



news

WINTER 1987/88



*Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year
To all our friends around the world!*



THE SWITZERLAND OF CENTRAL AMERICA

Costa Rica is located in the Central American isthmus with Panama to the South and Nicaragua to the North. It is a small nation – about half the land area of the UK – with 2.5 million inhabitants, mostly of European descent.

The army was abolished in Costa Rica in 1948 and there has been no dictatorship there for almost a hundred years. It is a rare example in Latin America of a continuous democracy and Costa Rica is known in the region as the Switzerland of Central America.

Harrison Line began a container service between European ports and Puerto Limon in 1982. Until that time the only Harrison Line vessels to have called in Costa Rica were those carrying fungicides to the banana plantations of the Pacific Coast in the early 1950s.

It was in the year 1502, on his last voyage to the New World, that Christopher Columbus (Cristobal Colon as he is known in Spanish) discovered what is now Puerto Limon. The Admiral and his party landed on the Caribbean shores at a point that is now the country's principal port, but fearing the intentions of the natives, they retired to a small offshore island, Uvita, a few hundred metres from the end of the present breakwater.

RIVER PORT

Colonisation and trade came by way of Puerto Viejo, a tiny river port well inland, with access to the Caribbean along the river which divides Costa Rica from Nicaragua. Settlements were established in the Central American highlands which gave easy access to the Pacific coast of Costa Rica and so trade and communication links grew up on the West Coast.

The official trade in coffee started in the early 19th century when a British captain looking for suitable homeward cargo put into the port of Puntarenas and loaded coffee for London. From these beginnings began the leading element of the country's present export economy.

Later in the 19th century a British company built a railway from Puerto Limon to San Jose, which is still running, and thus was established the first link from the Caribbean to the capital. The railway was built using labour from various British islands in the Caribbean, principally Jamaica. Even today there are parts of the city of Limon named after the ethnic origins of the settlers from the turn of the century; hence, Jamaica Town and streets named St. Lucia and Barbados.

Our Cover

It isn't snowing and cold during the Christmas season in many parts of the world, so perhaps it is appropriate to salute our friends in warmer climes with our cover photograph of Port au Prince in Haiti, with the imposing Cathedral dominating the port there.



A Harrison Line 40-foot container pictured along Costa Rica's Caribbean coast road.



Partial view of Puerto Limon Container Terminal where Harrison Line ships and their CAROL partners call regularly.



Coffee plantation in Costa Rica, which is famous for the high quality of its product.

When the banana trade started, the same workers stayed to work the plantations, an occupation shunned by the highland inhabitants of Spanish descent. There was further settlement in Limon following the completion of the Panama Canal in 1914 and this time a few Europeans came, particularly Italians who had been working on the canal.

Since then Limon has retained a distinctly Caribbean atmosphere and English has stayed as the "lingua franca". Limon remained dominated by the banana trade and the exports of coffee (breakbulk) until the early 1980s.

In the late 1960s a narrow and winding road was built between San Jose and Puerto Limon, where ten years later work began on a new container terminal. This was finished in 1983 and was equipped with three three-high stacking straddle carriers, 40 forklift trucks, ten yard tractors, 25 trailers and ten container chassis. There is also a ro-ro berth at Puerto Limon.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENT

In April 1983 the Harrison Line containership, "Author", of the CAROL Service made a trial call there and since then Limon has been incorporated into the regular CAROL schedule. In 1984 a further improvement was introduced with the installation of a Liebherr container gantry crane and this enabled the length of port stay to be reduced by up to 50 per cent.

Harrison Line currently operates a service every 13 days from the UK/North European ports with direct connections to and from Scandinavia, Central Europe and Portugal as well as other destinations, such as the Middle East and South Africa. In many cases the connecting carrier is another member of the ACT Group.

The homeward service has a transit time to Felixstowe of only 14 days, thus meeting the exacting requirements of the importers of perishable goods. Coffee is still, however, the principal export and it is interesting to note that because of demand for better quality coffee in the UK, exports to Britain have become second only to those of Finland, the number one consumer of Costa Rican coffee.

Costa Rican coffee is one of the major blends in Nestle's "Gold Blend" Instant

and fresh roasted beans from Costa Rica have always been recognised for their superior quality. The organisation of coffee production and export is impressive, as anyone who has visited the highland coffee farms, mills and export offices can testify.

But it is not only for coffee that Costa Rica is famous - banana production is



Three-high Straddle Carrier at work in the Puerto Limon Container Terminal, which is equipped with the most up-to-date equipment.

second only to that of Ecuador. Harrison Line is involved with the growing trade in other perishable exports, particularly of the leather leaf fern for the German flower industry and the yucca cane.

Most fern imports into Europe come from Florida, but producers are gradually switching production over to Costa Rica, where a higher quality product is available. Acres upon acres of uplands are now covered in black netting which shrouds the fern nurseries - located on the fertile slopes of active volcanoes - from ultra violet light at high altitude.

The ferns travel from these cool climes to the tropical port zone in 40-foot insulated Conair containers which are a feature of the Harrison service. The Conair provides the air conditioning required until discharge at Amsterdam and delivery in Germany or elsewhere.

Together with Guatemala, Costa Rica is also a leading exporter of the yucca



Picking ferns at the Helechos de Costa Rica S.A. plantation. This is a fast growing business with fern importers in Europe switching to the Costa Rican product which is of a very high quality.



Discussing the shipment of Helechos Ferns to Europe are Dale Minks (left), Harrison Line Representative, and Sr. C. Mora, Plant Manager.

cane which adorns so many living rooms in Western Europe. The yucca, along with other exports of perishable goods such as fruits and exotic vegetables, travels in 40-foot insulated Conair containers. Harrison Line also offers 20-foot and 40-foot refrigerated containers with clip-on diesel generators for this cargo.

In Limon the Conairs are connected to

(Continued on page 4)

"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 (Tel: (01) 368-6674). Editor: Robert Guggenheimer. Typeset by Comersgate Art Studios Limited, 52 St. Clements Street, Oxford OX4 1AG and printed by Print Trade Services Limited, Unit 4, Osier Way, Park Street, Aylesbury HP20 1EB.





Pictured are members of Harrison Line's agency in Costa Rica, Ambos Mares Limited, who help keep imports and exports moving smoothly.



Harrison Line Container coming out of the Zurqui road tunnel - the longest in Central America - on the new road from San Jose to Puerto Limon.

(Continued from page 3)

clip-on units and reefers to electric points on the quay for pre-cooling. The technical specifications for this equipment were drawn up by ACT Services who also supervise its maintenance on behalf of Harrison Line.

Other exports include general cargo to the Caribbean, such as plywood, tyres, bottles, plastic bags, cable, textiles, confectionery and a range of other goods. Loudspeakers, light bulbs, charcoal, tinned vegetables and cocoa are also exported to Europe.

Costa Rica has a small manufacturing industry and the majority of goods imported from Europe tend to be raw materials such as resins and chemicals. Costa Ricans have recently taken to UHT milk and fruit juices in cartons which Harrison Line carries from Sweden. Whisky is very popular and one can see twice as many brands of Scotch Whisky in a Costa Rican supermarket as in a comparable store in the UK.

Puerto Limon is now the gateway to Costa Rica. In 1987 the final stage of

integrating the isolated Caribbean coast with the capital was completed when in

HAT TRICK FOR HARRISONS

Harrison Line have been voted "favourite shipping line of the year" on the Caribbean, Central and South American trades for the third consecutive year, by readers of "British Shipper and Forwarder" magazine.

This year the Line actually won two awards as the categories have been separated and Harrisons were presented with one award for being best in the Caribbean trade and another for coming tops in the Central and South American trades.

In the photograph, Nigel Hollebone (left), Director of Harrison Line, is presented with the two awards by Andrew Deards of "British Shipper and Forwarder". The ceremony was held in the Exploration of Space Gallery at the Science Museum in London recently and guest of honour was Lord Brabazon of Tara, Minister for Shipping.

April a brand new stretch of highway 100 kilometres long was opened, passing north through the mountains outside San Jose and descending through one of Costa Rica's jungle national parks into the plains of the Atlantic coast.

This region was one of the most inaccessible in Costa Rica, but after almost ten years of construction, which included a 600 metre tunnel, it was linked into the national road network. Container lorries



Documentation and information on container control is inputted into the computer at Ambos Mares' offices.

which had to endure a tortuous journey of six to eight hours from San Jose can now reach Limon in half the time.

The Zurqui road tunnel - the largest in Central America - was carved into the mountains by the British company French Kier of Sandy, Bedfordshire, and was a principal engineering feat of the project.

Nevertheless, it is the Costa Ricans who take credit for the overall achievement in establishing a new link with Limon and completing a cycle of events which started in 1502 with its discovery by Christopher Columbus.

Despite the economic difficulties which have plagued the so-called "Third World" countries recently, Costa Rica continues to develop and justify its being known as the Switzerland of Central America.



Pickfords and ACT(A) – Sheene's Moving Link

Barry Sheene, former World Motorcycle Champion and sports personality has moved with his entire family to Australia – including wife, daughter, parents and parents-in-law plus dog, car, the contents of a spacious country home and, of course, the precious motorbikes!

The common problems of such a major upheaval were avoided by close co-operation between Pickfords and ACT(A). Barry chose Pickfords to handle the move and they approached ACT(A) to supply the containers and transport them.

The contents of Barry's house, garden and garage were carefully packed by Pickfords into eight 20-foot containers and they were then securely stowed for the long sea voyage to Australia under ACT(A)'s supervision.

COMBINED TRANSPORT BILL OF LADING	
PICKFORDS REMOVALS LTD 100, 101, 102, 103 LONDON W14	ACT(A) Associated Container Transportation LONDON
DATE OF ISSUE: 1969 PLACE OF ISSUE: LONDON	DATE OF RECEIPT: 1969 PLACE OF RECEIPT: LONDON
<h1>69</h1> <p>NON NEGOTIABLE COPY</p>	
Description of Goods: No. of Packages: Gross Weight: Net Weight: Volume: Nature and Quantity of Contents:	
Particulars of Charges: Freight: Insurance: Other:	
Name and Address of Shipper: Name and Address of Consignee: Name and Address of Carrier:	

The long association between ACT(A) and Pickfords is demonstrated by the first Bill of Lading (pictured) issued by ACT(A) in 1969.



Wishing "good luck" to World Champion Barry Sheene (left) is Jerry Austin, ACT(A) Sales Representative, as the last of the eight 20-foot containers are loaded.

But this was not the first time Pickfords and ACT(A) have worked successfully together. In fact, there has been a long and close association, with ACT(A) issuing its first ever Bill of Lading to Pickfords in 1969.

"The biggest problem with this particular job was the sheer bulk involved," explained Steve Wilkins, International Sales Executive for Pickfords World Wide Moving. "Because of the volume of packing, the entire operation took place over two and a half weeks, as opposed to the three or four days such a move would normally take.

"However, with 350 years' experience in removals and our own company in

Australia, Barry knew we could guarantee a consistent service both in Britain and abroad," Steve Wilkins said.

Pickfords Removals Limited, a member of the employee-owned National Freight Consortium, currently move over 60,000 people a year to all parts of the world.

"We were delighted to be called on to help in this interesting move," said Peter Taylor, UK Marketing Manager of ACT(A), "and once again to work closely with Pickfords."

Barry Sheene said that he was very pleased with the way the whole operation had been handled and could only praise all those involved in the complicated move.



Inspecting one of his motorcycles (photograph at left) is Barry Sheene, helped by his daughter. He shipped a number of his favourite motorbikes to Australia. In the photo at right, a brief respite in the loading is enjoyed by Mrs. Sheene and her daughter while Barry tells them, "The next time you sit on this sofa will be Down Under."

CRUISING DOWN THE SEVERN . . .

EHCL and Harrison Line took some 100 customers and their families on a cruise on the River Severn to thank them for their continuing support.

A buffet lunch was served on board and on their return to Kidderminster a cream tea was provided to complete what by general agreement was "a smashing day out".

Photographs on this page were taken during the day and show some of the customers and their families enjoying the lovely weather - good planning by the Sales/Marketing sections, we are reliably informed.



CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR PITCAIRN ISLAND

Thanks to the generosity of the British Government, Pitcairn Island will be getting a new longboat just in time for Christmas.

The new 13.7 metre-long motorised aluminium craft weighing 8½ tonnes is being presented to the 60 or so inhabitants of the island to commemorate the Bicentennial Anniversary of the settlement of the island, which has been described as the most remote inhabited island on our planet, about 6,500 kilometres from Panama in the North and 5,200 kilometres from New Zealand in the South-West.

The Crown Agents placed the order for the boat on behalf of the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) with George Prior Engineering Limited of Great Yarmouth. The vessel was built at their Lowestoft Yard and Crown Agents' Marine Engineers and Technical Inspection Departments approved specifications and monitored its construction at all stages.

CONSULTATION

The work was undertaken in consultation with the Governor of Pitcairn and the Island Council and the shipment was arranged by Greenshields, Cowie & Company Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Crown Agents, who chose ACT(A) to carry the boat. The Crown Agents work closely with ACT member Lines in their varied world-wide trades.

The new longboat was shipped from Tilbury on the "ACT 8" to Auckland and then loaded aboard the "ACT 4" there, to be taken to Pitcairn, along with a number of islanders who are returning home for Christmas.

The longboat will be based at "Bounty Bay", the only harbour on Pitcairn's rugged coastline with its steep rocky cliffs rising sharply from the sea. The islanders' very existence relies upon the longboats and the strength and efficiency of the vessels are of vital importance.

HIGH AND VIOLENT

Pitcairn's shore is extremely treacherous, the oceanic waves being so high and violent that even the inherent skills of the crews sometimes cannot prevent the boats from being swamped. With this in mind, special buoyancy compartments have been included in the construction of the new longboat, together with a flared bow to assist the crews in keeping their vessel afloat and dry.

The new boat has 14 oars and sails in addition to its diesel engine and it will be used to collect essential supplies and passengers from ships calling at Pitcairn and to transport the islanders' goods for trading.

The tiny island, which is about 1.8 kilometres wide, is administered by the British High Commission in New Zealand,



The motorised aluminium longboat is loaded aboard the "ACT 8" at Tilbury's Northfleet Hope by the Dock's gantry crane, to be securely fixed on deck for the long voyage.



Discussing shipment of the longboat are (left to right) Len Wright, ACT Services' Assistant Terminal Manager at Tilbury; J.S. Barclay, Dock Representative of the Crown Agents; and Graham Dickinson, ACT(A) Sales Representative.

who ask ACT to call there from time to time. The ships stop offshore for a few hours to deliver supplies or on a "mission of mercy" when someone needs urgent medical attention.

"Supply Ship Day" is a big event and cause for much celebration by the islanders, most of whom are descendants of Christian Fletcher and fellow mutineers from the "Bounty", made famous by several films and many books.

Pitcairn was first discovered in 1767 by a British seaman, Captain Cartaret of "HMS Swallow", but it wasn't until some 20 years later that Christian, eight members of his crew and 26 Polynesians from Tahiti stumbled upon the island,

having travelled 8,000 miles in search of refuge from the British Navy.

Norman Edwards, Assistant Shipping Manager of Greenshields, Cowie & Co. - which not only acts as "In House" forwarding agent but also trades in its own right - said that he was pleased to entrust the carriage of the longboat for Pitcairn to ACT(A). It was delivered in a skeletal case with lifting slings and nylon webbing "belly bands" in place for loading.

Whilst it is not intended that the longboat be delivered gift wrapped, it will obviously be a well received and useful Christmas present for the Pitcairn Islanders.

FIRST CALL AT SOUTHAMPTON

Always looking for more efficient and better ways to serve its customers, EHCL and its Southern Africa Europe Container Services (SAECS) partners decided to change the UK port of call for their ro-ro vessels to Southampton from Tilbury, which has been the regular UK port since the inception of the service in 1982.

The first ship to come into Southampton was CGM's "Ronsard" and EHCL took a group of customers down to see the ship to mark the event. At the same time, the Port of Southampton authorities presented a plaque and cut glass decanter to the Master to commemorate the first call.

After a tour of the vessel and toasting the success of the new service, the shippers were taken to ACT Services' offices for a buffet lunch.



The first ship on the Southern Africa Europe Container Service (SAECS) to call at Southampton was CGM's "Ronsard" (pictured).



Discussing the new service is Barry Collins (right), Sales and Marketing Manager of EHCL, with (left to right) David Boon, Shipping Manager, Wiggins Teape; Chris Davies, Operations Manager of EHCL; Jack Payne, EHCL Sales Representative; David Daniels, General Manager of WTC Transtec; Nigel Hollebhone, Director of EHCL; Michael Partridge, Sales Representative of EHCL; Paul Lewis, Chairman of WTC Transtec; and Eric Russell, ACT Services' Terminal Manager at Southampton.



To commemorate the first call at Southampton, a plaque and a cut glass decanter were presented to Captain Thierry Osouf (second from right), Master of the "Ronsard", by Andrew Kent (centre), Deputy Port Director, watched by (left to right) Barry Collins, Marketing Manager of EHCL; Eric Russell, ACT Services' Terminal Manager; and Nigel Hollebhone, Director of EHCL.



Captain Thierry Osouf explains the equipment on the Bridge to the visitors.

VERY FAST CAR TO CHINA

BLC was entrusted with carrying the ICI (Paints Division) Rally Car from the UK to China to compete in the Beijing Rally, one of the most difficult in the world, which took place in September.

The ICI car came 19th overall out of 61 starters in the gruelling race from Hong Kong to Beijing, and fifth in its class. Drivers David Sherwood and Bryan Harris said that it was the toughest rally in which they had ever taken part.

They covered 3,800 kilometres with no damage to the car, although they did have various punctures, without which they would most certainly have finished in the first ten.

The car, which was shipped in a Ben Line container, is a Peter Banham Group N Toyota Corolla GT - Group N being the category for standard saloon cars, of which there were ten in the group and 57 competing overall.

JUST IN CASE . . .

Jack Flucker, BLC's Scottish Marketing Manager, spent two weeks in Japan recently calling on customers and helping to generate new business between Scotland and Japan.

When he was invited to relax and play a round of golf at the picturesque Toride Kokusai golf course near Tokyo, he was a bit taken aback to discover that the Japanese lady golf caddies were wearing what appeared to be protective helmets. He asked himself if someone had warned them about his sometimes erratic golf swing.

But all was well when it was explained that this was the traditional head gear for ladies to wear when they were caddying, and Jack went on to play his usual excellent game (although no scores had been disclosed as we went to press).

In the photograph Jack Flucker (left) is pictured with the ladies and Shuichi Sato (centre) from the Foodstuff Division of Nosawa & Co. Ltd. of Tokyo and Shingo Harada of Nikka, Tokyo.



Going over final details prior to the car being loaded into a 20-foot BLC container in Southampton for shipment from the UK to China are Nigel Holloway (left), ACT Services Cargo Care Manager, Southampton, David Sherwood of the Overseas Department, ICI Paint Division, Slough, and co-driver Bryan Harris.



Chinese licence number plates were fitted to the rally car in Hong Kong and Cameron Bowie (left) of Ben Line, Hong Kong, makes an inspection of the vehicle at the container terminal before it was delivered in pristine condition to the racing drivers.

Encouraging Business



Paisarn Angsuvadhanadul (right) from Ben Line, Bangkok, visited major shippers in Europe recently to encourage continuing use of BLC for their cargoes to Bangkok. He is pictured in the offices of Neboresins Necarbo in Zaandam, Holland, accompanied by Mr Evert Driehuis (left), of the Marketing Department of Conva BV, Ben Line Agents in Holland, and Mr Husslage, Traffic Manager of Neboresins Necarbo.

RE-LIVING OLD MEMORIES

Bob Tookey, Director of Killick Martin & Co., Ben Line's principal UK agents, had a double reason for visiting The Festival of Thailand Exhibition held at the Barbican Centre in London recently – the attractive pavilion had been shipped from Bangkok

to the Barbican Centre by BLC and Bob is an old "Thai hand", having visited Thailand on business regularly and spent some time working in Bangkok.

Apart from learning the Ben Line business in those days, he also took the

opportunity to learn about the country and it is rumoured that he became an expert in the ram wong, a typical Thai dance. Some of his colleagues at Killicks were relieved to learn that there was no ram wong at the Barbican!



Sections of the Thai Pavilion being unloaded from a BLC container (left); Bob Tookey outside the colourful Thai Pavilion (centre), and (right) he observes the Thai floating market, perhaps recalling his younger ram wong dancing days in Bangkok.

Miss Belgium Joins the ACT

Conship, agents in Belgium for BLC, EHCL and Harrison Line, had an exhibition stand at Transcaldia held in the port of Antwerp in September. The stand was made up of two 20-foot containers, the lower part of which was made into a reception area with display and a bar.

The stand was well attended by customers throughout the five days that it was open to shippers, freight forwarders and members of the public.

Among the visitors was Lynn Wesenbeek, Miss Belgium 1987, and she is pictured on the stand with (left to right) René Hooyberghs, Managing Director of Conship, Robert Hogg of Ben Line, Gerald Verfaillie of Tabaknatie and John Mittelstein, Operations Director of BLC.



STRENGTHENING ACT(A)'S MARKETING TEAM



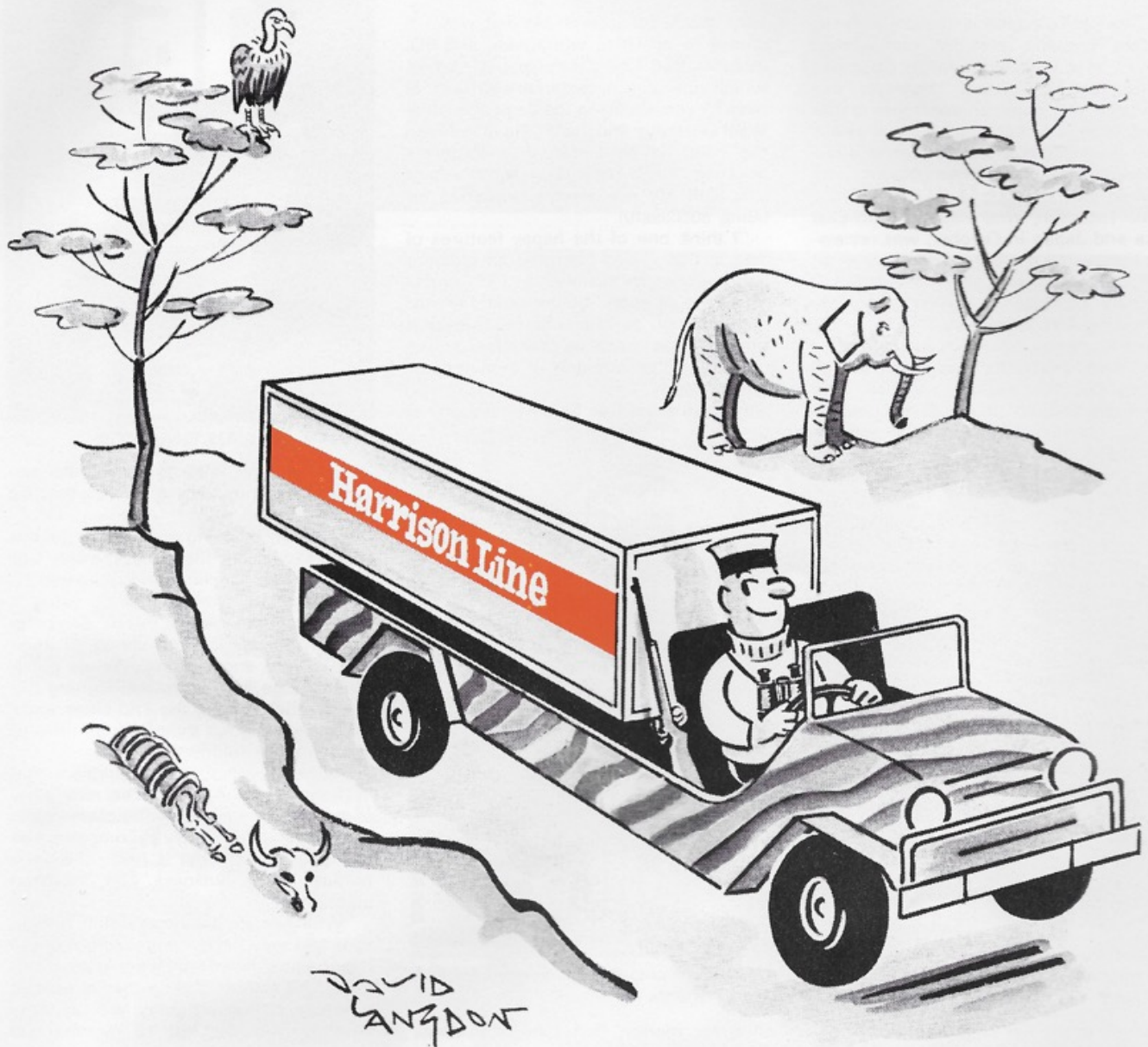
ACT(A) has announced several changes in its sales/marketing team in order to help provide even better service to customers.

Malcolm Lambard has been appointed Customer Services Manager based at ACT(A)'s London Head Office. In his new position he will have special responsibility for import cargoes.

Keith Riley has been appointed Sales Manager of ACT(A)'s Liverpool Office, covering the North-West Region and Ken Jones becomes Sales Manager for the Leeds Office and the North-East.

Discussing marketing plans are (left to right) Keith Riley, Peter Taylor, UK Marketing Manager, Ken Jones, John Mather, General Manager – European Trade, and Malcolm Lambard.

Harrison Line to **EAST AFRICA**



All the way.

**REGULAR CARGO LINER SERVICES
BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND EAST AFRICA.**

Thos. & Jas. Harrison Ltd., Mersey Chambers, Liverpool L2 8UF. Tel: 051-236 5611 Telex: 628404 Fax: 051-236 1200
15 Devonshire Square, London EC2M 4HA. Tel: 01-377 8535 Telex: 886829 Fax: 01-377 6272

GROWTH POTENTIAL STRONG IN FAR EAST SAYS BEN LINE CHAIRMAN

"The Pacific region is economically the fastest growing area in the world," according to William Thomson, Chairman of the Ben Line Group. "However, one has to be very much on one's toes to take advantage of a changing situation as it is such an enormous area and at so many different stages of development," he pointed out.

Mr Thomson, who visited South-East Asia and Japan in October, was reviewing the overall position of Ben Line in an interview which was given to Kenneth C. Bennett of Tokyo's English language "Shipping and Trade News".

The Company maintains dedicated offices and resident representatives throughout the region, via Ben Line Agencies Limited (BLA), to encompass

very much consortium-minded when it comes to activities world-wide and this includes Ben Line's participation in Trio, which operates a containerised fleet of over 21 vessels flying the flags of Britain, West Germany and Japan. He underlined the need for co-operation at all levels because "multi-national associations of this kind are not always renowned for being successful.

"I think one of the happy features of Trio is that it has operated an efficient service since its inception in 1972 and is as strong as ever," he declared. "A consortium such as Trio is so multi-layered that there is much co-operation on the ground, in the terminals or in joint planning offices."

Following the true Scot's philosophy of



WILLIAM THOMSON

necessary and wise to co-operate and provide the frequency of service that we do," he added.

"It is only by doing this that we get the support we do. I believe that the very fact that this has happened indicates that all three national components do value it and have managed to reach a *modus vivendi* that works," he stated. "I think that is very encouraging. We do put a considerable effort into maintaining the co-operation among the Trio Lines and I think the important thing is to continue to maintain this relationship."

But costs are the main problem that William Thomson sees. "The nitty gritty of it all is, are your operating costs as low as they can be, are they as competitive as the next man's? That is really the basic feature of the business," Mr Thomson stated.

"What we are seeing is a quite noticeable and very happy improvement in the imports into Japan which are at an imbalance," he added. "Taking the Far East as a whole, cargo volumes are up very strongly over the last 18 months and looking at the next year or two, we do see a strong trade, particularly in export terms, from the East.

"We regard the trade prospects for the next two years as being very healthy in the Europe/Far East Trade, subject, of course, to seeing whether the recent currency and stock market upheavals bring about a recessionary trend. With the post-war successes of Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan, Ben Line has become even more active in the region and we certainly intend to maintain our position there," William Thomson concluded.



The ubiquitous Ben Line container can be spotted almost anywhere in South-East Asia and here it is pictured in front of the Cathedral in Manila.

activities in the Far East and this allows Ben Line to react swiftly and effectively to market shifts and changes, Mr Thomson explained.

"I think it is very important to have these ears to the ground if you are looking for new opportunities," the Chairman continued, "and we set great store by the presence of our own Group agency company in the Far East, not only because we think they operate better for Ben Line Containers than would a third-party agent, but also because they help us identify possible new areas of expansion."

Mr Thomson said that the Company is

value for money, Ben Line has maintained an exceptionally strong attitude towards the combination of high service and meeting the current and future requirements of customers at a profitable level and this can be better handled within a co-operative venture such as Trio, William Thomson maintains.

"For modern container business, very few owners are able to provide frequency of service on their own. The three biggest players in the Europe/Far East trade are the Japanese, the West Germans and the British," the Ben Line boss stated. "They are the three biggest national volumes of cargoes, and yet they have found it

