

Open-U therapy for sailor wives

Sir,

Are there any other Open University students among the wives of seagoing personnel? I can fully recommend academic study as an excellent antidote for busy days with pre-school children and for the quiet evenings.

It is very hard work for most of us, and certainly requires a sympathetic husband for those few occasions when leave unavoidably clashes with exams or final essay dates. Discussions at study centres, at home, or over the phone bring new friends and fresh points of view. There is a certain happy madness about revision over the washing-up, and exchanging baby-sitting with other students for attending tutorials.

It will probably take me six years to achieve a degree, but there are over 30,000 students already, in every walk of life, and the Open University seems tailor made for sailor wives who like this sort of thing. No previous qualifications are necessary—just insatiable curiosity and plenty of determination.

CHRISTINE M. MORRIS,
The Old Bakery,
Mill Lane,
Sidlesham, Nr. Chichester,
West Sussex.

Footnote: Christine Morris is the wife of D. B. C. Morris, chief officer, *Kinaird Castle*.

GPO earns full marks for rapid decoding

Sir,

You may be interested in a letter received in the Southampton office recently, and addressed to us as follows:

Mr. Gayzer Irvien,
Architects Department Property,
Clan Line Steamers Ltd,
2/4 St. Mary's Avenue,
Southampton.

Could there be any further variations? However, full marks to the GPO for a quick delivery, the day after the letter was posted in the London area.

N. HODSON,
Hotel services (ships),
Southampton.

Thanks, CLANSMAN, for the memory

Sir,

I do look forward to receiving my CLANSMAN; it brings back to me many happy memories of my all-too-brief service with the company. I have already made one trip out to South Africa as a passenger and it is my intention that my wife and I shall, as soon as my civic duties permit, travel out again the "Union Way".

D. M. McBAIN,
Convener of Sutherland,
Heimra, Lochinver.

readers' letters

Battleship bother on first day at sea

Sir,

I would like to acknowledge the letter from Harold D. H. Pereth published in Readers' Letters in CLANSMAN No. 17 and to thank him warmly for his memory and kind remarks about me. I doubt if I was always "most patient" with my juniors but I tried during my thirty years or so in charge to remember my own panic on January 24, 1924—my first day at sea.

The ship was the *Bampton Castle*, a cargo ship with only one wireless operator, but for a short period an experiment was made with probationary wireless operators—additional W/Os with first class tickets but little or no experience. A fellow named Smith and myself had signed on as probationers. We were not allowed to transmit; only to listen and find out how things were done at sea as distinct from wireless school.

We left Tilbury about midnight and the wireless operator gave this information to Northforeland Radio and went to bed, leaving me on the middle watch. About 2 a.m. I heard my ship's call sign followed by 'de' (from) and another ship's call sign. On looking up the other ship's call sign I found it was *Revolution* and alongside the name was the symbol of crossed swords, indicating a warship. Panic station!

I was only 19 and only two hours at sea. I had visions of my aerial being blown away, and the second shot getting the wireless office, if I didn't reply quickly enough. I did not wait to call the wireless operator, but started the transmitter and answered the call. It was only a friendly message of good luck to our second officer from one of his pals—but I wasn't to know that, was I?

I would also like to inform anyone else who may remember me of my new address (below) which will be permanent for the next 30 years or so—well I'm only 68—and invite them to call or ring (Windermerer 4414). This is a lovely spot near the lake and I must have a few friends somewhere. Be glad to see you.

BOB BREW,
19 South Craig,
Bowness, Windermerer,
Westmorland.

The phantom cadet caught at last

Sir,

I am sending you a photograph from the *Western Morning News*, taken at the Plymouth Maritime School prizegiving in July 1972. It shows engineer cadet John M. Flynn and the director of training.

The cadet is my son and must be on record as the most evasive camera subject ever. We (his family) have not managed to get a photograph of him for over six years—neither have various photographers at the London Nautical School ceremonies or even local press at sea cadet functions.

You will realize therefore how much we value this picture—captured by the *Western Morning News* photographer, even though John spotted the camera and turned away. Fellow cadets at Plymouth would be amused to see even this capture since they could relate some hilarious tales of their own attempts at trying to snap him.

I do hope that you will decide to publish it even if I do get a rocket on *Argyllshire's* return.

THERESA FLYNN,
26 Ibbetson Path,
Loughton, Essex.



■ Rare picture (see letter above): engineer cadet John M. Flynn receiving the chief cadet captain's prize for service to the Plymouth Maritime School from G. E. Carter, director of training at the British Shipping Federation. Picture: *Western Morning News*.