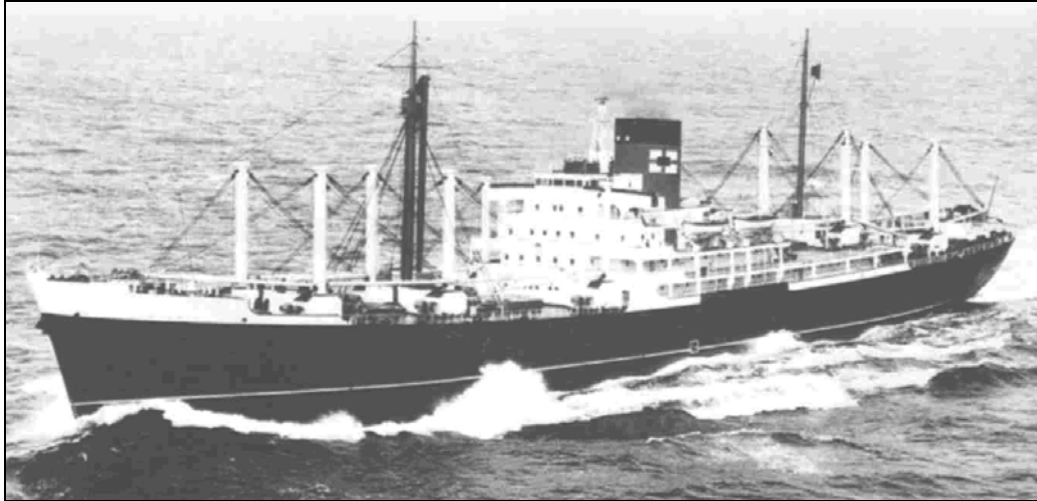


The Next Bend

Part 2 - First Trip

- Barry Wilton



After seeing my father and brother on their way and saying our goodbyes, I returned to the ship and reported as instructed to the Chief Steward. I asked him when we would be sailing, expecting and hoping him to say, "Tomorrow". When he told me that the ship would first have to discharge cargo prior to reloading, I was a little disappointed, after all, I'd anticipated us letting go that night and to be bobbing up and down in the Big Blue by the following day! "I'm just packing and I'll see you in about three weeks after I've had my leave!" Said the Chief. "Right let's go and find the Second Steward," we walked around to the galley. "This is Dave, he's the work-by second and he'll take care of you." With that the Chief walked away, and that was the last I saw of him for three weeks.

A work-by Chief Steward, very smartly dressed, complete with heaps of service braid on his chest arrived. His name was Peter, a very gentle man who only 'worked-by' on ships, saying he had done his sea time on the Rangi boats and was not interested in going back to sea. He was also gay, so I viewed him with a little suspicion being the first homosexual I'd encountered, but he wasn't 'in your face' with it. Peter took up residence in the Chief's office. Towards the end of the day another catering boy turned up, the catering boys cabin was a four berth, so I was half expecting another two lads to arrive.

The 'new lads' name was John. West Ham was his home which was just down the road, a big lad who had a couple of trips under his belt on the Iberia and Empress of Canada. Coming onto Otaki seemed to him like a down turn, and he said he'd only be working-by and would be going back onto the liners as soon as he could. Dave, the second informed us that there would be two catering boys and one assistant steward while we worked-by, however the sea going compliment for the Catering Department was Chief Steward, Second Steward and three Assistant Stewards, the Captain's Tiger, the Officer's Steward and the Engineers Steward. One Chief Cook a Second Cook/Baker, plus one galley boy, one catering boy in the restaurant and one pantry boy, would complete the sea going Catering Department.

The next day at breakfast the assistant steward arrived, totally out of it, he'd been on the bevy all night, I thought his ass was going to be canned but they let it go by. His name was Steve and had done a couple of trip as an AS, again he lived locally.

The three of us got on well, and once ashore would let rip all over the place. The two locals knew where the parties and best pubs were to be found.

After a couple of weeks, I'd got into a routine and found that this work-by was a doddle. We worked hard during the day and partied even harder at night, going all over the West and East End of London.

I'd gone home for the week-end and arrived back on the ship ready to turn to on the Monday morning, only to find that Steve had been sleeping in my bunk, I didn't think much of it at the time. Later that day the Chief called me to his cabin.

"Shut the door please", he instructed me.

I duly shut the door thinking I was in for a telling off, but couldn't think of anything that I had done to get into trouble.

"Undo your shirt and take it off". the Chief instructed.

"What?" I say, "I don't think I should do that Chief," I said.

"You need to take your shirt off now. If you like, I can call the Second Steward in here if that makes you feel any happier?"

At that, I realised, that he couldn't be up to anything if he was willing to bring the Second in, so I duly remove my shirt.

He moved over to where I was standing by the door, and began to very closely scrutinise my chest and stomach.

"What you looking for Chief?" I ask.

"Never mind", he says, "lift up your arms", and he now scrutinised my arm pits! By now I was starting to get concerned as to what he was looking for.

The Chief picked up the phone and called the Second Steward in, and asked him if the appointments had been made. The Second replied in the affirmative.

"Okay my lad", said the Chief, "take this note and get yourself down to the hospital now!"

"What's going on Chief?" I enquired. "Just do as I ask, and report back to me as soon you get back."

Confused, I made my way to the hospital, and handed in my chit at the Reception desk. The Duty Nurse read the chit, and said, "Right, follow me."

She led me to a bathroom, white tiled from floor to ceiling, with a white, cast iron bath. She turns to me and says "strip!"

"My lucks' changed here," I'm thinking, "I'm in, and what a cracker."

"Why's that then", I asked?

"Just strip and I'll be back in a minute," she replied, turned, and left.

So there I was, sitting in this cold white room, bugger all on, trying to shield "Big Jim" and the twins from the outsiders, who were walking past the doorless bathroom.

The Nurse returned. By this time, I had goose bumps and "Big Jim" and the twins had turned into "Tiny Tim" and the orphans! I was beginning to get thoroughly pissed off with the whole situation.

"What's going on Nurse," I asked, "why am I here, and why do you want me stripped?"

"Get in the bath", said the Nurse.

"But there's nothing in it."

"Just get in." she says.

I climbed in the bath and sat there, feeling like a twerp, she then turned the cold water on and I nearly hit the ceiling!

"What the hell you think your doing?"

Pulling me back down into the bath, she and insisted that I keep still.

"Why don't you put some warm water in? It's bloody freezing in here."

"I'm sorry, but we can't use hot water with this".

"With what?"

Without answering, she immediately covered me in a white liquid that stank to high heaven, like a heavy disinfectant.

"What's this?"

"Lift up your arms," she says and began to scrub the hell out of me with a floor scrubbing brush.

"Oh come on, leave this out," I cried, but she continued scrubbing me all over until I was red raw. "Stand up," she barked, and scrubbed my back and buttocks, legs and feet.

"Okay", she says, "you carry on with your privates." She handed me the brush.

"You have got to be kidding me, I ain't using this on "Big Jim" and the Twins." I looked down at them, but now they looked more like a squirt and two red currents!

"Get to it", she said, "I'll be back in minute." She turned, and left me standing up in the bath.

With no door on the bathroom, every passer-by was looking in on me, standing bollocky in a bath, with a bloody scrubbing brush in my hand. I threw the brush into the bath and sat down to await the return of Das Frauliein Flick.

She returned and asked me to stand, then checked me all over, before saying, "OK, dry off and get dressed."

"What, I stink like a lavatory. Can't I have a hot shower?"

"No", she said, "you need to keep that on for at least the next 24 hours".

"BUT, WHAT THE BLOODY HELL'S WRONG WITH ME?" I'm now shouting.

"Just get dressed and speak to your Chief Steward on your return to your ship." She said, and walked away, never to be seen again!

I returned to the ship, trying to be inconspicuous, but my red face and the stench gave me away.

Once on board, I reported to the Chief Steward's office, but neither he, nor the Second Steward were to be found. Deciding to go to my cabin, I found it locked, with a "No Entry" sign on the door.

I couldn't believe what was happening to me.

John came up the alleyway so I asked, "what's going on, everyone's running around like lunatics?" He looked at me and said, "what the hell happened to you?"

"I don't know, no bugger will tell me what's happening." I told him how I'd spent my day so far.

"Was she good looking?" he asks.

"Who?"

"The bloody Nurse", he said, winking.

"Oh bugger off," I retorted, "she stripped me bollocky, and scrubbed two layers of skin off, look at the state of me!"

"You know mate, you stink to high heaven as well. What's that you have on Odour de' toilet water?" he chuckled, then walked off to the galley laughing his head off.

By the time I got down to the galley, all the catering staff were there waiting for me.

"Okay", I said, "what's going on? I've been stripped, scrubbed and skinned this afternoon and I don't know why".

The chief stepped forward. "Steve (the A/S, who had slept in my bunk over the weekend), has contracted Scabies. Everything he had been in contact with, has had to be destroyed. Both his cabin and yours have been fumigated, and you were sent down to the hospital to make sure you were ok., By the smell of you, I'd say you must be!"

"So, what's happened to Steve?"

"He's in hospital and won't be coming back".

"So why the bloody hell didn't you tell me?"

"Well, we didn't want to get you worried!"

With that, they all fell about the deck, laughing their heads off!

After work the whole catering dept, minus Steve, went out to the nearest pub and laughed about it all night.

This was the only time while I was at sea, that the entire Catering team went ashore together for a drink! It was one of the best nights I ever had, even if I did stink like a toilet!

A few days later the Deep Sea crew started to show up; first the Chief Steward returned then the Chief Cook and the Second Cook/Baker, followed by the Captain's Tiger and finally the Second Steward.

These particular crew members had had some time together. The Captain's Tiger had been on the Rangis boats with the work-by Chief and they were best of mates.

Soon, the new catering boys and two new A/S's arrived on board. The ship was coming alive! The Deep Sea Second Steward was a guy called Peter Doyle from Waterford in Ireland; he was 21 at the time. One of the Assistant Stewards was Mike Smith from Hull, a very artistic guy and good fun. The other A/S was Billy from Scotland who was a very ugly drunk and a barrack room lawyer equalling a right royal pain in the neck.

I never knew the Captain's Tiger's name. We always called him Mother, a really nice bloke!

Mother's greatest claim to fame was once having tried to train Tommy Steel. He said all

Tommy wanted to do was to play his guitar and impress the girls. He (Tommy) was transferred outside to be a swimming pool attendant. Ironically, Tommy was sacked over something or

other, and after he became famous, the company asked him to come back for a dedication of some kind on one of their ships.

The following day the Union reps, and office agents were onboard, ready for us to sign on and while that was in progress, those of the work by crew who would not be sailing with us, left the ship.

Later that night we were slipping the lines and heading out through the lock to the River.

I spent a couple of excited hours watching as we slipped downstream. The Gravesend Sea School slipped by. Not so long before, I had spent so much of my spare time watching the ships navigate the river, wondering where they were bound, and now it was my turn.

I eventually turned in that night with a stinking head ache. Every first day at sea has been the same for me, even today when I'm delivering a boat, I get a head ache. Sea sickness I haven't suffered with, thank goodness. (Well, I tell a lie, once on my mate's 18' boat in the Florida Keys, but that's another story)

Our first port of call was Curacao, it was like sailing into Holland, but hotter. On the previous trip they had been bunkering the ship (taking on fuel), when the safety valve let go and all the oil blew out of the vent pipe, over the white superstructure and decks, turning a beautifully painted white and black ship into a completely black one. The deck lads were still trying to get ride of the stuff at the beginning of this trip.

Needless to say, anyone who has been to Curacao knows the spots, Happy Valley and so on, and everyone had a good time.

We left the next day heading for Panama.

Arriving early in the morning meant that we would have to anchor out and wait for our slot for passage through the canal, which was to be later in the day.

We spent most of our spare time during the day, fishing for sharks off the after end. I have never seen so many sharks in the water, Christ, if you were unlucky enough to fall overboard, you wouldn't stand a chance of surviving. We hooked a shark and the Bosun assisted us pulling it in, but just as we got its head up and out of the water, the meat hook snapped and the shark dropped back into the sea. It was some bloody size!

Finally, we weighed anchor and headed for the canal, by the time we arrived at the first lock it was dark so I missed the sights of Panama, but not the smells or the noise, Christ it was noisier than Piccadilly Circus on a Saturday night.

Once we cleared the Panama Canal, we were into the big blue and the sights just wiped me out, the colour of the sea, the flying fish, and phosphorus in the water, the heat and to top it all the movies out on deck. Man, that was cool (it's the little things in life, that make it special). Clear night skies illuminated by the thousands and thousands of stars, the warmth of the night and a slight breeze, a cold beer and the crew, skipper included, sitting around watching the big screen. But who was steering the ship? I was sure I'd seen the helmsman watching the movie! I kept looking around, hoping that someone after all, really was at the wheel!

For days and days we were the only people in our world, not another ship, aircraft or landmass. Nothing around, but the ship and the big blue.

We travelled about 550 nautical miles per day, with the one engine not missing a beat, thumping away like a heartbeat.

Then, one day, out of the blue came, a land mass. Blink and you could have missed it. As we drew closer, the island started to take shape. The trees came into view and then the buildings, and pretty soon we were starting to get close and personal.

The skipper brought Otaki in close to the harbour, a local tug tried to push us in, well, it was more like a rowing boat than a tug, I asked the Bosun, "are they for real?"

"Oh they'll do it, but it'll take them some time," he said. An hour later we were alongside.

After lunch, the skipper came into the galley and asked if we wanted to spend the rest of the day with the Governor and have some R&R. I looked at him dumfounded, thinking, bloody hell, the skipper is looking for us, to see if we want to go with the governor? "Of course skip, we'd love to."

"Is that okay with you Chief," said the Captain, "no problem" he says, "right get changed lads and off you go." I was down the gangway like a Jack Russell.



The Governor's wife was in the car waiting for us. We jumped in the car and we were off. She took us all around the island and back to her house, which was set mid way up the hill above Apia.

The house turned out to be the estate of the late Robert Lewis Stephenson which he had named Vailima (Five Rivers). There is no word to do this house justice, it was fantastic. We were given the dog and pony show, tea, and then taken out with the family for a swim under the massive water fall, they just happened to have in their back garden.

The view they had from up there was unbelievable, it was a day to remember. Sadly, the day came to an end and we make our way back to the ship, but the this fantastic island will live with me to die. I only hoped that I could someday return to this paradise.

We sailed the next day for Fiji, arriving later in Suva. As we approached the noticed the stifling humidity and a smell of Copra. My god does that stuff



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Island, we
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We docked, expecting to stay a few days. Everybody went down to the local pub to get to know the place, and the evening was spent in the Golden Dragon Nightclub.

The next morning I was still drunk. After breakfast was over, I was heading back to my bunk, determined to grab another hour or so of sleep if I could get away with it. This is when I noticed a commotion. The Dockers were shouting, the deckhands were shouting, the agent arrived and then, all went quiet.

Wondering what was going on, I walked out on deck. The wharfies were all sitting on the dock. The Bosun's mate told me that the wharfies had gone on strike. It was said to be the first strike in the island's history, and we hit it. The sit in continued for three days and nights, the wharfies just sitting, chanting and drinking Kava, a root that they ground down to a pulp, mixed with water, strained, then drank the white liquid.

We decided to join the wharfies, and sat with them to share the drink, it was a fine old tradition.

Kava is a slightly hallucinatory drug. It first numbs the mouth and tongue, and if enough is partaken, you can end up in lala land. You have to drink bucket loads, with neither sleep, nor food for three days, before it has an effect on you.

We gave the wharfies our full support and put a few pounds into their kitty, however after three weeks of strike the company instructed us to deliver their cargo of Land Rovers, bikes and Fire Engines to Sydney.

On my 18th birthday we set sail and left the Dockers still chanting and drinking their Kava. We also left Fiji a little more educated in the practicalities of safe sex, as 32 members of the 42 crew had managed to cop a dose!

What an island, we'd had a three and a half week holiday, but that smell of Copra, how they managed to make that a tradable commodity is beyond me, it was terrible stuff.

We arrived in Sydney a few days later, docking at Pyrmont. The deck and engine room crew were off down the gangway as soon as they could, on their way to "Monties" where else? After we finished work, the Catering crew took a stroll up to the infamous Hotel.

My first sight of the Hotel was nothing special, a load a guys hanging around outside drinking as the bar was packed to the doors. As we neared the pub, a guy came flying out the door backwards, blood streaming from his nose and a tall buxom girl with long black hair in hot pursuit after him. She then proceeded to knock seven kinds of crap out of him. As the guy lay there knocked out, she started to strip him of his jeans to the amusement and approval of the crowd inside. A couple a guys dragged him back inside and everyone carried on drinking. This was a serious drinking, seaman's bar, spit and sawdust on the floor and nothing in way of furniture to get in the way of people drinking. This day was not the day to visit Monties, it was just heaving, too hot and too much to see in a short space of time. Every time I've been to Monties I have never managed to make it back to the ship unaided. We decided to go to another pub, and return a couple of days later. Monties was the 'cockroach hotel' you could check in, but you couldn't check out.

After about a week, we left Sydney, heading for Auckland.

Auckland, was a fine town and I couldn't believe the number of privately owned yachts out there, I understand it has now grown into a fantastic and modern City, but back then it was more English than we were. Come Friday night, everything used to close, pubs, shops everything. The bars were closing at 21:30 and that was it for the weekend, unheard of! Most British ships had their own crew bars which were opened usually, only while on the Kiwi and Aussie coasts. The ships took over where the pubs left off, and it was party night every night, especially if there was a good set of ships in Port, Blue Star, Port Boats, Shaw Savill and of course the NZSCo boats.

I learned very quickly that I couldn't keep up with the rest of the guys when it came to drinking beer. It wasn't the quality as far as I was concerned it was the quantity - two pints and I was done, but I could hold my own with spirits. Knowing my limits with beer, I always "shouted" the first round and if I bailed out early, which was more often than not, I'd already had my round. When we first got to Auckland, I'd make it about half way back to the ship from the Snake Pit before I crashed and burned. A local copper picked me up the first night and I was placed in jail overnight for my own safety. The second night the copper (who I got to know pretty well,) took pity on me and returned me to the boat instead of the local nick. Jeff (the Policeman) reckoned that his workmates were taking bets at the local nick to see how far I would get before I passed out and had to be rescued. By the time we left Auckland, I could make it all the way back to the ship. I became good friends with Jeff and his wife and they would invite me up to their place for a meal or they would take me out and about and show me a little more of the beauty of New Zealand. I used to correspond with them for years and every time I'd be in town they would come down and we'd spend some time together, they were really nice people.

Back in the UK everybody thought they were becoming a promiscuous society, after visiting the South Pacific I realised they just didn't know what they were talking about. Everything back home was so conservative with a small "c", while down in the Southern Hemisphere, they really knew how to have fun, the Kiwi coast was everything and more that I'd heard about it, we just had so much fun.

On one trip to Auckland, Mike Smith and myself after our first night at the Snake Pit decided to paint the ship's name on the quay, so we painted in black, red and white "MV Otaki" in old English copperplate, even the skipper was impressed and commented, "nice job lads keep your heads down", as he passed us to climb the gangway. The next morning we turned to not thinking much about the previous evening's events, to be welcomed by the whole ship murmuring about the bloody dockers going out on strike.

"What for?", asked the cook, although in reality, everybody on the Kiwi Coast knew that it didn't take any effort at all for the Kiwi wharfies to decide to 'down tools', and walk off.

"Some bugger has painted the ships name on the wharf and they're upset about it, take a look, it's a nice job!"

We went out on deck to see what all the commotion was about. The wharfies looked like a lynch mob. They were all milling around muttering, as they walked around the sign, pointing at it.

"Man! Did we do a nice job or what?"

The trouble was that it was massive, you could have read this from an aircraft; well at least they would have known we'd been here! "Wilton, Smith", shouted the Chief, "up to the skipper's cabin now!" So we duly walked into the skipper. His cabin was full of suits! The agent, the dockers union reps all sitting there drinking coffee?

"Do you two know anything about the paint job outside," enquired the skipper, well we couldn't really say no as he had congratulated us on a good job on his return to the ship.

"Yes sir", we piped up.

"Well", says the skipper, "you have offended the Auckland dock authority and they are threatening to blacklist the ship if the culprits are not reprimanded".

I thought to myself, we're in for it now!

The union reps wanted to call the police and have ass's thrown in jail, but the skipper stood his ground, "I don't think that would be the best solution to this situation or in anyone's interest; it will stop all work, both on the ship and on the wharf and everyone will incur penalties. What would you say if the two lads here made a donation to your union fund?"

Again the muttering started and they suggested that a \$100 donation from each of us would do nicely.

The skipper suggested \$50, \$25 dollars each and said that we would "make good" the 'damage'.

They agreed, and we were dismissed. Shortly afterwards everyone got back to work. We were docked \$25 each from our pay, and confined to the ship. This was our first day in port and we were to be there for three weeks. Fortunately ban was lifted after a week and life got back to normal.

Our return trip from Bluff was pretty uneventful until we were going through the Caribbean and the Sparks informed the Captain that we were heading into some mucky weather. The Captain changed course to try to miss the worst of it but we still spent three days, bobbing up and down on the edge of a Hurricane!

Talk about ignorance being bliss! What did I know? I was a first tripper, I thought that this kind of thing happened all the time!. We were turned too and told to strap everything down. Up went the fiddles on the tables and the ovens and out came the ropes.

"What's the rope for," I enquired, "to tie the bloody pots down, what do you think?" By that evening we just couldn't move, everything had been battened down.

I said to the Chief Steward, "is it often like this?"

"Are you having me on?" says the Chief, "do you honestly think I'd come to sea if it was like this all the time?"

"I don't know Chief, the only reference I have of the sea is our trip out here and "The Cruel Sea" on the films".

The Chief assured me that that this would be a bumpy ride and he was right about that.

It was that rough, all we could serve was soup and bread. The Second Steward asked me to prepare some bread and butter, well you would think that wouldn't be a problem, but try doing it in an industrial tumble dryer and then tell me how easy it is.

The work service was an "L" shape, with the sink at one end and the fridges underneath at the other. I was standing at the fridge with my bread cradled in my arms, and holding on for dear life. I needed a bread knife, so I put the bread down to pick up the knife.

The bread shot off the work bench like a bullet and I caught it on the return journey.

Now I had the bread and the knife, but I needed the bread board. I put the bread and knife down in order to get hold of the board. The bread and knife shot off like bullets. I caught the bread on its return, and waited for the knife the next time around.

Okay, so now I had the bread, the knife and the breadboard, but the butter was in the fridge! I put the bread down held onto the knife and board and opened the fridge, whereupon everything in the fridge shot out and either covered me or broke on the deck! Bugger!

The Second Steward came round the service area when he heard all the commotion, "what are you doing", he says. "Trying to find the butter, but I opened the door and the lot shot out and I can't see the butter."

"That's because the bloody butter is stuck on top of your head"

I pulled the butter off my head and the Sec suggested that perhaps we should just serve the dry bread. It was then that he noticed the state of the loaf I had. It had spent about twenty minutes hurtling around the galley and was just a tad misshapen! He told me to get another loaf, and to clean the mess up!

I couldn't believe how tiring it was just remaining upright, and trying to do the most simple of things. When I got back to the galley, the cook had the soup on the go. A massive pot was tied down in the middle of the range. The pot must have stood 12" high and there was probably just an inch or so of soup in the bottom. We got the guys served and headed for our pits, feet in one corner and head jammed in the opposite. We had another two days of the same to endure.

The third day arrived bright and sunny, not a cloud in the sky, it was almost as if the previous three days had been a dream.

We had good weather most of the rest of the way home, at least until about two days away from UK, when the weather turned to the usual English summer, rain and cloud.

We were in the Mersey at 0730. I thought great, we'll be paid off by 1200, but just as we got near the lock gates, I heard the anchor drop,

"Why have we dropped the hook", I asked, and was told that we had just missed the tide, and would have to swing on the hook until the next one.

By 2000, we were tying up alongside, and I saw my dad waving at me. How the hell did he know where we were going I didn't know. I hadn't written to tell him. Hell, I didn't even know myself, at one point they were talking about docking at Hull.

"Hey, Dad" I shouted out to him, with that he was beating the Custom's, Health Officers and the agents up the gangway.

I managed to find Dad a cabin for the night and he joined us for the pay off drink, we were slaughtered!

The next morning the Chief called me to the office and asked me to sit down.

"Now, what I want to know is how you think you've performed", he said, very sternly. I thought that I was in trouble. "Erm, OK, I think", I replied.

"You did well son, and we would like to see you back here next trip, as an A/S, would you be interested in that?"

"You bet Chief!"

We paid off and then it was off to the pub for a final drink with the lads. We got my dad two parts to the wind and then we caught the train back home.

Back home, I received a big hug from mum before she ripped into my dad for being drunk, she then turned to me and said, "Good to see you home son, when are you going back?"

Footnote:

I spent another two years on Otaki and a further two years with NZSCo before transferring to the liners. I have to say that these days were some of the high points of my life.

I left the MN after being diagnosed with TB while on leave. This had happened while I was on my second trip on Otaki and I got it from the Chief Steward who had started to take ill just after leaving London. I was his cabin steward. I was disposing of virtually a bucket of sputum each day, and it wasn't until we reached Auckland that he was diagnosed with TB. He was transferred off to hospital

and we were placed under quarantine up in Whangari for a few weeks. We were tested for TB but at the time, all of us were negative.

It took a couple of years to come out and it was only diagnosed when I had one of those mobile x-rays. I was called back to the hospital for tests and was told that my body had fought it all that time.

I felt like I had a heavy case of flu. I lost two stone in weight during those three weeks. I was put onto a two year course of anti-biotic.

I tried to get back into the Merchant Navy some time later, but due to the inconsistencies of the Union I became frustrated and told them to stick it.

On all of the trips I did with NZS they were all young crews and all good guys. I had heard tell



March 1972, MV Otaki
Auckland Sheild Winners

of some real horror stories about crew, the crazy ones, the militant ones, the gay ones, the double headers and the oil tankers. Containers were only then starting to make their mark and boy did they take over. It all had to change, most of the NZS boat had a possible full complement of about 54 crew members. When I sailed on them there was about 42 crew. There was talk of turning them all to GP (general purpose) crews, which would have reduced the crew sizes considerably and the last time I went onto a cargo ship there were only 19 GP crew on board. A mate of mine who was on board just couldn't

wait to get off her. He went onto oil support ships out of Fremantle. He'd done 25 years at sea, and the whole thing was played out for him. He said that everything was political, and he really feared for his safety, so enough was enough.

Despite the way it all ended, they were indeed, happy days!