

Ex-B&C padre welcomes shipmates

Sir,

I retired from the Missions to Seamen on March 31 having been with the society since 1939. Before that I was a deck officer in your company.

During the past 30 years I have made many friends with personnel serving under your house flags, and we should welcome any of them who could possibly pay us a visit in Wells, Somerset. Our address is:

Bob and Mary Precious, East House,
33a Southover, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1UH.
Tel: Wells (0749) 72991.

J. R. PRECIOUS,
(former senior chaplain),
Missions to Seamen,
London Flying Angel,
Victoria Dock Road,
London E16 3DF.

Centralised BIA: an aftermath

Les McEwan, BIA administration officer at Redhill, writes to us under the title "Aftermath", like this:

"Being in one building has been the recent and happily justified pronouncement from Redhill.

"The scheduled airline division of the group has operated from a tripartite HQ for some years and all concerned looked forward to late November 1972, when so many minor problems were to be resolved by the bringing together of all Redhill staff into the central location. The move to Berkeley House created much in the way of pre-removal chat and anticipation.

"Now it is over and, for most, the excitement of moving has died away and it means a return to routine, if such a state can ever exist in the hectic atmosphere of the airline business.

"But the aftermath leaves some humour; moments of anguish and spells of amazement, particularly to those who discover (for the first time) there really is a reservations section. There are those who are equally amazed to find a real live resident managing director.

"Humour, too, can be taken from those who now show symptoms of 'cashier awareness': whose eyes and facial expressions clearly indicate the fact that they must now, at all costs, study carefully their journeyings between floors. The everyday event of popping downstairs to the Xerox must now be overshadowed by the careful plotting of a route which, with luck, will minimise the risk of seeing or being seen by the cashier (the only result of which could be a duodenal reminder of the expense advance, still outstanding). The field sales personnel—usually at great pains to advertise their presence—now drift in ghost-like fashion between offices, constantly hoping the cashier will not find them and remind them that a paid up account works wonders for an ulcerous condition.



■ Upper left: Bob Precious, retired senior chaplain, Missions to Seamen, and his wife Mary. See letter column one.



■ Lower left: another for the magazine's collection of B&C father/son teams. Capt. A. M. Kennedy, who retired recently, sailed to South Africa on board Reina del Mar last November. With him is his son Gordon Kennedy, senior second engineer, Reina del Mar. Picture: C. R. Brown, Trans-ocean Photographic.

"Despite the fears of meeting those you may previously have been able to avoid, of coming face to face with the person you once addressed telephonically—and no doubt rudely, when the mood demanded—there is clearly a gain in being together in Berkeley House. It is noticeable that more *hellos* are heard than before, and that an almost romantic togetherness exists and is encouraged. Togetherness for all, even the cashier!"

Old hardware may be valuable

Sir,

Marine antiques fall into many categories, few of which are likely to be found in the attics or junk cupboards of the average family—even if they include a seafarer in their background. However, having heard of one family who destroyed material which they subsequently learned could have been sold for a substantial sum, I thought it worth while passing on some information.

There are now collectors who are willing to purchase items of the ordinary mariner's hardware, things which a few years ago would have been difficult to dispose of except as a gift.

Not being a collector myself I cannot say just where the threshold lies between what is simply redundant and what is considered a

collector's item. Probably the date lies in the nineteen-twenties, which is not so long ago bearing in mind that this type of equipment was invariably well constructed to withstand a marine environment.

If any CLANSMAN readers have stowed away somewhere an elderly sextant, barometer, marine clock or glass, it would be a very good idea to keep it dry and clean. It may by now have acquired a modest value, which could increase over the years if it is well maintained.

Chris MITCHELL,
Fleet Management,
Bevis Marks, London.

Women, yes— but as officers?

Sir,

"Women at sea as officers and engineers".

This heading appeared in a recent edition of our local newspaper. It has occurred to me that if you appealed to the marine staff for comments the result might be more rewarding than your appeal to the office staffs for anecdotes for publication in CLANSMAN, though the office staffs (female) might possibly have more to say than the floating staff.

From my exalted age the thought of females at sea is really terrifying. I can imagine how I would resent having a woman on watch with me—I just wouldn't want it.