

The 2nd of October 1942 and the worlds biggest troop ship was crossing the Atlantic Ocean with 10,000 American service men on board, the giant Cunarder *Queen Mary* all 81,237 tons of her heading for the Clyde. She was crossing the ocean at the height of the submarine war, alone and unescorted, she relied for protection on one priceless asset— her speed 28 knots, steering a zig –zag course sometimes by 25 degrees then by 50, to confuse any submarine commander laying in wait, the zig-zag course reduced her speed by 2 knots and the greatest hazards lay ahead near the Irish coast were she would meet up with escorts and a cruiser *Curacoa*. The *Curacoa* had been laid down in 1916 and rearmed with anti-aircraft equipment in 1939, her top speed was 25 knots and at 4500 tons she was hopping to keep pace with the Cunarder by traveling on a straight course. But as always there is a twist to the story twenty miles off the Irish coast, in bright sunshine the two ships that had been in contact for many hours collided *Queen Mary* cutting in half the *Curacoa*, she was doomed with her 430 crew Captain Illingworth of the *Queen Mary* was facing an appalling choice, either he turned back to pick up survivors hazarding his ship with thousands Of passengers or he steamed on. Story continues page 6



Editor Chris Smith 2, Cavendish Close, Castle Donington, Derby. DE74 2NE
01332 858220 All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced.

Shipmate



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

P. Schofield	2
P. Stearn	3
Chuckle	4
Old Tales	5
Whats On	6
Harrison Line	7
Queen Mary	8

Ultimatum for Midlands Sec

Dear Dave,

As chairman, I have been asked by the TSVA EC to Inform you of a decision made by us at our last Committee meeting with regard to your Vindi membership. The TSVA EC decided last year that no person can be a member of our association whilst also holding membership of a breakaway group.

You will, I'm sure, be aware of this decision that the EC had to take regarding the above matter.

We must therefore ask you to decide whether you wish to remain a member of the TSVA or to continue as a member of your group. We would appreciate your Decision on this matter within the next four weeks.

Yours faithfully J. Somerville Chairman TSVA.

Dave Edwards is a genuine nice guy and certainly nobodies fool ,and a strong supporter of the TSVA. We in the Midlands do not dictate to him or anybody else what they should or should not do, the EC bully tactics have not worked with the Midlands and I am sure they will not scare him, he is a genuine ex Vindi Boy

NEXT MEETING
JULY 3RD 2010
FROM 10AM
VICTORY CLUB
BEESTON,
NOTTS

ISSUE 39
JUNE 2010

To all branch members , and interested parties.

Peter Stearns daughter has requested that her fathers ashes be scattered at sea, and could we be of any assistance in helping her achieve this, naturally we agreed to help in this area, and the following decisions have been taken.

Although Peter spent a lot of time in Derbyshire and was one of the founder members of the Midlands TSV, he was a man of Kent, and as such it was felt by the family, that if his ashes were scattered in the English Channel it would be a sort of coming home, so as to speak.

Peter was at sea for the last few months of WW11 and went on to serve for 24 years at sea, and I can remember him relating some of this service including the supplies to the troops in the follow up after the D-Day landings, also as we know Peter arranged many anniversary pilgrimages to the WW11 cemeteries,

Which also makes the Channel an apt place for Peters final resting place.

With this in mind, and Peter having sailed with P&O ferries, enquiries have been made with the P&O Company as to the possibility of using a ferry trip to achieve the scattering, P&O have advised that they do in fact have a provision

In the company guidelines for scattering the ashes at sea, subject to certain criteria, all of which Peter,s service fulfils.

Our initial inquiries revealed that members can travel as foot passengers, and there are no restrictions on numbers, other than the total maximum allowed per trip, at the moment there is a special offer Dover to Calais for £1.00 Sunday to Thursday 08.25 out 19.35 back similar Fri

Sat but the cost is £5.00, crossing approx

90mins. If sufficient numbers wish to attend a coach can be provided.

Before any concrete plans can be made we have to know how many wish to attend anyone wishing to go please advise

Us, and also any date that is not suitable i.e. on holiday and we can then try to fit the trip to suit all, The initial contact of Acceptance to be made to me Peter Schofield phone 01858 462672

Email peter@peterschofield1.plus.com

Or at our next meeting on July 3rd 2010 At the Victory Club Beeston.

Many Thanks Peter Schofield

Assistant Secretary Midlands TSV



Harrison Line of Liverpool

The day George Brown and Thomas Harrison around 1839 came to be partners the name as we know it was born, although George Browns father Samuel had been running out of the Mersey to France for many years previous in the wine trade, the name Harrison was to be born with these two coming together , and on Georges death the next Harrison brother became a partner and the rest is a hungry story.

The Harrison line gradually expanded and established regular trade with the West Indies and South America as well as India , in 1884 the fleet numbered 22 ships and between 1900 and 1930 the Line was to expand again considerably .

Around 1910-11 ships were purchased of the Rennie Line which ran to South Africa, suffering many losses in the 1WW they then acquired ships from other Lines to supplement their fleet, by 1930 the Lines main ports in Britain were Liverpool, London, Glasgow and South Wales, the Line operated to India, South Africa, Mozambique, Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, Brazil, etc,etc.

The 1930s trade began to pick up only to be affected by the Second WW But with the return of peace the Line gradually built up it's fleet and services again , in the 1970s the fleet began to be reduced as bigger and bigger ships were introduced and the spread of container cargo grew, in the 1970s

The Harrison Line ventured into bulk carriers and the container trade, and so was the end of the traditional cargo ship.

A great book to read on the Harrison Line would be Graeme Cubbins

The Last Word on a Great Company

HARRISON LINE of LIVERPOOL.

Harrison Line of Liverpool has been written by a former Marine Superintendent of the company, with an intimate knowledge of the ships and men and Has enjoyed full access to the Company's records and the memories of his Colleagues.

Continued**Whats on**

Story from page 8 Queen Mary
 Considerations of who was at fault were dwarfed for the moment by the terrible dilemma in which he was placed. All his instincts of humanity and Comradeship urged him to turn back, all his experience as a seaman warned him to sail on, tell those destroyers what's happened he ordered ask them to move in and pick up survivors, and sailed on for the Clyde.

Majority of the men of the Curacoa ,ship split in half were still in a desperate struggle for survival, two hours latter Bramham and Cowdray arrived to Search for survivors, picking up and landing 101 in Londonderry 329 men Lost, survivors were ordered to say nothing of the incident and it was 1945 Before the Admiralty took action against Cunard.

Most of the Curacoa crew were from HULL

Remember the Sharpness reunion we are meeting other branches at the Mariners Pub in Berkeley 7pm on the Saturday evening chance to meet old fiends and new, come along and swing the lamp.

Hull have been kind enough to invite us again, the date October 14th For their annual knees up.

REMEMBER OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY DECEMBER 4 th 2010
 LIVE ENTERTAINMENT BOOK NOW FOR A GREAT EVENING.

A NIGHT AT SEA

A Poem written by the late Peter Stearn on Empire Hallgate

**The ship rolls heavily through the seas
 And the rigging all tattered blows in the breeze,
 The decks are awash as the crew hang on tight
 As our ship heads slowly through the stormy night.**

**The skipper on the bridge paces up and down
 As the officer of the watch looks on with a frown,
 To the seas which are high and the sky that is dark
 For they wait anxiously for calm and dawns early spark.**

**The engineer down on his watch far below
 Tries to stand steady as the times going slow,
 He watches like a hawk to see nothing breaks down
 While with oil can his greaser is doing his round.**

**The sailor on the wheel hangs on silent and grim
 To keep the ship steady and in good trim,
 But as much as he tries she still rolls and pitches
 While in the quiet of the pantry someone's not stowed the dishes**

**Soon the first streak of dawn is seen
 And the mate looks out on the far off beam,
 To see the sun come up makes all seem well
 After a night of darkness and seas from hell.**

**Right by the stroke of 4 bells at dawn
 Up comes the Steward still giving a yawn,
 With hot tea and toast through winds still a blowing
 To the men on the bridge who have been keeping us going
 But tough as it seems it's all part of a day
 For the life of a Merchant Seaman it's just a job to earn his pay**

As far as I can work out this was written in 1945 as we encountered the Terrible gales of that post war winter. Peter Stearn

Vindi Chuckle

These are Classified ads ,which were actually placed in a

UK News Paper

Free Yorkshire Terrier, 8 yrs old hateful little bastard

Bites.

Wedding dress for sale worn once by mistake

Call Stephanie

For sale by owner Complete set of Encyclopedia Britannica

45 volumes Excellent Condition £200.00 or best offer.

No longer needed got married last month Wife knows

F #%#%G everything

This ought to make all Grandpas feel warm and fuzzy.

A six year old goes to the hospital with her Grandmother to visit her Grandpa, when they get to the hospital, she runs ahead of her Grandma And bursts into her Grandpa's room..... Grandpa, Grandpa, she says excitedly, as soon as Grandma comes into the room, make a noise like a frog !

What ? Said her Grandpa ! Make a noise like a frog— because Grandma said that as soon as you croak, we're all going to Disney Land !

My mother –in-law died in a wishing well, I didn't know they worked.

I'll make love to you in the hen house if you will only egg me on.

Phone call to the news paper how much to put an add in your paper , reply £5.00 an inch, sod that I have a forty foot ladder for sale.

What killed most sailors in old sea battles

A nasty splinter, Cannon balls fired from men o war did not actually explode (no matter what Hollywood thinks) they just tore through the hull of the ship causing huge splinters of wood to fly around the decks at high speed, lacerating anyone within range. British navel ships of the period were often rotten and unseaworthy, many of the officers had bought their commissions and had no idea how to sail, fight, or control their men. Hernias caused by manhandling acres of wet canvas were so common that the Navy was forced to issue trusses, to cap it all there was not a single pay rise for a century. At close range, a 32-pound ball was capable of penetrating wood to a depth of 2 feet.



It was necessary to keep a good **Cannon Balls** supply of cannon balls near the

cannon on old war ships. But how to prevent them rolling about the deck was the problem, the storage method devised was to stack them as a square based pyramid, with one ball on top, resting on four, resting on nine,

resting on sixteen. Thus 30 cannon balls could be stacked in a small area next to the cannon, there was only one problem— how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding / rolling from under the others.

The solution was a metal plate with 16 round indentations, called, for reasons unknown, a **Monkey**. But if this plate were made of iron, the iron balls would rust to it ,the solution to the rusting problem was to **Make them of brass—and few land lubbers realize that brass contracts faster than iron, so in very cold temperatures the balls would fall of The Monkey, or freeze the balls of a brass monkey.**

