

This is an opportunity to hear about *Rakaia* after the end of Voyage 45 (28th March, 1968) when she ceased to operate as a Cadet Training Ship. Barrie Hudd was an Engineer Officer on *Rakaia* for Voyages 46 to 48 (1968 and 1969), and he has very kindly produced some engineering highlights from those voyages together with several interesting photographs.

**RAKAIA – THE COMPANY’S PRETTIEST SHIP
BY
BARRIE HUDD**

My association with the New Zealand Shipping Company began in 1968. I still have the original paperwork from the Marine Superintendent Engineer (P Dobbie) offering me an appointment as a Junior Engineer. The pay on offer was £75 per month, or £83 with part “A” Board of Trade Certificate, with the proviso that gross earnings were more than 20% higher on average when certain extra payments were included.

On 14th March, 1968, I received a letter advising me to report to the Chief Engineer, of *Ruahine* before 3 pm at 33 Shed, Royal Albert, Dock E 16, on Sunday 17th March, 1968, for relieving duties. After spending an enjoyable month on this ship, I received a telegram to report to the Chief Engineer of *Rakaia* at West Gladstone Dock, Liverpool, before 3 pm on Tuesday the 16th April 1968. I was appointed 5th engineer for the ensuing voyage.

Voyage 46

Rakaia had ceased to be a Cadet Training Ship at the end of Voyage 45, and by the time that I joined her she only carried a few deck and engineering apprentices.

Throughout Voyage 46, I was on watch with the 2nd Engineer, Dennis Metcalf, or ‘snaggsie’, as he was called by the engineering crew. Whilst most of the voyage was relatively uneventful from an engineering perspective, we discovered a major problem with the main engine camshaft on reaching the Panama Canal from Timaru.

This forced us to go along side at Balboa for three or four days to do the necessary repairs, working 6 hours on and 6 hours off at first; for some inexplicable reason, the need for sleep vanished once a local bar was found!

We finally returned to the UK on the 1st August 1968.

Voyage 47

On rejoining *Rakaia*, I was promoted to 4th Engineer, and we sailed from Liverpool on the 3rd Sept 1968. The list of the names of the officers serving on *Rakaia* for that voyage can be found in the “Fleet List” published in the Company’s Crossed Flags Magazine No.8 – November 1968 – and both it, and a photograph of some of the officers, are reproduced below.

	RAKAIA
Master	J. Cosker
Chief Officer	E. B. Daubeny, R.N.R.
Second Officer	G. F. Everitt
Third Officer	M. L. Martin
Junior Third Officer	J. S. Parker
Radio Officer	T. H. Webb
Purser/Chief Steward	S. G. Clarke
Chief Engineer	A. W. Tolan
Second Engineer	J. Charters
Third Engineer	J. F. May
Fourth Engineer	B. J. Hudd
Fifth Engineer	B. Hinchliffe
Sixth Engineer	D. Ellison
Seventh Engineer	J. E. Curran
Eighth Engineer	—
Junior Engineer	R. J. Gant
First Ref. Engineer	I. G. Davidson
Second Ref. Engineer	E. Doyle
First Electrician	W. C. A. Bainbridge
Second Electrician	P. Mills

“Fleet List” – ‘Crossed Flags’ Magazine No.8 – November 1968



Junior 3 rd Officer J S Parker	4 th Engineer Barrie Hudd
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1 st Refrigeration Engineer I G Davidson	1 st Electrician W C Bainbridge	Chief Steward S G Clarke
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3 rd Officer M L Martin	2 nd Officer Graham Everett	Chief Officer Ted Daubeny RNR	Captain John Cosker	Chief Engineer A W Tolan	2 nd Engineer J Charters	3 rd Engineer John May
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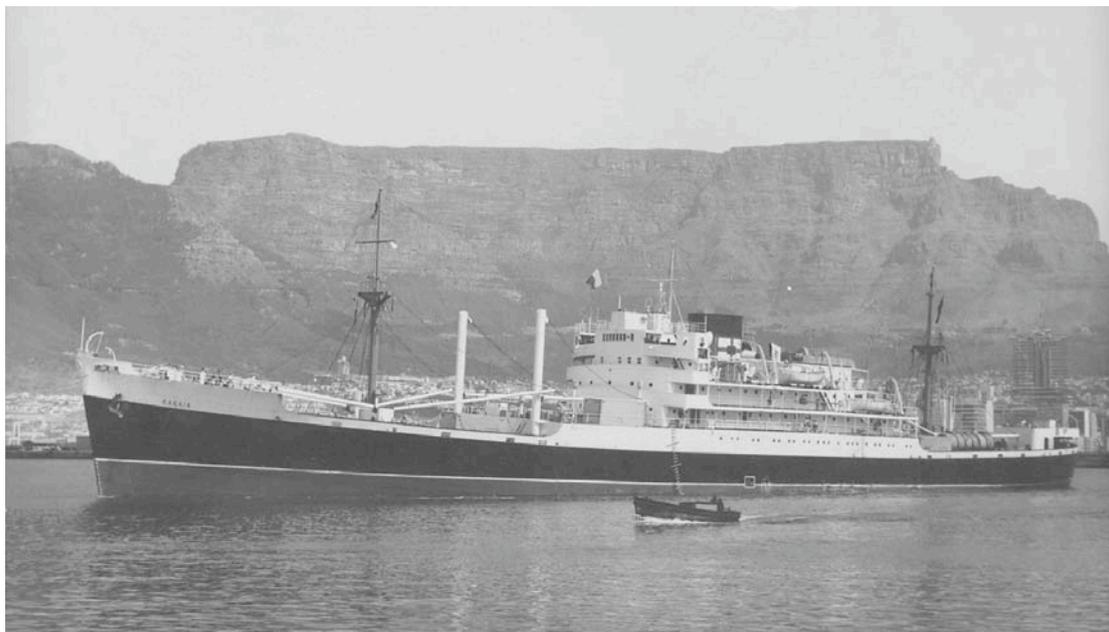
This voyage proved to be eventful! *Rakaia* was equipped with four main generators – made by Harland and Wolff and called “Harlandics”. Our first problem occurred when we lost the number one generator, when a con rod decided to come out of the side of the engine while it was running. This meant that the engine had to be removed by the shore side fitters while we were at Melbourne. A replacement engine (made by Ruston) was found in Sydney’s Una Park and successfully fitted by the shore side fitters. After all the work was finished, a big party was had with all the shore side fitters, before we sailed from Melbourne on 22nd December 1968, across the Indian ocean to Cape Town.



Generator Repairs
Left to Right
Donkey Man, Brian Hinchcliffe, Greaser, Barrie Hudd

During this voyage, the 3rd Engineer, John May, was working on repairs to No. 2 generator when the piston, that had been lifted in the liner, slipped down the liner and landed on his hand – cutting off the tops of three of his fingers. We immediately headed back to the nearest port in Australia, Fremantle, for urgent medical treatment. In the mean time, we had managed to contact a passenger liner with a doctor on board; a successful rendezvous was made, and we were able to transfer John to the passenger liner, using one of our life boats, and he was hauled aboard in one of their cargo nets. He told me later

on, when we next met up, that this had been quite a painful experience, and that he had kept “a close eye” on a shark that had been following the proceedings! John was hospitalised in Durban, and we arrived back in the UK on 5th February 1969.



Leaving Cape Town

Voyage 48.

We sailed from the UK on 3rd March 1969, and, on this voyage, I was the one to receive a serious injury whilst working on *Rakaia's* main engine. This engine was an eight-cylinder, two-stroke, double-acting, opposed-piston diesel engine, which was built under licence from Burmeister and Wain by Harland and Wolff Limited, Belfast.

We were in Wellington, New Zealand, in the April of 1969, and, while we were replacing one of the bottom exhaust pistons on the main engine, it slipped off the holding yoke and hit a crow bar, which hit me in the face – breaking my jaw in two places. I spent the next week in hospital, while the ship loaded around the New Zealand coast, and I then rejoined her for the homeward voyage – arriving back in Liverpool, via Dublin, on the 6th May 1969.

A second incident occurred when I was responsible for the engine controls, which, at that time, were on standby. *Rakaia* was listing to port, and I asked the Junior Engineer to see what the problem was. He came back and informed me that there was a leak by the refrigeration cooling pumps. As this continued, I instructed him to put the ballast pump on as well. I went to investigate, and I found the spool piece of pipe to the refrigeration pumps was leaking from the seaward side and getting worse by the minute. The Chief Engineer, A Tolan, was called, and it was decided that we had to abort the standby and call for a diver to cover the suction and make the necessary repairs replacing the spool pipe, before we could continue into port.



Left to Right
Barrie Hudd (Main Engine Controls) – Peter Mills, Electrician, (Air Start Valve)

I still have some receipt's from those days, when, for six New Zealand dollars, we could buy a whole lamb, which the Chief Cook cut up for a few beers, and, for five and a half dollars, we could buy a ten and a half pound box of rump steak – all of which we could store in the brine room for the voyage home.

Onboard expenses were very modest too. For example: a case of beer was one pound and four shillings; a bottle of spirits was twelve shillings and sixpence; and two hundred cigarettes were fourteen shillings!

I rejoined *Rakaia* at the King Harry Ferry, Falmouth, on 24th May, 1969, where she was laid up for a few months whilst waiting for work, but I then left her on 16th July before she sailed again.

My work then took me to the dry docks at Barry, Cardiff, South Wales, where I worked on many more NZSCo Ships.

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