

S-I-G-N-A-L



*Beannachta na
hAthbhliana d'Ár
Leitheoirí Uile.*

*We wish all our
readers a very
Happy New Year.*

In previous years we have published a Christmas issue but have changed this year to the New Year.

As a result some of the Greetings on this page are unavoidably belated.

SEASONAL GREETINGS

To **Tim Butler**, Engineer Cadet, "Irish Star" – Greetings and Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year, also congratulations on your 21st Birthday which took place on 10th November, from all at "The Galley Head".

To **Thomas Hughes**, "Irish Pine" – Hello Thomas, A very Happy Christmas to you and all on board. Hope you all have a nice time and we will be thinking of you, from Mam, Dad and all here in Lusk; also Greetings from Mary, Noel and children, also Liam, Patricia and Paul. Greetings from Therese and George and the new baby who is also Thomas. Belated Birthday Greetings for a very Happy Birthday on 10th November. Love from All.

To **Sean Lloyd**, Second Steward, "Irish Rowan" – Happy Anniversary, darling, on 2nd December, with lots of love; also Christmas Greetings and Best Wishes for every happiness during Christmas and the New Year. I love you and miss you very much, your loving wife, Mary.

To **Joseph Smith**, Cook, "Irish Elm" – Wishing you a Very Happy and Holy Christmas, Joe, from Sean and Mary.

To **John Murphy**, Second Officer, "Irish Elm" – Best Wishes for a Very Happy Christmas and Good Luck in the New Year, from Dad, Mam and Mary.

To **Michael Purcell**, "Irish Larch" – Best Wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Bright New Year, from Dad, Mam, Breda, Sean. Ina Padraig, Maura and Seamus.

To **Stephen Byrne**, Electrical Engineer, "Irish Pine" – Greetings to you and all personnel on board. Best wishes from Mam, Dad and the family, including Thomas, John, Rose in London, and Ronald and Jackie in Australia. See you soon, Father.

To **Dermot Horan**, "Irish Cedar" – Greetings and Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year from Dad, Mother, Barbara and Andrea in Ballymote.

Deck and Engineering Officers ashore as at 8th January 1977.

Masters: W. Garvey, J. A. Gleeson, M. O'Dwyer, M. Devine.

Chief Officers: J. Moynihan, B. Kehoe, J. Ryder, P. Farnan, T. A. O'Connor, M. Doyle.

Second Officers: D. Hopkins, P. Richardson, M. Ryan, P. Murphy, L. Gavin.

Third Officers: M. McCarthy.

Chief Engineers: P. Bardon, D. Knott, T. P. Murphy, M. Curley, T. Kenny.

Second Engineers: A. Bolster, P. Caffrey, P. Dowling, D. Gabriel, T. Hanrahan, J. Davitt, D. O'Brien.

Third Engineers: J. Nangle, N. O'Neill, P. Smyth, P. McGlade, F. Keane, E. Sweeney.

Fourth Engineers: F. Cronin, J. Garvey, J. Keane, P. Morris, D. Walsh, F. Keane.

Electrical Engineers: E. Walsh, E. Perry, A. Kane.

Catering Officers: J. Doran, U. Maher, T. O'Connell, P. W. Fanning.

We have received the following notice from the Seamen's Union of Ireland:

INCREASED CONTRIBUTION RATE

As a result of a review carried out by your Executive Committee of the industrial servicing and administrative costs of the Union in the current period, it has been decided to revise contribution rate as and from the 1st January, 1977, as follows:

Sea-going Personnel – 75p per week.

This decision, which was reached with some reluctance, was considered most necessary in light of the continuing rising costs over the past three years, the rate being last adjusted in 1973. In that period we are aware from figures issued by the Central Statistics Office that the Consumer Price Index rose by approximately 75%.

Despite this, however, your Executive Committee decided to increase existing rates by 50%, hoping that by the introduction of certain economies in our administration that we might off-set additional costs, without affecting the general efficiency of our operation.

In the circumstances, we have no doubt that you will fully understand the necessity for these increases and the need to ensure that your Union continues to operate efficiently and effectively on your behalf.

On behalf of the Executive Committee: William Stacey, General Secretary.

Sympathy

We offer our sincere condolence in his sad bereavement to **Mr. Joseph Fennessy**, Third Officer, "Irish Star", on the death of his eleven years old sister, Rose.

We also extend sympathy to **Miss Roisin Murphy** of our Agency Division whose Brother died on 31st December.

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*Contributions and correspondence for "Signal"
should be sent to the Editor at*
**IRISH SHIPPING LTD., MERRION HALL,
STRAND ROAD, DUBLIN 4.**
Editor: John Higgins.

NEWS FROM IRISH CONTINENTAL LINE

1977 ARRANGEMENTS

Irish Continental Line has announced details of its operations for 1977.

Again this year a feature of the service will be a continuous sailing schedule with departures from Rosslare and Le Havre every second day during the peak months between April and October reverting to three sailings per week in each direction outside this peak Summer period – every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from Le Havre and every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from Rosslare.

There are six standard cabin categories aboard the Car Ferry 'Saint Patrick' covering two, three and four berth accommodation. In addition, the vessel has a limited number of De-Luxe two-berth suites with bath and toilet.

Standard fares for 1977 range from £26.00 based on a berth in a

four-berth 'E' deck cabin to £34.00 per person single for a berth in a two-berth 'C' deck cabin with a special range of 20% lower mid-week return fares from £42.00 to £55.00 per person. 'Without berth' fare is quoted costing a standard £21.50 per person single. Vehicle fares range from £33.00 to £42.00 single with additional tariffs for caravans and motor cycles.

Other offers for 1977 include free car offer based on four adults travelling together outside the period June 25th to August 31st; special reductions for children under 14 years and group discounts for parties of eleven adults or more.

Once again in 1977 Irish Continental Line will promote its successful Ferrytours Inclusive Holidays Programme which includes Villas in Brittany, Motoring Tours in Normandy, Brittany and the Loire plus Paris Weekends involving Ship

and Rail arrangements from Ireland.

A special brochure will be available in January outlining details of the Ferrytours Inclusive Holidays.

Freight News

Freight carryings by ICL have increased in the recent two months and this trend is expected to continue through the winter season.

Apart from the usual carryings of meat and fruit, some less common cargoes have been shipped out recently. In October, seven loads of butter from Bord Baine were taken to Italy via Le Havre and a trial shipment of milk in bulk was transported to France in an insulated tanker. In late October, a 20 ton load of Irish oysters was taken on the ferry as the first leg to its destination in Spain.

Big numbers of Irish thoroughbred and half-bred horses were purchased by Continental buyers



The "Saint Patrick" berthed at Rosslare with imported cars in foreground (Photo courtesy Kieran Clarke)

recently and were shipped out in special road transporters.

One of the most unusual cargoes of freight ever carried to the Continent by the 'Saint Patrick' was a recent consignment of Irish-made pig weaner units. Manufactured by a County Wexford firm, the units are currently being exported to Northern France where a market has been assured for them.

Catering Moves

Catering management on the 'Saint Patrick' has been strengthened by the appointment of Mr. Joseph Hudson as Catering Administrator.

Twenty-six years of age, Mr. Hudson was previously Assistant Manager of the Metropole Hotel in Cork where he spent a total of 7 years and where he trained.

In his new position, he will be based at the company's offices in Rosslare Harbour and will report to Catering Manager, Austin Cody.

Catering on board 'Saint Patrick' reverts to its winter operation with the Smorgasbord being replaced by table d'hôte and a la carte menus for dinner and lunch in the Viking Restaurant.

The Smorgasbord will, however, be used should numbers warrant it.

Delays to "Saint Patrick"

Mid-October gale force winds, some as high as 70 miles an hour in strength, forced the 'Saint Patrick' to shelter in Falmouth Bay overnight during a crossing from Le Havre to Rosslare, resulting in a 26 hour delay.

The delay forced the cancellation of one sailing to enable the service to resume its schedule.

New Student Tours Programme

Close on 10,000 Irish students have in the past few years taken tours to the Continent on the Rosslare - Le Havre service in conjunction with various specialist student tour companies.

For 1977, ICL has again linked up with Group and Educational Travel of Dublin to provide a package of educational tours to France. In a special brochure describing the offers, details of some nine different trips are given and



included in the package are trips to Paris, Normandy, Brittany, the Loire Valley, a France/Switzerland combination plus a low cost Mini-Cruise to Le Havre offered from £10.95 return.

The cost of the tours, which range from £41 to £101 for 5, 7 and 9 days, includes passage and accommodation on the 'Saint Patrick', full board accommodation and comprehensive travel insurance.

Belgian Travel Agents Visit

Some ten travel agents from Belgium arrived in Rosslare aboard the 'Saint Patrick' at the end of October for a six day familiarisation tour.

In Ireland as guests of Bord Failte, the party saw many places of tourist interest during their stay before returning home via Le Havre.

International Soccer Excursion

Support for Ireland's national football team in their vital World Cup qualifying game against France in Paris recently was boosted as

a result of a special offer from Irish Continental Line and Ferrytours.

For an all-in price of £49.00, Irish soccer fans were guaranteed a ticket to the match, two nights in Paris and accommodation on the 'Saint Patrick'.

Start of New Service Postponed

An 8 year Agreement exists between Irish Continental Line and Brittany Ferries whereby both companies would jointly introduce a direct Rosslare-Roscoff Car Ferry Service in 1977 to be serviced by a vessel from Brittany Ferries' fleet.

Notwithstanding this, Irish Continental Line has now been informed that the Board of Brittany Ferries has decided to postpone the start of this proposed service and consequently it will not come into service this year as planned.

Irish Continental Line is disappointed that Brittany Ferries has been unable to commence operations and we hope that the Agreement can be implemented in 1978.

MANY STRANDS

Our ships have been very much involved in the movement of large cargoes of steel from Antwerp to the manufacturing centres on the United States Pacific Coast in recent years. When we think of steel as a raw material we usually imagine its use as the basic material for the manufacture of motor cars and machinery, even though we are also aware, but tend to forget, that it is widely used in the making of many diverse articles in everyday use. During the last summer holiday period we were pleased to welcome to our Head Office, a representative of an American Company which manufactures a steel-based product which has almost countless uses. He is Mr. Bill Staeck, Traffic Manager of the Davis Walker Corporation, Los Angeles.

In simple terms Davis Walker make wire. More specifically this corporation, which was established in 1927, manufactures seventy different types of wire from galvanised chain link fence wire to the very fine wire which is used to tie paper bags. Davis Walker is one of the largest wire producing companies in the United States and now operates from five plants in the Western States as well as from two in Western Canada. These are strategically located to serve important markets throughout the West. The basic raw material used is hot rolled wire rod which is converted into wire by being drawn through various dies into hundreds of types of high or low carbon, oil tempered, galvanised, annealed, coppered or fine wire, ranging from approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter to 27 gauge which can be used for identifying garden plants. The company is wholly engaged in the manufacture of wire and wire products.

Davis Walker design and build most of the machinery used in the Company's plants. This enables the Company to provide products which can be specifically tailored to customers' needs. The Company serves more than 4,000 customers and manufactures large quantities of wire and finished wire products for stock.

Commerical and industrial construction play an important part in the Company's business mainly in the manufacture of structural and engineered welded wire fabric. Welded wire fabric is used as concrete reinforcing in high rise office and department buildings, industrial plants, motorways, aquaducts, air-

port runways, concrete pipe and in pre-cast modular and tilt-up construction. A wide range of construction products are manufactured by automated machinery in accordance with architects' and builders' individual specifications. Structural fabric offers the builder many advantages in reducing construction costs. Of most importance is the rapid and efficient field installation of concrete reinforcing which results in earlier availability of buildings. Underwater pipe lines throughout the world are reinforced with pipe wrap netting to provide negative buoyancy. Many of the world's

extensive under-water energy transport systems are reinforced with this type of product from Davis Walker.

In agriculture, wire plays a very important role as fencing material, plant and tree supports, in binding hay and cotton bales, providing poultry cages and livestock pens. Welded field fencing combined with electric fence wire provides a dependable and inexpensive fencing system for all kinds of livestock. Moveable pen panels provide easily erected security for horses or other livestock. Also included in the range of agricultural wire products is the familiar barbed wire.

Domestic Uses

Wire is used in almost every aspect of the domestic scene from the reinforcing of the concrete foundations of houses to the many familiar kitchen utensils such as egg whisks, dishwashing trays and the many household gadgets which have become a feature of the modern home. The wire used for



Checking some rolls of fencing wire before being dispatched from a Davis Walker Plant.

bedsprings and furniture springing represents another facet of wire manufacture. In the supermarket we find in the baskets and trollies another type of wire product.

In the sphere of security there are many kinds of wire fencing which provide various forms of protection depending on the particular requirements to be met. The firm of Davis Walker is just one of the many large concerns served by our ships which are constantly bringing essential raw materials thousands of miles across the world's trade routes.

Plymouth Prizewinner

Our congratulations to Deck Cadet Thomas Sarsfield who has won the Ellerman Prize for progress in the Ordinary National Diploma Course at the Plymouth School of Maritime Studies. We also offer our congratulations to Cadet Sarsfield and to his colleagues, Cadets, D. Dignam, D. Fleming, J. O'Connor and P. Boyd, all of whom have recently passed their Orals and Signals Examinations for their Second Mate's Certificate.



Coils of steel wire rod stowed in No. 1 hold of the "Irish Pine" at Antwerp for the Davis Walker Plant in Los Angeles.

LATE MR. GEORGE ZACHERT

We regret to report the death of Mr. George Zachert which took place on 28th October. The late Mr. Zachert joined Irish Shipping in the 1950's as Chief Cook and served

on various vessels of the fleet including the "Ash", "Fir", "Poplar", "Plane", "Rowan" and "Sycamore". In June, 1960, he was promoted Chief Steward and he retired from sea service at the end of 1973. Subsequently he undertook some relief work on the "Saint Patrick" but most of the past two years he spent quietly in retirement at his Dublin home.

The news of George Zachert's death will be received with sorrow amongst his many friends in the Company, both ashore and afloat. He was an extremely shy person, most conscientious and obliging in the performance of his duties.

To Mrs. Zachert and family we extend our sympathy on her great loss.

CONDOLENCE

We offer our sympathy to **Capt. T. Byrne**, Master "Irish Pine", on the death of his brother, Mr. Joseph Byrne, which took place recently.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Ultan Maher, Catering Officer, m.v. "Irish Maple", wishes to express his thanks to the shore staff and also his sea-going colleagues for the many messages of sympathy which he received following the death of his mother recently. Mass has been offered for the intentions of all.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICES



Pictured at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, after the annual Service organised by the Maritime Institute of Ireland to remember Irish seamen lost at sea between 1939 and 1945 on Irish and other vessels. Included are (l. to r.) Captain Desmond Fortune, who was wounded while in command of the m.v. "Kerlogue"; Mr. Donal O'Flanagan, Secretary, Maritime Institute of Ireland; Captain Padraig O Seaghdha and Captain Michael Langran. The Service, and an earlier Mass celebrated at City Quay Church, was attended by Officers of the Institute, members of the Diplomatic Corps, Naval Service representatives, members of An Slua Muiri, Seamen's Union, Irish Chamber of Shipping, Dublin Port and Docks Board and Irish Association of Master Mariners. Also represented at the Services were the An Taoiseach and the Minister for Defence.

BALTIC INTERLUDE

As the "Irish Oak" completed her charter with the Russian firm, Sovfracht, the ship spent over a month at Riga. Subsequently Captain Michael Devine kindly gave us a very interesting account of the vessel's stay at this north European port.

Captain Devine writes: "The 'Irish Oak' arrived at the port of Riga in the Gulf of Latvia on September 22nd. Due to port congestion the vessel had to anchor in the Roads until October 4th when she moved into the Daugavina River entrance to lighten to a 31 feet draft. This was in order to make the passage to the upper river berths. While at the lightening buoys, word was received that the port Authorities, after analysing samples of the maize cargo had found some insects in it and this would mean the fumigation of the entire cargo. Eventually the vessel docked at Riga on October 10th.



A general view of the City of Riga.

On account of the fumigation and due to the poisonous gas used, the entire ship's Company were required to leave the vessel for a week and all hands were duly 'hotelised'.

The vessel's machinery apart from the domestic fridges was entirely shut down and the only sign of life on board when everybody left on October 12th were the pigeons, a number of whom were to lose their lives when the gas was released. Of course a number of those carrying out the fumigation were always on board and the Deck and Engineer Officers were allowed on board daily to check on moorings and fridge machinery.



A statue of Lenin in front of the Hotel Latvia.

The ship's Company were divided hotel-wise between the Metropole and the Daugavina Hotels. The latter is a new hotel about nine stories while the Metropole in the centre of Riga is a much older hotel. Seafarers who have been to Russian ports will know that the seamen's centre in each port provides entrance tickets to most entertainments free of charge. Amongst other things which most of our people saw was a very good circus. Riga itself is a very old city. The organ in the old cathedral dates back to the 1300's. We found the people whom we came in contact with to be very friendly and we were allowed to invite a number of people on board for a meal which, of course, they really enjoyed".

"LOUGH BELTRA"

The "Lough Beltra" was launched from Hakvoort Shipyard, Holland in 1973. She is a seventy foot steel stern trawler and was used as such by Howth Fisheries Limited until 1976 when she was acquired by the National Science Council.

The National Science Council was established in 1967 to advise the Government on science and technology, with particular reference to economic development. The "Lough Beltra" was taken over by the Council on 1st June, 1976 and Irish Shipping have attended to the operational needs of the vessel since then with regard to manning and services. The vessel is propelled by a 425 H.P. marine caterpillar engine and has a service speed of 10 knots. She is fully controlled from the bridge and has the most up-to-date navigational equipment including a Decca Auto Pilot, Track Plotter, Navigator and Radar. There is accommodation for eight people on board including a crew of three – the Master, Engineer and Cook. In addition there are five scientists and in the vessels operations so far these experts have come from the Geological Survey of Ireland, the Department of Oceanography, U.C.G., Department of Microbiology, Department of Zoology and the Fisheries Division. The Geological Survey of Ireland were working on the East Coast and on the proposed Kinsale pipeline using an overboard

side scanner so that they could examine the sea bed to a depth of three feet. The Department of Zoology were involved in deep-water benthic dredging while the Oceanography Department were interested in taking water and plankton samples. The Fisheries Division were taking core samples and after these have been dried they help to determine the mercury and iron content. In addition to this type of scientific research it is also expected that charts of the different sea areas and information will be compiled on the history and movement of marine life around our coasts. This work will undoubtedly take a



At the wheel of the "Lough Beltra" is Captain B. Hearne.

considerable length of time and the present research being undertaken aboard the "Lough Beltra" is a very important first step in providing information which is vital to the future development of our marine resources.

(Photos Courtesy Karl Vekins)



Examining net after benthic dredging in depth of 170 fathoms of water.



Rocks from the sea bed being examined by scientists on board the "Lough Beltra".



Inspecting some of the marine fauna and flora after a haul.

NAVAL SERVICE REPORT

The Maritime Institute of Ireland submitted a report on the naval services to the Government on 19th November last. The report was produced by the Institute's Committee for Naval Affairs and was initiated by the Institute in January 1976. The members of the Committee were Colonel A. T. Lalor, Mr. D. O'Flanagan, Mr. J. Hughes, Commander J. Courlander, Dr. J. De Courcy Ireland and Mr. P. Sweeney.

Among the many aspects of the Service with which the report deals are fishery protection; protection of oil rigs and maritime mineral resources; general surveillance of the sea over which national jurisdiction is claimed; prevention of gun running and drug traffic; supervision of derelicts or dangerous objects at sea; sea rescue; coastal hydrography survey; aids to navigation and enforcement of navigational rules and regulations; ship arrest at sea and the removal of vessels from certain areas or localities where such is government policy or a decision of the courts; enforcement of such rules or regulations with the E.E.C. may make or may be required by international law or regulations. The report also deals with courtesy visits by foreign naval vessels and visits to foreign ports; conveyance of State representatives or dignitaries on ceremonial occasions where such is deemed necessary in the national interest; support of military peace-keeping contingent; support and or escort of Irish merchant shipping in time of necessity and observation of any foreign presence in the area over which national jurisdiction is claimed.

The Committee recommends the provision of general purpose vessels capable of keeping at sea in all weather. In the report a vessel such as the Aviso A69 was considered a suitable type of vessel. Although a speed of 30 knots is considered necessary for most naval vessels the Committee felt that in Ireland's case a speed of 24 knots would be sufficient for most needs and the 18 knots speed of the "Deirdre" is just about adequate for



The L.E. "Deirdre" pictured on her sea trials in April 1972 when she was under the command of Captain E. C. G. Horne. The vessel was built at Verolme Cork Dockyard.

fishery protection. In terms of range such a patrol vessel should be able to stay at sea for 14 days and should, if required be capable of crossing the Atlantic. Adequate radar and sonar detection facilities were also considered essential equipment for such a vessel.

In addition to the type of vessel which should be provided and the equipment it should have the report also dealt with the overall question of authority in connection with the Naval Service.

The following rhyme was received from a Chief Engineer who welcomes the layout of the new Engine Stores Indent Book but is slightly puzzled by one tiny entry:

Eulogy for an Indent

The Common Market bond has given
Consent in many spheres
From joint results in farming plans
To placating border fears
And with this comes a sound desire
For order, calm and rational,
In units used for mass and length
To make them international.
This is a wise and counselled
thought
Which has but simple rules
Where everything is plainly known
Not needing special schools.

For units now of mass and length,
Such as the gramme and metre,
Use letters single, lower case,
What system could be neater.
Thus 'g' and 'm' the new
shorthand

For units to one thousand
When kilo comes into its own
Unto one thousand thousand.
Above this mark use upper case
To prefix the simple unit
As 'Mg' for the metric tonne,
'Tis really easy, innit?
Now what, you'll say, is all this for
How does it touch the indent
Where style and layout has been
changed

To clarify the content.
Now as to that, upon a page
Therein, and numbered twenty,
You'll find a purchase unit large
And believe me it is plenty!
Fully fifty giga-grammes are writ
Which, using our new code,
Means fifty thousand tonne of rag
And that's a heavy load!
This can't be true, its plainly known
Because we all know better
But how much clearer it would be
Typed with its proper letter!

Departmental Change

As from 30th November, 1977
personnel functions relating to sea-
going staff have been transferred
from Mr. D. Hodgins to Mr. D.
O'Neill.

Christmas Call from South Pacific

A little girl of our acquaintance had a very special surprise in store for her during the Christmas holiday. Eight years old Anna Maria Walsh was invited to take part in the Christmas Eve edition of the radio programme "Here and Now". Radio Telefis Eireann had arranged a telephone link-up with the 'Irish Larch' which was then just north of the Fiji Islands on passage to Brisbane from Los Angeles with containers and general cargo. Although the line was not very clear Anna Maria was able to join her mother, Mrs. Betty Walsh, in sending good wishes to her Daddy, Capt. Jim Walsh, Master of the 'Irish Larch', and to all on board the vessel. The most exciting part of the entire operation for Anna Maria came when, through her headphones, she heard her father's voice greeting her from a distance of almost eleven thousand miles away. The memorable conversation took place at 9.30 a.m. Irish time, on 23rd December and was recorded for transmission over the air on the following day. Because of this Anna Maria had the added pleasure of listening to the actual broadcast with her little brother, Declan, who was also very excited by the whole affair. Unfortunately, the connection with the 'Larch' was not of sufficiently good sound quality to enable other members of the ship's personnel to send greetings to their families at home. Nevertheless, thanks are due

to Maxwell Sweeney, Producer; Michael Johnston, Interviewer, and the technical staff at R.T.E. who made the link-up possible despite the very considerable difficulties with which they had to cope.



Anna Maria.



Mrs. E. Walsh.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I usually receive from friends of Capt. Joe McPolin a copy of "Signal", and, as one who has always taken an interest in building up Ireland's merchant fleet I read it enthusiastically.

As some of your readers will know, £4.5 million has recently been spent on re-constructing Warrenpoint Harbour, and it was here, during what must have been the wettest week-end for years, I ad-

mired the new "Daunt Rock".

However, it was not till I received the Autumn "Signal" that I was aware of the coaster's connection with Irish Shipping Ltd., and I am pleased that we now have an association, however tenuous, between your fleet and our harbour.

Whilst we may not yet be able to accommodate the "Rowan" or "Pine", who knows what may happen in years to come?

Yours hopefully,

Jim McCart,

Member of Newry and Mourn District Council and Warrenpoint Harbour Authority.

From Capt. Woolfenden

Dear Mr. Editor,

Thank you for the Autumn edition of the "Signal", very interesting indeed, as always.

My congratulations to the Company on their latest addition "Irish Rowan", may her voyages be prosperous and happy ones.

My best wishes to John Morgan on his retirement, let us hope it will be a long and happy one.

We sailed together on "Poplar" in 1957 and I could not have wished for a better shipmate.

Your article on the Philippine Islands recalls an odd message I received from the Agents at the port of Manila when I was making a call there in the "Sycamore" about 1963. Had signalled that we would be anchoring off the port during the hours of darkness, a prompt reply came back, "Suggest you cruise outside the Bay until daylight as piracy is rife off the port during night". Needless to say we stayed outside until daylight, only to learn that an American ship had been attacked the previous night. Brings back memories of my early days on the China Coast, forty six years ago, when piracy was a frequent occurrence, the officer of the watch went on to the bridge armed after inspecting the Sikh sentries posted round the boat deck. Times have not changed very much.

My best wishes to all.

Yours sincerely,

R. M. Woolfenden



Five years old Declan.

We are indebted to our good friends at Sir Wm. Reardon Smith and Sons Ltd. of Cardiff for the following tragic tale of a famous wreck. No doubt it was intended to moderate possible excesses of good cheer for the New Year!

IN MEMORIAM

The loss of the s.s. "Agnes Jack"
27th January, 1883

*It was a dark and stormy morn
Long ere the break of day,
When cries of deep distress were heard
Across Port Eynon bay.*

*The villigers quickly rose from bed
And hurried to the strand;
There shattered spars and broken boats
Were washed up on the sand.*

*And woeful cries borne by the wind,
Distinctly they could hear;
Above the roaring of the sea,
Sad wails fell on the ear.*

*Yonder o'er "Skysea" rugged rocks
A mast-head light was seen,
And through the murky darkness there
That flickering light did gleam.*

*The wild waves seethed upon the shore,
And winds did howl and moan,
And from the mountain breakers rose
The angry spray and foam.*

*When dawned the day upon the scene
Out through the misty gloom,
The topmasts of a sunken ship
Above the waves did loom.*

*And in the rigging human forms
Were clinging for their lives,
We gazed with pity on them there,
For help we heard their cries.*

*Their ship had struck the fatal rocks
In the darkness of the night,
Upon a wild and dangerous coast,
For there's no beacon light.*

*Cast on an iron-bound lee-shore,
The rocks her sides did gore,
And eighteen men on board were doomed
To see their homes no more.*

*They sought for refuge in the mast,
And the shaking ropes they grip,
Whilst the raging billows swept the decks
Of that ill-fated ship.*

*In fragments high upon the beach,
Their every boat was cast,
And all the hope, poor souls, they had,
Was that frail breaking mast.*

*The coast-guards and the rocket crews,
Now did their duty brave,
But with their rockets and their lines,
Alas! they could not save.*

*A sorrowing crowd stood on the shore,
The tear filled many an eye,
Yet sympathy could not avail,
They all were doomed to die.*

*And good men offered prayers to God
For those in sore distress,
For all the powers of man were vain
To rescue them from death.*

*Small open boats upon the beach
There at Port Eynon lay,
But these were useless in the waves
Of the foaming storm-lashed bay.*

*And men with hard and stony hearts
Were melted into tears,
While cries of those poor souls for help
Fell on their listening ears.*

*Five dreadful hours had passed away,
And still for help they cry,
No lifeboat to launch from the shore,
No arm to save was nigh.*

*Out in the surges clinging there
To that frail mast and rope,
They gazed upon the crowds on shore
Without a ray of hope.*

*Drenched and benumbed with wet and cold,
They saw each foaming wave,
That rolled in madness 'neath their feet,
And yawned their dreadful grave.*

*Some stripped the clothes from off their backs,
And shoes from off their feet,
While on the verge of death they stood,
Their certain doom to meet.*

*The shrouds are gone, the frail mast bends,
And it is breaking fast,
And now their prayers to God for help
Were heard above the blast.*

*A mountain wave broke on the mast,
Down in the surf it fell;
And oh! the sadness of that sight,
No human tongue can tell.*

*They battled with the raging waves,
In vain the shore to reach,
While scores of strong and willing men,
Stood helpless on the beach.*

*Huge waves o'erwhelmed them and they sank,
So close, so near the shore;
Their languid cries were hushed in death –
Life's voyage now was o'er.*

*The gloom of death spread all around;
For them there tolled no bell;
The moaning of the wind and waves
Seemed like death's solemn knell.*

*Oh! had there been a lifeboat there
To breast the stormy main,
Those men might not have perished thus,
Imploring help in vain.*

*But thus they perished – thus they sank –
So very near the shore;
The "Agnes Jack" and her brave crew
"Shall plough the deep no more".*

C. Bevan

An Irishman "Down Under"

At the beginning of January the "Irish Larch", which is on an Australian charter, visited the Port of Sydney.

The city of Sydney is served by two ports, Sydney Harbour in Port Jackson, which is known as the Port of Sydney, on whose shores the city was established, and Botany Bay, six miles to the south on the southern fringe of the metropolitan area.

Cargo traffic at the Port of Sydney amounts to fifteen million tons per year. In addition, as a result of the planned diversion of a large section of the city's bulk oil trade to Botany Bay, more than six and a half million tons of Sydney's oil cargoes are now handled there each year, so that the total cargo tonnages for the Sydney metropolitan area amount to more than twenty one million tons per year shipped on more than four thousand commercial vessels.

PORT OF SYDNEY

Assisted by its favoured geographical position and natural advantages, Sydney Harbour has developed into a major world port serving a city of more than two million inhabitants. Large vessels may enter or leave the port in complete safety at any state of tide.

It was on the shores of this harbour that the first white settlement in Australia was established



This view of the Port of Sydney shows the famous Sydney Harbour Bridge in the top right hand corner. The Harbour Bridge, which was officially opened on 19th March, 1932, has a total length of $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles, including the approaches, and the length of the arch span between the pylons is 1,650 feet. The cost of construction was £10 million and 52,800 tons of steel were used including 38,000 tons in the arch.

The width of the bridge is 160 feet accommodating two sets of railway tracks, an eight-lane roadway for motor vehicles and two footpaths, each 10 ft. wide. The deck is slightly arched, rising 17 ft. 10 ins. from the pylons to the centre of the span, where the vertical clearance for shipping is 171 ft. 9 ins. above mean high water spring. This clearance is reduced by 8 ft. if the travelling painting gantry is in position. The highest point of the arch is 440 ft. above the water.

with the arrival of Governor Philip and the "First Fleet" in 1788. At that time there was a sand bar inside the entrance carrying a depth of 20 feet at low water, but this did not provide any obstacle to the ships of Philip's expedition as his vessels had a maximum draft of about 15 feet. This sand bar and other shoal areas in the port were later removed by dredging to provide the wide, deep channels which are now available.

The full area of the port extends over 13,600 acres, approximately 21 square miles, and about half this area carries a depth of water not less than 30 feet at low tide. The average width of the harbour is slightly less than one mile, but, although it extends only about 13 miles inland, there are approximately 152 miles of foreshore bordering the various arms and the many sheltered bays.

Because it is almost landlocked, Sydney Harbour provides excellent shelter for shipping, but despite being endowed with great natural advantages considerable capital expenditure was required to develop the port to its present position. The steep nature of much of the foreshore and the great depth of water and underlying silt added to the cost of providing wharves and approaches. At Walsh Bay, for instance, many of the piles in the jetties were spaced to make lengths up to 145 feet and much of the port roadway system had to be cut out of solid rock, sometimes to a depth of 60 feet, to provide good access to the wharves particularly in the Walsh Bay and Darling Harbour areas.

In terms of cargo handled, Sydney is Australia's leading port and most of the cargo handled there represents deep-sea trade.

First President

In 1935 the Australian Legislature passed an Act called the "Maritime Service's Act 1935", one of the objects of which was to provide for the constitution of a Board to be styled the Maritime Service's Board of New South Wales. Under the Act Parliament charged this Board with the responsibility of exercising and discharging all those powers, authori-



Robert Hickson.

ties, duties and functions, and also the obligations which, up to the 1st February, 1936, were exercised and discharged by the Department of Navigation and the Sydney Harbour Trust Commissioners.

The Sydney Harbour Trust had been created by a Bill passed through Parliament on 25th October, 1900 to take over the privately owned wharfage and for the purpose of controlling, administering and developing the Port or Sydney which had, at that time, suffered an outbreak of bubonic plague caused by infected rats invading the old, dilapidated privately - built wharves, stores and dwellings on the water front, principally in the Darling Harbour area. The first President of the Trust was Robert Rowan Purdon Hickson, who was born in Dublin on 15th September, 1842, and was educated at St. Columba's College. At the age of 18, Hickson was articled to the Engineer in Chief for Public Works in Northern Ireland. He subsequently worked as resident Engineer in charge of harbour and related works at Carlingford and as Managing Engineer to the Barrow-in-Furness harbour dredging department. In 1876 he emigrated to Australia to take up a position as Engineer in charge of marine engineering works and harbour dredging. For the first four years he was based at Adelaide, but in June 1880 the post which he held was abolished and he moved to New South

Wales where he entered the Department of Public Works at Newcastle. Eventually he became head of the Department in which post he had to undergo a public enquiry into allegations of fraud and incompetence by his department. The result of the enquiry was that Hickson and his officers were exonerated from all suspicion of improper conduct.

On 11th February, 1901, Hickson became the first President of the newly established Sydney Harbour Trust. In this position he returned to his original career in harbour engineering. During his twelve years of office he saw Walsh Bay, Darling Harbour, Pyremont, Glebe Island, Rozelle Bay and Woolloomooloo provided with modern wharfage. He also supervised the dredging and deepening of the shipping channels and the building of a large portion of the main port roadway from West Circular Quay to Sussex Street which was later named Hickson Road in his honour. Many other developments and improvements were carried out and subsequent to his retirement in December 1912, tribute was paid to Robert Hickson for his many achievements, and the major contribution which he had made to the growth and prosperity of Sydney and for his part in making the Port of Sydney the leading port in Australia.

The Voice of Irish Shipping



Our Receptionist and Telephone Operator, Maureen Grogan, provides a vital link in our communications network. Maureen enjoys a limited amount of gardening and she has a 'spider' plant to prove it.



FLEET NEWS

"Irish Pine"

On her present voyage the "Pine" loaded forest products at Vancouver, Washington, Portland, Oregon, and Crofton as well as at Vancouver and Eureka. She completed at Vancouver, B.C. on 18th December and sailed for London. She went through Panama on 30th December and is due at London about 15th January, 1977. She will also discharge at Esbjerg, Denmark and at Antwerp where she is expected to complete discharge about 27th January.

At the end of this voyage the ship will go into drydock for five to eight days but the drydock has not been nominated as we go to press.

"Oak" for El Salvador

This vessel unloaded a cargo of steel from Antwerp at Long Beach and Portland, Oregon. She then loaded forest products at Vancouver, B.C. for Cardiff.

She sailed on 11th December and passed through Panama on 22nd December. She arrived at Cardiff on 6th January and left on 18th January to go into drydock at South Shields where she will be for ten days before going on to load iron ore at Heroya, Norway for Acajutla in El Salvador.

The "Irish Oak" is at present on charter to Northwood Mills of Canada.

"Irish Maple"

Captain M. Carey relieved **Captain J. Kelly** while this vessel was at Liverpool towards the end of November. **Chief Officer B. Hearne**, **Chief Engineer P. Collins** and **Second Engineer F. Mullin** relieved **M. Doyle**, **P. Bardon** and **P. O'Halloran** respectively at the same port. The vessel arrived at Boulogne on 7th December to discharge part cargo and subsequently unloaded at St. Nazaire and La Pallice. On completion of discharge at the latter port the "Maple" sailed in ballast for the U.S. Gulf.

She loaded grain at Houston and sailed 5th January for Japan. She will be due at her Japanese discharge port on 2nd February.

"Irish Larch"

The "Larch" continues on her Australian charter and while the vessel was at Los Angeles **Captain J. Walsh** relieved **Captain O'Dwyer**. **Chief Officer P. Murphy** relieved **J. Ryder**. **Second Engineer M. Egan** relieved **D. Gabriel**. **Third Engineer J. Waters** relieved **F. Keane**. **Electrical Engineer J. Grace** relieved **D. Niall** and **Junior Engineers P. Conran** and **F. Brennan** relieved **M. O'Leary** and **L. Byrne** respectively.

The vessel arrived in Brisbane on 28th December with containers and general cargo. She also discharged at Melbourne before loading steel at Newcastle and Port Kembla for Iligan in the Philippines. The "Larch" is expected to sail from her final loading port about 26th January and arrives at Iligan about 5th February.

"Irish Elm"

While this vessel was at Jacksonville, early in December **Captain T. Fiddler** relieved **Captain W. Garvey** and **Second Engineer H. Teehan** relieved **J. Devitt**.



Paper pulp being loaded on the "Irish Pine" at Crofton, British Columbia.

The "Elm" discharged a cargo of motor cars at Jacksonville which were shipped from Nagoya. She then went to Baltimore and Newport News to load coal for Japan. She completed loading at Newport News on 16th December and passed through the Panama Canal on 22nd December. The ship will be due at her Japanese discharge port on 21st January.

"Rowan" visits Philippines

Having completed her maiden voyage from Wakayama to Basrah, the "Irish Rowan" arrived at Guimaras Island in the Philippines on 9th December where she loaded a cargo of sugar for the U.S. Gulf. The vessel completed loading on 18th December and is expected at Panama on 14th January, and at her discharge port, Burnside, on 19th January. On her present voyage the vessel is on charter to a Japanese company.

"Irish Star"

The "Star" loaded lumber at a number of British Columbian ports as well as at Eureka, California for

Rotterdam, Brake, Velsen and Boulogne. She went through the Panama Canal on 6th December and arrived at Rotterdam on 24th December.

She arrived at Boulogne on 5th January and completed discharge on the following day. Then she sailed in ballast for Newport News where she is expected to arrive on 18th January to load coal for Japan.

"Irish Cedar"

This sister-ship of the "Irish Rowan" will sail from the builders yard at Shimonoseki on 15th January on her maiden voyage to Inchon, which is the port for the South Korean capital, Seoul. There she will load rail cars for the port of Surabaya in Java.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

To **Damien Matthews**, "Irish Cedar", Birthday Greetings and Best Wishes from all the Family for your 21st Birthday on 23rd February.

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING CREW MAIL

We again remind readers that all letters for ships' personnel must be adequately stamped for airmail delivery and the minimum charge is 15p.

Registered mail or parcels should be mailed directly to the ship concerned after first obtaining the correct forwarding address from our Personnel Department. This is necessary in order that the required declaration forms may be completed in the case of parcels and to avoid the re-registering of registered letters where these are sent to our Head Office for forwarding.

Large postal packets such as box cards or large birthday cards should be treated in the same way as already described for posting parcels.

GREETINGS FROM CORPUS CHRISTI

We received a very welcome letter from Mr. Robert Bunting recently advising us of his change of address from New Orleans to Corpus Christi. Bob and his wife have often extended their much appreciated hospitality to our sea-going colleagues during their time in New Orleans and established a very genuine bond of friendship which is clearly evident whenever visits to New Orleans are mentioned.

Bob and Mrs. Bunting have asked us to convey their best wishes to all in Irish Shipping and their heartfelt hope that any in the Corpus Christi, Texas area will contact them at (512) 643 - 7721 or at 884 - 3566.

On behalf of the many Irish Shipping personnel who have been befriended by these kind people we thank Bob and Mrs. Bunting most sincerely and wish them every happiness and good fortune in 1977 and in the years ahead.

READY FOR MAIDEN VOYAGE



This picture shows the busy scene aboard the "Irish Rowan" prior to her departure from the builder's yard at Shimonoseki last October. In the foreground can be seen Bosun, Mr. P. J. Harris and Bosun's Mate, Mr. D. O'Sullivan, while in the background leaving the vessel are Mr. P. H. Greer, Chairman, Irish Shipping together with Mr. N. J. McGovern, Mr. D. Hodgins and Mr. D. O'Neill who were in Japan for the launching of the "Irish Cedar".

Fleet Personnel



Deck and Engineering Officers in Order of Rank (as at 8th January, 1977)

m.v. "Irish Oak" – Captain T. Hughes; Deck Officers: J. Darcy, B. Coburn, R. Fennessy; Deck Cadets: G. Regan, T. O'Callaghan; Engineering Officers: R. Tennent, C. Corcoran, P. Herlihy, T. Farrell, J. Kavanagh, G. O'Brien, B. Elum; Engineer Cadets: D. O'Connor, J. O'Flaherty; Catering Officer: J. Dillon; Radio Officer: F. Farrell; Deck Department: J. Tallon, M. Byrne, D. Driscoll, F. Sweeney, T. Handly, G. O'Connor, P. Leonard, Jas. O'Connor, A. Meehan, E. O'Reilly, P. Furey; Catering Department: A. Rourke, P. Codd, C. Lewis, J. Cooney, P. Clarke, G. Humphries, D. Muldoon.

m.v. "Irish Larch" – Captain J. Walsh; Deck Officers: P. Murphy, M. Purcell, M. Kirrane; Deck Cadets: P. Dorgan, R. O'Shea; Engineering Officers: W. D. McCarthy, M. Egan, J. Waters, D. O'Loughlin, P. Conron, F. Brennan, W. A. O'Dwyer; Engineer Cadets: F. McGarry, P. Guinning; Electrical Engineer: J. Grace; Catering Officer: B. Dorgan; Radio Officer: M. Murphy; Deck Department: J. A. Hearne, E. Frampton, M. Brennan, A. Byrne, S. Doyle, F. Dunne, B. Goyvaerts, M. Devlin, P. Parkes, B. Coogan, I. Tarbett, T. Sweeney; Catering Department: W. Muldoon, F. Gavan, J. Buggy, R. Pullen, J. Byrne, E. P. Donnery, K. Taylor.

m.v. "Irish Elm" – Captain H. Fiddler; Deck Officers: E. Greevy, J. Murphy, F. Traynor; Deck Cadets: R. McCabe, G. Farrell, J. Flaherty; Engineering Officers: J. Mooney, H. Teehan, M. Hayes, D. Gerety, A. Curran, N. Pearson, E. McQuillan; Engineer Cadets: J. Cummins, G. Sheehan; Electrical Engineer: J. Dunn; Catering Officer: P. F. Walsh; Radio Officer: R. M. Byrne, T. Floyd; Deck Department: W. Boon, D. Healy, P. Duffy, C. Cody, R. Draper, T. Kelly, B. O'Reilly, E. Judge, J.

Kenny, C. Murphy, J. Roche, J. White, A. Kelly T. O'Connell; Catering Department: J. Smith, J. Mulligan, G. O'Toole, K. Stenson, A. Williams, C. Walker, P. Kiernan.

m.v. "Irish Rowan" – Captain J. Caird; Deck Officers: J. Whyte, P. Miley, B. Kinch; Deck Cadets: D. Elliott, J. Whelan; Engineering Officers: B. Larkin, J. Reilly, M. McCann, P. N. Duffy, M. Tyrrell, T. Lanigan; Engineer Cadets: J. O'Reilly, C. McIntyre; Electrical Engineer: P. Clarke; Catering Officer: J. Clinton; Radio Officer: E. Durman; Deck Department: P. Harris, D. O'Sullivan, N. Byrne, H. Gaines, E. Manson, J. Ryan, P. Fennell, J. O'Neill, H. Black, J. Hall, H. McClenahan; Catering Department: M. Moody, D. J. Leonard, J. Lloyd, J. O'Brien, P. Lumsden, P. Harryington, D. Healy.

m.v. "Irish Pine" – Captain T. Byrne; Deck Officers: D. Kavanagh, M. Darcy, F. T. McCarthy; Deck Cadet: N. Cantwell; Engineering Officers: M. Byrne, D. Power, J. O'Leary, M. Scully, J. Durham, F. Murphy, M. Flynn; Engineer Cadet: M. Okoli; Electrical Engineer: S. Byrne; Catering Officer: E. Fricker; Radio Officer: J. Lyons; Deck Department: K. O'Malley, T. Hughes, J. Farrelly, F. Galvin, O. Ward, J. Murphy, N. Murphy, M. Manson, P. O'Sullivan, D. Doyle, M. Brown, P. Garry; Catering Department: L. Kiernan, S. Paige, T. Mahony, P. Quilty, A. Becton, J. Gavan, C. Mooney.

m.v. "Irish Maple" – Captain M. Carey; Deck Officers: B. Hearne, E. Curry, P. Boyd; Deck Cadets: M. Poole, J. Jameson; Engineering Officers: P. Collins, F. Mullin, E. Kealy, P. M. Molloy, E. Tubridy, M. Egan, M. Boland; Engineer Cadet: J. Murphy; Electrical Engineer: P. Tobin; Catering Officer: P. Farrelly; Radio Officers: D. M. Power, C. Walsh; Deck Department:

L. Maloney, V. Beech, P. J. Rice, T. Perle, T. Byrne, O. Kelleher, M. Carr, W. Murphy, P. Proctor, A. Gillen, J. Graham, S. Byrne; Catering Department: G. McGovern, J. Kelly, E. Mulready, M. Gowan, J. D. Cooney, B. Lattmore, J. Egan.

m.v. "Irish Star" – Captain B. Reilly; Deck Officers: P. Kehoe, C. J. Lawless, P. J. Hughes; Deck Cadets: W. Kavanagh, P. J. Kingston, G. O'Connor; Engineering Officers: J. Reynolds, T. O'Toole, P. McCarthy, M. McAneny, W. J. Sammon, B. Geoghegan, J. Lynch; Engineer Cadets: J. Butler, G. Ohikere, Electrical Engineers: J. D. Murphy; Catering Officer: J. Rogan; Radio Officer: T. V. Sutton; Deck Department: J. Griffin, J. Kelly, O. McGrah, J. Keogh, D. Nodwell, F. McCarthy, D. Hunt, J. McGran, D. O'Donovan, A. Blake, D. Coleman, G. Courage, M. Christie; Catering Department: Jas. McGrath, N. T. Duggan, E. Foran, R. Martin, P. Kane, L. Pullen, A. Reilly.

m.v. "Irish Cedar" – Captain M. McMahon; Deck Officers: G. Kyne, H. McGowan, D. Dignam; Deck Cadets: M. J. Butler, D. Devenney; Engineering Officers: L. Sherringham, J. O'Toole, J. Denham, C. N. McGarrigle, D. Horan, H. Mahon; Engineer Cadets: D. Matthews, B. Kelleher; Electrical Engineers: H. Stears; Radio Officer: J. Butler; Deck Department: J. McGrath, R. Nugent, P. McDonnell, N. Shiels, R. Rennicks, B. Clarke, T. Fitzgerald, A. McCabe, R. Rooney, K. Kelly, D. Meares; Catering Department: W. B. Rogan, P. Foley, J. McGuire, A. Boyle, P. Kelly, M. Kiernan, W. Richardson.

m.v. "Daunt Rock" – Captain M. Devine; Deck Officer: D. Mundow; Engineering Officers: A. O'Jalloran, E. Sweeney; Cook/Steward: E. Murphy; Deck Department: H. McElwaine, E. O'Leary, J. Marry.