

# FULL AHEAD

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Sixten Norrgrann:

# A time of change

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## EDITORIAL

# Dear Reader,

## A time of change

There is nothing permanent except change." (Heraclitus c.540 – 480 BC). As part of its corporate strategy, Finnlines has developed into an international shipping group with subsidiaries and operations in many countries. Its expansion is set to continue. At the end of June the Group employed 2,245 people of various professions. Divided by operational sectors, 593 worked on land operations of Shipping & Sea Transport Services, 950 were in Port Operations and 702 were seamen. The Group consists of 17 different employers in seven countries. The staff policies of each unit are naturally guided by national legislation and contracts of employment, as well as the operations and practices of each company. To harmonise operations, Finnlines has developed and is continuing to develop support functions and systems for almost all its sub-sectors. It goes without saying that sustaining this requires coordination and cooperation between units, extending also to human resources.

To develop this, Finnlines Plc has strengthened its personnel management organisation by establishing a Corporate HR (Human Resources) unit, subdivided into three sections: Personnel, Crew management and Corporate HR Development.

Corporate HR cooperates closely with the HR operations of subsidiaries and coordinates the HR functions of the whole Group. There are common training and staff development programmes, employees are offered the opportunity to transfer from one unit to another, seamen can work on ships under another nation's flag, and so on. Vacancies are announced across the whole Group.

It should not be forgotten that each company has its own identity and the right to retain its individuality. This will continue to be a strength of Finnlines, which the Group will seek to exploit when developing its human resources policies.

This year Finnlines has developed an operating system to guide company practices and replace the previous quality system. Finnlines Cargo Services will operate as the pilot unit. The aim is that relevant parts of the system will later be adopted in other units.

The project to establish a Shared Service Centre will be completed this year, which will probably cause changes in all units. Negotiations are being held with employees about the staffing effects of SSC.

The Sourcing Project, aimed at coordinating purchasing operations and improving their efficiency, has been started. Support functions will be harmonised and the same computing systems and programs will be used throughout the Group. Furthermore, all of Finnlines Plc has moved under one roof in Porkkalankatu, Helsinki.

These reforms, and changes in the Finnlines fleet involving negotiations with staff, have made the past year a challenging time for employees throughout the Group. The changes have been made to improve operations. Motivated employees are the best guarantee that they will be successfully accomplished.

**Sixten Norrgrann**  
Vice President  
Corporate HR

## FULL AHEAD

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# Combining seafaring traditions with the challenges of the future



Tradition-rich seafaring never stops developing. Our employees on land and at sea are experts in their field, which is why it is easy to work with them. That's the explanation that the Group's new head of Human Resources, Sixten Norrgrann, gives for the 30 enjoyable years he has spent with the Company.

I was also lucky with my choice of a workplace," he says. "Finnlines has always been a forward-looking shipping company and I have been able to be part of the process. I don't suppose I could even do anything else!"

**Sixten Norrgrann** is a familiar face at sea and in the office. Before he became head of Human Resources for the whole Group in spring, he was in charge of Finnlines sea personnel. And back in the 70s and 80s he sailed as pursuer on board the Company's passenger ships.

"I was on Finnlines ships for almost all of the 1970s apart from a period as a trial teacher at Åbo Akademi University. At that time passenger traffic was in its infancy. We were happy novices, with a fierce urge to develop passenger services. Finnlines was in the long-distance cruise business and we sailed the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and along the West African coast."

Norrgrann ended up at sea by chance, as many seaman have. After his studies he worked for the summer in Helsinki Seamen's Mediation.

"**Kalevi Silvasto** (see page 22) picked me out from there, though he did say later that it was probably the biggest mistake of his career," Norrgrann laughs.

It was no longer coincidence that dictated his move ashore at the start of the 1980s. Norrgrann's sons missed their father and their father his sons.

"My last ship was the Finnjet. Although it was a wonderful place to work I felt that three years was enough. My sons were young and it was time to spend more time with them. I also wanted new challenges," he explains.



Sixten Norrgrann says that he needs the confidence to discuss unpleasant matters and the ability to make difficult decisions. "Fortunately I have the support of a professional team, and a job that never gets dull."

### A signal to seafaring

The move ashore came at a time of upheaval in seafaring.

"When I transferred from ship to office, a seamen's strike was just beginning. It lasted three months and, when it ended, crewing costs rose 25 percent. The following year they rose 13 percent. It was a clear signal to Finnish seafaring. Ship-owners began to flag out their ships and the same trend is continuing."

Over the years, Finnlines has grown into an international shipping group with subsidiaries and operations in many countries. Today, the group employs more than 2,000 people. Norrgrann believes the present expansion will continue.

Individual jobs are also changing at a rapid rate. The purser's job, for example, has been changed by advances in IT, Sixten Norrgrann notes.

"The things that have altered the most are the technology and the booking and cashier systems. Ship-to-shore communications is now very different from my seafaring days. But the basic idea, serving customers, is still as important."

### Simplifying the organisation

International Finnlines is now applying unified policies in its units. In order to make organisational lines clearer, the Group has established a unit responsible for Group human resources. The unit is divided between personnel, crew management and cor-

porate HR development departments, which work closely together.

The unit offers joint training and development programmes for staff. An employee can flexibly move from one unit to another and a seaman from under one nation's flag to another. Vacancies are advertised throughout the Group.

*"You need to be personally convinced that what you're doing is correct, to examine all the alternatives and to think them through."*

"For example, there are Finnish engineering and deck officers on ships sailing under the Swedish flag. Initially they worked for our Finnish organisation and then moved to serve Nordö-Link Management."

An international approach is vital for shipping because interaction between nationalities is important. Finns see how the Swedes operate their ships and the Swedes see how the Finns work. "The trend has come to stay. In this way, seafaring jobs are being internationalised."

### Local application of common objectives

An international approach also requires HR policies on the Group level. A company can-

not have different business policies in every unit and country.

"Naturally, each unit has its own traditions and tried and true methods. We certainly don't mean to change these. We also need to take into account the culture, legislation and employment contracts of every country where we operate."

The head of Group Human Resources sees staff motivation as the most important task for the future. Management should be developed with the individual in mind and with respect for his or her skills.

"We need a consistent line for staff management in all units, the same objectives and the principles, but implemented in a way that suits local conditions."

The Group is developing its own operating system, a way of guiding a company's business and administration in written form. It is equivalent to a quality system, Norrgrann says, but is more flexible in taking customer needs into account. Units have a great responsibility in developing the system.

### Long workdays

Sixten Norrgrann's days are filled with talks and negotiations. He also helps handle some individual cases and also finds time to follow work aboard the ships. Normal office hours are not enough for the job.

But the work is worthwhile when you believe you are making the right choices.

"You need to be personally convinced that what you're doing is correct, to examine all the alternatives and to think them through. It is the only way to find the best solutions for employees as well as the employer."

After the tough work regime, he unwinds in his home region of Ostrobothnia. He is also a keen follower of sports, mainly football. And he has started to take up musical hobbies he had as a child.

"As a little boy I played a trumpet, which I've now fixed up. But judging from the sound it's best that only my wife hears me playing," Sixten Norrgrann laughs.

TEXT: MARITA KOKKO  
PHOTOS: TIMO RAUNIO

Norsteve aims at

# Norway's top spot

In Oslo's Filipstad port, Norsteve's managing director, Aase Askim, is actively seeking new customers and extra volume. She puts great weight on interaction between a wide range of partners.

Very few managers can be as close to the workplace as **Aase Askim**, managing director of Norsteve AS at Filipstad in Oslo.

The office building is in the middle of the container area, the buzz of the port is just outside her second-storey window. The loading area is nearby and ro-ro ships berth a few hundred metres away.

There are 33 employees in Oslo and three in Drammen, which was the home port of the whole company until the start of the 1990s. Most of Norsteve's loading, forwarding and transport operations are in Filipstad.

Cargoes are unloaded rapidly using modern equipment. Two cranes and four trucks can empty even a large ship in a few hours.

Traffic regulations are strict in the area. There is a lorry threading its way between containers despite transport rules and regulations; "the driver must be new to the area", the managing director says, "and has strayed from the narrow area reserved for trucks."

## Waiting for the move

Major decisions are in store at Norsteve. The City of Oslo has announced that Filipstad will be shifted to the other side of the fiord in 2006 since the city council has decided to give Filipstad and other shore areas back to the public. Development plans have come and gone over the years. At one point it was even proposed to land fill the basin at the far

The current managing director and her predecessor get on well together. Though he retired in July, Jan Bekeng is continuing as a consultant. Aase Askim, a master of numbers and IT, is glad to call on the advice of an old seafaring expert.



*“We have to know things on behalf of our customers. If they don’t know or remember something, we need to remind them.”*

end of the harbour but that idea was blocked on environmental grounds.

Aase Askim doubts that the new port will be ready by 2006. New traffic arrangements will have to be in place before operations can be shifted there. The new area is at the base of a mountain so tunnels will have to be drilled for the roads. A new opera house is being

built near the harbour, which will also increase traffic.

Fortunately, the E18 road runs by the present and the future harbour areas. This eases traffic congestion and gets cargoes moving quickly.

Filipstad is more significant for imports than exports. Most of the consumer goods used in the economic region of Oslo and southern Norway arrive in containers.

At the end of the harbour area is a ro-ro port where Finland’s large paper mills send their paper reels. Norsteve has a terminal building there for storing them.

Next to the company in the harbour area is a coffee roastery, which is supplied with raw coffee beans directly from the ships. Norwegian fish are a common export cargo from Oslo’s harbour. The volume of containers loaded by Norsteve is about 40,000 TEU per year.

## The importance of communication

Aase Askim became managing director in July this year. She is a long-standing employee of the company and was previously responsible for finances and information technology. She was joined in the interview by her predecessor, **Jan Bekeng**, who retired in July but is continuing in the company as a consultant.

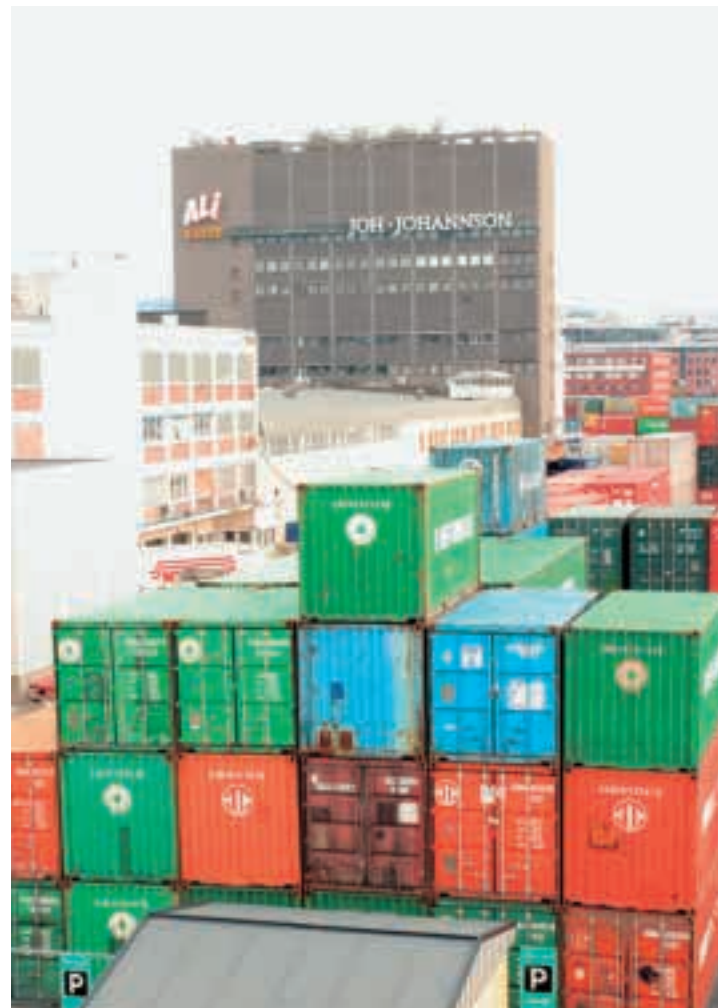
The two have obviously developed a close relationship over the years they have worked together and have a high appreciation of each other’s skills.

“As a former sea captain Jan understands seafaring while I understand numbers,” the new managing director says. Jan Bekeng in turn points out that IT is not merely technology but includes communications.

The new managing director agrees. “Communications is our strength. We need to be able to maintain a dialogue with all our cus-

A coffee roastery looms over the containers. It's a short trip from the ships for the raw coffee beans.

Norsteve AS is a 100% subsidiary of Finnlines since 1992.



tomers and partners, as well as with the ships.”

The job is a bit like babysitting, she adds. “We have to know things on behalf of our customers. If they don’t know or remember something, our job is to remind them.”

Price competition is tough right now, she says, and has reduced margins, but volume has also risen so profitability has remained good. The company aims to rise to number one in the port of Oslo from its present number-two position.

Askim is appreciative of the advice and support given by **Hans Martin**, Finnsteve's managing director. As a 100% subsidiary of Finnlines, Norsteve belongs to Finnlines’ port operation division, headed by Hans Martin. Finnsteve’s managing director, Martin also has experience of moving port operations because he is actively involved in Helsinki’s Vuosaari project.

## Hammer and brush

Aase Askim faces a fast 90-minute drive to work each day. She enjoys it, she says, because it provides time to think without disturbances.

At home her hobby is keeping the family house in top condition. A hammer and brush are never far from her hands.

Outside exercises like fell walking are so obvious to Norwegians that she does not even mention them as a hobby until asked. Her golf is still in the planning stage.

Some of the best things about her work are the constant challenges and new situations, as well as wonderful colleagues. The company is renowned for its good working atmosphere. Askim also enjoys the environment of seafaring, typified by the closeness between people as well as its own language.

This is an advantage in a job that involves keeping up contacts on all sides. The most im-

portant partners are port officials who control the land area and cranes. Also important is the labour union, which provides Norsteve with the stevedores who work inside the ship. Norsteve has only one of its own men in the ship but the truck drivers are its employees.

“The main thing for business is of course keeping in touch with customers,” the managing director stresses. “Our job is to make their lives easier.”

TEXT: ARJA VARTIA

PHOTOS: ALL OVER PRESS/MORTEN KROGH

With two cranes and four trucks Norsteve loads and discharges 3-4 ships a day.





Kaija Niemi, Mirja Parikka and Tina Damstén are well-known to our customers.

## Scandinavian and Polish traffic an important part of **Customer service**

There have been ro-ro services between Finland and various Scandinavian ports since the 1960s.

Originally the Company served Denmark but, in 1992, its Scandinavian traffic grew to include Swedish and Norwegian ports when it took over these lines from Bore. The main trunk route is between Helsinki and Aarhus; the other ports have varied somewhat over the years. Since 1997, Polish services have been handled in cooperation with a Polish partner Euroafrica Shipping Lines Co. Ltd. Both partners have their own ships in service. Traffic with Poland has grown at a steady pace and is expected to continue expanding as Poland joins the EU. The main port

in Poland is Gdynia, which has modern ro-ro facilities. In the Finnlines customer service unit, Scandinavian and Polish services are handled by three energetic traffic operators.

### **Kaija Niemi and Tina Damstén operate Scandinavian traffic**

There are three departures a week from Helsinki to Aarhus. On the same sailings, a customer can also get his cargo to Kalundborg or from there to Finland. Four ships handle Scandinavian traffic. MS Finnforest and MS Finnbirch sail to Aarhus. MS Antares and MS Finnkraft sail on alternate weeks to Copenhagen, Oslo and Helsingborg and return to Finland via Oslo, Helsingborg and Malmö, where cars are loaded for shipment to Hanko. Typical export cargoes are paper and sawn goods but containers and semi-trailers are also carried. Glass flats from Helsingborg

to Finland are a speciality on the import side. Trailers make up most of the import cargo on the Aarhus service. A certain volume of cars in transit to Russia is carried from Aarhus and Malmö, as well as a small volume from Copenhagen.

The agreed division of responsibility is that Kaija handles MS Finnbirch and Tina MS Finnforest. Other departures are divided equally between them. "You need one person in charge of the whole job, including export and import journeys," Kaija insists. She has handled Scandinavian traffic for several years. She first joined the Company to work in the Kuopio office handling small-tonnage traffic, but came to Helsinki six years ago to handle the Polish service in its initial stage, later switching to the Scandinavian service. "In dealings with the Danes and Norwegians, I get by with the Swedish I learned at school," she



## Containers services centralised in **Team Lines**

laughs. "Thank goodness I had a tough Swedish teacher then. Of course there are certain repetitive routines in this job, but the work really is varied."

Tina is one of the Company's youngest employees, though she has several years behind her. She began while still a schoolgirl, with a summer job. She handled Polish traffic for a couple of years before switching to Scandinavian services, though at present she is again handling Poland, standing in for Mirja Parikka. Tina says that one of the best sides of the job is the human interaction, keeping in constant touch with all the regular customers.

### **Mirja Parikka operates Polish traffic**

There are three departures to Poland each week, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. The sailings are by MS Finnoak and MS Inowroclaw, operated by Euroafrica Shipping Lines. Ships call once a week at Kotka in addition to Helsinki, and at Szczecin in addition to Gdynia. There is also one departure per week from Rauma to Gdynia operated in connection with Baltic services. Rauma traffic is operated by **Immu Rauhanen**. Cargo to Poland includes paper, steel, plywood, semi-trailers, lorries with their drivers and also containers. Cargo from Poland include iron, semi-trailers and lorries with drivers. There are strong hopes that EU membership will have a positive effect on Poland's customs legislation, which is regarded as difficult. Mirja books export cargoes directly into our system, but import cargoes are booked in Poland.

Mirja was already operating Polish traffic with Finpol Shipping; its services came to the Company from the start of 1997 and Mirja with them. By training she is a ship's mate from the Maritime Navigation College of Rauma, and has done both "real work" at sea and in port. "It has been enormously useful in my present job," she says. "I know what goes on in the ships and ports, and why. There are lots of regular customers but, now and again, new ones come along. My work is varied, which makes it interesting."

TEXT: RITVA ERKAMA  
PHOTO: KIMMO BRANDT



Jürgen Schapals and Petri Pohjanlehto both have solid experience: Jürgen has worked in shipping for more than 23 years and with Team Lines for over three years, while Petri has served the company for 16 years, three years as head of the container traffic centre.

**F**innlines Lines Units container transport operations, which consist of container traffic sales, equipment management, customer services and inland operations have become a part of the Team Lines organisation in Finland.

Following the April decision, 14 Finnliness staff became employees of Team Lines Finland.

The new business unit is internally called Intra-European Container Service (IECS).

Respectively Team Lines - intra Europe is headed by **Jürgen Schapals** (Vice President). The new common business unit consists of former separate departments:

- Finnliness based Lines units traffic (LU), Helsinki
- Team Lines house/house (TL h/h), Hamburg
- Road to Sea Transport (RtS), Hamburg

**Petri Pohjanlehto** is heading the Lines units traffic of the new business unit in Helsinki. The Hamina office was discontinued in the changeover and its tasks will now be handled from Helsinki.

The Lines units department consists of the following operations and functions: Sales (Göran Backman, Hannu Pihlasi, Peter Martin, back-up Arja Sallinen), Container Management (Helena Raimi, Matti Räsänen in Sompasaari), Inland operations in Sompasaari (Hannu Möller, Liisa Kuusinen, Anneli Timola)

and Customer Service (Anna Gripenberg, Lisbeth Kettunen, Pirkko Rauhio, Aulikki Tilli).

Intra European Container Service combines LU's into one body, working together with its counterpart units (TL h/h and RtS). Nine people are working in Hamburg.

Jürgen Schapals, who visits Helsinki from Hamburg at least every second week for two or three days at a time.

The feeder part of Team Lines Finland will still continue to concentrate on feeder traffic while the new part will concentrate on cabotage traffic Germany - Finland, (TL h/h) on cabotage/Lines units traffic to/from Russia and Baltic States (RtS) and on European Lines Unit traffic (LU).

### **Growth is the rationale**

"World and European container traffic is growing strongly and we want to reinforce Container traffic's position within the Group," Jürgen Schapals emphasises. Merging container traffic and related know-how into one unit creates a stronger basis for the whole operation and better opportunities for development within the Company and the market. Schapals' vision is to achieve a leading position in the Intra European Container Transport market.

"By combining our strengths we can achieve better results," Schapals commented. He and Finland are keen to tackle the new challenges; there's a strong team spirit, they say.

TEXT: RITVA ERKAMA  
PHOTO: KIMMO BRANDT



PHOTO: HAFEN HAMBURG/MICHAEL LINDNER

Hamburg is Germany's biggest deep-sea harbour, which is quite surprising when you look at the map: it is several kilometers closer to the Baltic Sea than to the North Sea.

# Harbour Hamburg

Finland is the most important European trading partner of the leading German container port

Hamburg is situated where the River Alster meets the River Elbe, which is about 100 km inland before the River Elbe actually enters the open sea. Germany's "Gate to the World" grew in importance as trade with the Americas and the Far East gained strength.

Today, the harbour of Hamburg is a general cargo port, but it is also of utmost importance for containerised traffic, mainly to and from the Far East and the USA and has a top position among ports of northern Europe. As the most easterly North Sea port, Hamburg is also well-suited for trade with Northern Europe,



Team Lines newbuilt MS Gotland with the "Hamburger Michel" in the background. The 130 m high steeple of the St. Michaelis church – colloquially nicknamed "Michel" – is the landmark of the city of Hamburg.

Russia and the Baltic States. Finland is No. 1 among its European trading partners, heading the list with 369,000 containers in 2002. That is an increase of 28 percent compared to the previous year.

For vessels the traditional way to go from the Baltic to Hamburg is via the Kiel Canal, which connects the Baltic Sea with the North Sea by cutting through the region of Schleswig starting at Kiel in the Baltic and ending in Brunsbüttel on the River Elbe estuary. But owing to the closeness to Lübeck it is also possible to reload containers on trucks and ship them from Lübeck to any Baltic Sea port.

Hamburg is not only connected to all main harbours all over the world, but has also good links to the inland waterway network of Europe. The River Elbe is navigable most of the year well down south to the Czech Republic (see also "Finn Heavy Project – Carrying Drums from Savonlinna to Eilenburg" in this issue) and a system of canals connects the Elbe with the industrial area of the River Rhine and the German capital, Berlin.

The harbour area covers 3412 hectares (land areas only) and has spread from the traditional areas close to the inner city into the hinterland and newly-developed areas. The cityscape is still dominated by the Elbe, the port and its related industries. You never have to walk far from the inner city to see ships, be they large container vessels from abroad, smaller barges for guided tours through this busy harbour or the yachts of the "Hamburgers".

The port city of Hamburg is also home to the biggest German feeder operator Team Lines, which is a member of the Finnlines family. You will find its office close to the inner city in the Sloman building overlooking part of the harbour and the harbour city.

TEXT: UTE SCHILLER

## Finnlines included in the new European sustainability index

Finnlines Plc has been chosen as one of the companies in Europe's first index for socially responsible investment (SRI) in smaller companies.

The Smaller Europe SRI Index, containing 69 companies from 12 countries, was launched on 1 October.

"The whole subject of SRI is gaining interest among companies, pension funds, consultants and trustees," said Neil Dunn, of Kempen Capital Management. The new index was launched by Kempen together with SNS Asset Management, both Dutch financial services groups.

Finnlines is delighted to have passed the exacting standards imposed for membership of the new index. The company has been working hard to be a responsible citizen in the communities where it operates. Now its efforts have been recognised.

Only companies with the very highest standards and practice in three areas – business ethics, human resources and the

environment – have been accepted for the index. Each was carefully examined and considered on a case-by-case basis.

"Until now, only companies with large capitalisation have been rated for their sustainability," Neil Dunn said. "Now we are providing objective information on the performance of smaller European companies."

The index is the result of three years of research and a screening process involving 1,700 companies. Initially only 69 companies were chosen, though it is expected to grow in the future.

The Smaller Europe SRI Index provides a benchmark measuring the performance of SRI-compliant smaller European companies. It is intended to guide investors who want to invest their funds in a socially responsible way.

## Finnlines Baltic Service will be intensified

In order to improve our service on the Helsinki-Travemünde line the time of departures have been postponed as from 20 October 2003.

From Helsinki we sail Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in the evening at 21.00 hours instead of 20.00 hours.

The Monday-Friday departures from Travemünde to Helsinki have been postponed with two hours. As from October 20 2003 we sail at 20.00 hours.

The times of arrival will remain unchanged. Other service between Helsinki and Travemünde remains as today.

### Finmerchant

was sold in September and was renamed MS Merchant. She flies the UK flag and continues in Finnlines traffic on a charter basis.

# MS Finnulp feels at home in the Baltic



PHOTO: HANNU LAAKSO

The ro-ro ship Finnulp gives a very polished first impression. It is an impression that lasts wherever you go onboard. This can partly be explained by the fact that the Finnulp, built in 2002, is new in traffic. Another explanation is that the crew has taken pride in keeping their vessel clean and tidy.

It is mid-September, amid a Finnish Indian summer. The voyage from Helsinki to Kotka should be very smooth. The captain, **Thomas Malmberg**, prepares the bridge for departure. "The deck officer could also do the job, but I want to listen to the conversation with the VTS (vessel traffic service) and hear which vessels are arriving and leaving." At around eight o'clock in the morning, there are many passenger and cargo ships approaching Helsinki.

MS Finnulp has a crew of 16. The working language is English, but Russian is also



Captain Thomas Malmberg spends most of his time on the bridge on the voyage from Helsinki to Kotka.



Chief Engineer Staffan Andersson and Second Engineer Oleg Klohtins going through the day's work.



Chief cook Mikus Zalans has an important job feeding the crew and passengers.



Third Officer Karel Lemmik is keeping watch. He is very content with the advanced radar, compass and electronic chart systems. The AIS – automatic identification system – is waiting to be installed on the bridge.



Atis Feldsbergs works in the galley and mess. He also waits on passengers.



Uldis Ozols works as a fitter onboard. He sails alternately on two sister ships, Finnmill and Finnulp. Eight weeks' work onboard entitles him to a four-week holiday. Motorsports is one of his interests.



OS Martins Krisans hoisting the Finnlines flag.



The main engines have been named Thelma and Louise after the principal characters in a road movie.

spoken among the crew members, many of whom come from Latvia and Lithuania. The master and chief engineer come from Sweden.

The ship calls at the ports of Lübeck, Kotka, Helsinki, Rauma and occasionally Hanko. All crew members are happy to be sailing in "domestic" waters.

### Keeping fit

Six cabins accommodate a maximum of 12 cargo-related passengers. There is a separate dining room and day room for passengers. The

### MS FINNPULP

Chartered by Finnlines  
Built in Najing, China 2002

GT	25,654
Length	187.06
Breadth	26.50
Draft	6.90
Speed	20 knots
Lane metres	2680
Flag state	United Kingdom

ship has a conference room for crew meetings, a laundry room, one mess for the officers, another for the ratings. In case of sudden illness, there is a spacious hospital cabin with two beds.

The ship is equipped with a sauna and two jacuzzis. The gym is well equipped, but it is mostly used during the winter. In summer, the crew prefers to ride a bike or go fishing.

Basketball has been played frequently on deck, but more practice is probably needed, as many balls have been lost.

*“He admits it has been an extra struggle to learn the Finnish names of islands and lighthouses.”*

### New challenges in familiar fairways

The master, Thomas Malmberg, joined the ship in the Suez Canal at the end of March 2002, but he has been sailing onboard vessels chartered by Finnlines for some five years. Holding pilot's certificates to Kotka, Helsinki and Rauma, he is familiar with Finnish coastal waters. He admits it has been an extra struggle to learn the Finnish names of islands and lighthouses.

The master has already started work to meet the requirements of the ISPS Code (International Ship and Port Facility Security), which comes into force on 1 July 2004. The code will involve many restrictions, such as strict access control. “It's a pity you can't drive around in ports to look at the ships any more.” I quite agree, having driven around the port of Kotka in my uncle's Beetle as a child.

**Karel Lemmik**, the third officer, keeps 4-hour watches on the bridge. Karel is a graduate of the Estonian Maritime Academy and he has been working on MS Finnulp for two months. He has previous experience of Finnish waters from sailing on the passenger ferry Nordlandia, which operates between Tallinn and Helsinki. His knowledge of Finnish is useful to pick up information from the VTS. Like many of the crew members, Karel mentions sports as a hobby.

### Keeping Thelma and Louise running

The chief engineer, **Staffan Andersson**, gives a tour around the engine room. The two main engines have been named Thelma and Louise after the principal characters in the American film. The main engines are equipped with a water emulsion system, reducing nitrogen oxide emissions.

The Amos maintenance programme is used to record information on engine operations. A work list is printed out for the engineers and engine crew once a month. The Finnulp is the last of a series of six vessels built in China in 2000-2002. Four vessels are of the Finnmaster type, whereas the Finnmill and Finnulp have greater capacity. Staffan shows me how the ships exchange information on maintenance and repairs.

Apart from sailing, Staffan has worked on oil drilling platforms in the North Sea and Mexico. He has lived in the United States where he did enjoy the warm climate, but today he prefers four seasons to one. On holiday, he likes to hunt and he is looking forward to the elk-hunting season.

The weather has stayed glorious throughout the voyage. “It's a fine day to be a sea captain”, says Thomas Malmberg when the ship berths in Hietanen at two in the afternoon. The captain will leave the bridge and move on to paperwork, as some crew members are going on holiday and will want their money. Others are coming to work and their certificates need to be checked. Fortunately, most of the crew have been sailing on the Finnulp or Finnmill for over a year now and know the ship and their duties.

The chief officer, **Viktors Suharevs**, has been on board for eight weeks. He has no special plans for his forthcoming holiday, but time will certainly fly among family and friends.

An overnight stay in Kotka once a week gives an opportunity to do maintenance work onboard. Hopefully, there will also be some time to go for a bicycle ride.

TEXT AND PHOTOS:  
ANNA-LIISA PERTTILÄ

# Planning

– well begun is half done

Sompasaari is one end of a bridge to Europe, Finland's leading port for wheeled cargo. Now that it operates seven days a week, with the number of cargo units handled daily varying from a hundred to well over a thousand, precise advance planning is needed for each ship that calls at the port.

**T**he biggest challenge for production planners is the great range of loads on different days of the week, and even within the same working day. Obviously staff needed to handle over 1,000 cargo units in a day can't be rationally employed on any day when there are only 100 units. Work like this can't be done in advance or later so planning is more than half of the job.

On busy days, when several ships arrive in port at the start of the working day, co-operation with shipping lines is also needed to be able to decide the priority given to each vessel.

Another partial solution is to use the resources of different operations within Finnlines, focusing and refocusing them during the working day. Thus, one employee could well be assigned several jobs during the day. In traditional port operations, each ship has been handled as a project that begins when it docks and ends when it sets sail. In modern production planning,



it is the workday that becomes the project, during which certain tasks have to be completed.

The key requirement for planning is to obtain and process transport information in advance. It is vital to see the manifest and cargo chart of each ship as early as possible. In this respect electronic data transfer has meant a great step forward. It gives the planners a few extra hours although the port operator still does not get the information a moment too soon. At the planning stage, small errors in the manifest do not matter but they do cause certain delays at the production stage.

Planning at Sompasaari is also very important for production management. Management includes directing each customer to the right area of the terminal. Planners try to locate cargo units so that they travel the shortest possible route from the ship to the port gate, and vice versa. At the same time, traffic congestion has to be taken into account. If Finnsteve tug masters and the customer's

trucks are directed to the same area at the same time, there will be traffic jams affecting all parties.

Better cargo data flows and more effective production planning have previously allowed customer service to be improved by moving the closing time for semi-trailers two hours closer to the ship's departure time. In practice, though, cargo can still be accepted a few minutes before departure if the customer has agreed in advance with the shipping company what time the cargo will arrive in the port.

Because Sompasaari's development has focussed on serving road traffic, planning of container handling has lagged behind. Its next challenge is to create a transport information chain for container handling, to form a basis for production planning and management.



Planners try to locate cargo units so that they travel the shortest possible route from the ship to the port gate, and vice versa.

TEXT: VELI TAKANEN  
PHOTOS: FINNLINES ARCHIVES

# New pontoon in Zeebrugge

Sea-Ro Terminal, the most important stevedore in Zeebrugge and handler of the three Finnlines vessels calling at the port, began using a brand new ro-ro pontoon in July.



PHOTO: SEA-RO

Cutting the tape at the inauguration of the new pontoon: from left Mieke Merlevede - Sea-Ro, Luc Hens - Finnlines Belgium, Pierre Kerckaert - MBZ (Zeebrugge Port Authority), Guy Gillis - Sea-Ro, Cees Ravestein - Ravestein (builders of the pontoon) and Theo Milliau - Sea-Ro.



PHOTO: SEA-RO

The safe working load on the pontoon is as much as 220 tonnes.



PHOTO: LEO MOONS

MS Transbaltica discharging at the new pontoon on 13 September.

Sea-Ro Terminal's Pontoon 11 was inaugurated on Thursday, 24 July.

The pontoon was constructed by Ravestein, a specialist Dutch contractor, and is the culmination of an important investment programme by the Zeebrugge stevedore, bringing its fleet of ro-ro pontoons to an ultra-modern level.

In a speech on the occasion, **Guy Gillis**, General Manager of Sea-Ro Terminal, expressed pride that his company was able to offer such advanced superstructure to its customers.

"Without exaggeration we can say that our pontoons are among the most modern in the world. It is important to show our customers that Sea-Ro, even in these difficult economic times, continues to invest in modern superstructure. It creates customer confidence, because they receive the guarantee that their vessels will be handled in the best possible way," Guy Gillis said.

The inaugurated pontoon, known as Pontoon 11, is the third to be brought into service in a very short time. The others are at the Swedish Quay and the Hermes Pier (Britannia Dock), in addition to the latest pontoon at the Wielingen Dock. It brings Sea-Ro Terminal's total fleet of ro-ro pontoons to eight.

The investment in the three new pontoons is 7.4 million euros. "If we also take into account the investment in the two-level pontoon at the Wielingen Dock, then total investment over the last few years has increased to 13.3 million euros," Guy Gillis calculates.

Although not identical, the three pontoons have the same main characteristics. The difference is in the length of access-bridges and the dimensions of the floating pontoons. The similarities are more important: all three have a Safe Working Load of 220 tonnes and the distance between the guardrails on the access bridges is 11 metres. This makes it very easy to discharge any ship at any of the three terminals.

Pontoon 11 can also be seen as the completion of the superstructure of Wielingen Dock: at this berth, Sea-Ro has a ro-ro platform that can simultaneously offer lo-lo facilities.

The newest pontoon at Wielingen Dock is already in use by Finnlines vessels and for vessels loading paper for Philadelphia in the USA.

TEXT: LEO MOONS



PHOTO: SEA-RO



# Transport of drums from Savonlinna to Eilenburg



Mr Jürgen Brunner says that Finn Heavy Project Oy has specialised in project and special cargoes.

Once again Finnlines proves to be an expert in carrying heavy and out-of-gauge cargo.

A Finnlines customer, Finn Heavy Project Oy of Helsinki, needed to transport two drums, each 17.60 metres long, weighing 76 tonnes and with a diameter of 4.60 metres. They had to travel more than 2,000 Km across Europe with the help of Finnlines.

The drums, needed for processing waste paper, are produced in Savonlinna in eastern Finland. They were brought by road across the country to Rauma in western Finland to meet the MS Finnmerchant, which provides a deck high enough for this cargo. Finnlines could also offer a special roll trailer for moving and lashing the drums on board.

After arrival in Lübeck, Finnlines supervised reloading of the drums at the Nordlandkai in Lübeck onto a barge for the inland waterways, which proved to be the best means of transport, because a load with a height over 3.90 metres is not very easy

to steer on German roads with many bridges and flyovers. The barge sailed via the Elbe-Lübeck canal to the River Elbe and from there southwards.

In late August, Germany was experiencing a drought and the water level of the River Elbe was exceptionally low. The cargo had to be reloaded on to a special low-bed truck much farther north than had been planned. It was brought the last 150 Km by road to the final destination in Eilenburg, Saxony, where the drums are to be used in a paper production plant. The whole trip from eastern Finland to south-eastern Germany took 12 days.

Finn Heavy Project Oy, the haulier, is a specialist in project and special cargo and has been successfully doing it for more than 12 years. The company was founded by **Jürgen Brunner**, a native of Germany who has been living in Finland for 30 years.

“It was not the first time we have handled such large, heavy objects,” he said. “Sometimes they come with a sieve attached, which makes them even bigger. We are expecting the next transport of drums in October; they will be the thirtieth and thirty-first we’ve carried. And this time they’ll go from Savonlinna via Hamburg to China!”

TEXT: UTE SCHILLER  
PHOTOS: THOMAS HAUSHAHN



The drums were reloaded under Finnlines' supervision at the Nordlandkai onto a barge for transportation to the final destination.



Six sleepyheads from previous years carry the covered figure of Christer Backman, still soundly asleep, between a guard of honour consisting of parade girls, down the jetty to be tossed into the sea.

## Finland's Official Sleepyhead heads Finnlink



The 2003 Sleepyhead, managing director Christer Backman, received his sceptre, deed and congratulations from last year's titleholder, Pentti Arajärvi, DL.

The 2003 Sleepyhead works on behalf of Naantali port and business life. He is known as the innovative head of a sea transportation company and an accurate forecaster and visionary. Can you already guess who?

A crowd of about a hundred were waiting tensely at Naantali Marina on 27 July, for a closely guarded secret to be revealed: the identity of the Official National Sleepyhead. A group of previous titleholders carried the mysterious figure, thickly wrapped, to the end of the jetty, where the somnolent hero was thrown into the water to freshen him up. Rising from his soaking, the managing director of Oy Finnlink Ab, **Christer Backman**, was greeted with waves of applause as he scrambled back onto the jetty.

"Not cold at all," he insisted, and the summer weather had indeed been hot, but it was drizzling with rain that day.

**Pentti Arajärvi**, DL, the husband of Finland's President Tarja Halonen, last year's Sleepyhead, gladly relinquished his sceptre to Backman, who received the title in appreciation of his work for the benefit of the Port of Naantali and local business life. At the same

## Sleepyhead Day's long history

In its present form, the Sleepyhead tradition has been celebrated since the 1950s but the day's roots stretch much farther back into history.

Sleepyhead Day is celebrated in honour of the saints of Ephesus who, fleeing from persecution by the Roman emperor Decius, slept in a cave for some 200 years. The first reference in Finland to Sleepyhead Day is in the almanac of Hemming's hymnbook of 1652, where Bishop Hemming recalls the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus.

Sleepyhead Day Carnivals began in Naantali as entertainment for spa guests at the end of the 19th century, when townsfolk and visitors gathered early in the morning to drink the spa waters. Burs were thrown at late arrivals and the noisy procession woke up the rest of the town.

Today, the title is a tribute to services rendered to the town and inhabitants of Naantali by people such as Christer Backman, who has headed Finnlink since 1988. Previous titleholders have included all the mayors of Naantali, **Arto Noras**, cellist, **Raino Äijälä**, sculptor, **Mikko Rönnholm**, member of parliament, **Lea Laven**, singer and **Matti Tuominen**, chief gardener, as well as last year's Sleepyhead, **Pentti Arajärvi**, DL.

time, the award is a mark of respect for all the port operations. Income from the port has been very important to the town in developing services.

After his morning dip, the newly invested Sleepyhead headed for the sauna and to put some dry clothes on. Then the cheerful procession marched through the town to a stage in Kaivopuisto Park and the Market Square, where Christer Backman received congratulations and enjoyed a herring breakfast. After the celebrations, the hero was planning to head for an auction in nearby Rymättylä and new adventures amid articles from the 1950s and 60s.

TEXT: MARIKA VIHRELAIHO  
PHOTOS: NAANTALIN MATKAILU OY

This summer an exhibition in memory of Jaakko Piela was held in Kotka library from 24 July to 15 August. In all, 50 of his scale models were on display.

## Jaakko Piela, master of scale

**Jaakko Piela** was born in Koivisto on the Karelian Isthmus in 1936 and died in Hamina on 18 September 2002. He began his seafaring career aboard MS Sweden in 1951 as a mess boy.

After sailing the world's seas, he came ashore to work with the Merchant Navy Service Council and later the Finnish Seamen's Service from 1970 to 1993. It was after retirement that his own fleet began to grow.

He had started building scale models of ships as a hobby back in 1975. His first target was to build a model of all the freighters on which he had ever sailed. Over the years it became his philosophy to create miniature

copies of old lost freight ships and thus preserve them for generations to come.

The scale models of Jaakko Piela have been on show at dozens of model exhibitions. They have often won gold, silver and bronze awards, as well as honourable mentions, in shows of seamen's handicrafts and Model Expo.

Piela was a giant of scale modelling, a maker in his own class, and his models of freighters are again the best of the exhibition. Their proportions, their finish, colour, polish and details are accomplished with professionalism. The result is faultless. Piela had a deep understanding of the structure and

Jaakko Piela at his workbench. The SS Hamina, under construction, remained uncompleted.

form of power-driven vessels. In his hands, a scale model became a refined and sophisticated piece of work, like a sculpture.

The skill of this scale modeller was admired for the last time at an exhibition of the Marine Association (Meriliitto – Sjöfartsförbundet) held in Helsinki's Jugend Hall on 25 April to 2 June 2002. Jaakko's workbench again drew crowds as he answered the questions of admirers.

Jaakko Piela on scale modelling: "The history of model ships is as old as seafaring itself. Of the steam tramps of post-war Finland – the real workhorses of the seas – only memories are left. A scale model is a tribute to Finnish seafarers."

TEXT: LEENA ROINE

Models and photographs attract a large following.



PHOTO: JUHA RAATIKAINEN



PHOTO: TATU KORHONEN



PHOTO: TATU KORHONEN



STS MIR waving the Finnlines flag.



"Greeting each other". Markku Anttila blew the horn of MS Finnhansa – Gunter Ranke waving from STS Mir.

## Sail your dreams

This year the Cutty Sark Tall Ships Race under the motto "Sail Your Dreams" culminated in Travemünde.

**A**fter racing between the harbours of Gdynia and Turku, the ships had their second race between Riga and Travemünde. Gale-force winds and high waves kept the teams busy and caused problems for some ships on the Travemünde leg. All this was forgotten after the sails and ropes were mended and the parties started. During the three days in Travemünde, about 500,000 visitors marvelled at the tall ships, among them the green-rigged Alexander von Humboldt, the Lord Nelson, the sister ships "Mir" and "Nadezhda" and the champion of this year's race the Sorlandet of Norway. The vessels were open to the public most of the time.

Finnlines chartered the Mir for a party for customers and friends on Friday 22 August. It was a fine setting among the tall ships, with entertainment provided by a splendid local jazz band "Dr. Jazz Company".

The party was a great success and the guests danced well into the night. The Mir proved to be an excellent choice: the crew earned the coveted "Sail Training International Friendship Trophy" for contributing most to international camaraderie.

"Viva Travemünde, viva Mexico" sounded the loudspeakers on board the Mexican three master "Cuauhtemoc" as she joined the parade of the tall ships in Travemünde on Sunday 24 August, which was the highlight of events around this year's Cutty Sark Tall Ships Race.

The Mexican crew found their way into the hearts of the audience as the whole crew, standing on the yardarms, greeted the accompanying boats and onlookers.

"Tall Ships ahoy and see you next year in Travemünde during the Baltic Sail on 19-22 August."

TEXT AND PHOTOS: UTE SCHILLER

## Whodunits and romances Finnlines reads fiction



**T**he Finnlines staff association, Teamship, runs a library offering a selection of some 1,000 titles. One third of the books are in Swedish, because the library was originally founded at the Swedish speaking FÅA – Finland Steamship Company. Today, Finnish is the dominant language but the library also has some novels in English.

It operates on a self-service basis, but Mari Eerola-Lewis keeps the collections in good order. A library committee, consisting of six avid readers, try their best to choose titles for every taste: it buys contemporary prize-winning novels, as well as romances, (auto)biographies and suspense thrillers. Many of the readers appreciate access to new titles that have a long waiting list in public libraries. As a rule, books are purchased twice a year, but readers have also made donations after spring-cleaning at home.

### Queens of crime, voices of the heart

Mari welcomes feedback from readers. Agatha Christie has devout fans year after year. Other popular thriller writers include Leena Lehtolainen and Ilkka Remes from Finland and Liza Marklund and Åke Edwardsson from Sweden. Romantic books by Barbara Taylor-Bradford, Maeve Binchy and Nora Roberts have been borrowed by female readers. The international bestselling authors John Irving and John Grisham are also at the top of the list.

TEXT: ANNA-LIISA PERTTILÄ



# Naming of MS Öland

A clear blue sky, bright sunshine, 26°C and calm: could there be better weather conditions for a ship-naming ceremony? Seven hundred were celebrating the launching of the MS Öland in the harbour of Hamburg at invitation of the shipping yard J.J. Sietas KG, the owner DT-Bereederungs GmbH and the charterer Team Lines.

Patron of the launching ceremony was Mrs. **Raija-Liisa Jokela**, the wife of the Finnish consul general in Hamburg, **Mikko Samuli Jokela**. Nice company and good food made the party a special treat as the ship cruised through scenic parts of the harbour on the River Elbe.

The MS Öland will serve the route of Bremerhaven/Hamburg to Rauma and vice versa. She is the sister ship of the MS Gotland (launched in April 2003), the MS Helgaland (launched in May) and last but not least the MS Tavastland (launched in August). These ships were devised to meet the needs of a sophisticated feeder container transport: fast (18 – 19 kn), a capacity of 822 TEU and advanced special devices on deck allowing fast and easy lashing of containers. They are also eco-friendly, meaning that no tank containing fuel is close to the hull, earning the designation of “Green Ships”.

TEXT: UTE SCHILLER

PHOTO: KATHRIN DOMNINIAK

Mrs Raija-Liisa Jokela, patron of the launching ceremony, and Mr Rudolf Tietjens from DT-Bereederungs GmbH on board MS Öland on the River Elbe.



The Finnlines' dragon boat team was composed of Christina Damstén, Marja Kallio, Nina Liljeqvist, Mirja Parikka, Helena Raimi, Anne Ryhänen, Heidi Tynkkynen, (plus Niina Stykki and Pinja Kasvio in qualifying rounds). Bengt Ekholm, Karl-Gustav Kaisla, Reijo Krook, Peter Martin, Rainer Mérus, Ilpo Mäkinen, Henri Nevakivi, Thomas Nifkiffa, Peter Sandberg, Pertti Väänänen, Henrik Ohenoja, Mika Halme, Juho Viitanen, Mikko Lehtinen and Juha Salmi.

## Finnlines' dragon boat surges ahead

Dragon boat racing, which originated in China, reached Finnish shores in 1990 and has steadily grown to be one of the largest summer events in many places. Charity is part of the dragon boat tradition, and the races held in Helsinki for several years have helped to raise money for neo-natal intensive care at the Hospital for Children and Adolescents. The race began for the Finnlines team in the qualifying heats on 12 August.

### Success crowns early performances

With one carefully executed practice session behind us, we arrived at Kaisaniemi ready to give our opponents a tough challenge. Teams from Spar and TNT were in the same round. Our cox was the same as last year, **Kalle Kaisla**, who kept his cool despite provocations from his old friend, **Höyry Häyrinen**, who was commentator for the race. Despite a strong performance we narrowly came in last.

So it was a great surprise when we learned that our time was good enough to go on to the quarterfinals. Thinking that the competition was over for us, some of the team had already gone home. Suddenly we were faced with the urgent job of recruiting replacements. But we did it and paddled our way through to the

semi-finals. The whole team was amazed; in most other years we have been knocked out in the qualifiers.

### Rain dampens semi-finals

Stung by the pouring rain we bravely began paddling towards the start. As our pirate's hats became drenched, black dye started to pour down our faces. The starting shot rang out through the rain and we were off. On the last leg of the race, a dragon boat in the next lane turned towards us on a collision course, which spoilt our rhythm, so our final sprint was not quite as good as we could have managed. Even so, our time was a full two seconds better than before. Tough times bring out the best in a Finn!

We may have been secretly satisfied not to get through to the finals, and to be able to change into dry clothes and head for the shelter of the terraces. The last casualties of the race, after our sopping hats and dyed t-shirts, were the captain's jeans, which caught fire in the competition pavilion as they were drying over the sausage grill. Preparations for next year's competition will have to start with new outfits.

TEXT: NINA LILJEQVIST  
DRAGON BOAT CAPTAIN

## Retirements



Kalevi received a leather cap from his co-workers. Outi Byckling looks on amused.

### Kalevi Silvastu

A long-serving crewer and head of crew hiring, **Kalevi Silvastu** decided to retire in his prime at sixty. He went into retirement on 1st August, having served the company for 37 years.

Born in Ylöjärvi Kalevi Silvastu studied radiotelegraphy in Helsinki. He spent a couple of years on Ålander ships before signing up with Finnlines' Lotila on the Mediterranean line in autumn 1966. "On the ships from Åland, I learned Swedish and saw the world," he recalls.

When German passenger traffic began, Kalevi switched to MS Finnhansa and MS Finnpartner as a telegrapher; his duties also included some staffing matters and wage calculation. In summer he filled in as a payroll calculator in the company's office. The move ashore happened "little by little," he says. In 1968 he left seafaring entirely to become a wage calculator for Finnlines crewing department. In autumn 1971 he switched to crew hiring.

No one went aboard before their certificates of competency had been checked. At that time, the ships still had crews of about 40 men, compared with an average of 15 today. "Sometime in the 1970s, in Finnjet times, the

one-one rotation system began and this made hiring easy," he says. The job was most enjoyable when many new ships were entering service and needed crews quickly. Time flies when things are busy.

Kalevi feels that his job is done, and it is easy to retire "though I'll miss my good friends," he adds. He has visited the ships regularly and got to know the crews over the years. "Open, honest people! No need to beat around the bush. You can speak direct-

ly." He himself talks rapidly, he notes, because there has not usually been time for chattering. Things have to be worked out quickly.

In his free time Kalevi has been an actor in Vantaa for many years. He intends to continue his acting hobby. A wife, a daughter, a son studying at home, a dog and a terrace house will probably take up the rest of his time. We wish him a happy retirement. RE



### Harry Smolsky

**H**arri Smolsky went on early retirement at the start of October, having worked for the company for exactly 33 years.

Harri started working for Finnlines in 1970, first as a computing expert. From

1971 to 1990 he held management positions in the financial unit. Back in the 1960s, when he worked for Enso-Gutzeit, he had designed the first data processing systems for shipping and afterwards developed Finnlines data systems. He participated in the projects to establish Finnlink and F-Ships and was appointed head of finances and administration for the new F-Ships at the start of 1990.

After F-Ships was combined with the Finn carriers organisation in 1991, he served as head of computing for F-Ships traffic until F-Ships traffic ceased operations. RE

## Retirements



### Simo Kuusiola

**S**imo Kuusiola retired from Finnlines at the start of October 2003 after 38 years of service. Most of his working career was spent in managing the marketing of Finland-North Sea services, and he had a firm belief in unit traffic. From 2001, he was on special assignment and head of the Agencies department. He was an all-round expert in Finnlines Shipping, as skilled in operational as commercial jobs. He was also a keen trainer at in-house training events and outside the Company.

This born-and-bred city boy was interested in seafaring from an early age, and his enthusiasm only increased during his military service at sea, part of which was served as captain of a wooden minesweeper. In the 1960s, Simo polished his skills in different shipping related companies in Åland, Hamburg and London. He is probably one of the few Finns, he says, who has cleared ships in ports on the River Thames and at Trinity House in London.

Since 1973, Simo Kuusiola has been in senior management with sales and marketing, especially for unit traffic. He was involved in the start-up of Finland's first North Sea container service from Antwerp to Helsinki back in 1967. Later, it was based on his ideas that the Company developed and started box bulk container traffic in 1972 from West Germany to Finland, mainly for the paper industry.

Simo Kuusiola believes that the high point for Finland-North Sea services was the switch to the era of jumbo ro-ro vessels when the first ship of a fleet of newbuilds, MS Arcturus, entered service.

Other strong memories are of the affiliate company, Finnbelgia Agencies NV (now Finnlines Belgium) that he established in Antwerp in 1979, his work on the board of the subsidiary Finnfrance with rather limited French, and his great success in marketing Finn carriers services and moving in 1986 to

Antwerp's new Left Bank port area despite strong local resistance.

In 1984 Simo Kuusiola was appointed head of marketing for the new North Sea business unit, where he was again responsible for Continent-Finland, as well as routes between Finland and Britain.

From the late 1970s right up to the early 1990s, Simo Kuusiola helped arrange numerous seminar trips for customers on the subject of transportation. These created important contacts with transport sector decision-makers; Simo emphasises that business needs heart – interpersonal skills – at least as much as hardware. The vessels can be bought or leased but motivation cannot and it takes a lot of work to create professionalism.

Simo believes in fostering a strong spirit of togetherness at the branches. He used to call almost daily to our offices in Belgium and Britain and often to other agencies to keep in touch with what was going on.

From 1996 till autumn 2000, Simo Kuusiola was the head of both the West European marketing department and container traffic. This included responsibility for container services to Russia. He still warmly recalls the dedication of the staff and their flexibility and innovativeness at a time when Russian traffic increased as much as 30 percent in a month.

Simo cherishes his memories of Finnlines, its predecessors and agencies. "It's been a company of fantastic personalities with great abilities and language skills," he says, recalling all the names of his colleagues down the years, to say nothing of the customers. "What's more we've preserved certain fine traditions and manners, as expressed in the Christmas and spring parties, and so on. The work has been varied, motivating, linguistically challenging and stimulating." RE

*We wish him a happy retirement*



### Jaakko "Jaska" Mattila

**J**aakko Mattila went on early retirement from the start of June after serving the company for a total of 37 years. He began with Finnlines in August 1966 as an assistant in the Technical Department, also handling various other projects and costing. When Finn carriers began operations in 1976, he became head of the Research and Development department. In 1982, he returned to Finnlines as head of freight traffic.

Jaska Mattila is best remembered as the manager and active organiser of F-Ships traffic, a job he was appointed to at the start of 1990. He held this position for more than ten years until F-Ships' operations were terminated.

RE

## Congratulations

### Birthdays

*Full Ahead* magazine publishes the milestone birthdays of company employees. If you would prefer this information not to appear, please contact the editor at least two months in advance.

### Finnlines

#### 60 years

4.10. **Karl-Gustav Kaisla**  
9.10. **Hans Hellström**, Finnsailor  
19.11. **Pauli Moilanen**  
14.12. **Markku Anttila**, Finn hansa

#### 50 years

2.10. **Erkki Englund**  
7.11. **Hannu Timonen**, Finnsailor  
14.12. **Veli Arpiainen**, Finnclipper

### Finnsteve

#### 60 years

5.10. **Rainer Richter**  
17.11. **Kalevi Jalkanen**

#### 50 years

21.10. **Niilo Kotilainen**  
29.10. **Jarkko Tolonen**  
8.11. **Seppo Kousa**

## Appointment to Finnish-British Chamber of Commerce



In June **Brian Rolfe**, who is the Finance Director of Finnlines UK Ltd, was appointed a Director of the Finnish-British Chamber of Commerce in London. The Chamber of Commerce promotes trade between Finland and the Britain. The organisation was formed in March 2001 to replace the old Finnish-British Trade Guild. The Chamber has many networking events where companies from both countries can meet.

## Appointments

### Finnlines



#### Outi Byckling

has been appointed Manager for Crewing and Salaries as of 1 August 2003. Outi reports to Sixten Norrgrann.

### Finnlines UK Ltd



#### Gary Robinson

has been appointed Account Manager. Gary is based in our Hull office and will gradually take over Malcolm McEwan's Accounts/Area (Northern England and Scotland). Gary reports to Annika Alapeteri.

## New employees

### Finnlines



#### Tarja Forsblom-Korsi

started as Corporate HRD Coordinator on 1 September 2003.



#### Anne Mäki

started as Hostess on 1 September 2003.

### Finnlines Representative office in St. Petersburg



#### Olga Tsvetkova

started as Market Analyst/Marketing Assistant on 1 July 2003.

## Magazine assistants

**Leena Liuskanto, Sixten Norrgrann, Anna-Liisa Perttilä, Aapo Rauhio, Tom Waselius and Ute Schiller.**

## Internal transfers

To Team Lines Finland Oy from Finnlines Plc as of 1 May 2003

**Göran Backman**  
**Anna Gripenberg**  
**Lisbeth Kettunen**  
**Liisa Kuusinen**  
**Kjell Lindholm**  
**Hannu Möller**  
**Hannu Pihlantie**

**Petri Pohjanlehto**  
**Helena Raimi**  
**Pirkko Rauhio**  
**Matti Räsänen**  
**Arja Sallinen**  
**Aulikki Tilli**  
**Anneli Timola**

## Thank you

Many thanks to all of you who, one way or another, helped to celebrate my "coming of age"!

Heidi R-N

## Thank you

*The parties were fun,  
The visits are done,  
Now thank you to everyone.*

With belated appreciation to Finnsailor and Finnlines and those who so kindly remembered me.

Aake

## In Memoriam

### Finnlines

First engineer

#### Martti Einari Silverin

(formerly Silvennoinen)

*born 17.8.1949 in Kerimäki  
died 19.7.2003 in Ipswich*

Martti Silverin began in the company's service as a motor apprentice in the Heros. From 1979 he was an engineer in the ships of the Finnish Steamship Company and Finn carriers, until he and his ship, the Pollux, switched to Finnlines in 1987. He served as an engineer for ships under Finnlines management until his death. His last ship was MS Finnmerchant.

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# Few jobs need more skills than **stevedoring**



Wharfies are a port's service wizards.

Stevedores have always been masters of versatility, able to switch from controlling heavy machinery to handling information technology to serving customers in several languages.

**L**auri Hartikainen of Finnsteve feels that the job's growing demands only make it more fascinating. "The Port is a better workplace than people realise, and a dependable employer," he says.

Like many of the other stevedores in Helsinki's Sompasaari Port, Lauri Hartikainen has solid experience at sea. He sailed with Finnlines from 1969 until 1980.

Most of that time was spent on North American and Mediterranean routes, but Hartikainen also travelled as far as South Korea and Japan. Some of the most colourful stories from his seafaring days are from Asia.

"I've never seen traffic jams like the ones in Japan. The taxi drivers in Osaka were incredible, threading their taxis through that great ants' nest of congestion. I still can't see how they found their way through the chaos."

# stevedoring

In Vera Cruz, Mexico, it was the primitive state of port equipment that caught his eye. "Those guys didn't even have automatic roll clamps. It was horrible to watch how they unloaded the rolls of paper that had been so carefully loaded at the Finnish end."

It was while he was a sailor that he decided to take a port job. The birth of his second child in 1980 put the final seal on his change of career.

"The boy was born on the last day of July. On the first day of August I was working for Finnsteve in the port," he recalls. He says he was fortunate to get into the apprenticeship programme.

"At that time it was the fashion to train people to be able to manage every possible job

in the port. It's been really useful although there have been times when I haven't done much general stevedoring. A port needs versatile people who can turn their hand to whatever comes along."

It is a useful thing for a stevedore to have spent some time at sea. Some of Hartikainen's friends from earlier days are still seamen, but many an old sailor is now working ashore.

## A vehicle like an expensive writing desk

Information technology has transformed stevedoring in the past twenty years, Hartikainen says. No one at the start of the 1980s could even have imagined the changes that were coming.

"There's a computer terminal in my straddle carrier that shows me what has to be lifted next and other upcoming tasks. I call it my silent workmate. The whole thing is like a really expensive writing desk," he says of a vehicle the size of a three-storey house.

"There's IT everywhere. We're currently trying out automatic jacks that have built-in microchips to transmit their location."

An automatic jack makes it faster and easier to couple semi-trailers on board ship. A large ro-ro vessel can carry 150 semi-trailers so automation means big savings. Coupling takes less time.

As a driver Hartikainen handles a wide range of equipment, each heavier and more complex than the last: straddle carriers, coun-



## Temporary staff always needed

Old movies show stevedores as rather shady types who turn up at the port assignment office in the early hours whenever they're low on cash.

Ports still have assignment offices to handle employment but the dubious nature of stevedores no longer exists outside the cinema.

Temporary labour needs are handled via what is called the B-employee system. As an A-class stevedore with a permanent employment contract, Lauri Hartikainen has nothing but praise for the temporary staff.

"In this kind of field, it's obvious that workforce needs vary constantly. We have B-listers working here all the time, but they've all been through basic training. It's called the B-list because that's where they sign up when they're looking for work but these people know their business."

Dividing employees into A and B classes sounds grimmer than it really is. The fact is that the system benefits organised employees, as well as a stevedore employer like port operator Finnsteve.

The availability of B-list workers helps to ensure that stevedoring companies do not have to resort to laying off or dismissing permanent employees every time business conditions turn down.

## Finnsteve aims to be world-class

Finnsteve, already a leading Finnish port operator, has set itself ambitious objectives. The company wants to be the world's best in providing general cargo services.

Finnsteve monitors its standard of service with regular surveys. The functions measured include loading and unloading efficiency, cargo throughput times from gate to ship and the average time taken to serve a lorry collecting cargo. By these standards Finnsteve easily holds its own against competing European port operators.

To reach its goal, the company is making significant investments in equipment and staff training. Its computer system, for example, has tentacles that extend out as far as the tools used by stevedores working in port areas.

The tools themselves are many and heavy. In Helsinki alone Finnsteve has umpteen straddle carriers, as many reach stackers, and dozens of terminal tractors and trucks. It is thanks to these that the company's container terminals can handle more than a thousand containers a day.

Each week Helsinki's ports receive more than 20 container feeder vessels and about 50 ro-ro ships. This means about 10 ships every day of the year.

terbalance trucks, reach stackers, terminal tractors and so on.

The cargoes and equipment are expensive and there must be no accidents. For example, a ten-metre tall straddle carrier or a reach stacker costs hundreds of thousands of euros. These are the employer's investments and have to be used as efficiently as possible.

### Flexible working to meet service needs

Many outsiders regard stevedores as taciturn types and far from the model of customer-friendliness. The reality is different. Customer service arrived in the ports long ago.

The aim of better service for customers has moved port opening times and stevedore working hours ever closer to three-shift working.

Lauri Hartikainen says that working hours in Finnish ports since the latest employment contract took effect resemble the five-shift system of the paper industry.

"Today we accept, for example, rolls of paper day and night and next month we'll start despatching containers 24 hours a day," he notes. "Everyone understands that it doesn't suit customers to keep drivers waiting behind the wheel for the port to open."

Road transport companies want to keep their lorries on the move and distributors want goods in the shop faster than before. It was at the suggestion of the main wholesale chains that Sompasaari's first shift of the week on Monday now starts at 4 a.m.

### Vuosaari safeguards the future

No one can have followed the plans for a new national harbour at Vuosaari closer than the stevedores. Port professionals have not always had much patience with the delays and disputes about environmental impact. For stevedores the project has a direct effect on working conditions and the future. The same cannot be said of many other Vuosaari defenders and detractors.

In Lauri Hartikainen's view, Vuosaari safeguards the future of stevedoring. Among other things, the new port will certainly interest a new generation of young stevedores.

"It will bring new jobs and continuity to this sector. The main thing is to put an end to the whole on-again off-again dispute," he says.

"In any case, a new residential area will be built spreading from the north of Arabianranta towards Sompasaari. The city of Helsinki is looking for more land from here. We get a constant stream of surveyors taking soil samples and whatever."

Sompasaari works very well, he believes. Safety can never be overemphasised in port operations.

"This is an open port, with a lot of people moving around. Drivers realise they need to be wary of machinery but the same can't be said of the express messengers, occasional delivery staff and others who pass through the area," Hartikainen points out. "A carrier weighing over 80 thousand tonnes deserves some respect."

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