASTER MARINERS OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2011
CAPTAIN PETER DAVID MURPHY

Peter has contributed significantly to raising the awareness to the decline in standards of international shipping and the plight of its seafarers, both in Australia and overseas.

Peter spent over 20 years at sea and has a British Masters Foreign Going Certificate. He served in numerous types of vessels, including general cargo, reefer, passenger liners, tankers and offshore supply vessels in an era on the cusp of containerisation.

After successfully completing the first year of a law degree by correspondence whilst at sea, in 1981, Peter was appointed as a Cargo Superintendent for the Australian National Line at its Port Botany Terminal, where he continued to study part time through the Law Extension Committee of the University of Sydney.

On successfully qualifying in law, Peter was admitted as a Barrister in 1984 and then as a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of NSW in 1986. In 1985 he was recruited to join the local law firm of Wesgarth Baldick to work on a large aviation case and two years later joined the firm of Norton Smith & Co. specialising in maritime law. Whilst in London on secondment by his firm to maritime lawyers Richards Butler, Peter was appointed a partner of Norton Smith in Sydney. He served as a partner with Norton Smith for over 10 years, being the driving force for the firm becoming the largest maritime and aviation law practice in the Southern Hemisphere. As well as other qualifications in law, Peter holds a Master of Laws degree from the University of Sydney. He is also a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators of London and holds a Certificate of Mediation from the Victorian Law Society.

Peter's clients have included the Cypriot, Greek, Japanese and Philippine Ship Owners Associations. He was also appointed legal counsel for the large Dutch ship owner Spliethoff amongst others. Peter also was involved on behalf of the owners, Baltic Shipping, in the subsequent court case involving the sinking of the Russian Liner "Mikhail Lermontov" in 1986, off Cape Jackson in New Zealand.

Peter is an internationally recognised maritime lawyer, with over 25 years experience as a solicitor, barrister and consultant, practicing both in Australia, Europe and the Middle East. Through his work with the various organisations and committees, including the International Bar Association and the Inter Pacific Bar Association, he became a much sort after speaker at legal, maritime and aviation conferences both in Australia and overseas.

Peter has been uniquely placed as both a maritime lawyer and master mariner, to address the many controversial issues, through his prolific articles, speeches and radio interviews that constantly besiege international shipping. He has always highlighted his concerns for today's seafarers and in many ways became their voice and conscience.

Peter Murphy's presentation to the CMMA, Sydney Branch, 13 June 2012

Murphy told of some major international law cases in which he was involved, using these to demonstrate the need for tenacity in the search for winning truths. One outstanding case was that of the sinking of the *Mikhail Lermontov*, a Russian vessel owned by the Baltic Shipping Company.



The *Lermontov* left Sydney 6 February 1986 on what was billed as a two weeks cruise of a lifetime and by 16 February she was dead in the water off Gore Cove on NZ's South Island. Two matters from this case were indelibly printed on Murphy's mind. First was that the Wellington Radio transcript of the emergency just before the sinking stated the liner's master had *declined* assistance, which contrasted with the

insistence of the ship's bridge crew that the Master had *called* for assistance. Murphy's team sought the original recording from Wellington and, with a voice recognition expert, they discerned beyond any doubt that the Master *had* indeed requested assistance and that the transcript was wrong.

The second matter concerned the whereabouts of the second mate, who had been navigating and charting the ship's position at the time. The Harbour Board, as the employer of the Pilot, sought to argue that the vessel had in fact grounded, but that the Master had failed to drop the anchors in time, thus *Mikhail Lermontov* had slid off into deep water and sunk. The allegation was that the second mate had erased the position where the ship had grounded. It was vital to provide evidence from the navigator, who was by then nowhere to be found.

Baltic Shipping Company denied they could find the officer, saying he was no longer working with the company. Concerned about the truth of this, Peter's team called for crew lists of all of the Baltic Shipping Company vessels and eventually found the very man, serving on a Baltic Shipping Company vessel about to leave Adelaide! Through the embassy in Canberra, they got him to Sydney to the trial, where his evidence proved vital to show that, although the *Mikhail Lermontov* had come close to grounding, she had not - and the position where she came to rest *was* too deep to drop the anchors.

Sometimes, said Murphy, it is a matter of luck – always, however, it is a matter of forensic tenacity that wins in the end.

Another case was of a Greek flagged liner cruising in the Greek Islands. Whilst clay pigeon shooting from the after deck, an activity organised by the vessel - and with guns supplied by the vessel - a NSW passenger was severely injured when the gun he was firing discharged into his stomach. Murphy's team was instructed by the vessel's owner to



defend the claim and, as a first step, they opposed the jurisdiction of the NSW Supreme Court. It was clear the injured man would be entitled to a larger sum in damages from any award of a NSW court than would be likely from a Greek court. The lawyers argued that, based on the doctrine of *forum non conveniens* and the principles of *Spiliada*, Greece was a 'more convenient' forum and that there were a number of factors – Greek ship in Greek waters, Greek medical staff, Greek domiciled witnesses - that clearly militated against the case being heard in NSW. When unsuccessful, they pursued this line, with special leave, to the High Court, but in a very narrow decision against them, the High Court refused to follow *Spiliada*, holding that for an argument of *forum non conveniens* to succeed in Australia now, it was necessary *not* to show that there was a 'more convenient' forum elsewhere, but that Australia was an 'inconvenient' forum - a much more difficult onus to satisfy.

A very intriguing case Captain Murphy spoke about was one in which an Australian coastal command aircraft encountered a Japanese fishing trawler in Australia's coastal waters off Norfolk Island. The vessel was designed with twin funnels abeam of each other, one used for main engine exhaust, the other for the trawl winch exhaust. Coastal command had

shadowed the trawler for some time, taking detailed photographs and using heat seeking radar images. One of the central points of the case was the evidence of the surveillance aircraft that the port smoke stack was emitting heat and smoke, indicating that the trawl winch was operating or at least had power to it. In breach of Australian Fisheries Law, fishing gear was clearly visible on deck. The aircraft ordered the trawler to proceed to an Australian port 'under arrest', for illegal fishing.

Unfortunately the surveillance aircraft ran low on fuel and was forced to return to base. Instead of continuing on its course to Australia, the trawler turned and ran for home.

Murphy said he flew to Japan and took evidence through an interpreter in which it was denied that the trawl winch was being used or, at the relevant time, had power to operate it. It was not denied that fishing gear was on deck, but it was claimed that nets were being repaired.

He examined the 'as built' plans of the vessel, which clearly showed the division of the exhausts - the starboard exhaust for the main engine and the port exhaust for the trawl winch. Still concerned, however, together with the chief engineer, Murphy climbed up the outboard side of the twin smoke stack exhausts and then traced the relevant exhaust, down through the casing and into the engine room, where it was obscured by what looked like a large void, with a steel bulkhead. Emerging from the void, the exhausts lead down the port side to the trawl winch boiler and down the starboard side to the main engine. Not content, however, that all was as it appeared to be, Peter said he prised off the deckhead abutting the steel bulkhead - and there appeared a very small coverplate!

By removing the coverplate and shining his torch up inside, he saw that in some inexplicable engineering *volte-face*, the exhausts crossed. Murphy now had the evidence



to prove that the vessel had *not* been fishing and that there was no power to the trawl winch. Even the builders of the vessel, were unable to explain how the two exhausts had been crossed - let alone why!

This, said Peter Murphy, was perhaps a slightly extreme illustration of the maxim "Never take anything at face value and always verify information for yourself." Murphy's Law? Murphy's tenacity!

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Some old, but still used, seafaring jargon for you to reminisce on!

Whistling up the wind Whistling at sea was frowned upon and if caught whistling a seaman would be severely rebuked by an officer. There was a superstition that whistling brought about freshening winds which, except occasionally in extreme heat, was usually unpopular in steam ships.

Cake and arse party. Said of a smart party on board, as that thrown by the master or a shipping company for guests from the shore. Such a party might be intended to thank shippers as inducement to ship cargo in the company's vessels.

Source: [All Hands and the Cook- Captain Barry Thompson](#)

Shipping Australia Limited – Parliamentary Luncheon –15th June 2012



The luncheon was held in The Strangers Dining Room of Parliament House, Sydney. Representing the Sydney Branch of the CMMA were Capt. Richard Sandeman-Gay with wife Elizabeth and both Branch Chaplains, Rev Ian Porter and Sr. Mary Leahy, OAM.

Bill Rizzi, Chairman, NSW State Committee, welcomed all present and thanked the main sponsor Sydney Ports Corporation and their CEO, Grant Gilfillan. Mick Kinley (below), Deputy CEO of AMSA, gave a spirited address on the importance and value of seafarers to world trade despite all the difficulties and hardships experienced in their occupation.



The parliamentary host, The Honorable Duncan Gay, MLC, Minister for Roads and Ports (below), gave a speech on the transportation of goods. Most of this was directed to land transportation, the only mention of maritime matters was the proposed sale of the port of Port Kembla and the possible sale of Port Botany.

Then followed a lively question time conducted by Ken Fitzpatrick, Chairman, Shipping Australia Ltd. A vote of thanks and lucky door prizes draw were also conducted by Ken Fitzpatrick. (Hon Ed was lucky enough to win a lead crystal sandwich tray!) As is usual at these events, Mr. Kushy Athureliya of Shipping Australia, ensured all ran smoothly and efficiently. The three course meal with wines was delicious.





BOOK REVIEW

Title: *We, The Drowned*

Author: Carsten Jensen © 2006

Translated by: Charlotte Barslund with Emma Ryder

Publisher: Vintage Books, London, 2011

ISBN 9780099512967

We, The Drowned lives up to the promise of its intriguingly mysterious nautical cover and its back page praise. It is indeed an epic story. Its point of view is Danish. The novel covers one hundred years of seafaring stories and ends in 1945, and you cannot help but live through every one of these 690 pages.

Like an ocean current sucking, the opening takes you along from the very beginning.

Many years ago there lived a man called Laurids Madsen, who went up to heaven and came down again thanks to his boots. He didn't soar as high as the tip of the mast on a full-rigged ship; in fact he got no further than the main. Once up there, he stood outside the Pearly Gates and saw St Peter – though the guardian of the gateway to the hereafter merely flashed his bare arse at him.

The book is by no means as light as its opening may indicate; its title surely indicates gloom. Yet, isn't that the way of the sea? There are contrasts of light and dark, land and sea, peaks and troughs, tropics and the arctic, home and away, life and death. And death comes in many forms that may surprise a reader expecting mere drownings.

There are stories of a cruel schoolteacher, of children hardening even before going to sea, of an ex-con pub-owner, widows, wives and other women, business people, captains, mates and an able seaman. Jensen takes us from island to ship-deck to port, through economic hype and slump and from sail to steam, from broomstick warfare to U-boats and torpedoes, to Pacific islands, icebergs and home again, yet the main story, the main character, is that of the Danish coastal town of Marstal.

The voice of the book varies. Some sections are told as if by a chorus, speaking in the first person plural, commenting or telling the town's story as it happens.

So off we went to war. On Palm Sunday we sailed along the coast of Aero, past the hills at Vejsnaes, where Laurids had turned the island upside down with his cry 'The German is coming!' Now the Dane was coming, and it was the German's turn to light his tar barrels and take off like a headless chicken.

Other sections are told as if by an objective narrator.

All told, the *Emma C. Leithfield* was an odd ship. Despite the men's linguistic differences, they understood one another well enough to agree that of all the vessels of the ... merchant navy, the *Emma* had the worst first mate and the best cook. The galley was heaven, and the deck was hell.

Jensen has created an exciting, complex story full of adventure and also of domestic detail. If you've ever felt inescapably wedded to the sea or to a seafarer, you'll love it.

Reviewer [Elizabeth Sandeman-Gay](#)

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Canvas That time-tested material used to make the sails that have powered ships for centuries is made from the hemp plant. The name canvas is derived from the Greek word for hemp, *kannabis*, a plant well known to have properties other than the manufacture of sails. [Source: *With a Pinch of Salt* – Captain Nick Bates](#)

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Obituary, Capt. Devon Napier Devenport

Ms Susie Devenport (a daughter of the deceased) has contributed the following:

Dad was 90 years of age when he passed away on June 9th and had lived a full and rich life. Going to sea at the age of 16 in 1938, he quickly made his way through his Cadetship from apprentice (Deck Officer) to Master Mariner in 1948. While he was with E & A Line, he assisted with the evacuation of Hong Kong and they were the last ship to take evacuees from Singapore during the Japanese invasion. He was with the Australian Merchant Navy until 1941 and joined Port Line which enabled him to be a part of the British Merchant Navy during the rest of the war. He was part of the Mediterranean convoys during WWII. Often his ship would be one of 130 merchant vessels with escorts of Corvettes through to Destroyers, carrying 10,000 tons of high explosive shells, gas bombs, army equipment, torpedoes and aircraft bombs. The merchant ships' armaments would be hopelessly inadequate and they were sitting ducks with only one third of ships reaching their destination. He would also sail across the Atlantic to New York.

When Dad came ashore, he worked as Marine Superintendent in Sydney and later joined Dalgeties, then became Managing Director of Conaust Stevedoring. Many of Dad's ideas made changes on the waterfront which are still used today.

We celebrated his life with friends and family at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium on June 14th. [Susie Devenport](#)

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Costa Concordia Salvage Plan

Representatives from Costa Crociere and the Italo-American consortium Titan-Micoperi today presented the details of their much anticipated plan to remove the wreck of Costa Concordia from the Island of Giglio using cranes and caissons to float the vessel.

As we learned weeks ago, Titan Salvage and Micoperi were selected to remove the stricken Costa Concordia from Giglio Island after beating out several leading salvage companies vying for the historic contract. Titan Salvage, part of the Crowley Group, is an American-owned specialist marine salvage and wreck removal company and is a world leader in its field. Micoperi is a well-known Italian marine contractor with a long history as a specialist in underwater construction and engineering.

The requirements laid out for the job included refloating the hull in one piece while giving top priority to minimize the environmental impact, protecting Giglios economy and tourism industry, and maximizing safety.

To do this, Titan-Micoperi will set up shop on the mainland near Piombino, where equipment and materials will be stored and crews will be housed, thereby avoiding impact on the islands port activities and as not to clog up the islands limited hotel accommodations. The consortium says the work will begin in a few days and is expected to last about 12 months.

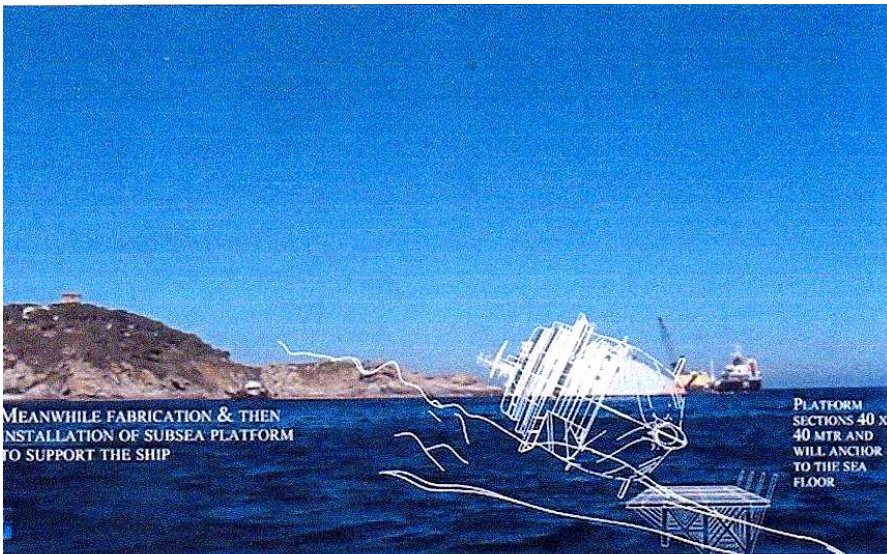
The plan to remove the wreckage has been divided into four basic stages, described below in photos:

Stage 1:

After stabilizing the ship, a subsea platform will be built and caissons that can be filled with water will be fixed to the side of the ship that is out of the water.



The tieback chains prevent the wreck from sliding as forces are applied.



MEANWHILE FABRICATION & THEN INSTALLATION OF SUBSEA PLATFORM TO SUPPORT THE SHIP

PLATFORM SECTIONS 40 X 40 MTR AND WILL ANCHOR TO THE SEA FLOOR

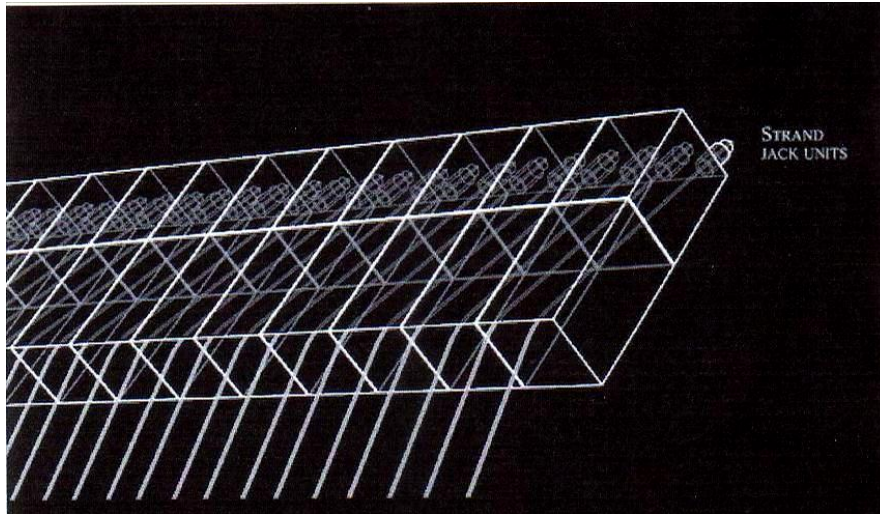
Meanwhile fabrication and then installation of subsea platform to support the ship.

Stage 2: Two cranes fixed to the platform will pull the ship upright, helped by the caissons (a large watertight chamber), which will be filled with water.

Install the flotation tanks on the port side by welding to framework which was previously attached to the hull.

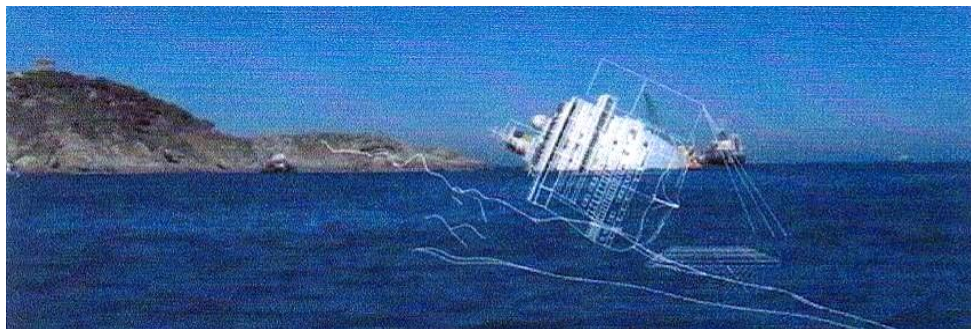


INSTALL THE FLOATATION TANKS ON THE PORT SIDE BY WELDING TO FRAMEWORK WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY ATTACHED TO THE HULL



Pulling machines are connected to pulling points on the subsea platform.

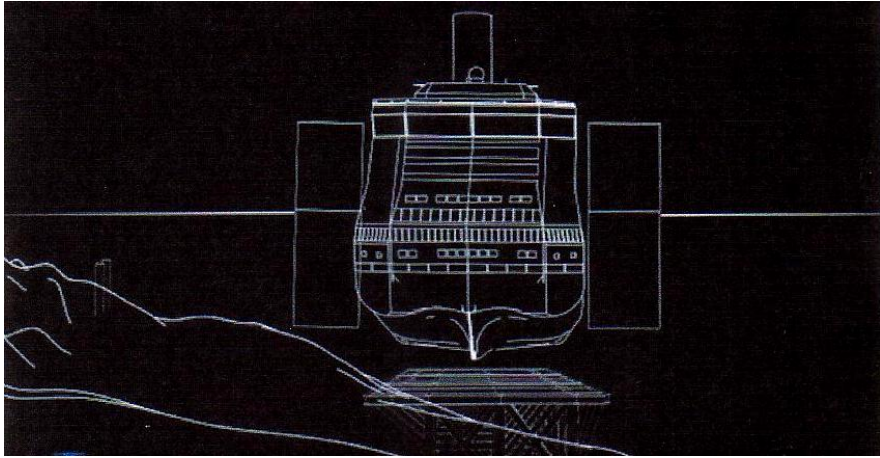
With flotation tanks and pullers in place, we can begin to roll the ship upright.



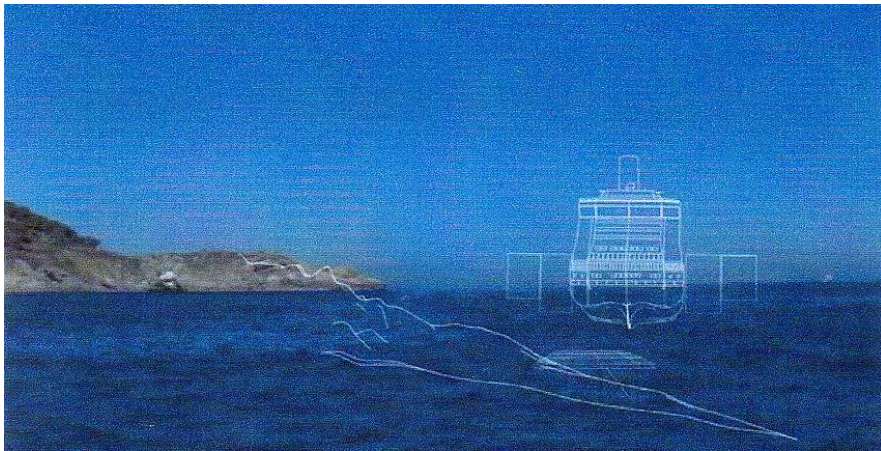
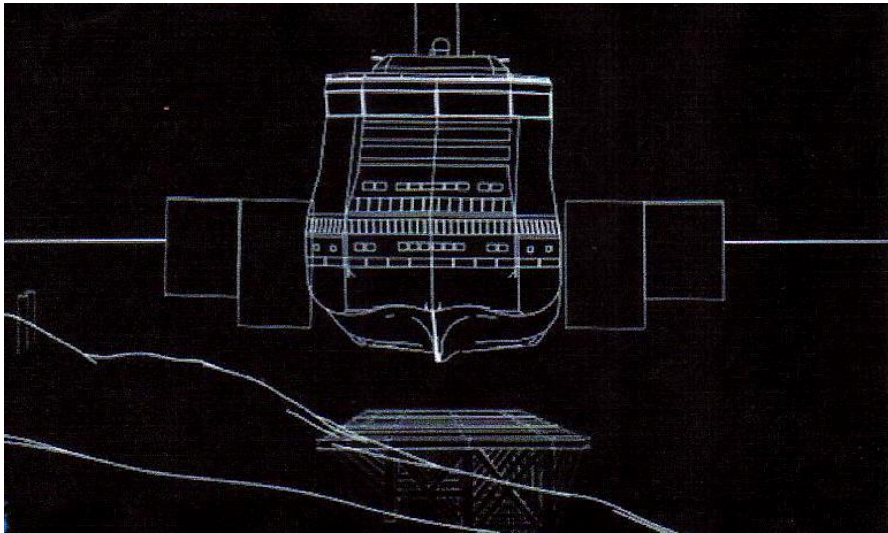
Stage 3:

When the ship is upright, caissons will also be fitted to the other side of the hull

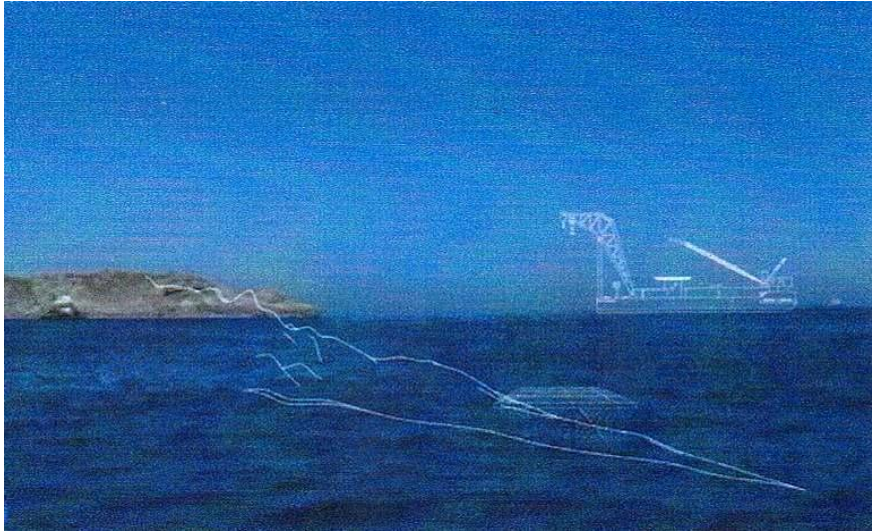




Stage 4:



The caissons on both sides will then be emptied after treating and purifying the water to protect the marine environment and then filled with air.



Once refloated, the wreck will be towed to an Italian port and dealt with accordingly. Meanwhile, the sea bottom will be cleaned and marine flora replanted.

The plan was selected by an evaluation team with specialist representatives from Costa Crociere, Carnival Corporation and London Offshore Consultants and Standard P&I Club, with the collaboration of RINA and Fincantieri, because it best fulfils the main objectives of the operation – removal of the wreck in one piece, minimal risk, minimal environmental impact, protection of Giglios economy and tourist industry, and maximum safety.

While this method has been used before to refloat ships, it has never been done on this scale. One thing is sure, however. Whatever happens, the operation to refloat and remove the Costa Concordia from the shores of Giglios will be an historic one and one the world will be keeping a close eye on.

On the Thames on June 3, 2012



Above, a line of tall ships at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant on the Thames on June 3, the ex-steam yacht **Amazon** (built 1885) was present at the last **Diamond Jubilee for Queen Victoria in 1897**. Is now diesel engined and has recently voyaged to the USA and back. **Photo : Graeme Ewens ©**

Day of the Seafarer 25 June “Thank you, seafarers”

What are we celebrating? There are one and a quarter million of them, but most people don't know they are there, as they mostly work, quite literally, over the horizon. The jobs they do are absolutely vital and without them, world trade, industrial growth and progress would screech to a halt. In many parts of the world, without them, whole populations would freeze in the dark without fuel, and even starve, because they had run short of food. These important people are the world's seafarers, who operate upwards of 50,000 ships in oceans, seas and coastal waters and on June 25, which has been designated “**Day of the Seafarer**”, there is an annual opportunity to thank them all. Seafaring has always been a challenging job, working in a hostile environment, and even in an era of satellite navigation and big, sophisticated ships, traditional dangers are still to be encountered. But we take for granted that the ships will arrive, bringing their cargoes of every description, from all around the world in a reliable, dependable conduit of world trade. The seafarers who run this fleet are special people. They leave their homes and families, often for long periods. They are highly trained professionals who operate some of the world's biggest man-made moving objects, in a safe and responsible fashion, in a business that runs every day of the year, 24/7, with astonishing precision. They deserve our thanks and recognition for the vital role they play. IMO believes that on this Day of the Seafarer, the hugely positive work of seafarers on the daily lives of ordinary people ought to be publicly recognised. They are suggesting that besides just thinking about this maritime workforce, everyone ought to choose one object that came by sea, and without which they just could not live. BIMCO is proud to be associated with this “**Day of the Seafarer**” campaign. We know just how valuable our seafarers are, and hope that at the end of the day other people around the world might appreciate them and what they do for the world, a little better. [Source: BIMCO](#)

VISA When going to Brazil it is a requirement that guests from a number of countries must have a visa. One passenger, when asked why there was no visa in their passport, immediately produced an American Express card and asked, ‘Will this do?’

[Source: With a Pinch Of Salt. Capt. Nick Bates](#)

Justice for Seafarers?

Initial results of the first major survey undertaken by Seafarers' Rights International (SRI) into the experiences of seafarers facing criminal charges have thrown up worrying claims that seafarers are subjected to unfair treatment and feel intimidated by policing authorities around the world, and that they are not provided legal representation and interpretation services when needed. The survey of 3,480 seafarers was undertaken in the 12 months to the end of February 2012. It was conducted in eight languages – Chinese, English, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Tagalog. Responses were received from 18 countries and 68 different nationalities of seafarers. Of the seafarers surveyed, 8% had faced criminal charges at some stage in their career, while 4% had been witnesses in criminal prosecutions and 33% knew of colleagues who had faced criminal charges. Worryingly, almost 24% of Masters in the survey said they had faced criminal charges. Responses to the questionnaire were collected by sampling seafarers using the same country proportions of seafarers as contained in BIMCO's Manpower 2005 Update, the Worldwide Demand for and Supply of Seafarers. The responses were then weighted to incorporate new observations as contained in BIMCO's Report of Manpower 2010. Thus, the survey is a demographically weighted sample, and a random and representative sample of seafarers from the whole world. The results of the survey were presented by SRI to the 99th session of the UN International Maritime Organization (IMO) Legal Committee on 16-20 April 2012 under its agenda item on Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident. The

IMO is the only UN body currently discussing the issue of fair treatment of seafarers and the Committee noted that the statistics showed that there is a need for better implementation of the Fair Treatment Guidelines. SRI was encouraged to submit a full report of its study to the next session of the Legal Committee in 2013. Questions in the survey specifically asked about the experiences of seafarers who had faced criminal charges. Of the seafarers who answered the questions on searches, 44.28% of vessels were searched; and 63.75% of cabins were searched without warrants. Just under 44% of seafarers reported that they were bodily searched, while 87% who faced charges relating to the discharge of their professional duties said that they did not have legal representation. Just over 91% of seafarers who needed interpretation services said that they were not provided with such services; and 89% of seafarers who had faced criminal charges said that they did not have their rights explained to them. Seafarers were also specifically asked about their perceptions. 80% who had faced criminal charges felt intimidated or threatened. Concerning casualty inquiries and accident investigations, 46% of seafarers who answered the question said that they would be reluctant to cooperate fully and openly with such inquiries. Reasons expressed included: "The information that I would provide might be used against me"; "I would fear incriminating myself". Overall, 81% of seafarers who faced criminal charges did not consider that they had received fair treatment. To gain a broader view of criminal charges faced by seafarers, SRI also carried out a review of all incidents involving criminal charges against seafarers reported in Lloyd's List, TradeWinds and Fairplay, for the 12-year period from 2000-2011. There were 415 incidents reported in this period, involving 1,580 seafarers. Significantly over the period under review, the numbers of maritime criminal incidents and the numbers of detained seafarers showed a tendency to increase. "The voices of seafarers are expressing real fears and concerns over criminal charges and it must be in the interests of the whole maritime industry that these are addressed and seafarers adequately protected. The prospect of criminal charges is daunting for any human being, whether in your own country, or even more so in a foreign country, and so for seafarers entering foreign ports on a daily basis, the risks are high and the consequences can be dire if fair and due process is not followed," said Deirdre Fitzpatrick, SRI Executive Director. She added: "We hope that the results of this survey will provide momentum for increased efforts to ensure fair treatment of seafarers, whether innocent or guilty of a criminal charge, and that from this survey, the faces and the voices of the seafarers will be seen clearly and heard loudly."

[Source: Seafarers' Rights International \(SRI\)](#)

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25th June, Day of the Seafarer - Thoughts on Seafarers *Source: All Hands and the Cook – The Customs and Language of the British Merchant Navy 1875 – 1975 – Captain Barry Thompson*

Nicholas Monsarrat, in his book *Corvette Command* (Cassels, 1945) paid a well-earned tribute to British merchant seamen and those of her allies when he wrote '*Incidentally, it is the merchant seamen especially, who have risen above the peace-time grudge they might well bear, and have glorified their calling by an unmerited generosity. Their valour and spirit have heaped coals of fire: no class in Britain were treated worse, or more brutally disregarded, than the merchant seamen in the early nineteen-thirties, and no class forgot it more quickly and completely when the call to action came*'.

Such was the respect [also] of the Poet-Laureate, John Masefield for the British merchant seamen after WW2, that he wrote a poem for the HMSO publication, *Merchantmen at War – Official Story of the Merchant Navy 1939-1944*. The poem concluded with a final verse summing up the nation's gratitude:

*'Unrecognised, you put us in your debt:
Unthanked, you enter, or escape, the grave;
Whether your land remember or forget
You saved the land, or died to try to save.'*

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