

"There are holes in the sky
Where the rain gets in
But they're ever so small
That's why the rain is thin."

Spike Milligan

Autumn 2013

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Welcome to our Autumn newsletter.

Apologies, first, for the lack of a Summer Newsletter, due mainly to staffing changes but also because of work-loads and holidays. However, the winds of change have now eased and life is getting back to normal. Now is the time to start wrapping up warm, cooking all the good stuff in the kitchen and laying in the new stock of sloe gin, wines and beers! When the warm weather dies down anyway.

Cooling Down !

Keith chilled out this Summer by undertaking a number of surveys on alleged damage to Chilled and Frozen containerised goods.



John and Richard have both left us for pastures new, but in their places we have recently welcomed into the office our first female Master Mariner and surveyor.

Jessica Tyson joins us having been at sea for 18 years and having sailed as Master in Tankers but read her CV to see what else she sailed.....and what she has done before the mast or was it abaft?

The women in the office now often outnumber the men!

Jessica looks forward to meeting you all professionally and socially.

More Work!

There have been several personal injury claims, speed and consumption claims and loading shortfalls. Also a stability issue requiring an expert opinion which we have been able to offer.

We continue to be kept busy with a variety of surveys such as Marpol, bunker condition, loss prevention and towage. We have been regularly dealing with damage claims concerning hull damage, weather damage and contact damage; also layerage surveys for NAABSA berths, existing and potential alike.

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Port of Bridgwater

In the summer we successfully tendered for a new contract with Sedgemoor District Council, relating to the provision of Harbour Master and Pilots for the Port of Bridgwater. Chris has stood down and Keith is now the Harbour Master and is working hard to ensure that the high standards are maintained. He is currently reviewing and updating the port's Oil Spill Contingency Plan, prior to submission to the MCA as per requirements.

Ongoing maintenance of the pilot boat and navigational aids is continuing as weather and shipping allow.

Jessica is now a trainee pilot. So far there has not been sideways rain, a cold wind or a lumpy sea at obscure hours of the morning or night but that is to come as that can be a pilot's lot as Keith, Andy and Chris well know!

The Retirement that did not happen!

Chris has tried to retire but fate keeps putting "interesting things" in the way! At the time of drafting this he was waltzing off to Vienna to assist a client with respect to a stability issue.

No doubt he will land squarely on his feet and show us how to sweep round the floor on his return.

Alas from waltzes, to wallowing! It is back in the mud doing layerage surveys!

General

Over the spring and summer it's been pretty busy with Keith spending a week in London with a P & I Club learning things from a different perspective (and enjoying the alleged unusual levels of social activity!....how the other half lives).

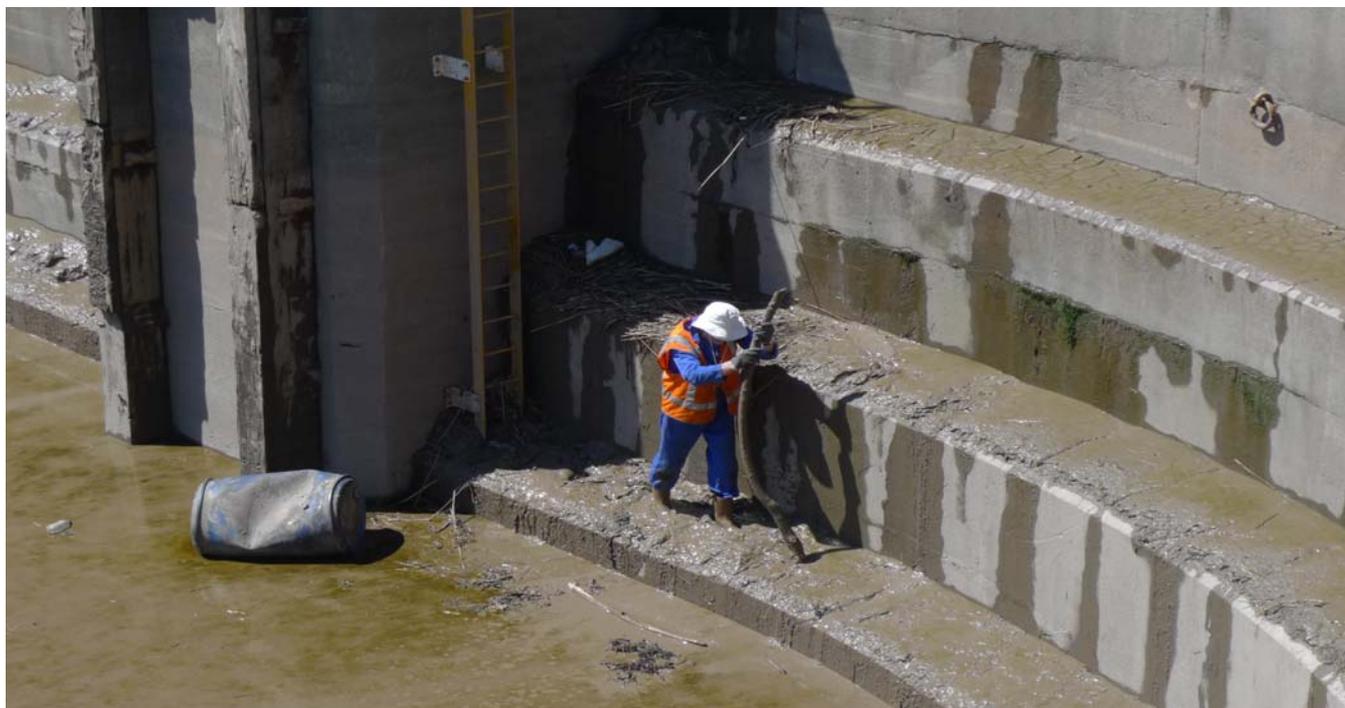
At C.F. Spencer & Co Ltd we are always keen to learn from all aspects of the industry as we reckon that gives us the ability to give a more thorough and effective service to our clients on a range of issues.

In the past we have offered informal ship visits to various people, as and when the opportunity has arisen. Although not the busiest ports in the world, Bristol, Newport, Gloucester, Sharpness, and Bridgwater do have a wide variety of ship types along with the various NAABSA berths, dry docks and repair facilities in various locations.

We are more than happy to do this again so if you would like to get a perspective from the 'sharp end' as it were, we would be more than happy to accommodate. Please contact us on info@cfspencer.com We look forward to hearing from you.

Given the remarks on mud and feet in this issue it is right to remind you that keeping us with feet firmly on the ground in the office are the indispensable Brigitte and Rosy!!





Chris on his return from Vienna, starting to sort out the access, through the mud, for another layerage survey. Never a dull moment! Hence landing on your feet is no bad thing!!

NAABSA: Not Always Afloat But Safely Aground. To survey the area where the ship will sit, or layerage as it is known, starts with safe access. The first criteria is access to the layerage, and then the condition of the layerage (sand, stones or mud).

Robust plans for moving through mud using poles for safety are a prerequisite.

One person collates all the data on the type of bottom and records it as the survey progresses. Some layerages are clean and clear, others are under 2 feet (60cm to our younger readers) of mud.

Eventually a plan and elevation data will be drawn up to generate information on any soft areas, highs and lows and the overall declivity or slope of the bottom. There is no problem with a slope as long as it is known and the slope is constant.

The dangers are: ever present tides, mud, access ladders, hidden objects, and sudden deeps. (Sudden deeps are a particular problem for Keith, who has had first-hand experience, in previous employment at another location on the Bristol Channel)

As with many tasks we undertake communication is everything!

