

Black Jack

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



Issue No: 210

Spring 2024



Norwegian Joy inward-bound off Hythe on 12th February .

photo Angela Oldham

Black Jack – Spring 2024 No.210

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Nigel Robinson, Michael Page & Andrew McAlpine.
Website – Neil Richardson

***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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Situation Vacant see opposite

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2024 Branch Meeting Programme

March 12th	The QE2 Story.	Steve Harra
April 9th	Cornish Ports.	Krispen Atkinson
May 14th	The rise of MSC.	David Hornsby
June 11th	Capt. James Cook.	Dr Michael Walshaw
July 9th	Cable Ships.	Barry Peck
August 13th	London Dock in the 1960s.	Ian Wells
September 10th	The Bristol Floating Harbour and the SS Great Britain	
	Philip Benstead FIET AOC ARINA	
October 8th.	Amsterdam.	Richard Joliffe
November 12th	AGM and Digital Photography Competition	
December 10th	Travels with Andy Skarsten	

Branch Cruise 2024

Monday 15th July – from Town Quay departing 11.15
returning at 6.15 – numbers limited to 60. Cost £35.

SITUATION VACANT!!

The Branch urgently needs an Hon. Branch Secretary – please consider if you could take on this important position. Note that the Branch cannot officially function without a secretary!

Articles please!!

Your editor would as always be delighted to receive any articles for inclusion in Black Jack and also any snippets and photos for possible inclusion,

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 the latest updates on the comings and goings and other news from around the port.



The 2016 built **Magnor** can dredge to a depth of 32 metres.

On 10th February two ultra large containerships operated by Ocean Network Express (ONE LINE) were in port together for the first time. The **ONE Ingenuity** 24,136TEU was on her maiden voyage and was passed by the out-going **ONE Tradition** 20,170TEU which made for quite a sight and a first for the port

Since December Boskalis operated backhoe dredger **Magnor** has been conducting work to widen the approach channel to the container terminal. The **Magnor** is the world's largest backhoe dredger, and the work is expected to last until mid-March.

Norwegian Cruise Line **Norwegian Joy** made a first visit to Southampton on 20th January, she had sailed from Miami and was enroute to Damen shipyard in Rotterdam for a major refit.



2017 built **Norwegian Joy**

Service updates: Southampton has lost the MSC IPAK service which means no MSC container service will call at the port and from mid March the CMA CGM Femex service will also move to Felixstowe.

On 25th February Southampton celebrated 60 year anniversary of being awarded City status, and to help celebrate a special display was arranged at the container Terminal which featured 67 shipping containers! With assistance from the **Svitzer Ferriby**.



until next time
wishing you
happy ship spotting

Andrew

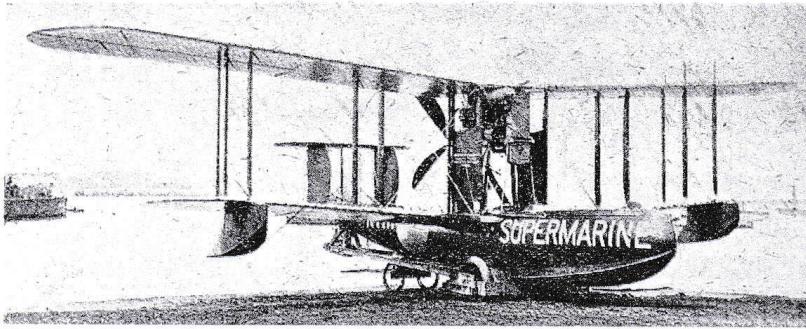
all photos by Andrew McAlpine

SOUTHAMPTON'S EARLIEST CONNECTION

The Southampton areas involvement with flying boats began even before the Great War, with the 1913 opening of the Calshot Air Station, just three years after the first successful powered seaplane flight. In this period several local companies were involved in the design, construction and operation of seaplanes or flying boats.

SUPERMARINE AVIATION WORKS

After the First World War, in August 1919, Supermarine commenced operating the first civilian flying boat service from a terminal at the Royal Pier to Portsmouth, Bournemouth and the Isle of Wight. The first international flights were made in September 1919 from Woolston to Le Havre, when the regular Southern Railway cross-channel ferry services stopped in support of rail strikes



The service was short-lived, but used a Supermarine Channel Mk.1 biplane flying boat (left) carrying a pilot and just four passengers, the plane being manufactured by Supermarine and designed by R.J. Mitchell..

Ten examples of the Mk.1 were used locally, five in service and five in reserve or under repair. The aircraft had a 30ft length and a 50ft 5in upper wingspan and was powered by one 160 horsepower Beardmore engine giving a cruising speed of just 53mph and a maximum speed of 80mph. The design was also used by Norway (3 + 4 naval), New Zealand (1), Bermuda (3), Chile (2) and Japan (3), while one ordered by Sweden was destroyed before delivery.

BRITISH MARINE AIR NAVIGATION CO LTD (jointly Supermarine and Southern Railway)

Just over One Hundred Years ago, in August 1923, the company started cross-channel services to Cherbourg, Le Havre and the Channel Islands from Woolston, where immigration and customs facilities were installed.

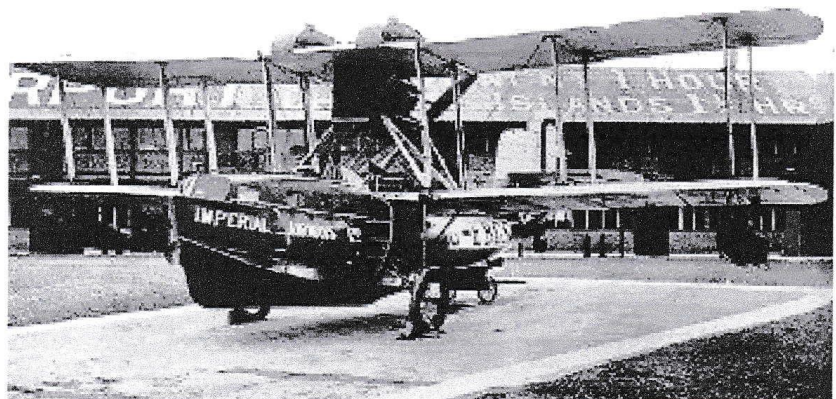
The service used the only three *Supermarine Sea Eagle* flying boats built, each carrying two crew and 6 passengers. Length 36ft 4in, wingspan 46ft, powered by one 360hp V-12 Rolls Royce engine giving 93mph maximum speed.

In September 1923, one of the three planes (G-EBFK) was forced to ditch off Hamble, shortly after take-off from Woolston. The 2 passengers and 2 crew were rescued, but the aircraft was damaged beyond repair.

The service only lasted for a few months, as in March 1924, the Government promoted a merger with three other companies to form **Imperial Airways**.



The Supermarine Sea Eagle

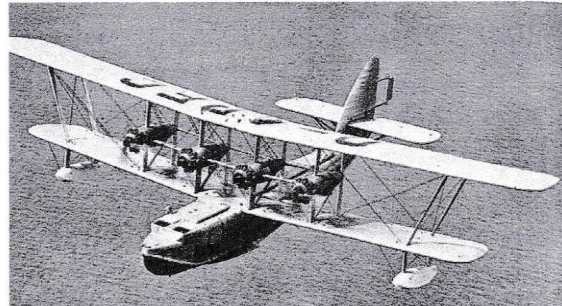


IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

The Company was formed by merging **British Marine Air Navigation**, **Handley Page Transport**, **Instone Air Line** and **Daimler Airways**, all of which were facing stiff competition from subsidised Continental operators. The Government supported the merger and offered a subsidy, which would gradually reduce over ten years, on condition that passenger services were provided to the Continent and Empire, and that targets were met.

Operations were land-based, mainly from Croydon Airport to destinations in the Empire and on the continent. The first flights were to Paris, but the next route to start was from Southampton to Guernsey on 1st May 1924. To improve flights to the Empire, from April 1924 until February 1929, the Imperial services continued, despite the growing competition from land-based aircraft.

During the 1920's, **Short Bros.** started developing a number of flying boat designs for **Imperial Airways**. The first was the **Short S.8 Calcutta** bi-plane capable of carrying 15 passengers, a radio officer and two pilots in an open cockpit. Powered by three Bristol Jupiter radial engines giving 1620 hp, the flying boat had a cruising speed of 97 mph and a range of 650 miles. Seven were built, the first entering service in 1928, although two were subsequently involved in fatal accidents at Naples and between Crete and Alexandria. (*Short S.8 Calcutta above right*)

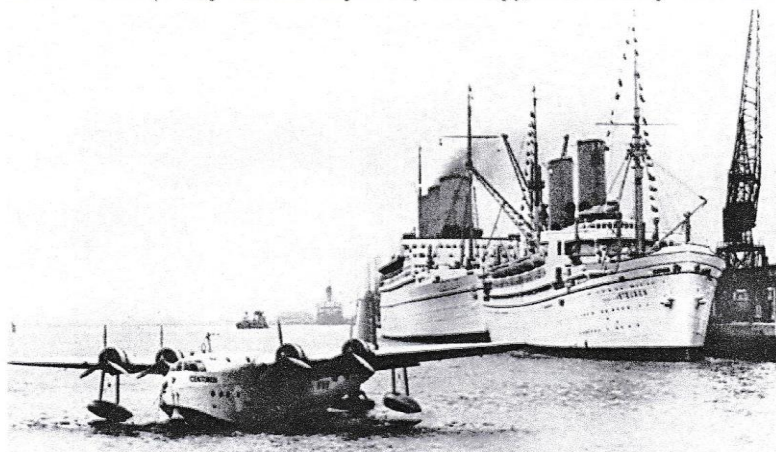


The design was further developed with the **Short S.17 Scipio** bi-plane, more suited to cross-Mediterranean services after Italy stopped UK planes from using their ports. Three were built from 1931 carrying 16 passengers, a steward and 3 crew in an enclosed cockpit. With an extra (4th) engine they could cruise at 105mph with a maximum of 137mph, but only a 450 mile range. Two were lost, *Sylvanus* was destroyed by fire at Brindisi in 1935 and the following year *Scipio* sank off Crete after a heavy landing.

However, **Imperial Airways** needed an even larger flying boat, capable of carrying 24 passengers in some comfort, airmail and freight at 170 mph, as well as a range of 700 miles to enable flights to India and the Far East, Africa and eventually Australia, plus a variant with 2,000 mile range for possible Transatlantic services. **Short Bros** were initially uncertain if such a flying boat could be constructed, but in "one of the World's boldest experiments in aviation" (others said a gamble), **Imperial Airways** in 1935 placed an order for 28 of the yet-to-be designed flying boats. No manufacturer in Britain had ever constructed such a heavy and complex aircraft and early test designs showed that **Shorts** normal planing-hull would cause too much drag with an 18 tons aircraft, so new designs were tested for this and a single high-mounted wing capable of housing the four engines. The new design was the **Short S.23 class**, even better known as the '**Empire**' flying boat, but known by Imperial as the '**C-class**' and an additional 14 were added to the original order. The flying boats had an overall length of 88ft, a wingspan of 114ft, a gross laden weight of 18.4 tonnes and could carry 24 passengers by day and 16 on night stages. The four Bristol Pegasus engines provided a total of 3,680 hp with a 165 mph cruising speed and a max of 200 mph, with an operating ceiling of 20,000 ft.

The maiden flight took place in July 1936, with delivery to **Imperial Airways** from December 1936. After initial non-stop trials from Calshot to Alexandria, commercial operations started in March 1937 from pontoons off Berth 101 in the New Docks at Southampton to Alexandria (36 hours), followed in June 1937 with services to East and South Africa (4 days and 6 days respectively), then in July 1937 a Transatlantic service to the United States.

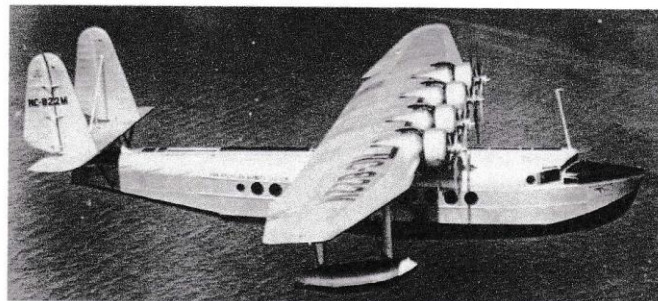
Between 1936-40, **Short Brothers** at Rochester built 42 'Empire' flying boats for **Imperial Airways**, some being operated at various times by **Qantas** and **TEAL**, then from 1940 by **BOAC** after Imperial's merger with **British Airways**.



Left - Imperial Airways Centurion G-ADVE off 101 Berth with passenger ships General von Stueben (NDL) at 101 berth and Empress of Britain (Canadian Pacific) at 102 berth.

The transatlantic service operated in conjunction with the US-based **Pan American**, which operated ten **Sikorsky S-42** flying boats on various routes worldwide. (photo right)

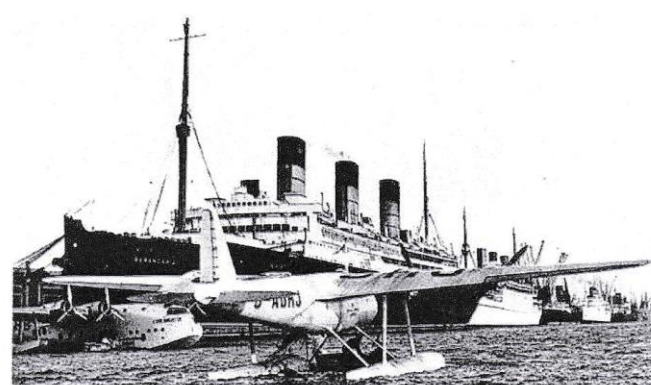
In 1936, **British Marine Aircraft** was formed to build the S-42 under licence at Hamble, but no orders were received and the company was sold to Henry Folland and renamed **Folland Aircraft Co.**



In 1938, a new Terminal - Imperial House – was commissioned at 108/9 berth at the opposite end of the New Docks and by the end of June 1938, there were 8 services a week to Egypt, two of which carried through to Durban and 5 services a week to Karachi, three of which carried on to Singapore. The return journey to Singapore took 18 days with 115 hours in the air.

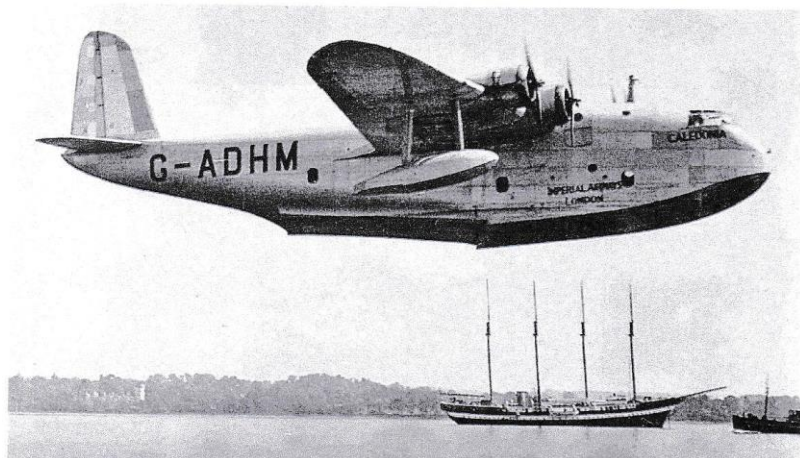
The Marconi radio sets used by **Imperial Airways** was so good, that aircraft flying over Southampton Water and even at the Hythe maintenance base could often hear ground stations in Egypt, East Africa and even India, while communications on the inaugural flight from New York to Bermuda could be heard in London. On the occasion of King George VI's Coronation in May 1937, three 'C' class flying boats over the Mediterranean received the BBC's radio broadcast and relayed the service to passengers.

On 19th June 1939, *Connemara* was destroyed by fire on Southampton Water, less than 3 months after delivery, although its engines were later salvaged and reused.



1938/9 photographs (left) Imperial Airways Calypso G-AEUA off Berth 108 with Qantas-operated *Corio* VH-ABD behind and the original quayside warehouses, before construction of the Berth 108 Cold Store in 1958 and (right) Short S.22 *Scion* G-ADHU long-range mail flying boat, an 'Empire' and *Berengaria* at 108 Berth.

With the onset of the Second World War and, following the merger of Imperial and British Airways, to form **BOAC**, in September 1939 **BOAC** flying boat services were initially moved to Hamworthy in Dorset, before the 'Empire' routes were finally relocated to South Africa, where Durban was used as the authorities reserved Cape Town for South African Airways. When based at Hamworthy in Poole Harbour, the aircraft still returned to Hythe for servicing, despite the high risk from enemy action, also land-based anti-aircraft fire and barrage balloons.



After the War, services initially resumed from Hamworthy, until a new Terminal with rail access was commissioned at 50 berth, using the mooring dolphins originally constructed for the former Floating Dock.

Left: The second **Imperial Airways** 'Empire', *Caledonia* G-ADHM flying over Southampton Water

I joined the **Sea Trident** in Douala (Cameroon) 13-Mar-01 as Master, my first time to West Africa with Gardline Surveys.

A little about the vessel before I go on about the work vessel undertook whilst I was on there.

The **Sea Trident** (IMO 7393169) Panamanian flag built 1974 with a G.R.T. of 491 or 941 depends on which site you use! Gardline used 491 as with that tonnage she did not require the dreaded ISM documentation, although she did have it as the Oil Companies, the usual clients, requested it. She was built as the **Kirsten Bravo**, became **Anvil Scout** and then the **Western Trident**. She was originally going to be a RoRo but was converted whilst still on the stocks. The company that owned her was Western Geophysical and they ran her as a deep seismic vessel until Gardline bought her in 1991. Westerns had run her up a beach for scrapping, so Gardline bought her for a song, not sure how much they paid for her.

The vessel has a single screw with a bow-thruster, that occasionally worked, but not most of the time I was aboard. We loaded up our stores and equipment in Douala, including a small work boat called **Gardline Tender**, but known as the "squib"



the

to



Unfortunately, the Survey crew member in charge of the tender decided to charge up the brand-new batteries without putting in any distilled water, burning out the batteries. When we got to Pointe-Noire (Congo) it was a Sunday, we were at anchor, and if we didn't get on site by midnight there was a heavy penalty (\$20,000 per day), so I had to get the agent to supply 2 x 24-volt lorry batteries which should have cost about \$200 dollars each, but as it was a Sunday and no time to haggle we paid \$1,800 for them.

The job was to run a survey for a new pipeline from the N'Kossa Oil Field to the N'Kossa Oil Refinery at Pointe-Noire. The tender was required to run the lines into the

beach as the Sea Trident could not. This took us about 3 weeks to do, we then went into Pointe-Noire to take on stores, fresh water, and fuel. On the passage up to Malabo on the island of Bioko our steward became unwell, and I had to diagnose what was wrong with him as the Master is the "doctor" on all Gardline ships. It became obvious that he had malaria and I had to get him off the ship. We were sent to Bata in Equatorial Guinea, but not alongside, so he had to go ashore in the agent's boat, which turned out to be a hollowed-out tree trunk with an outboard!!

We then proceeded to Malabo to await orders, at anchor; this was quite good as I managed to get quite a few photos whilst there. The only problem I had there was one night a strong gale blew up and we dragged anchor, across the moorings of a buoy. I had to keep the engine running all night to stop us going back any further, there was the island astern of us!! One ship didn't check his speed very well and ended up on the beach. In the morning we tried to get ourselves free of the chain, but couldn't, so we had to cut our anchor chain. We then re-anchored to await orders from the Company. They decided to send us to Tema in Ghana as this was the easiest place to get spares to us. Whilst waiting for the stores to arrive we were boarded by pirates early one Sunday morning, fortunately as the Second Officer was on anchor watch he managed to chase them off with a flare, they got away with a 50" plastic buoy. Another Gardline ship, Sea Surveyor, at anchor was also boarded and the pirates got away with some 45-gallon drums of oil, mostly used dirty oil, so they were welcome to them.

We got our parts for the anchor, swivel, and a joining shackle (Kenter shackle is the term) and set about re-joining the anchor. Gardline wanted us to go alongside to do it and use a shore-side crane; I didn't want to do this as it would be easier at sea. This we proceeded to do and took us 2 hours, none of the crew had done this before; I had done it many times whilst on large general cargo ships going to buoys to work cargo.

We then got orders to proceed to Luanda in Angola, but first to go alongside and pick up some more stores for ourselves and the Sea Surveyor working off Cameroon. This we did, but about 5 hours before sailing I called the office in Great Yarmouth for some details of the survey crew joining, I couldn't get hold of the Operations Manager so spoke to the Underwater Operations Manager who requested me to transfer old seismic cables from the other vessel to ours. I asked how I was supposed to work my own ship if the deck was full of old survey equipment. He said, "Haven't you been told yet, you are going to Malta". Well to say I was speechless is an understatement as we didn't have the charts to get to Malta; the office reply was to pick them up in Las Palmas. I was hoping to get relieved in Las Palmas as by then I would have been away for 14 weeks, but my relief was new to the Company, so I had to stay on until Valletta. I did feel rather sorry for the new Master as his last vessel had been a 250,000-bulk carrier, we sailed from Las Palmas in a slight wind, but with the swell residue of a strong Northerly gale. He stood in the corner of the bridge turning a pale green and getting a deeper shade when I mentioned to him that not only do we as Master keep watches we also have a lot of paperwork to do, this almost finished him off, but he survived and stayed with the Company for about 5 years.

I finally got off the vessel in Valletta on 17-Jul-01; 18 weeks after joining!!

A – Z of Sail

by Michael Page

For the letter “K” I have chosen the KALMAR NYCKEL

This replica was built in Wilmington Delaware in 1997

This is a replica of the first Swedish vessel ship to arrive in America in 1638, in what is now Delaware.

She is one of Americas pioneering colonial ships, it rivals the **Mayflower** but not as well known.

The colonists were dumped on the shore to found their colony in the Delaware valley = the colony of New Sweden in present day Wilmington.

In all she made 4 round trips, more than any other ship of that era .

On the trip was a mixture of Swedish, Finnish, German and Dutch descent, plus one black freeman who sailed from the Caribbean on the companion ship called the **Fogel Grip** -

in all a total of 24 settlers. Apparently the Swedes came because of the beavers. They built log cabins like the ones at home.

Kalmar bought this 3 masted Pinnace, then saw it as the key to the settlers. The ship was built in Holland and was called a pinasschip - which in Swedish is a pinnace.

This new ship is owned and operated by the Karmal Nycell Foundation, which is a non-profit organization offering all people a variety of sea and land based learning and recreational experiences.

Views of the **Kalmar Nyckel**



This is the last article on sail by Michael who has over the years worked his way through the alphabet at least twice and we must thank him for all his efforts!!