

# act news

SUMMER 1985



**WORLD FREIGHT EXHIBITION  
BRIGHTON ENGLAND  
3-6 JUNE 1985**

**SPECIAL ISSUE**

# WELCOME TO THE 'WORLD OF ACT'



## Associated Container Transportation Ltd.

Registered Office: Richmond House, Terminus Terrace, Southampton SO9 1GG  
 Telephone: 0703-34433 Telex: 477622  
 Registered Number 1158972 England



May 1985:

Dear Customer,

Welcome to our exhibit, "The World of ACT", at Brighton.

I know that this first International Freight Industry Conference and Exhibition will be a great success and the ACT Group is very pleased to support it.

Many of you are familiar with ACT through using one or more of our services and, of course, through "ACT News". We believe that this Exhibition will now provide an excellent opportunity for the industry to meet us in person and to see our whole range of services displayed together.

ACT(A), ACTS, BLC, CAMEL, EHCL, Ellerman Lines, Harrison Line .... a pretty formidable line-up of British shipping assets and expertise serving all major trade routes. While each of our container lines is independent, they enjoy - through their association within ACT - the benefits of pooled resources, common policies and mutual support. It works well for us and our customers.

Whether you want hard facts about any of the services we operate or the chance for an informal but informed discussion about the industry in general, I strongly suggest that you will find a visit to "The World of ACT" interesting and worthwhile.

Yours sincerely,

B.R. Hazlett  
 Chairman



You could win the Grand Prize — a cruise for two to Spain and Portugal on the magnificent "QE2" — or one of the other prizes being offered, when you visit the ACT Stand, No.376, at the World Freight Conference and Exhibition being held at the Metropole Exhibition and Conference Centre at Brighton, from Monday, 3rd June through Thursday, 6th June 1985 (inclusive). An interior view of the world's most famous luxury liner, the "QE2", is pictured left.

# STEPPING STONE TO THE FUTURE

Looking for better ways to serve customers has meant a tremendous capital investment for ACT(A), and the Company continues to have great faith in the future of containerisation, which has been described as the most important development in world liner shipping since the steamship.

ACT(A) sees this development, which it has helped to shape over the past 18 years, as only a stepping stone to the future. There will be newer and better ships, service will continue to be improved wherever possible and more new ideas and methods developed.

To provide the level of service it now offers has meant an enormous, complicated undertaking with vast sums of money being invested in new purpose-built ships, containers by the tens of thousands, inland depots, rail and road transport and sophisticated computer systems to handle all the documentation and accounting.

"The Company is continuously studying ways of widening the range and choice of services that it is able to offer and to provide the customer with maximum flexibility," said ACT(A)'s Marketing Manager David Haigh.

"As an independent, self-managed container group, we are able to discharge our duties more efficiently by exercising direct control over our own decision-making, which in turn allows us to be responsive to customer requirements and fluctuations in trade," Mr. Haigh declared.

ACT(A) consistently strives to lead the field and has introduced innovations right along the line. The Company inaugurated the first container service to New Zealand, pioneered refrigeration techniques for containers and has led the way in refrigeration for shore installations.

ACT(A)'s management is determined to continue to participate actively in leading the way in containerisation, a concept which the Company has helped to come of age in the UK.



## SPEEDING THE MOVEMENT OF CUSTOMERS' CARGO

ACT Services Limited was formed in 1971 by the five member companies of the ACT group to provide efficient services for the ACT operating Lines in documentation, accounting, inland transport, cargo handling and to carry out research and long-term planning.

The actual movement of containers to and from the ships, the necessary documentation and accounting work, the close liaison with customs, health and port authorities — all this is handled by ACT Services to speed the movement of cargo from one side of the world to another.

Providing essential equipment for con-

tainer shipping is the concern of specialist members of ACT Services' staff, including engineers and other experts, who look after the international purchase, construction and maintenance of 70,000 containers, trailers and refrigeration units. They carry out research and provide specifications for the design of all types of containers, terminal refrigeration layout and on-board lashing systems and they cooperate with manufacturers to develop refrigeration and other systems to meet particular operating needs.

### CENTRALISED CONTROL

Another important aspect of ACTS' work is the co-ordination and centralised control of the safe carriage of dangerous cargo. Their team of experts deal with the booking request not only from the UK, but also from all over Europe. They are responsible for ensuring that the cargo is properly classified in accordance with international regulations and seeing that there are no infringements of port regulations.

Computers play a key role in enabling documentation to be prepared quickly and accurately — Bills of Lading, freight invoices, manifests, ledger accounts and management information. Cargo details are disseminated, reconciled and despatched to ACT Services' extensive network of offices in the UK as well as overseas, including continental offices and relevant terminals throughout the world.

An essential part is played by ACT Services in helping to ensure the smooth movement of goods and assisting in providing the highest quality of service to customers of the Lines in the ACT group.



# 200 SHIPS ON — SERVING FAR EAST

A century and a half and some 200 ships ago in Leith (Scotland), Alexander and William Thomson acquired their first ship, a tiny 88-foot barque, "Carrara". The vessel was built to carry marble from Leghorn to provide builders in Glasgow and Edinburgh with an appropriate material to mark Scotland's prosperity.

It was the first of 25 sailing ships, mainly wooden, that extended the Thomson shipping interests (by then trading as Wm. Thomson & Co.) from Italy to Canada to Australia and, in 1859, to the Far East. It was in this latter trade that Wm. Thomson & Co. was to make its mark as Ben Line, so called because of the practice of naming its ships after Scottish mountains with the prefix "Ben".

## CONTAINERISATION

By 1970 a fleet of more than 30 fast, modern cargo liners was operating seven services each month between Europe and the Far East, and preparations for containerisation were well under way and Ben Line Containers Limited (BLC) was formed. In conjunction with Ellerman Lines Limited, Ben Line was to introduce container services to the Far East.

Three of the world's largest and fastest container ships were delivered and put into service in 1972-3, adding the advantages of this new method of through transportation to the high standards of service which the Company had traditionally provided. These three 73,000 tonne ships, "Bendalder", "Benavon" and "City of Edinburgh", are nearly 1,000 feet long, can carry some 3,000 20-foot container units

and have a service speed of 23 knots.

BLC operates over 12,000 20-foot and 40-foot containers in a variety of styles, capable of transporting a wide range of goods from the simplest box of palletised items to the most complex engineering products.

Containerisation has enabled BLC to

provide a complete door-to-door transport service, collecting goods from virtually any address throughout Europe and delivering to any address in the Far East area where the service operates and vice versa. Ben Line is well equipped to serve the trade in its new form as faithfully as it has done in the old.



# 70 MIDDLE EAST DESTINATIONS

CAMEL is Cunard's Red Sea container service, directly linking the ports of Felixstowe, Rotterdam, Hamburg and Le Havre with Jeddah, Aqaba, Hodeidah and Port Sudan. Piraeus is served en route.

Currently operating with four self-sustaining containerships, CAMEL offers a sailing from Europe to the Red Sea every 10 days. Special features of the CAMEL service are rapid transit times, the ability to supply and carry containers of any kind, a door-to-door facility embracing over 70 Middle East destinations and the flexibility required to handle customers' special transport problems.

Dedication to the Red Sea and Piraeus trades has enabled CAMEL to build up, over the years, vital knowledge of the areas involved and to appoint the very best local agents to service customers on the spot.

The Middle East continues to be a prime export area for Western Europe and Scandinavia. Saudi Arabia still holds enormous potential, with container throughput at the impressive new port of Jeddah increasing each year. Jordan, a long-time trading



partner, has recently discovered oil and its port, Aqaba, has just installed the most modern container gantry.

Yemen, whose main gateway is Hodeidah, enjoys healthy trade with Europe in particular, while CAMEL carries large quantities of Sudan's agricultural exports in addition to that country's various imports. Finally, Piraeus is an important commercial centre, receiving North European products and generating its own exports to the Red Sea. This important trade route calls for fast, efficient shipping services — like CAMEL.

Since its inception nine years ago, CAMEL has had a close relationship with ACT Services, who deal with bookings, documentation and invoicing, container care and inland transport in the UK. ACTS' high technology and wide geographical coverage form a vitally important part of CAMEL's overall service to customers.

CAMEL is constantly reviewing the structure of its service in order to ensure that its original objective — to be *the* container line to the Red Sea — remains fulfilled.

# CARRYING ON FINEST TRADITION

Ellerman Harrison Container Line Limited (EHCL) was formed in 1975 by Ellerman Lines and Thos & Jas Harrison Limited specifically to operate a new service between Europe and Southern Africa.

EHCL quickly established itself as a progressive new company offering the modern service of today combined with the finest tradition of yesterday built up over many years by Ellermans and Harrisons.

Today, EHCL operates a comprehensive range of container services as well as facilities for the shipment of breakbulk and heavy lift cargoes on ro-ro vessels. These services extend far beyond the provision of ocean transportation.

## CONTAINER TRADE

In the mid-1970s, the new South African container trade required large, purpose-built ships to take advantage of the economies of scale essential to the long-term viability of the service. It was recognised that a high degree of co-operation would be necessary if the enterprise was to be a success and EHCL became a founder member of the Southern Africa Europe Container Service (SAECS). SAECS operates a joint service with Lines sharing the space on all the ships in the trade.

EHCL decided to create its own international organisation to ensure its separate identity and independence within SAECS. The Company performs its own separate operations, container control, documentary services and marketing in each country through a network of agents controlled centrally by Head Office in London.

This position allows EHCL to control the quality of service the shipper receives throughout the entire transit of his cargo, whilst at the same time benefiting from the

frequency of sailings made possible by sharing of ship space within the Consortium.

The advantages of this arrangement,

together with a reputation for a personalised, flexible and high-quality service, has attracted the support of a large number of shippers.



## 150 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

Thomas & James Harrison became partners in a shipbroking enterprise in Liverpool over 150 years ago. Their management skills and foresight enabled the partnership to expand.

Originally serving the Charente region of France, the brothers soon despatched sailing vessels deepsea to South America, to the U.S. Gulf and to India. Towards the end of the last century these services were extended to include regular sailings to the West Indies, Mexico, South Africa and, later, to East Africa and Mauritius.

Harrisons remains a private family company to this day.

Following World War II, the Indian service was withdrawn and more recently the U.S. Gulf Trade has been temporarily suspended; however, the other traditional Liner services have been expanded over the years and containers have been introduced into all trades now operated by the Company. The inter-modal concept of modern transportation enables Harrisons to offer container services from the UK to points as remote from the sea as Bogota and Blantyre, Mexico City and Nairobi.

## CARRYING CARGO

Harrison Line containers may also be seen in the streets of Zurich and Zeebrugge, Hamburg and Le Havre, carrying cargo to and from the Caribbean and South Africa.

When containers first entered the South African trade in 1975, the Company joined with Ellerman Lines and formed the Ellerman Harrison Container Line to operate in that trade.

Harrison Line's philosophy is to work closely with all regular exporters and importers, to and from the markets the Company serves, offering a personal service backed by many years of experience.

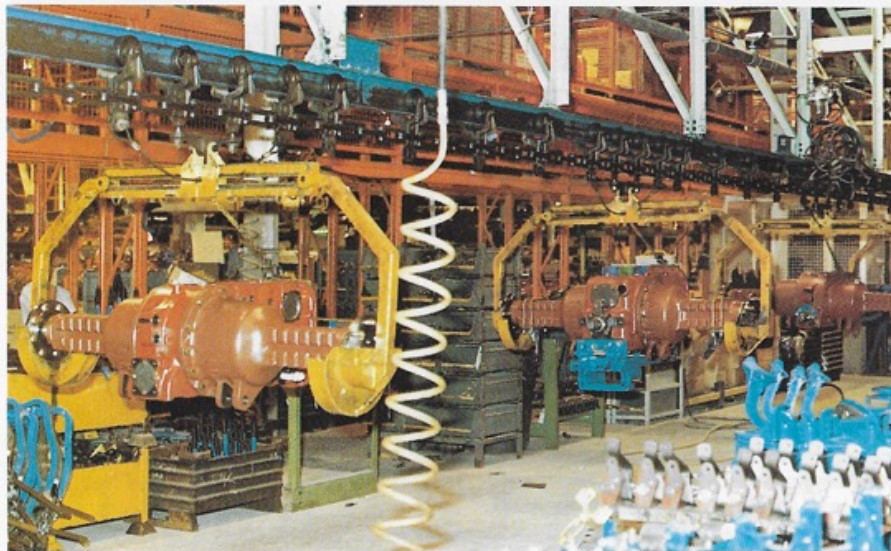


"ACT News" is published quarterly on behalf of Associated Container Transportation Limited (ACT) comprising The Ben Line Steamers Limited, Blue Star Line Limited, The Cunard Steam-Ship Company plc, Ellerman Lines plc and Harrison Line, by RG Public Relations, 13-19 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3LT. Editor: Robert Guggenheimer (Tel: 01-377 0580). Printed by Print Trade Services Limited, Unit 4, Osier Way, Park Street, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 1EB and typeset by Artlink, 102 Commercial Street, London E1 6LZ.

# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE



The versatile Ford agricultural tractor is manufactured in a wide variety of models and many innovations have been added to meet users' demands.



More and more modern technology is being introduced at Ford's Basildon plant to increase efficiency.



Highly trained and motivated personnel ensure the high quality of the tractor units.



Checking the components being packed in the Knocked Down (KD) units is James Deacon (left) of Contract Maintenance.

In 1907 Henry Ford I built the first Ford agricultural tractor from the parts of a car and implements. Today, Basildon in Essex is the world centre of Ford tractor production and over £80 million has been invested there in new manufacturing facilities and equipment since 1979.

Ford has invested heavily in new technology aimed at improving product quality. Robots are being introduced where practical and there is wide-spread use of micro-electronics and computerisation of production process controls.

Production at the Basildon tractor plant of built-up and KD tractors plus component packs totalled 58,594 units last year, a 28.5 per cent increase over 1983. Of this total, 53,000 units — 37.7 per cent up on 1983 — were exported, with substantial shipments of tractors and component parts being sent to South Africa, Brazil, India, Mexico, Korea, Pakistan and Turkey.

## EXPORT

EHCL carried a large part of these exports to South Africa and other member Lines of the ACT group also helped with the worldwide export of shipments of Ford tractors and components.

Final results of Ford tractor production in 1984 on a world basis, show that approximately 100,000 units were manufactured, some 20,000 up on the previous year.

Basildon is the major source of Ford tractor engines and the BSD Industrial engine range, launched in mid-1982, was an outstanding success in 1984, with sales more than double those of the previous year. Over 4,600 of these engines were sold to manufacturers of equipment as diverse as power boats and combine harvesters.

Henry Ford, a farmer's son and "the man who put the world on wheels", turned out his five-millionth motor car as long ago as May 31, 1921, but it wasn't until 1981 that Ford produced its five-millionth tractor.

He would undoubtedly be pleased at the progress that has been made in the production of the Ford tractor and especially in recent years when more and more modern technology is being introduced to increase efficiency and make better quality units.

In Basildon, for example, Statistical Process Control is being introduced, resulting in considerable improvements in the quality control of machining processes. With this system, operators keep a constant check on their own quality by regularly sampling the output and by plotting dimensional averages and ranges of the samples on a graph.

This prevents unnecessary machine adjustment and makes it easier for the operator to keep within component design tolerances, thereby eliminating waste and so reducing machining costs. Improved product quality is the consequence.

## COMPONENTS

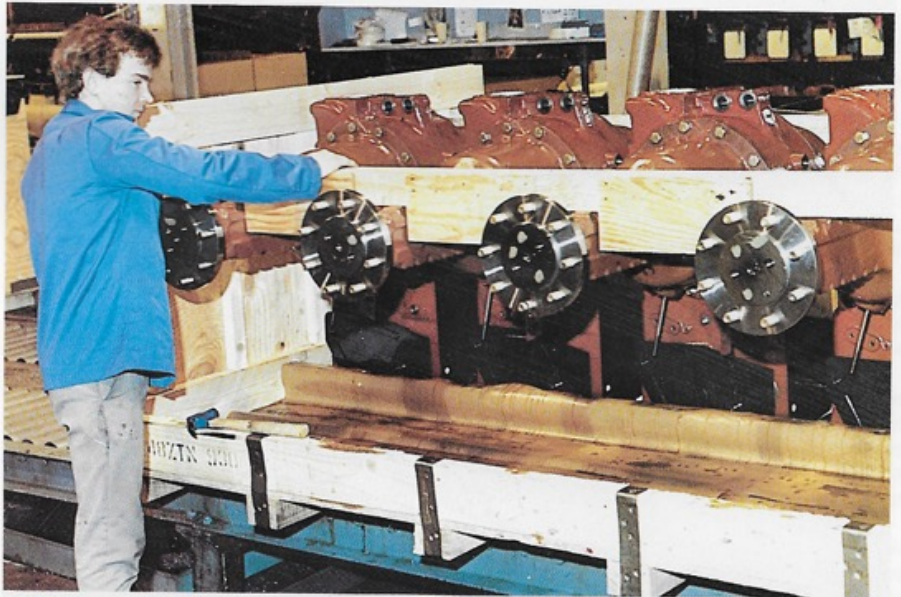
Another break with tradition has been the installation of bolt tensioning equipment at Basildon, at a cost of £1 million. Traditionally, nuts and bolts were always tightened to a specified torque figure. This new method involves measuring the degree of stretch in the bolts and results in more accurate and secure bolting together of components and assemblies than did the old system.

Perhaps the biggest single investment at Basildon in the last two years is the £10 million Cross transfer line for the machining of 4- and 6-cylinder tractor hydraulic top covers. This is fully automated and computer-controlled and is able to maintain the highest quality standards.

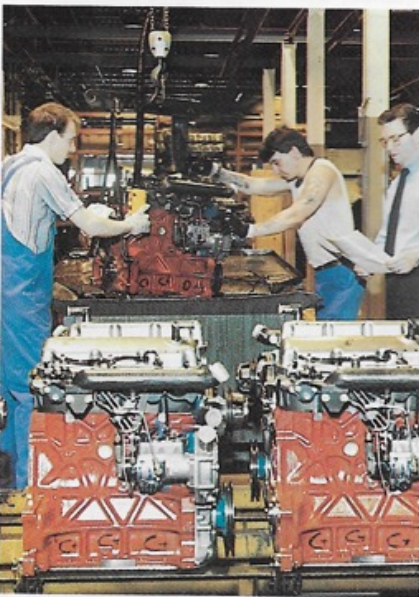
Ford maintains that, to stay out in front in today's harsh tractor business environment, it is necessary to make the most of modern production technology. That is why so much is being invested at Basildon. "It's not a gamble," say Ford management, "it's securing our future."



*Aerial view of Ford's Tractor Plant at Basildon in Essex — the world centre of Ford's tractor production — which covers an area of 100 acres.*



*Careful packing of tractor components ensures that they arrive in perfect condition at their destinations around the world.*



*Tractor engines are dipped in oil before being wrapped and packed for shipment. Douglas McDowell (right), Superintendent KD Packing, checks on the progress of a shipment.*



*Inspecting a tractor unit ready for loading into an EHCL container are (left to right) Brian Croft, Assistant to the Marketing Manager, EHCL; Ken Courtney, Ford's Traffic Manager; Tony Prosser, Supervisor of Traffic Operations, Ford; and Dennis Gozna, Supervisor Tractor Pad at Ford's Basildon plant.*

# EAST AFRICAN GATEWAY



Yard gantries at work at the Container Terminal, capable of handling 250,000 20-foot equivalent units per year.



MV "Ubena" alongside at the Port of Mombasa



Tractor and trailer system in operation at Mombasa, Kenya's leading port.

Containers first began arriving on a regular basis in Mombasa, Kenya's premier port, in the year 1975.

At that time, the East African Harbours Corporation operated 17 general cargo berths in the port. These first containers were handled conventionally by ship's gear or existing shore cranes together with a small fleet of tractors and 20-foot trailers.

The following year the Corporation acquired its first Side-Loader and in 1978 two Front-Loaders were added to the fleet.

The Kenya Ports Authority was formed in January 1978 and it quickly appreciated that containers had come to stay and that the numbers were likely to increase dramatically. Berth Number 18 was built as the original Container Terminal and became operational in 1979, complete with KONE Crane and low-jib forklift trucks for stuffing and stripping purposes.

Over 30,000 containers were handled at Mombasa in 1980 and at that time, plans were laid for the construction of the new Mombasa Container Terminal, which was finally completed last year.

Berths 16 and 17 have been incorporated into the terminal to give 2,000 feet of quay frontage. Mechanical equipment includes three Ship-to-Shore Portainer gantry cranes, each capable of lifting 40 tonnes under the spreader; eight rubber-mounted yard gantry (Transtainer) cranes, each capable of stacking containers three high; and two rail-mounted (Freight Liner) gantry cranes. All of this equipment was supplied under a French government loan by Gaillard-Levage S.A. of Le Havre.

## MASTER PLAN

The decision to build a Container Terminal outside Nairobi, the capital city, formed part of the Kenya Port Authority's master plan and some 30 acres of land were acquired adjacent to the International Airport at Embakasi for this purpose.

This terminal, fully equipped with gantry cranes, LCL cargo shed and container stacking yard, was officially opened on 1st July 1984. Embakasi and Mombasa Container Terminal are linked by rail and daily trains run in both directions. Plans are already afoot to build a second inland container terminal at Eldoret.

Mombasa has been the traditional port of entry for cargo destined for Uganda as well as Rwanda, Burundi, Eastern Zaire and southern Sudan. Containerisation will help to speed this cargo on its way inland, be it by rail or road. A Container Terminal has already opened in Kampala and new railway equipment will be purchased.

The Kenya Ports Authority has designed the Mombasa Container Terminal to be capable of handling 250,000 20-foot equivalent units per year, when combined with the inland depots, and this is sufficient to handle Kenya's containerised cargo requirements for the foreseeable future.

Both Ellerman Lines and the Harrison Line, members of ACT, offer regular twice monthly container sailings between Felixstowe, Mombasa and points inland. Their local agents in Kenya are Mackenzie Maritime Limited.



# HISTORY IN THE MAKING

**CAMEL's Commercial Manager Tony Hope was visiting Khartoum on company business when the Sudanese government was overthrown and a new one installed. He records his impressions of what happened on that occasion.**

*Khartoum, Saturday, April 6* — It is not often one witnesses history in the making, but today was one of those rare days.

Yesterday, Friday, was a day of rest; the preceding days had been difficult as demonstrators disrupted the business life of this capital city. What would this first day of a new week bring?

Would we be free to carry on our business calls, or would we once again have to dodge the demonstrators as we made our way round Khartoum?

Behind the hotel the farmers had started the daily routine of tending their crops and guarding them from the attentions of their cattle, dogs and goats. At the front, things are strangely quiet, the roads empty of people and vehicles.

What had happened to the usual movement of workers from their homes in Omdurman to their businesses in Khartoum? The bridge over the White Nile was obviously out of use for some reason.

Odd — only two taxis by the hotel. Oh well, one's enough. The first intended stop was the offices of Sudanair, but beyond the zoo the road was blocked — blocked by the riot police with their helmets, visors and plastic shields.

Could we proceed? No! So back to the hotel and another boring day by the pool where mixed bathing is now permitted, but the bar remains alcohol-less.

Before the sun gets too hot some exercise is called for, so a walk along the Nile and between the cultivated fields. Back at the hotel the road is still deserted, in the lobby a small group of a dozen or so listen to the radio.

A buzz of excitement, a cheer, Nimieri is finished! The Sudanese nation smiles again! Crash — Nimieri's picture is no longer hanging on the wall — it lies amongst its shattered glass on the lobby floor.

The same scene is doubtless repeated millions of times all over the Sudan. The flags outside the hotel are pulled down and the plaque commemorating its opening, presumably by Nimieri, is quickly covered; his name must be erased from national life immediately after nearly two decades of rule.

Even the May gardens are rapidly renamed the April gardens; so long coming, change is virtually instant. In the roadway the silence is broken at last — vehicles have begun to flow over the bridge from Omdurman.

At first, only one or two car horns blaring with people clinging to doors, bonnets and boots: tyres are flattened by the weight of the extra people. Then the mad rush started which was to continue for hours.

On buses, bicycles, donkeys, donkey carts, scooters and even crutches they came! With hands aloft, with chanting, with yelling and victory signs they came, but most impressively on foot they came, as a great unstoppable flow of humanity they came!

It seemed as though the whole world was making for Khartoum. Surely Omdurman must be empty by now, but no — the stream of people kept on coming.

The fields were deserted of farmers, the flower beds of flowers. Both the farmers and flowers became part of that huge, noisy, joyous procession making for the centre of town. All to celebrate the downfall of one man they came.

A new noise. An urgent noise. A military



*Tony Hope recalls the historic time he spent in the Sudan.*

helicopter rushed by the window so close it seemed almost touchable! A tank and armoured cars move through the crowd towards the palace. Is there to be resistance, is there to be fighting in amongst the vast crowd? Surely not!

The soldiers are happy too — thank heavens — they are waving their weapons in the air! A donkey is held aloft by the crowd! Down on the street rumours fly! Nimieri is arrested, the Vice-President is arrested, they are on trial, they are shot; only rumours!

In the sky above swallows fly on their way to Europe. Have they seen similar scenes before as they cross this politically turbulent continent? Probably!

But one's eyes come back to the people, this vast crowd of palm waving, flower waving, happy people! Was Palm Sunday like this? Is there to be a Good Friday?

Is Nimieri to be sacrificed to the people? So many thoughts! A bus rounds the corner too quickly! People unable to retain their balance fall from the roof!

## CELEBRATION

Bodies bounce on the road, bruised and broken limbed, but bandages are for tomorrow, today is for celebration no matter what the pain! Gradually this human tide slows and turns back towards Omdurman. Happy, smelly, smiling they go.

Today was the people's day, but tomorrow? The first question ... the first doubt. Will anything really be different tomorrow? One wonders — one hopes so for the sake of this long suffering but good humoured nation. Still, why spoil today by thinking of the realities of the future?

Is it only six hours since we were turned back from the town? It hardly seems possible so much has happened! History has again been made in Khartoum.

A final thought: did Gordon, if he was watching from his perch above, recognise the faces of the relations of so different a crowd almost exactly one hundred years ago to the day?



*View from the Hilton Hotel looking towards Khartoum across the Blue Nile. The roadway in the background is the one that is described in the article.*

## MEETING OF MOUNTAINS



The 3,032 TEU containership "Benalder", named after a mountain in the Grampian region of Scotland, was painted recently by the artist Colin Verity, showing her alongside the container terminal at Shimizu with Japan's famous Mount Fuji in the background. The painting was commissioned to celebrate the regular calls now being made by BLC ships sailing in the Trio Europe/Far East service, and which also call at the ports of Tokyo, Nagoya and Kobe in Japan.

## RECEPTION FOR ROGER



A Reception and buffet dinner were held recently in Singapore to introduce BLC Marketing Manager Roger Miall to customers shipping between Europe and South-East Asia. In the photograph, Roger Miall (left) talks with BLC's Ng Teck Soon (centre) and a shipper.



David Beck (centre), recently appointed Ben Line Owner's Representative in Jeddah, is pictured shortly after taking up his new position from the Edinburgh office with Sikander Ali Khan (left), BLC's Marketing Manager, and Rasheed Orompurath, Ben Ocean Marketing Manager, in front of the Jeddah office.

## 57 YEARS OLD AND STILL GOING STRONG

A rare vintage 1928 Alfa Romeo is being shipped by BLC to its owner in Singapore.

The 57-year-old vehicle, which has been restored to its original condition, is a six cylinder, 1500cc, single camshaft model with a cabriolet body by James Young.

Pictured at Barking Containerbase, near London, shortly before the Alfa Romeo is loaded into a Ben Line container are Peter Naylor (left), BLC representative, and David Baylis, Managing Director of Beaulieu Cars Limited, who specialise in the restoration of Alfa Romeos.



## 160 YEARS OF HISTORY

The World Ship Society has updated the Ben Line "Fleet List and Short History", covering the five years since this illustrated book was published in January 1980.

The 120-page book is still in print and it is available, together with the new supplement, at a cost of £3.00, including UK postage and packing. It may be obtained from: The World Ship Society, 1 Bure Haven Drive, Mudeford, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 4BS.

For those who already have the book and wishing to bring it up-to-date, the supplement only is available post-free from the above-address at a cost of 80 pence.

## BLC APPOINTS REPRESENTATIVE IN JEDDAH

Mr. David Beck has been appointed Owner's Representative for Ben Line and BLC in Saudi Arabia and has recently taken up his new position, based in Jeddah.

Mr. Beck, who is a graduate of Oxford University, worked with ACT Services in Southampton, Liverpool and Tilbury prior to joining BLC in Edinburgh. He spent short periods seconded to BLC's port and inland agents in the UK and Northern Europe before taking up his new Jeddah appointment.

# NEW ACTS SYSTEM HELPS IMPORTERS

A new computerised system has been introduced by ACT Services to speed the progress of containers from the moment they are discharged at the terminal until they reach the customer.

It also produces Transport Notes, Telexes to advise customers of the progress of their goods, advises ACTS inland Regional Offices of the movement of shipments and produces Invoices to cover costs, such as haulage, customs entry preparation, demurrage, etc.

Information is taken from manifest tapes which are sent from overseas to the mainframe computer at ACT Services' Head Office in Southampton and then transmitted automatically to the regional computer, making the information available to all the staff in the region.

## COMPLETE PICTURE

Through individual desk-top VDUs, additional important information is added until the complete picture is built up, which enables customers' queries to be answered rapidly. The system allows shipments to be cleared more quickly, necessary forms to be prepared and customers advised promptly.

It also permits transport to be allocated for rapid despatch. A printer in the Transport Department makes the latest information available to staff there so they can plan the traffic movements.

"This is just another example of how ACT Services strives to provide better service to customers," said Peter Bainbridge, Managing Director of ACTS.



Partial view of the VDUs at ACT Services' Basildon Regional Office where the new computerised system is speeding the progress of containers being imported into the UK.

## YEMEN'S BREATHTAKING SCENERY

If your impression of the Middle East is simply sand, oil and dollars, then a look at the Yemen Arab Republic could change your mind.

Tucked away near the foot of the Saudi Arabian peninsula, this remarkable country of 7½ million people can boast some of the most breathtaking scenery anywhere.

The towering cliffs and deep valleys which hallmark the centre of Yemen are traversed by steep winding roads, and the

clear, dry air allows amazing views from numerous vantage points. A typical example can be seen in the photograph (below) at the foot of Mount Sabir near Taiz.



CAMEL Director Alasdair MacVean (right) is pictured with Hassan Kassem of Hodeidah Shipping & Transport, CAMEL's Yemen agents and the plain is in the background.

Legend claims that Sana'a, Yemen's capital, was founded by the eldest son of Noah. In any case it is one of the oldest cities in the world but, despite its antiquity, Yemen has a modern and thriving business community with strong trade links with Europe.

This is an important market for CAMEL and the Line's ships call at the country's main port, Hodeidah, every ten days.

## ACT(A) COMMERCIAL PLANNING MANAGER

ACT(A) has appointed Mr. David W. Briggs Manager of Commercial Planning.

He joined the Company in 1977 as Assistant Operations Manager and a year later became Assistant Commercial Manager. In 1980 he was seconded to ACT(A)'s offices in Australia and New Zealand, where

he spent a year before returning to Head Office in London as Commercial Manager in 1981.

David Briggs was seconded to Blue Star Line in 1982 and went to South America to co-ordinate the inauguration of the BHLR container service. In 1983 he returned to London and joined ACT(A)'s Commercial Planning Department.

Mr. Briggs joined ACT(A) from Pirelli General in Southampton. He holds a BSc honours degree in Electrical Engineering from Southampton University and a diploma in Management Studies from Portsmouth Polytechnic.



DAVID BRIGGS

## BLC IMPROVES FAR EAST SERVICE

BLC has announced that it is increasing the number of calls at Shimizu and Nagoya from two to three per month.

These Japanese ports have been ports of call for the past year for BLC and its TRIO partners and they report that the new direct service has been very positively received by the Trade.

The main Japanese ports of Tokyo and Kobe will continue to be served five times per month by the BLC service with its third generation container ships, "Benalder", "Benavon" and "City of Edinburgh".

## ACT(A) TRACKS 'EL NINO'

Three ACT(A) vessels are taking part in a major scientific oceanographic study of the South Pacific and in particular "El Nino".

The "ACT 3", "ACT 4" and "ACT 6" have been fitted with special data collecting equipment and computers to record sea surface and sub-surface information for the CSIRO Division of Oceanography.

The study, which will cover the sea lanes

from Australia and New Zealand to Panama, is being conducted with the CSIRO, the French Institute of ORSTROM in Noumea and the University of Sydney. This Pacific route is on ACT(A)'s schedule to Europe and the East Coast of North America.

Dr. Matt Tomczak from the CSIRO asked ACT(A) to assist in the work, which is being undertaken to establish whether the recent drought in Australia has any connection with the large scale climatic fluctuations in the Pacific Ocean known as "El Nino".

The equipment used includes an on-board PET computer which most crew members can operate and an XBT system which has an extendable probe that can be launched from the deck on a flexible cable and then relays information to the computer.

Dr. Tomczak said that in recent years a number of oceanographic institutions have been collecting information, but so far no one has covered this important area which is now being monitored by ACT(A)'s container ships.



Examining the special probe which is being used to monitor temperatures and other information in the South Pacific are Captain P.R.R. Ramsay (right), Master of the "ACT 6", and Dr. Matthew Tomczak of the CSIRO Division of Oceanography.

## STIFF COMPETITION FOR CONVA'S JAAP

It was 5.30 a.m. when the whistle blew.

The barn doors burst open and a horde of skaters surged forward, making their way awkwardly towards the nearby canal and then quickly disappearing into the darkness.

Midwinter madness? No, it was the Eleven Town race, the world's longest ice skating competition, and among the 17,000 competitors taking part was Mr. Jaap Hazejager of Conva, ACT(A), BLC, EHCL and Harrison Line's agents in Holland.

The 125-mile event has only been held 13 times this century — the last time was in



Conva's Jaap Hazejager warms up before beginning a practice skating session as he prepares for the world's longest skating competition, the 125-mile Eleven Town Race.

1963 — because it can only take place in winters when the temperatures are cold enough to turn the canals of the northernmost Dutch province of Friesland into ice.

Conva's Jaap Hazejager did well in the race and then went off to celebrate and relax, but not so the winner.

First place was taken by 26-year-old dairy farmer Evert van Benthem in a record time of 6:46:47 and he won not only the prized Eleven Town Cross, but also praise from HRH Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands. Then, he rushed home that evening to milk his 40 cows who didn't seem too impressed with his outstanding accomplishment.

## SEA DOGS ON THE BRIDGE

When a shipper entrusts his cargo to ACT(A), he can be sure that it will be well looked after from door-to-door, but a recent shipment on the "ACT 7" got extra special treatment.

It wasn't necessarily because it was very valuable cargo, but it was a bit different — three lovable hounds, two beagles (female) and a harrier (male).

Deck Cadet Chris Grimmatt was assigned to see that they were fed and exercised on a regular schedule and he had lots of help from his shipmates who seemed to find quite a few reasons to come to the bridge, where the dogs were kept, to help Chris out in their off-duty hours.

## ACT(A)/ANL RE-STRUCTURE AGREEMENT

ACT(A) and ANL have announced that, subject to completion of final arrangements, they are re-structuring their present joint agreement at ANL's request.

ACT(A) and ANL will continue to operate together in the European trade using their vessels "ACT 1", "ACT 2", "ACT 7", "Australian Exporter" and "Australian Venture" in the same manner as at present.

ANL will withdraw from the Pacific America Container Express (PACE) trade whilst ACT(A) will continue in that trade. The two Lines will continue to operate a joint container fleet covering all the trades in which they presently operate together and will exchange vessels between those trades as necessary and convenient.

**Visit the ACT Stand, No. 376, at the World Freight Exhibition in Brighton from 3rd June to 6th June 1985.**



Checking on the special shipment, on the bridge of the "ACT 7", shortly before the vessel sailed from Northfleet Hope at Tilbury are ACT(A)'s UK Southern Region Sales Manager Sam Garnett (left) and Deck Cadet Chris Grimmatt.