

# C F Spencer & Co Ltd

## Marine Consultants & Surveyors



Autumn 2011

"Cause nothin' lasts forever, Even cold November rain"

~ A Rose GnR

### Summer

That happy sound of leather on willow, or baton on oik, depending on where you live.

Sensibly (in our opinion) several of our clients have taken the opportunity of escaping the city this summer and to visit ships and ports in the west country to gain a fuller understanding of our work and ship operations. One experienced lawyer said she found it "informative" and "would thoroughly recommend it", without being coached! Do let us know if you would like to see some ships at first hand.

### Shipping Lunch

Proper planning and good luck with the weather meant our annual summer BBQ was yet again a success. Those that attended, in addition to a small glass of something chilled, were offered free range Thai chicken breast on lemon grass skewers, beef sirloin in sea salt and cranberry crust, as well as champignons avec fromage bleu. This was followed by meringue nests of summer fruit and cream, or a selection of cheese (for those that hope to enjoy gout later in their careers).

Hopefully the weather will be as good for our BBQ next year and Tim Andy will actually perform at the tennis for a change.

### New Engineer

We are pleased to announce that Richard Gordon has joined us from one of the world's largest marine consultancy firms, and now heads our engineering department. With over forty years of experience before the boiler (or whatever the engineering equivalent of a mast is) both at sea and in a variety of roles ashore ranging from surveyor, superintendent, technical director, and casualty investigator, he brings a wealth of experience and knowledge and we are delighted to have him onboard.

Some of the more noteworthy points of Richard's career have been technical responsibility for 6.5 million dwt of shipping as technical director, boiler repair and conversion, dry dockings (predominantly in Singapore, Dubai & Bahrain), expert witness work in London.

Although born north of the border, Richard has been a West Country man for 20 years; admittedly for seven of those he was also working in London.

Please see our website, for his complete CV, and Richard's contact details.



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### Surveys

Keith has been our man at the coal face recently with various ship attendances in Turkey, Cornwall and Wales.

His Turkish appointment was a condition survey on a vessel following a port visit in a ex Stalinist state. The attendance was unfortunately a little too short for him to try the local kebabs.

His visit to Cornwall was to carry out a MARPOL re-survey. Obviously the survey was carried out on a Saturday, and with problems of launch availability, travelling times etc he had to stay overnight, and check the local pasties; the hardships of a surveyor!

Steel coils in Wales was his last tourist destination, no pasties or kebabs, and no need to mention the rugby, especially England's alleged recent interpretation, at least there isn't a World Cup coming soon.....



### Offshore

"What is the maximum number of rig moves you would want to do back to back" is a question we have never been asked but three would be Fraser's answer. After five weeks and three rig moves that was enough for him. Fortunately he had a relief and we were able to cover a fourth move, which interestingly was a four legged unit, instead of the more common three.



### Expert Witness and Arbitration

Chris, John and, more recently Fraser, have been busy with expert reports covering disputes, personal injuries, collision, stowaways and speed and consumption. Chris spent a week in London being cross examined on one case and then a less stressful week in arbitration where the 'boot was firmly on the other foot'.

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### Cancelled Jobs

We frequently receive enquiries as to our availability and capabilities which go nowhere, but which kick start our imaginations.

One recent enquiry was to attend an ex warship for towage approval purposes prior to its sale. What particularly raised our interest levels in the office was the lack of clarity regarding the actual client and what he or indeed she wanted to do with it.

You would be amazed how difficult it is to have a good poke around when you can't tell the MOD who your client is, or why they want a great big second hand warship.

### Presentations and Workshops

Fraser chaired an IIMS workshop at the recent Seawork 2011 exhibition, the subject being "The Marine Surveyor as an Expert Witness". This was very well attended with standing room only for several of the presentations.

Fraser and Keith have also been asked to give presentations at the forthcoming "Project Cargo Risk Management" conference in London in November. The joys of being volunteered know no bounds.

John will also be giving a presentation at the Cambridge Academy of Transport in September, on "Ships and their Operational Problems".

### Buoy Replacement

Although not the world's busiest port, Bridgwater is in continual operation with regular commercial traffic and the facilities require maintenance and we recently repositioned one of their buoys.

An article will be placed in our nautical notes section as soon as Keith has had 5 minutes to finish writing it, detailing how this operation was carried out.

<http://www.cfspencerandcoltd.com/nauticalnotes.html>

### Gardener's Corner

Earlier in the year John looked at several cargoes of damaged produce, which spurred him to, in his words, "produce some lovely stuff" from his garden, even if he did plant his sweetcorn in the wrong place (again).

Finally Fraser was very smug after winning first place in his first ever entry in his village show with his cucumber, not only did it look great, it was delicious.



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