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Newsletter March 2020

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2020. Please accept my apologies for the late delivery.

Update on ICMH8, University of Porto, 30 June- 4 July 2020

As members will be aware, the coronavirus is creating considerable uncertainty about international travel and mass gatherings such as conferences. In a bulletin dated 17 March, Professor Amélia Polónia, on behalf of the organizers, stated:

“Dear 8th IMHA Participants,

We hope this email finds you well. As you all know the rapid spread of the COVID-19 (“Corona”) virus disease is affecting events worldwide. Many conferences and meetings have been canceled so far. Obviously, the board of IMHA and the local organizers are considering how and whether to proceed with preparations for the 8th IMHA International Congress of Maritime History, scheduled to be held in Porto from 30 June to 4 July 2020.

We will be watching the situation closely and will decide what to do in the light of developments by early April. We will keep all registered participants informed by email, and you are also invited to visit our website regularly. It will reflect the latest stage of our deliberations. Above all: we wish you good health during the upcoming weeks.”

This is a dynamic situation and the conference organisers will notify participants if this advice changes.

Meanwhile, the provisional programme is available at <https://imha2020.com/programme/>. See also the University of Porto video available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w41uP6SXGXo>). Just a reminder that membership fees for 2020 are now overdue. You can renew via our website <https://imha.info/>.

My thanks go to Dr Ian Chambers for his voluntary help with producing this newsletter.

I hope you all stay safe and healthy in these difficult times. I’m very tempted to follow the advice of some friends and self-isolate offshore in a fishing boat!

From the President
Professor Malcolm Tull

Vice President, Amélia Amelia Polónia, is awarded a Doctor Honoris Causa, the highest distinction awarded by French universities, by Université Bretagne Sud.



Amélia Polónia, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Porto (FLUP), received, on February 10, in the French city of Vannes, the title of Doctor Honoris Causa by the University Bretagne Sud (UBS) .

“As in Portugal, the title of Doctor Honoris Causa is one of the most prestigious distinctions awarded by French universities. In this case, however, it has the particularity of being attributed only to "personalities of foreign nationality" who are distinguished by "eminent services rendered to science, letters or the arts, to France or to the University".

With almost 40 years of connection - 35 of which as a teacher - to FLUP, Amélia Poland ...thus sees internationally recognized a path of excellence in teaching and research in the area of Modern History. Specialist in the History of the Portuguese Overseas Expansion and History of European Colonization, she is widely recognized for her work in the fields of Colonial Studies, Port History or Gender Studies.”

The Honoris Causa PhD award ceremony took place at the Faculty of Law, Economic Sciences and Management at UBS, and was attended by the director of FLUP, Fernanda Ribeiro.

Source: <https://noticias.up.pt/amelia-polonia-e-doutora-honoris-causa-pela-universite-bretagne-sud/>

Online Scottish Arctic whaling data set

Chesley W. Sanger, Professor emeritus at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, reports that the dataset “Scottish Arctic Whaling (1750-WWI”: A Digitized Statistical Profile” is now available on the whalinghistory.org web site.

The information originally hand copied from primary documents almost a half century ago is now housed in MUN’s Maritime History Archive, St. John’s, NL, and was unfortunately difficult to access. The data were the basis of Professor Sanger’s Ph. D thesis (1985), 16 journal articles (1980-2013), and a summary book, “Scottish Arctic Whaling” (Edinburgh: John Donald 2016). These publications, especially the book, generated considerable interest in this little known but important Scottish industry. It was thus decided to digitize details of the 3,641 individual voyages fitted out by Scottish entrepreneurs.

This data set was the structural framework for the following research findings: Vessels clearing variously from 16 Scottish ports between 1750 and WWI returned with almost 20,000 bowhead whales and 4,000,000 harp seals. And they did so under almost unimaginably demanding and hazardous conditions. More than 110 ships were lost, while others were often entrapped within the pack-ice, causing the whale men to suffer starvation, disease, scurvy, frostbite and death. In 1836, alone, more than 100 whalers on the *Advice* and *Thomas*, *Dundee*, and *Dee* of Aberdeen perished at Davis Strait.

New Books



Creating Global Shipping

Aristotle Onassis, the Vagliano Brothers, and the Business of Shipping, c.1820–1970

Part of Cambridge Studies in the Emergence of Global Enterprise

- AUTHOR: Gelina Harlaftis, Ionian University, Corfu
- DATE PUBLISHED: August 2019

Shipping has been the international business par excellence in many national economies, one that preceded trends in other, more highly visible sectors of international economic activity. Nevertheless, in both business or economic history, shipping has remained relatively overlooked. That gap is filled by this exploration of the evolution of European shipping through the study of two Greek shipping firms. They provide a prime example of the regional European maritime businesses that evolved to serve Europe's international trade and, eventually, the global economy. By the end of the twentieth century, Greeks owned more ships than any other nationality. The story of the Vagliano brothers traces the transformation of Greek shipping from local shipping and trading to international shipping and ship management, while the case of Aristotle Onassis reveals how international shipping was transformed into a global business.

- The first serious treatment of Aristotle Onassis and his contribution to contemporary shipping
- Will appeal to those interested in how successful global businesses are created and sustained
- Based on significant archival research worldwide, showing how Onassis' successes came on the back of those of the Vagliano brothers



1852 Baltic Hull Shipwreck Identified

A well preserved ship wreck discovered by Finnish diver Jerry Wilhelmsson four years ago in shallow water off the Aland Islands has been identified as the *Regard*, a ship from Hull, which disappeared 168 years ago en route for St Petersburg. Dr Robb Robinson, from the Blaydes Maritime Centre, The University of Hull, played a key role in the identification of the vessel.

See <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/incredibly-well-preserved-hull-ship-which-sank-1852-found-baltic-2450032>.

Indian Ocean Studies Conference

(This report is supplied by Peter Ridgway, Editor of the AAMH's Newsletter)

The AAMH sponsored Sheridan College Indian Ocean Studies conference was held on 22 and 23 November at their Perth campus. AAMH members Sally May, Emeritus Professor Malcolm Tull and Peter Ridgway worked with Dr Joshua Esler, Dr Jenny Skerritt and Dr Jonathon James of Sheridan College to deliver what is hoped to be the first of a series of conferences focusing on the trade in not



Figure 1: Gary Wilson, Senior Master Coral Expeditions and Professor Malcolm Tull. Gary delivered a bright paper on cruising the small islands of the Indian Ocean. This paper tied in nicely with Professor Sathindrakumar's paper on the role of international tourism in the Maldives.



Figure 2: Professors Erika Techera & Heather Goodall

only commodities but also ideas, religions, people and politics across the Indian Ocean. Keynote speakers Professor Pier Larson from John Hopkins University and Emeritus Professor Malcolm Tull from Murdoch University set the tone with their presentations on family and history in the Indian Ocean, and Seaports and Chinese soft power respectively. Other topics covered included the spread of disease, commercial trade, politics, slave trade, religion, environmental management and archaeology.

AAMH Journal Editor, Professor Erika Techera hopes to publish a number of the papers in *The Great Circle*.

Sheridan College is a new tertiary institution offering a range of courses including history. Two of the College's students delivered papers at the conference. Jackson Black reviewed the reactions of the French colonial administrators, Japanese imperial forces, nationalist and communist Vietnamese to the Japanese occupation of French Indochina. Elliana Frame looked at the Dutch East India Company's intervention on the island of Lombok at the end of the 19th Century.

Planning is underway for the next conference to be held in late 2021.

The papers delivered at the conference were recorded and are available on the Sheridan College website at <https://sheridan.edu.au/index.php/extensions/2019-indian-ocean-conference>.



Figure 3: Model ship on display at Sheridan College

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The conference also marked the launch of AAMH member Dr Howard Gray's book *Spice at Any Price: The Life and Times of Frederick de Houtman, 1571-1627*

Howard describes Frederick de Houtman as a spy, navigator, astronomer, ship's master, prisoner, linguist, VOC Governor and field commander. He was a key figure in the earliest days of the Dutch forays into the East Indies spice trade, surviving four journeys to today's Indonesia, the first two disastrous with enormous loss of life, then twice as VOC Governor, involved in the domination of the Portuguese, Spanish and English rivals and the local populations. He incidentally was the first European to encounter the south-west corner of Australia and the Houtman Abrolhos Islands, ending much speculation about Terra Incognita Australis.

The book is available from Westralian Books for A\$40.00 plus postage. See <https://www.westralianbooks.com.au/product/spice-at-any-price/22?cp=true&sa=true&sbp=false&q=false>



Figure 4 Dr Howard Gray