

# Black Jack

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH  
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY  
[www.sotonwss.org.uk](http://www.sotonwss.org.uk)



Issue No: 212

Autumn 2024



P&O Cruises **Arvia** 184 700g completed in 2022 is seen here at the Ocean Terminal (berth 46) on 18th August 2024 being refuelled with LNG (Liquified Natural Gas) by the LNG tanker **Green Zeebrugge** 2017/7403g.

*photo Nigel Robinson*

## Black Jack – Autumn 2024 No.212

### Editorial team

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.

### Honorary Branch Secretary

Situation Vacant see opposite

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## 2024 Branch Meeting Programme

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

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## 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!**

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### 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,

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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.



We start this latest Summer notebook off with this beauty, Royal Caribbean's 2003 built **Serenade of the Seas**, the Radiance-Class ship was on day 229 of her 274 day "Ultimate World Cruise" which will see her visiting 60 countries around the world. She sailed the same evening for Zeebrugge.

left: **Serenade of the Seas** 26th July 2024

On 18th March the tug **Craigleith** arrived to cover for other tugs due for drydocking etc. She had originally spent some time at Felixstowe and on the Forth.

right: **Craigleith** (Built 2018) seen 2nd June

July saw a one off visit from **Songa Panther**, currently on charter to Hapag-Lloyd. She had arrived from Asia as an extra loader. The 1800TEU ship was built in China.



left: **Songa Pearl** (built 2023)

There have not been as many bulkers visiting recently but July saw the 31,748 grt bulker **Nordic Stavanger** arrive on 109 berth.

right: **Nordic Stavanger** (built 2011) seen 13th July.



all photos by Andrew McAlpine

until next time wishing you  
Happy ship spotting  
Andrew

Orders were placed by Lord Inverforth's Crusader Petroleum Industries Ltd., for 7 tankers to be built by two German shipyards as a means of gaining access to funds which the German Government had frozen due to their foreign currency restriction.

It was intended that the tankers would supply oil to a refinery which it was planned to build at Dublin by Sean Lemass. The construction of the refinery was cancelled and the contracts for the tankers passed to Liffey Transport & Trading Co., Ltd .

On 16th November 1937 Inver Tankers were registered.

Lord Inverforth (Andrew Weir) considered selling the ships to Japan but British government t exerted pressure not to sell to overseas because of threat of war.

Registration transferred to British on 6th December 1939

#### INVERLEE

Motor tanker, single screw, 9158 gross tons,  
length 480.1', breadth 63.8', depth 35.7'.

engine 8 cyl. 2 s.c.s.a. MAN oil engine

1938 built by Bremer Vulkan Schffbau & Maschinenfabrik, Vegesack for Inver Tankers Ltd., (Managers Andrew Weir) having been launched for Liffey Transport & Trading Co., Ltd. and on completion laid up in River Fal for a few months.

1939 Port of Registry changed from Dublin to Glasgow on outbreak of WWII.

1940 July 3<sup>rd</sup> picked up 27 survivors from HMS Willamette Valley (X 39) which had been sunk by U53 south west of Ireland on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

1941 October 19th torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U 204 30 miles off Morocco whilst on voyage Trinidad to Gibraltar with cargo of fuel oil, 21 of 47 crew lost. (Master T.E.Alexander, C/E F.Ellis)

#### INVERSHANNON

Motor tanker, single screw, 9154 gross tons,  
length 480.2', breadth 63.8', depth 35.7'.

engine 8 cyl. 2 s.c.s.a. MAN oil engine

1938 built by Bremer Vulkan Schffbau & Maschinenfabrik, Vegesack for Inver Tankers Ltd., (Managers Andrew Weir) having been launched for Liffey Transport & Trading Co. Ltd., and on completion laid up in River Fal for a few weeks.

1939 Port of Registry changed from Dublin to Glasgow on outbreak of WWII.

1940 September 20th torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U 99 (Kretschmer) in position 55° 40'N 22° 04'W whilst in convoy HX 27 on voyage Curacao to Scapa Flow with cargo of fuel oil, 16 of crew of 47 lost. Elmbank also in same convoy.

Reported that U boat placed sole survivor of sunken 'Baron Blythswood' into lifeboat (Survivors" Bennett)

#### INVERLIFFEY

Motor tanker, single screw, 9456 gross tons,  
length 503.2', breadth 63.3', depth 34.2'.

engine 8 cyl. 2 s.c.s.a. MAN oil engine

1938 built by Deutsche Werft A.G., Hamburg for Inver Tankers Ltd., (Managers Andrew Weir) having been launched for Liffey Transport & Trading Co. Ltd., and on completion laid up in River Fal for a few weeks.

1939 Port of Registry changed from Dublin to Glasgow on outbreak of WWII.

1939 September 11th torpedoed by German submarine U 38 (Liebe) in position 48° 14'N 11° 48'W and sunk by gunfire whilst on voyage Trinidad to River Thames with gasoline ( Capt William Trowsdale). The 45 crew were allowed to get away in the lifeboats before being torpedoed and due to intense flames submarine took one lifeboat crew onto its casing and placed them in another boat ("Survivors" Bennett) U-38 stopped the American tanker *R.G. Stewart* (Le Havre to Caripito) and put *Inverliffey's* 45 crew on board, crew transferred to American freighter 'City of Joliet' and landed at Le Havre

#### INVERDARGLE

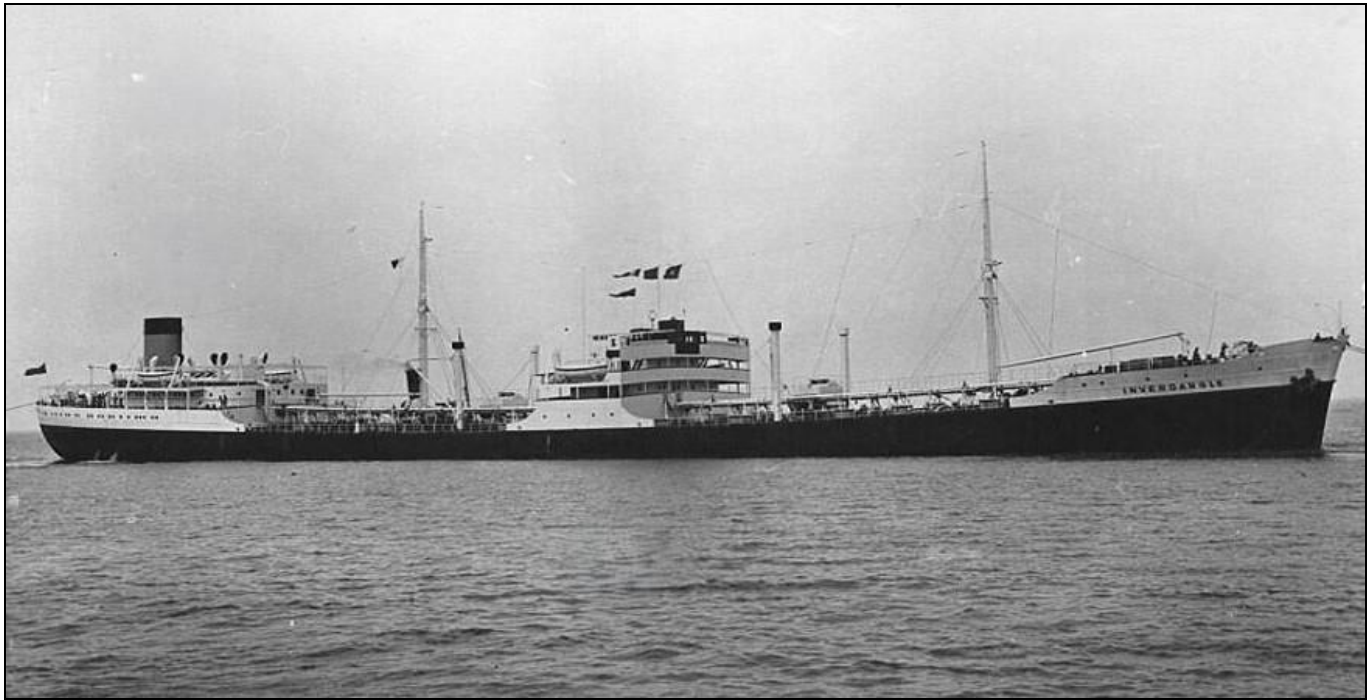
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1939 Port of Registry changed from Dublin to Glasgow on outbreak of WWII.

1940 January 16th mined and sunk in position 51°16'N 03° 43'W in Bristol Channel whilst on voyage Trinidad to Avonmouth with cargo of aviation spirit, all crew being saved. (Master Evan Murdock Skelly)



*Invergle*

#### INVERLANE

Motor tanker, single screw, 9141 gross tons,

length 480.1', breadth 63.8', depth 35.7'.

engine 8 cyl. 2 s.c.s.a. MAN oil engine

1938 built by Bremer Vulkan Schffbau & Maschinenfabrik, Vegesack for Inver Tankers Ltd., (Managers Andrew Weir) having been launched for Liffey Transport & Trading Co. Ltd., and on completion laid up in River Fal for a few weeks.

1938 Oct. 28th 3/O Miller joined at River Fal with white crew and sailed in ballast under command of Capt John Robertson for Port Arthur, Texas to load petrol for Santa Cruz de Teneriffe.

After discharge sailed to Galveston, Texas to load for Alicanti and Malaga, Spain.

Proceeded to Venice, Italy for drydocking.

Loaded crude oil via sea pipeline at Tripoli, Syria for Marseille, France.

Ballast to Corpus Christi, Texas to load for Santander and Bilbao, Spain.

On discharge sailed to Abadan to load fuel oil for Lands End for orders.

Advised that discharge was in Germany but put into Zeebrugge, Belgium on declaration of War II, then ordered to Southend Anchorage for a lengthy stay.

1939 Sept. Port of Registry changed from Dublin to Glasgow and ship painted grey, Master and crew relieved.

1939 December 14th mined in position 55°05'N 01° 07'W whilst on voyage Abadan to Invergorden with cargo of fuel oil. Survivors rescued by HMS Kelly which was then mined aft and survivors transferred to HMS Wallace.

Beached near Sunderland and broke in two. Forepart refloated and towed to South Shields and then to Scapa Flow as blockship and used for fire fighting practice. Sunk in Burra Sound by R.N. and remains still visible. then to Long Hope where it was beached.

1944 May 20th refloated and scuttled as blockship at Normandy.

('Voyages into Eternity' by I.A. Miller)

#### INVERSUIR

Motor tanker, single screw, 9456 gross tons,

length 503.2', breadth 67.3', depth 34.2'.

engine 8 cyl. 2 s.c.s.a. MAN oil engine

1938 built by Deutsche Werft A.G., Hamburg for Inver Tankers Ltd., (Managers Andrew Weir) having been launched for Liffey Transport & Trading Co. Ltd., and on completion laid up in River Fal for a month.

1939 Port of Registry changed from Dublin to Glasgow on outbreak of WWII.

1941 June 2nd torpedoed by German submarine U 48 (Schultze) in position north of the Azores 48°28'N 28° 20'W and sunk by gunfire whilst on voyage Trinidad to Avonmouth with cargo of aviation spirit. Capt.R.C.Loraine and 23 crew members were picked up by the Norwegian steam merchant 'Para', transferred to the British ocean boarding vessel HMS Corinthian (F 103) (Cdr E.J.R. Pollitt) and landed at Greenock on 21 June. Nine crew members were picked up by HMS Wanderer (D 74) (Cdr A.F.St.G. Orpen, RN) and landed at Holyhead. The remaining 12 crew members were rescued by an unknown ship and landed at Quebec.



*Inversuir*

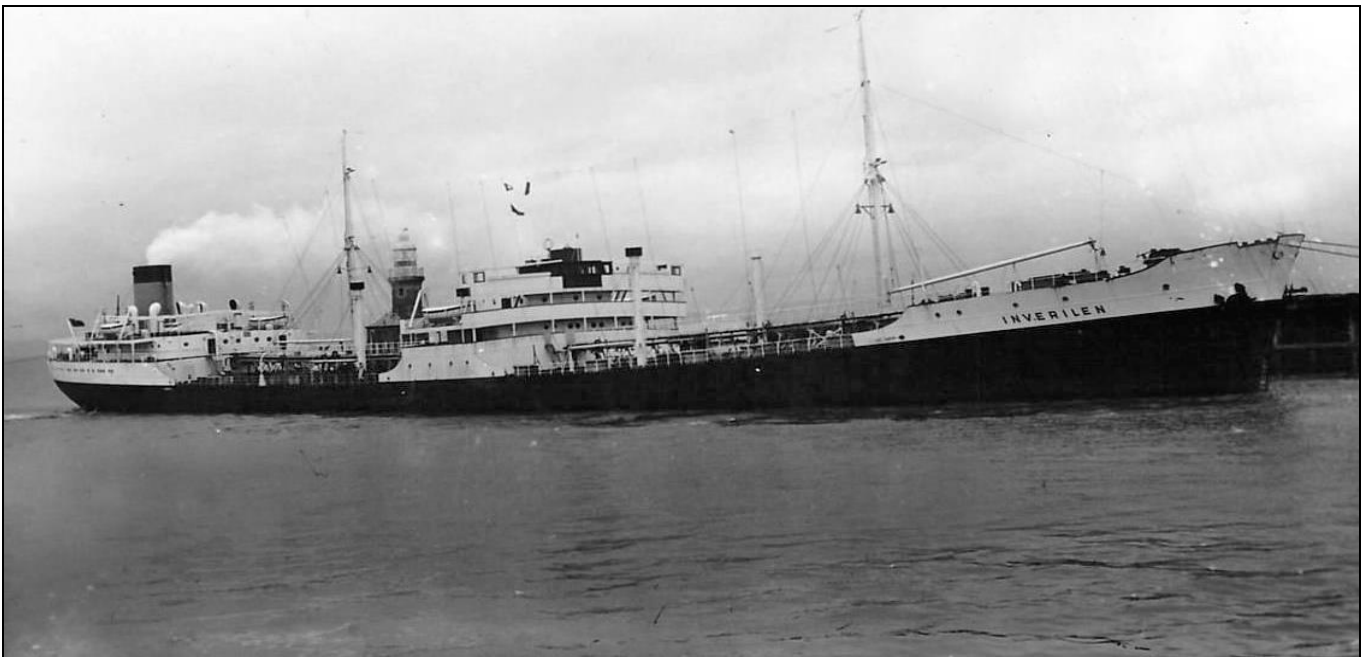
#### INVERILEN

Motor tanker, single screw, 9456 gross tons,  
length 503.2', breadth 67.3', depth 34.2'.  
engine 8 cyl. 2 s.c.s.a. MAN oil engine

1938 built by Deutsche Werft A.G., Hamburg for Inver Tankers Ltd., (Managers Andrew Weir) having been launched for Liffey Transport & Trading Co. Ltd., and on completion laid up in River Fal for a few weeks.

1939 Port of Registry changed from Dublin to Glasgow on outbreak of WWII.

1943 February 3rd torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U 456 in position south of Iceland 56\*35'N 23\* 30'W whilst on voyage New York to Stanlow with cargo of clean oil, Master Joseph Mann, 24 crew members and six gunners were lost. 14 crew members and two passengers (DBS) were picked up by HMS Asphodel (K 56) (Lt G.L. Fraser, RNR) and landed at Londonderry. Empire Bronze in same convoy.



*Inverilen*



I joined the **Sea Surveyor** (IMO No 7813901) on 13-Dec-01 as Master in Luderitz Bay, Namibia. The vessel is Bahamas flagged built 1978 and of 1,275 G.R.T. and is the ex-RMAS Magnet, a submarine de-magnetizing vessel, bought by Gardline in 1997. Before being put into service, the vessel was lengthened by 7.32 metres, unfortunately it wasn't done very well, and the ship suffered, and still does, with poor stability. To join the vessel, Gardline sent me down to Cape Town for 24 hours on the 10-Dec-01, where I managed to spend time up Table Mountain, before flying to Luderitz on 12-Dec-01. The flight to Luderitz must put down on the border with South Africa so that we could be searched for diamonds, I would have thought it would have been better being searched when leaving Namibia as it is a diamond mining country!!

I took over command of the vessel and with the assistance of the Chief Officer we checked all the stores as we were due to spend Christmas at sea. It was fortunate that we did as the previous Master and Cook had forgotten to order any festive food. The Chandler in Luderitz did not have any spare turkeys' etc., so we had to order it from Cape Town; this took over 24 hours to be driven up from there in a freezer truck.

Our first job was for Shell, doing a seismic survey prior to a rig spudding down. The weather was, to say the least, not good, despite it being summertime down there. On talking to the Shell Rep, it appears that Shell did an analysis of the weather patterns and it appears that the best time to do the survey was in May/June, why we were doing it December is beyond me. Whilst working out on the site we were nearly always surrounded by seals and albatrosses. It was at this time I found out the seals in the wild swim on their backs and clap their fins, just like they are "trained" to do in captivity. We finished the job about the middle of January, just in time for us to avoid going back in for stores, if I remember rightly; Shell gave up on the job, due to the weather. We went back to Luderitz to discharge our survey crew and store up for another job.

From Luderitz we proceeded to Luanda in Angola at a slow speed as we were not required to be there for some time. The job from there was an environmental survey after an oil rig had been moved, also to check out some features on the seabed. Whilst engaged on this survey I saw a whale shark, it came up swimming around our vibro-corer, stayed on the surface for a few minutes then swam down again, unfortunately I have lost my photos of the animal!!

We had to look for a fault line off the coast, we did but, not in the position we were led to believe it was. When we got back into Luanda it was found out that the surveyor-in-charge has miscalculated his sums and were looking 800 metres away from where we should be. It was not surprising that we did not find any sign of the drilling, oil residue and the likes. Gardline was informed and the vessel was to store up and proceed back to the site and do it all again, at Gardline's expense. As my time was up I was not staying to do it again, fortunately my relief was standing on the quayside. I flew home from Luanda via Paris, but my suitcase didn't arrive until 22 days later!!

Some of the ships seen on our recent Branch Cruise on 15th July



**Mein Schiff 3** 2014/99526g Malta registered



**Dattilo M** 2023/5870g Liberian registered



**XT Peace** 2006/13693g Italian registered

photos Nigel Robinson