

The Ground Rules

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News from the Consulting Firm of

Martin, Ottaway, van Hemmen & Dolan, Inc.

"The Oldies"

Much has been said and written over the past 15 years or so about the aging bulk carriers and their structural problems.

The progressive loss of structural steel due to corrosion and related local failure of the vessel's scantlings in older ships on occasion have led to the loss of a vessel and, more importantly, to the loss of life at sea.

That subject does not need further highlighting we feel. Most marine related people are well aware of that.

What we don't hear about, and what does not get as much attention as the disasters occurring, is the fact that there are still a not insignificant number of "not so young" vessels that are well maintained and kept on the high seas by responsible shipowners.

Ship owners, who do not wait till the regulatory bodies lower the boom on them and who do not seek less "cumbersome" ways to get from under prevailing rules and regulations.

Carrying out inspections for P&I clubs, this office sometimes has an encounter with a vessel that fits into that category and her proud owners' representative, who is eager to show us around the vessel.

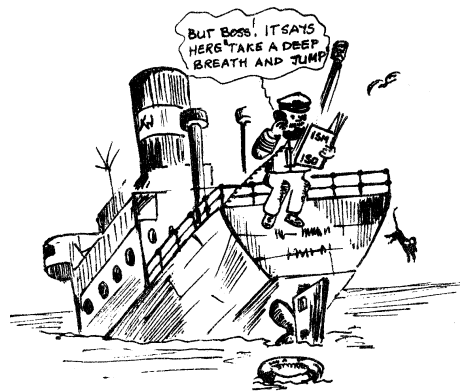
It shows that there is still such a thing as the real ship-owning spirit.

In such instances we have no hesitation to report our observations to our principals.

It hurts our soul, though, when we witness shredded steel scrap or, worse, bulk steel being loaded in nicely epoxy-coated cargo holds. The responsible owner being forced by a low freight market to offer his ship for that trade in order to stay in existence often cannot get away from that unfortunately.

We just thought that we should make some space in our "Ground Rules" to put

those vessel owners and operators in the limelight, and salute them from this spot.



Associates Corner

"William Towner"

Recently the firm received some distressing news concerning our former associate, Bill Towner. Bill, who joined Martin, Ottaway in April 1993 and retired to the eastern shore of Maryland in May 1995, suffered a stroke while driving his car near his home.

Bill had a very distinguished career before retirement, including time spent as a senior surveyor for ABS, Manager of United States Lines' diesel project and as a consulting engineer to the Maritime Administration and Military Sealift Command.

Bill is highly regarded by his peers and is well known as one of the foremost diesel engine experts in the United States.

Presently Bill Towner is recuperating at Health South Chesapeake Rehabilitation Hospital in Salisbury, Maryland. Cards and flowers may be sent to his wife Jacqueline at the following address:

28159 Oaklands Road
Easton, MD 21601, USA

Our best wishes and support go out to Bill, Jacqueline and their family.

Wharves, Docks and Bridges

One of the side effects of the economic downturn of the New York harbor area in the 70s and 80s was the lack of continual maintenance performed on the various wooden wharves, piles, bulkheads and whales along our waterfront. These wooden structures were generally left to decay at nature's rate. However, the New York harbor area had an ally in the fight against deterioration by fungus and marine borers in the form of pollution. Wooden structures tended to last longer under these conditions, with a typical wooden pile lasting 30 years or more.

With the recent movement in environmental awareness, the New York harbor area is experiencing cleaner waters, as well as resurgence in its marine life, including the parasites.

Waterfront operators and managers are finding that their wooden structures are deteriorating at a faster rate than before. The combined effects of age, neglect and decay are taking their toll among the city's piers and fender systems.

Unfortunately, maintenance and replacement routines have not always kept up with the advanced decay. It's not uncommon to find 40 plus year old wooden piers or fenders used as operating terminals in the New York harbor. These structures are typically in such a state of deterioration that one good hit often causes a collapse of a major portion of the structure.

Of course the owner or operator of the pier is looking to have it replaced,

usually at the expense of the poor soul who had the unfortunate distinction of being the last one to contact it, giving the structure the deathblow.

It has been our experience that one of the most important tools in making the case for a deteriorated structure is prior documentation of its condition. In this regard, our firm has embarked upon a project to document the conditions of the wooden structures typically found along the waterfronts in the New York harbor.

This project is currently in the preliminary stages. To date we have received interest in this project from various tugboat companies and insurance underwriters. If you are interested in participating, please contact Rik van Hemmen at our New Jersey office.

Welding Inspectors

In March Wayne Thomas and Pierce Power took a welding inspector course in Norfolk, Virginia.

This course was much more involved and more difficult than one would expect it to be.

After a couple of all-nighters, they took the exam and both passed with flying colors. They are now officially certified welding inspectors.

Ship Repair & Conversion Committee

After just having completed his term as Chairman of the Association of Average Adjusters, Henk van Hemmen has now assumed the mantle of Chairman of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers Ship Repair and Conversion Committee.

The Ship Repair and Conversion Committee is soliciting input on standardized repair and conversion procedures and hopes to eventually publish bulletins related to a variety of technical aspects of ship repair and conversions.

The intent is to consolidate worldwide trends in ship repair and conversion to enable greater streamlining of the administrative repair and conversion process. The committee is looking forward to world wide input.

If interested in assisting, please contact Henk van Hemmen at our Headquarters, (732) 224-1133.

Dave Schroeder Update

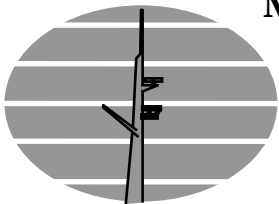
Dave Schroeder, our company-sponsored sailor, who is competing for a berth in the Sydney Paralympics 2000, just completed sailing the Swedish open and the World Championship in Sweden.

On August 10th, he and Rik kayaked around Manhattan as a salute to his sponsors in the Port of New York and New Jersey.

Later this month Dave will be competing in Cadiz, Spain at the disabled World championships.

David's boat, trailer and support boat are being shipped by Sea-Land Services. Without their very generous assistance it would have been impossible to pull the whole project off.

Many thanks to Sea-Land Services and all other supporters.



Established 1875

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