



Atlantic Pilotage Authority

THE DISPATCH

APA PILOT BOATS (REPLACEMENT PROGRAM)



The safe transfer of pilots between ships and pilot vessel is paramount for the APA and every effort is made to ensure that pilot vessels are maintained in excellent working order. Throughout the Atlantic region weather and sea conditions vary constantly, yet over many years these vessels have withstood these day-to-day challenges. Inevitably, with the passing of each decade they are getting older.

In 2000, the Authority commenced its pilot boat replacement program with the launching of *Placentia Pilot*. However, issues relating to the construction of this vessel and subsequent repair and associated costs impacted significantly on the program. Following the completion of repairs, the new pilot vessel operated successfully in Placentia Bay until April 2006, when it became involved in an accident resulting in the vessel being declared a Constructive Total Loss (CTL). *Placentia Pilot* was eventually bought by Superport Marine Services Ltd., based in the Strait of Canso, who intend to fully

rebuild her. Meanwhile, as outlined in the previous edition of the "Dispatch," the APA's latest pilot vessel (Hull A407) is being constructed at the AF Theriault boat yard in Meteghan and is gradually taking the shape of a sleek modern pilot vessel. Pictures of her construction can be viewed on the APA web page: www.atlanticpilotage.com. Following the loss of "Placentia Pilot", it was decided that two identical pilot boats should operate within the lengthy compulsory pilotage area of Placentia Bay. (The average run for the pilot boat is approximately 28 nautical miles one way.)

Once again, A.F. Theriault was the successful bidder. The contract for this vessel (Hull A412) was signed in late September with the expectation that the vessel be operational by the fall of 2007. As with the previous vessel, Lengkeek Vessel

Engineering will provide project management on behalf of the Authority and the vessel will be built to Class (Lloyd's).

Meanwhile, two of the three Breau boats (APA #18 and #20) continue to operate in Placentia Bay. Recently, modifications were made to APA #20 in order to provide rear entry into the wheelhouse versus side doors. In Halifax, the third Breau boat APA #1, continues to fulfil approximately 3,500 pilotage assignments each year. However, this vessel is now into its fourth decade of operation. Options are underway to design and build a primary pilot boat with the intention that it be operational in 2008.

Elsewhere, the Authority's latest acquisition, *Fundy Pilot*, based out of Saint John, NB, has exceeded all expectations and is proving to be an excellent sea vessel for those waters within the compulsory area.

WE HAVE A WINNER!!!!

CAPTAIN WARD SCOTT

Ward Scott was 12 years old when he took his first step on the path to becoming a pilot. His father had recently taken over the buoy contract on the Miramichi River and consequently Ward had the opportunity to be able to learn first hand the basics of seamanship. When a special job came up, like lifting a ship's anchor, Scott was even allowed to take a few days off school to help.

"It was a different type of work than most of my friends at my age were involved with, and I was always proud of what I accomplished," says Scott.

The work he did as a boy gave Scott a taste of the river and opened his eyes to its curves and nuances. In the early '80s he helped with the reconstruction of the channel, helping with the dredges and working on a survey boat as Master checking the depths of the new channel.

He also held a job as a linesman, continuously adding to his knowledge of the waters and familiarity with pilot boats. Then, in 1985, Scott took the step that would sail him on his way to a career.

"When the opening came, I just applied for it and got the position," says Scott, adding that he never planned to become a pilot. And he didn't expect to stay this long.

But stay he has, and Scott says his best memory is getting recognition for 20 years of service.

In those 20 years, he has grown to know and love the 35-mile long stretch of flowing water called the Miramichi River. He says most of his work in the river consists of transiting the narrow channel and navigating around six islands and many sandbars. In Dalhousie and Belledune, where Scott also pilots, most of the work is focused on docking the ship, as the waterways leading up to the docks are wide, spacious and deep. The familiar and yet completely different characteristics in all the waterways he pilots keeps Scott on his toes, and promises to make life interesting.

One day Scott piloted a cruise ship into Dalhousie – a port that hasn't seen more than that one cruise ship in Scott's career. He says it spiced up the job much more than any cargo vessel has.

"The atmosphere was very friendly but professional, as it's a big event for the ships to make a safe docking," says Scott.

When trying to think of what makes a bad day on the job, Scott can simply testify to weather being the kicker. He says heavy ice and heavy winds are the worst, but there isn't a terrible weather day that sticks out in his mind. He has never been injured, and is thankful for that.

His family is also thankful, as Scott has a wife and two daughters waiting at home for him when he gets back from a job. The oldest daughter, 17, is an avid

dancer, and his youngest, 15, has recently stowed away her dancing shoes to pick up a pair of hockey skates and soccer cleats. With a piloting schedule as flexible as it is, Scott gets to see the dance recitals and games that mean so much to his daughters.

Scott also enjoys his piloting job because he can expect a different scenario every time he sets foot on the deck of a pilot boat. Each time the phone rings and calls him in, he's going to a new vessel, to meet new people, to experience different weather challenges in an environment he could possibly navigate with his eyes closed.

"It's not the humdrum office going in to do the same thing, like in a factory or something, the same job," says Scott. "It's the changeability of your work."



CAPTAIN AMBROSE MCCARTHY

He's been on the water for a good part of the last 23 years. He's worked his way up from a sailor, to a deckhand, right up to a Master. He knows Placentia Bay and Holyrood as well as he knows the faces of his own daughters. But Ambrose McCarthy never thought he'd be a pilot.

"It was something that just never came to me," he says, "it just sort of appeared."

Despite never expecting to follow this path, McCarthy has settled into his piloting career as if it was the plan from day one. He gets to see his daughters, 10-year-old Britney and seven-year-old Brooklyn, more than most fathers because he's on-call for two weeks and off for two. He enjoys the job and it caters to his lifestyle. But don't read this the wrong way – piloting in McCarthy's shoes is no easy feat.

"We have a 29-mile distance to travel by pilot boat," says McCarthy of his experience in Newfoundland. "And we have severe conditions here in the winter time regards to wind and sea."

Although the harbour hasn't been iced over since he started working with the APA almost nine years ago, Ambrose says the ice found in other nooks and crannies makes it difficult during the winter.

"Boarding the ships in icy conditions, when there's freeze and spray and things like this – when the ladders are iced up, that's what I consider the most dangerous part of it," he says.

"The embarking and disembarking of the vessel, right? Timing's gotta be right."

And since it's a 29-mile stretch to get the pilot boat out and a vessel back in, the weather can even change on the way to a job. Ambrose says he's left Come by Chance and by the time he reaches the vessel the conditions have turned. He doesn't get worried about this part of the job, or any other part, though. Piloting is old hat to him, and he looks forward to the challenge. There's no need to anticipate future jobs or cringe at situations that have passed. He says they're all different, and that's a perk.

"I takes it day by day," he adds. "Once it's done it's done."

Aside from varying weather conditions that liven up the job, Ambrose enjoys the range of people he meets on the 29-mile stretch in. He says the distance allows for some interesting conversation, some more memorable than others.



"There's one particular captain – I forget what the nationality is right off hand – he was telling me how he was put in jail for some kind of a marine violation somewhere-over," says McCarthy, chuckling to himself. "I'm not exactly sure where it was to, somewhere over cross the way there."

He adds that he wasn't scared by this comment, but it opened his eyes to what goes on outside his world. He hears stories about what happens in Iraq concerning port security. Some of the captains have told him about people walking around with machine guns at the port. It's a world away from what takes place in Newfoundland, and Ambrose gets to peek in on it all without ever leaving home base.

And home base is important to him. When not at work, Ambrose spends a good chunk of time with his family. But he has another passion: music. He has recorded three CDs, all of which are on the market, and is in the process of finishing up number four. Ambrose records his Newfy and Irish music with a few buddies in a studio that belongs to a friend.

"I do all the vocals and the guitar and, well, a mixture of everything there, right?" he says, a hint of pride in his voice.



SAINT JOHN RECOGNIZES PILOTS OF YESTERYEAR

Under a blazing sunny evening the Saint John pilots hosted a reception in recognition of a number of retired pilots. Many guests attended, including a number of former Saint John pilots and their spouses/guests.

The reception honoured Captain B. Pennington, Captain B. Petite and Captain J. May. Combined, these three pilots contributed approximately 70 years of pilotage duty within the Port of Saint John. The evening ended in a spectacular cruise in areas of the Saint John and Kennebecasis Rivers.

SAINT JOHN MISSION TO SEAFARERS

The Saint John *Mission to Seafarers* held their first ever Golf Tournament, which their Chairman hopes will become an annual event. The tournament, sponsored by many local companies, was held at the Westfield Golf Club located overlooking the Saint John River.

Over 70 players participated in a *Texas scramble* format, after which followed dinner, speeches and prize presentations.

OH & S

This year marks a big step for the OHS Committee. After four years of compiling the OHS System Manual, it is anticipated that it will be rolled-out during the months of November/December. Mike Carter will be heading up the training for all APA employees.

In the upcoming months, the committee will also be seeking new members. Since the manual is completed, one of the keys to its success will be having a steady flow of new members. This will give all employees the opportunity to bring forward new ideas, and allow them to foster an environment of Health & Safety in the workplace.

Your present committee is:

Capt. Shaun Dauphinee, Committee Co-Chair
 Capt. Patrick Gates, Committee Co-Chair
 Robert Hearn, Halifax, NS
 Capt. Scott MacDonald, Cape Breton, NS
 Capt. Ambrose McCarthy, St. John's/Placentia Bay, NL
 Capt. Steven Mullin, Saint John, NB
 Chris Naugle, Halifax, NS
 Hayward Pilgrim, Halifax, NS
 Capt. Randall Spencer, Saint John, NB
 Tina Panopolis, Halifax, NS
 Mike Carter, Kentville NS



BACK ROW: CAPTAINS CLAUDE BROOKS, GERRY MERRIAM, DON DUFFY, OSBORNE NASON, JIM MAY, BOB PENNINGTON- 2ND ROW: CAPTAINS PAT QUINN, ALLAN VALLIS, LARRY ABRAMS, FRANCIS QUINN, HENRY CROCKETT— FRONT ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: CAPTAINS STEVE JOHNSON, BRUCE HARRIGAN



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: CAPTAIN ANTHONY MCGUINNESS, CAPTAIN PAT QUINN, PETER MACARTHUR AND CAPTAIN AL SOPPITT

AND WE HAVE A WINNER....

This year APA held its first "Photograph Contest" for our Christmas Card. We received quite a number of photos which made it a very difficult choice. Winner of the 2006 APA Christmas Card Photo Contest is Christine and Captain Bill Hancock. We would like to thank everyone who participated in this contest. Look for your Christmas greeting from APA and meet "Meeka".

CHRISTMAS IS A TIME OF GIVING.....

This year the APA is participating in its first *Adopt-a-Family*. Office staff at APA will bring joy and happiness to two young girls, age 11 and 10, brother age 4 and mother. Each employee have selected a wish from our little angel tree to give to the three children and mother. On December 16th, these gifts will be delivered to the family by volunteers of the Salvation Army and the Daily News. Stay tuned till next year, hopefully we can adopt more than one family with your help.

