

The Traverse Board

Newsletter of the Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc

September 2009

Proudly Supporting the Paul McGuire Collection of The State Library of South Australia.

News From The Friends

From The President



Spring is sprung, and better than a plank sprung! I hope you are all well after the winter chills, and looking ahead to the new season.

John Couper-Smartt joined us for our July meeting and talked about the origins of the Port Adelaide Sailing Club, and how closely it matched the development of the Port itself; there were many connections with the early years of the R.S.A.Y.S. as well. Altogether it was a most interesting look at our local history, and a very pleasant evening, too. Thank you, John.

Because we could not tee up our next speaker until November, on Monday, 28th September, we will meet at the Railway Hotel, Port Adelaide, for a "show and tell" evening. This need not be restricted to nautical items, and I hope it will be a bit of fun, something different, so please come along, maybe bring a friend.

Our annual dinner will take place at the Flying Knife Restaurant at Semaphore, on Wednesday, 28th October. We have gathered there in the past, when it was Cafe Saltwater, and the quality is as high as it was then, so please note this date, the menu is included in this issue for your perusal, it sounds delicious.

The Maritime Museum is organising an outing aboard S.T. Yelta on Sunday, October 11th, to book for this call the Museum on 8207 6255. Enjoy the smooth power of steam as you take in the sights of the Port River.

I shall wrap up this message now, so look forward to seeing you all on the 28th.

Regards, Julian.



Next Meeting

Show and Tell Evening

Do you have some item of maritime interest that others might find interesting?

You do! Bring it along to our next meeting and share it with others.

Anything is welcome – DVD's, photos, newspaper clippings, drawings, books or even just your stories.

Date: Monday **September 28th 2009**

Time: **8:00 pm**

Venue: **Railway Hotel, Port Adelaide.**

Cost: **Donation**

Members are invited to join the committee at dinner from 7:00pm. Please book with Fred or Sue at the Railway Hotel on 8447 1527.



The old cemetery at Cape Borda is a reminder of the isolation of those who tended South Australia's lighthouses.

Tony Arbon's Farewell

A gremlin crept into the system last issue: The function to mark Tony's retirement on the 24th June 2009, not the 17th as printed.

The Traverse Board

Published by:

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In the news:

Maritime news in the past couple of months can be characterised into environmental matters in local waters, and piracy in international waters.

Perhaps the strangest case was the disappearance, and subsequent finding of the Maltese owned and Russian crewed *Arctic Sea*.

I have a couple of yachting stories as well.

There is so much material it will be continued in the November *Traverse Board*.

\$53m Industry at stake

SEEMA SHARMA

5/08/2009 11:30:00 PM

The \$53 million prawn industry in the Spencer Gulf could be drastically affected if the discharge from the proposed desalination plant is harmful in the long run.

The Spencer Gulf and West Coast Prawn Fisherman's Association raised its concerns on Tuesday while making submissions on the BHP Billiton Environment Impact Statement.

Members called for strict conditions to avoid the risk of damaging the sensitive marine environment and in turn one of the State's most economically valuable industries.

Association executive officer Barry Evans said as a condition of approval, BHP must be required to identify an alternate site for its discharge outlet, offering an oceanic environment with stronger tidal movement that will disperse the saline effluent more efficiently.

He said the risk of not doing that will place an industry that contributes \$53.6 million to gross state product in jeopardy.

The industry also provides employment for 600 people, and has been recognised by the United Nation's as the best managed prawn fishery in the world.

"Our industry is supportive of the expansion of the Olympic Dam Mine and recognises the benefits it will provide to the State, both economically and socially," Mr Evans said.

"However, it must not come at the cost of putting at risk one of our State's most sensitive marine environments.

"If, as proposed, BHP is allowed to discharge large quantities of effluent back into the native marine environment at that location, there is substantial risk of environmental degradation."

Mr Evans said to pump waste hyper-saline brine back into an inverse estuary such as the Spencer Gulf would not only be illogical, but would also be environmentally irresponsible. The association has commissioned independent research by Flinders University's Research Centre of Coast and Catchment Environments, which calls into question the conclusions drawn in BHP's EIS.

"Of greatest concern was their finding that Point Lowly would achieve a dilution rate of 11:1 (seawater to saline effluent), far below EPA standards, which state a target dilution rate of 50:1 is to be achieved within a 100m distance of a desalination plant discharge outlet," Mr Evans said.

"The researchers have recommended the effluent from the plant be piped to a location of lower environmental sensitivity.

"The bottom line is that no one knows what the long term impact of desalination effluent will be on the Spencer Gulf.

"We argue that BHP should have to operate under the same precautionary principle that the fishing and aquaculture industry adheres to, in order to protect what is a sensitive and unique marine environment."

The association's submission also raised concerns about increased shipping movements in the Upper Spencer Gulf during construction of the plant, arguing that discharge of ballast water greatly increases the risk of introducing marine pests.

Whyalla News

Fishermen overpower Somali pirates

Posted Sat Aug 15, 2009 10:20am AEST

Updated Sat Aug 15, 2009 10:19am AEST

A group of Egyptian fisherman has escaped four months in captivity after overpowering a band of Somali pirates, killing two.

Local reports suggest the fishermen seized their kidnappers' machetes and guns in a desperate battle to regain control of their boats.

They had been held captive since the pirates hijacked the boats in April.

Two of their kidnappers were killed, several were captured and one was rescued after being stabbed and thrown into the sea.

It is understood the pirates had rejected a \$200,000 ransom on Wednesday (local time).

The Egyptians sailed for home with the captured pirates on board.

ABC News



Whale of a time at Elliston

SOPHIE WANDEL

27/07/2009 11:30:00 PM

A WHALE and her calf have been delighting crowds of people on the Elliston jetty for the past six days.

The southern right pair arrived last Wednesday and have been resting in the bay completing loops into the jetty much to the pleasure of the crowd.

Scores of locals and tourists have been visiting the jetty to marvel and take photos of the pair who have been putting on a playful show.

Yesterday the pair was still nearby the jetty.

Port Lincoln Times

High and dry: Boat ends up grounded on rocks during yacht race

By Peter Allen

Last updated at 1:13 AM on 08th July 2009

As he began his daring overtaking manoeuvre, Arthur Manning wondered if he was sailing a little close to the wind.

In fact, he was too close to the rocks. His yacht, the Jersey-registered Knight Star, ended up grounded and then wobbling in mid-air on its 6ft keel as the tide went out near Saint-Quay-Portrieux, north-west France.

Mr Manning, who was trying to speed ahead of 19 rivals in a Royal Channel Islands Yacht Club race, described it as 'an embarrassing misjudgment'.

He and his crew abandoned ship and the French sea salvage service refloated the Knight Star at high tide. The yacht escaped mostly intact - unlike Mr Manning's pride.

It happened at 8am today, soon after Mr Manning and fellow crew member Peter Williams left Binic, in north west France, on the last day of the Royal Channel Islands Yacht Club's 14th Waller Harris two-handed triangle race.

As their 36ft Sadler Starlight 35 passed the rocky outlet of La Longue, opposite the port of Saint-Quay-Portrieux, disaster struck as they sailed too close to rocks and became grounded.

The boat ended up perched on its side after the tide went out.

'Half the fleet had cleared the rocks, but we clearly got too close to them,' said Mr Manning, who had previously never made a serious mistake in a highly successful racing career stretching back 40 years.

'We'd consulted local charts, but didn't take into account the height of the rocks, or whether there was enough water.

'The boat ground to a halt, and we realised we were grounded. We immediately pulled all the sails down, and put on our life jackets.

'At one stage we thought we might go over, and had the life raft ready, but then managed to get off on to a rescue boat. We both feel terrible.

'Nobody likes hitting rocks, so this was very embarrassing.'

As dramatic pictures show, the Knight Star ended up perched on its 6ft deep fin keel as the tide went out.

A member of the crew of Le Galaté, one of the French vessels involved in the rescue, said: 'We got the two Englishmen aboard and out of harm's way, but could do nothing for the yacht as it rose higher and higher into the sky.

'The boat wasn't badly damaged and the two crew members were uninjured, although I do think their pride might have taken a bit of a battering.'

The French sea salvage service SNSM (Société Nationale de Sauvetage en Mer) supervised the re-floating of the Knight Star at high tide.

'There was very little damage, and we now on our way back to Jersey,' said Mr Manning, who was won the race twice in the past.

'These things happen, but it won't put us off racing in the future. We simply made a swift decision and it was the wrong one.

Daily Mail, London



Well and truly wedged: The boat ended up perched on rocks, but was not badly damaged

Malacca Straits tanker on fire

Firefighters are battling a fire on board an oil tanker which collided with a bulk carrier in the Malacca Straits.

Malaysian police say that nine sailors - Chinese and Taiwanese - are missing after the collision, which occurred late on Tuesday.

The tanker was listing on its side and could sink, marine police said.

Traffic in the busy straits was said to be unaffected. About 70,000 ships use the narrow Malacca Straits each year, but collisions are rare.

Local police chief Mazlan Othman said about 40 firefighters were trying to control the blaze on the Liberian-registered tanker, which collided with the British-registered and Greek-managed bulk carrier.

Mr Mazlan said 15 Chinese and one Taiwanese sailor were rescued, but eight Chinese and another Taiwanese remained missing.

The fire could be seen from Port Dickson in Malaysia, near the site of the accident.

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/asia-pacific/8208735.stm>

Published: 2009/08/19 04:42:13 GMT



The Mystery of the Arctic Sea – Modern Day Pirates?

As I assembled *Traverse Board* a maritime drama was unfolding in Europe and off the coast of Africa. Here are transcripts of a number of stories from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation News and Current Affairs web site and from UK papers detailing the story as it unfolded.

Even after the ship was found there seemed to be many unanswered questions.



The Russian navy and European authorities are scouring the seas for any sign of the Arctic Sea. (AFP: Lehtikuva/Pekka Laakso, file photo)

Ship goes missing amid European pirate mystery

By Adam Rollason for AM
AM | abc.net.au/am
Posted Thu Aug 13, 2009 6:45am AEST

The Russian navy and European authorities are scouring the seas for any sign of the Arctic Sea.

It is feared that pirates are to blame for the disappearance of a cargo ship which dropped off the radar after travelling through the English Channel late last month.

The Russian navy and European authorities are scouring the seas for any sign of the Arctic Sea, a Maltese-flagged ship.

Maritime security experts say reports of a hijacking in the days before the ship vanished mean piracy is the most likely explanation.

On July 28, Helsinki police received information that the Arctic Sea had been temporarily hijacked in Swedish waters.

A group of people wearing masks and police uniforms had apparently boarded the ship and assaulted several Russian crew members, before leaving in a rubber boat 12 hours later.

The ship continued its journey to Algeria through the English Channel, where it made contact with the Dover coastguard.

Maggie Hill is from Britain's Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

"There was nothing abnormal with that radio call. It was entirely routine, nothing untoward," she said.

"The Arctic Sea reported to Dover coastguard that she was bound for Bejaia in Algeria and she was due to arrive at 2300 hours on August 4."

But the 4,000 tonne ship never reached its destination.

Maltese maritime authorities say it never even passed through the Strait of Gibraltar.

Graeme Gibbon-Brooks assesses the risks faced by shipping companies for the Dryad Maritime Intelligence Service.

"There are a number of possibilities for what happened to the ship, right from it having slowed down because of bad weather and it could arrive tomorrow, or to it having sunk, but the facts don't point to either of those scenarios," he said.

"So there are two fairly strong lines of possibility that people are looking at. The first is that the pirates remain on board and the ship was in fact hijacked and that when they got to the Straits of Gibraltar, they continued south down the west coast of Africa in order to sell the cargo or the ship.

The second possibility is that the crew is complicit, is that the crew have effectively stolen the ship."

Mr Gibbon-Brooks says the case has caught authorities off guard.

"There are lots of instances of cargoes going missing and cargo crime and fraud," he said.

"I think what is unusual about this and what's got world attention is the fact that potentially, if the attack occurred as advertised, there's been a piratical attack in Swedish territorial waters.

"I think probably the one question we ought to put to bed is: are there gangs of Swedish pirates floating about looking to attack the next ship that passes through the Baltic? That seems fairly unlikely. It's more likely that the ship was targeted specifically."

Nick Davis is the chief executive of a UK-based security firm Anti-Piracy Maritime Security Solutions.

The fact there has been no ransom request makes him believe a "commercial dispute" may be to blame.

"There's no demands that have been made, and I think this may well be a dispute that's been on-running for maybe a couple of years, and that they've seen how easy it is and how well the Somalis can do it," he said.

"So people have basically used that blueprint for their own means to recover the vessel. Or it could be an insurance job.

"This is very, very unique. This is an oddball, and it is an actual act of piracy, and it's the first time it's happened in European waters for a few hundred years."

He believes the ship will be repainted, renamed and taken off the radar permanently.

Russian navy shadowing disappearing ship: reports

By Moscow correspondent Scott Bevan, reporters

Posted Fri Aug 14, 2009 5:01am AEST
Updated Fri Aug 14, 2009 9:15am AEST

Russian media is reporting that a ship that went missing after passing through the English Channel last month may have been found.

The merchant ship *The Arctic Sea* was due to dock in Algeria on August 4 but it has disappeared, raising fears that the ship and its predominantly Russian crew may have been hijacked by pirates.

On July 28, Helsinki police received information that the *Arctic Sea* had been temporarily hijacked in Swedish waters.

A group of people wearing masks and police uniforms had apparently boarded the ship and assaulted several Russian crew members, before leaving in a rubber boat 12 hours later.

The ship continued its journey to Algeria through the English Channel, where it made contact with the Dover coastguard.

But that was the last contact it had with the outside world.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev ordered his country's navy to become involved in the search for the ship and now the editor of Russian maritime bulletin *Sovfrakht* has told local media he has learnt from a Defence Ministry source that a frigate has been following a ship similar to the *Arctic Sea* in the Atlantic Ocean near Gibraltar.

But according to the ITAR TASS news agency, the Russian navy has denied the report, saying its ships are continuing to search for the *Arctic Sea*.

ABC News



The *Arctic Sea*, which was hijacked in European waters.
Photograph: Sovfracht/Handout/EPA

Disappearing ship spotted off W Africa

Posted Sat Aug 15, 2009 7:21am AEST

A Russian-crewed cargo ship last seen two weeks ago has been spotted 740 kilometres off one of the islands in the Cape Verde group, a coast guard source said

"The Arctic Sea is some 400 nautical miles off one of the islands of Cape Verde, therefore outside its territorial waters," the Cape Verdean official said, without saying which island in the archipelago, some 450 kilometres off the coast of Senegal.

"The Cape Verde coast guard is in contact with international agencies and organisations that are continually informing it of the movement and progress of the ship."

The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said "when the ship enters in our jurisdiction, we will decide in consultation with our partners what actions to take."

But Moscow's ambassador to Cape Verde says he has not been "officially" informed by the military that the ship had been spotted off the islands.

The spotting of the ship "has not been officially communicated to the embassy" by the military, said Alexander Karpushin, Russia's ambassador to Cape Verde.

"I have contacted the armed forces chief of staff and he has not confirmed that information to me."

He also said searches for the ship were continuing with Russian ships, submarines and satellites. Mr Karpushin declined to provide details on where the searches were taking place.

The disappearance of the *Arctic Sea*, which dropped off the radar in the English Channel on July 28, has sparked intense speculation about its fate, with experts debating whether pirates, a mafia quarrel or a commercial dispute were involved.

The Maltese-flagged ship had been due to arrive in Algeria on August 4 with a cargo of sawn timber.

A European Union spokesman said earlier that the ship appeared to have been attacked twice but not in "traditional" acts of piracy, and Russian warships have been scouring the Atlantic Ocean for the vessel.

EU Commission spokesman Martin Selmayr said "radio calls were apparently received from the ship, which had supposedly been under attack twice - the first time off the Swedish coast and then off the Portuguese coast.

"From information currently available it would seem that these acts, such as they have been reported, have nothing in common with 'traditional' acts of piracy or armed robbery at sea," he said, without going into details.

Swedish police say the ship was hijacked in the Baltic Sea on July 24, when masked men claiming to be anti-drugs police boarded the ship, tied up the crew and searched the vessel.

But the men reportedly left after about 12 hours.

ABC News

Meanwhile *The Telegraph* in London reports:

How on earth has the 'Arctic Sea' vanished?

In the age of satellite technology, the disappearance of a 4,000-ton cargo ship raises more questions than it answers, reports Andrew Alderson

Published: 6:59PM BST 15 Aug 2009

The Arctic Sea, a Maltese-flagged cargo ship, was supposed to make port in Algeria with its cargo of timber on August 4. It is nearly 100 metres long, more than 17 metres wide and weighs almost 4,000 tonnes. Yet, even in a hi-tech world of satellites and Google Earth, the Arctic Sea has vanished without trace in busy European shipping lanes.

A possible sighting of the Turkish-built "ghost ship" off the Cape Verde Islands was dismissed, meaning the disappearance of the cargo vessel has, in the words of one insurance expert, left "far more questions than answers".

A huge international search is under way this weekend for the vessel, which vanished more than two weeks ago amid fears that pirates, similar to those now operating off Somalia, had seized the 15 Russian crew and its timber cargo valued at £1.3 million. Finnish police said they had received a ransom demand for a "large sum" of cash, but declined to give further details or say whether the demand was authentic.

Maritime security experts say that in a world where it is routine to "tag" a car, a prisoner or even a pet, it is nevertheless possible for a large ship to travel for thousands of miles without being tracked by satellites or any other device.

Nick Davis, formerly in the Army and now running the Dorset-based Merchant Maritime Warfare Centre, which specialises in shipping intelligence and security, told the Sunday Telegraph: "It is possible to 'lose' ships on the high seas because everything on a ship can be turned off.

"You can disconnect both satellite phones and the Automatic Identification System, which is a transponder (a transmitter and responder) with a unique identifier to each and every ship. There is no alternative secret 'parent' transponder that is blinking all the time."

He said any ship weighing more than 300 tonnes has to be fitted with an Automatic Identification System - also known as an AISLive - but it is not compulsory to have it switched on.

"All a vessel at sea has to do is show the correct navigational systems and obey the rules of the 'road'. But freedom on the high seas is the right of everyone and every thing. As long as you are in a seaworthy ship, you can steam for as long as you like."

Similarly, he said that satellites used for Google Earth and other uses do not cover a large enough area with "live" images for a ship to be tracked around the clock.

The Arctic Sea set sail from Finland on July 23 and had been due to arrive in northern Algeria on August 3 or 4. However, there were unconfirmed reports that it had been boarded in Swedish waters by armed and masked men on July 24, although this was not said to have been notified to the authorities for several days.

The crew are known to have made contact with Dover coastguards on July 28, but at this point there had been no international alert over the "attack" and so there was no hunt for the ship. Two days later, the Arctic Sea was spotted in the Bay of Biscay and at 1.30am on the same day its AISLive gave off its last signal in the same area.

However, shortly afterwards, the ship appears to have changed direction, apparently bearing towards the western Atlantic rather than Algiers.

Solchart, the operator of the merchant vessel which flies under a Maltese flag and is based in Valletta, has blamed piracy for the ship's disappearance. "My view is that it is most likely that the vessel has been hijacked," said Viktor Matveyev, the director of the Finnish company.

Mikhail Voitenko, the editor of Russia's Sovfracht maritime bulletin, has suggested that the ship might have been hijacked because it was carrying a "secret shipment", such as drugs or arms, unknown to its crew or owners. "The only sensible answer is that the vessel was loaded with a secret cargo apart from timber," he said.

Nato has reported that armed gangs have already seized 29 merchant ships this year and carried out 114 attacks - more than in the whole of last year.

However, Mr Davis, the British maritime security expert, thinks piracy on the high seas is unlikely. "I suspect this is either some sort of 'inside job' involving the crew, or it's some sort of insurance or commercial dispute."

Mr Davis believes that the ship will be traced within days, and thinks its most likely destination is west Africa. "The vessel had just under 300 tonnes of fuel and it burns 13 tonnes of fuel a day. So it had sufficient for 40 days steaming. It would probably have had 30 to 60 days of food on board. He expects the ship to turn up, possibly as far south as Cameroon, in the next "48 to 100 hours" and that it will then be boarded by a foreign navy or police force. "The odds are it will have headed for somewhere like Sierra Leone," Mr Davis said.

He speculated that it would be difficult for the vessel to be retrieved from such a remote, lawless area, where it might be kept until the financial, or other, demands of those controlling the ship were met.

The ease with which large ships can travel around the world undetected has raised fears that al-Qaeda, or another terrorist group, could use a vessel packed with high explosives to mount a terrorist attack on a Western country, such as Britain or the US.

Dmitri Medvedev, the Russian President, is said to have "the situation under control," according to his spokesman. He has ordered Anatoly Serdyukov, the Defence Minister, to take "all necessary steps" to find the ship and, if necessary, to free its crew.

According to a state-run Russian news agency, the ship's owners have not filed a claim with its insurer, Ingosstrakh. Vladimir Kleimenov, a spokesman for the insurers, said of the ship's disappearance: "There are far more questions than answers."

On Friday, French officials were responsible for reports that the ship had been seen about 520 miles off the Cape Verde islands, a former Portuguese colony off Africa's westernmost coast. However, Russia to add to the puzzle, the Arctic Sea's tracking system was reported to be broadcasting signals from the Bay of Biscay off France yesterday, according to the Russian maritime website, Sovfrakht.

It said the signal appeared on a tracking service at about 8.30 am but added that it was not known if the AISLive equipment was still actually on the ship.

How on earth has the 'Arctic Sea' vanished? (continued)

The Royal Navy has said that it has not been asked to get involved in the search. Source say its rules of engagement for international waters mean it could act only if there was evidence that the ship was about to be hijacked, or pirates were endangering lives on board.

One senior shipping source said: "There is obviously lots of speculation. The fact that a ship is late is in itself not a huge story, but added to the fact that the vessel was 'attacked', and yet at the same time the owners are saying 'don't worry, it is sorted', it is very odd. It is an old fashioned mystery." an sources were dismissive of those reports yesterday.

Russia holds eight after recovering missing ship Arctic Sea

Four Estonians, two Latvians and two Russian nationals arrested as defence chief says ship was 'hijacked' two weeks ago

* Peter Walker, Tom Parfitt in Moscow and Caroline Davies
* guardian.co.uk, Tuesday 18 August 2009 12.44 BST

A cargo ship which vanished into the Atlantic for more than a fortnight was hijacked by armed men who ordered it to sail for Africa, Russia's defence minister said today, announcing the arrest of the eight suspected pirates.

"It was a pirate attack," Anatoly Serdyukov told reporters, when asked what happened when the Arctic Sea was seized in the Baltic sea. If confirmed it would be the first such incident in European waters since the 17th century.

The hijackers – four Estonian, two Latvian and two Russian nationals – had been in control of the vessel since boarding it in Swedish waters on 24 July, Serdyukov said, according to Russian news agencies.

"The hijackers boarded the Arctic Sea, threatened the crew with weapons and demanded that their orders be followed. The Arctic Sea was heading to Africa with all of its communications and navigation equipment shut down, as ordered by the hijackers," Serdyukov said.

The vessel was located yesterday by a Russian anti-submarine ship, the Ladny, 300 miles off the coast of the Cape Verde islands, following a joint operation involving Russia's navy and air force, Serdyukov was quoted as saying by Interfax. The ship was intercepted by the Ladny, and the crew were freed without a shot being fired.

The eight arrested men were being questioned aboard the Ladny, Interfax added, while the crew were en route to Russia.

The Russian prosecutor's office said it had opened an investigation into "kidnapping by an organised group".

Latvia's foreign ministry said it had no information about any of its nationals being involved.

The disappearance of the Arctic Sea as it carried a £1.1m cargo of timber on a planned route between Finland and Algeria left experts baffled. The day after it set off on its voyage, the ship was boarded by up to a dozen armed men as it sailed through the Baltic, according to an account later given by crew members to marine authorities in Malta, where it is registered.

Russian news agencies said today that the hijackers got aboard the ship after claiming their inflatable boat was in trouble.

The masked raiders bound, blindfolded and beat the crew before, initial reports said, departing in an inflatable boat 12 hours later, leaving the ship's communications equipment damaged.

The Arctic Sea was known to have made contact with Dover coastguards on 28 July, but, at that point there had been no alert over the attack so there was no hunt for the ship.

British coastguards speculated later that the routine communication from the Arctic Sea could have been made either by the hijackers or a crew member speaking under duress.

Two days later, the ship was spotted in the Bay of Biscay, and its automatic tracking system recorded the position. From then on there was no further contact. The tracking system appeared either to have been switched off or to have stopped working from that day. It was due to make port in Algeria on 4 August, but seemingly changed direction, heading out into the western Atlantic.

Then, French officials reported the same day that a ship "resembling" the Arctic Sea had been spotted off the Cape Verde islands, west of Senegal, though there was no immediate confirmation.

The plot took a further twist at the weekend, with unsubstantiated reports that the ship's Finnish owners, who have denied its cargo is anything other than timber, had received a ransom note for a "large sum", reported to be almost £1m. But there was no confirmation whether this was genuine.

Given the ship's valuable but commonplace official cargo, unsubstantiated suggestions have been made that the ship might have been hijacked because it was carrying a "secret" shipment, such as drugs or arms, unknown to its crew or owners.

The Guardian



2009 Annual Dinner

Members and friends are invited to the 2009 Annual Dinner of *The Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc.*

The Flying Knife Restaurant*,
6 Jetty Road Semaphore

Wednesday 28th October 2009.

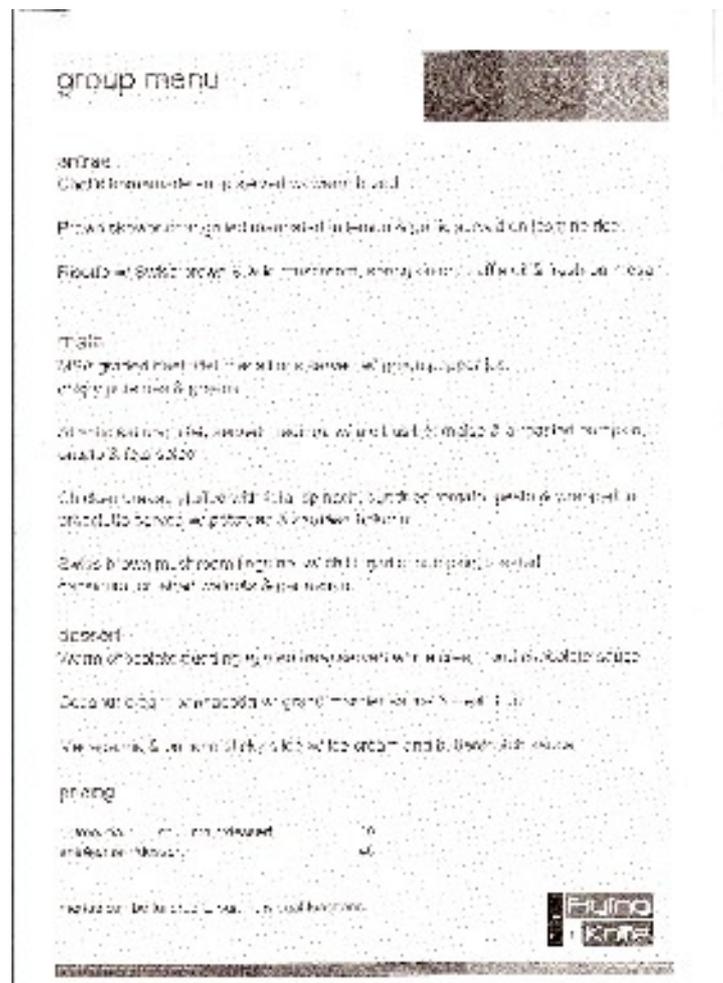
6:30 pm for 7:00 pm

Cost: \$40 for entree/main –
desserts available.

RSVP, with payment, by 23rd October
to

Treasurer,
The Friends Of The Paul McGuire
Maritime Library Inc
PO Box 680 Mitcham Shopping
Centre 5062

Or phone Neil Waller on 71274563.



* previously *The Saltwater Cafe*