

Review

Offshore

Serpent that coils its way around amazing secrets of the deep

Oil industry-backed project offers new gateway to scientific breakthroughs about the deep sea environment, writes **Martyn Wingrove**

THE offshore oil industry is not known for its environmental contributions. But it has lately shown not only its economic importance but also some benefits to the study of marine biology.

BP's backing of Serpent has allowed video images of marine life in waters of the West of Shetlands to be screened to the scientific community and soon to the public.

The project combines the expertise of the oil industry and the academic world and is also backed by contractors Subsea 7 and Transocean.

It has involved the use of Subsea 7's remotely operated vehicles during their breaks on working at BP's deepwater oil projects Foinaven and Schiehallion in the Atlantic Margin area.

"Serpent offers us a whole new gateway to scientific breakthroughs about the deep sea environment," said Ian Hudson, who is co-ordinating the project from his



Video images from the project have shown relatively unknown deepwater species.



base in Southampton Oceanography Institute.

Some amazing scenes from the ROV cameras have shown scientists many relatively unknown deepwater species in action such as anglerfish or sea cucumbers, sea spiders, starfish, monkfish and deepwater sharks.

The project has provided some benefits to BP and its contractors in that BP staff have developed a more accurate and cost effective protocol for collecting environmental samples and there is a morale boost for the ROV operators.

Now the BBC has become involved. Television programme makers are hoping to work with Serpent to shoot footage for the coming programme Planet Earth.

After two summers of trials in the West of Shetlands, Serpent is seen as a success and has been exported to other areas by other oil companies.

ChevronTexaco is one of

the leading followers of the project and is keen to participate. It has brought the project to the Gulf of Mexico on Transocean's drillship *Discoverer DeepSeas*.

French oil company Total is also involved having allowed the Serpent team access to the environment around the Lagan drilling project, West of Shetlands, using Subsea 7's *Clansman* ROV on Transocean's *Jack Bates* semi-submersible.

Mr Hudson is encouraging more oil companies to come on board and wants to see a similar programme happening in deepwaters off Trinidad, Brazil, the Mediterranean, Australia and West Africa.

For the oil industry it is a chance to show the world how unobtrusive it really is in deepwater environments, and for the scientific community it is a chance to see marine biology at work.

For more information go to www.serpentproject.com.



Hugh O'Mahony takes a look through the archives of Lloyd's List

July 2, 1923

NEW YORK, June 30. Sixteen steamships carrying 7,000 immigrants are anchored outside the harbour awaiting the stroke of midnight to dash into United States waters before the July immigration quota is exhausted.

The midnight race will be timed by three official watchers so that there may be no dispute about the first vessels to reach quarantine.

The cramped conditions of Ellis Island are expected to add to the misery of some of the immigrants who will have to face deportation because of the excessive numbers seeking admission.

The agent of Cosulich Line, of Trieste, here has sent a wireless message to the captain of the *President Wilson*, which is lying off the port with immigrants from Naples on board awaiting tomorrow's rush, advising him that all beer on board must be disposed of before the ship enters the harbour.

After an interval the captain replied that he was doing his best to comply with the order, and had offered the passengers free beer.

Despite their best endeavours, however, 20 barrels would have to be consigned to the sea.

July 2, 1898

INFORMATION comes from Peking that the amended Belgian Peking-Han-ka railway contract, signed at Shanghai on Monday, is regarded as definitive. The railway will extend the influence of Russia southward to the Yellow River.

July 7, 1898

ADMIRAL Sampson, telegraphing on Sunday, says "the fleet under my command offers the nation, as a Fourth of July present, the destruction of the whole of Admiral Cervera's fleet".

Two desperate dashes were made by Admiral Cervera to escape. Every one of his ships except the *Christopher Columbus* was forced ashore, burned and blown up, within 20 miles of Santiago, and at 60 miles west she lowered her colours.

One American alone was killed — the chief yeoman of the *Brooklyn*, which represented the United States at her Majesty's Jubilee — and only two were wounded.

Admiral Cervera, with 1,300 men, are prisoners in the hands of the Americans. Many hundred Spaniards must have perished from gun explosions and drowning. The Spanish Admiral is wounded in the arm.

On Sunday morning General Shafter summoned Santiago to surrender on pain of bombardment.

Complying with the application of the British consul and his colleagues, a postponement was granted to enable the non-combatants — about 20,000 in number — to withdraw.

Today Santiago will be bombarded if the Spanish commander declines to surrender.

When news of the ruin of the Spanish fleet reached American lines a regimental band played "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight".

June 29, 1764

THE *Johnson*, late *Robinson*, from Liverpool, at Loango, who had purchased 230 Slaves; but Capt Robinson, the Doctor and his Mates, together with 17 of the Crew, were poisoned by the Negroes.

July 1, 1949

WITH effect from today, a limited telephone service will be available with Korea. The service is restricted at the distant end to Seoul only, and calls can only be connected between 11 pm and 4 am. The charges for the calls will be at the rate of £1.5s a minute (minimum £3.15s for three minutes) on weekdays and £1 a minute (minimum £3 for three minutes) on Sundays. The report charge will be 4s.

Piraeus will miss deadline despite Olympic clampdown

PLANS to turn Piraeus into one of the most heavily guarded ports on earth will not prevent the Greek port from becoming one of the highest-profile organisations to flunk compliance with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code, it has emerged.

As a committee only yesterday started examining offers from consultants to draw up Piraeus' ISPS preparations, port officials conceded the 11th hour tendering process is too late to meet this week's international deadline.

But they insisted this did not reflect the reality of massive security preparations undertaken by the port for the Olympics, which are due to start in 45 days' time.

In fact the port says that a tangle between Olympic security planning and the more mundane requirements of ISPS is part of the explanation why Piraeus has run out of time.

"Unfortunately we are going to be listed as a 'contaminated' port," confirmed Stavros Hatzakos, head of the port's European Union bureau, who has been involved in Olympic security for the past four years. "It is a strange situation."

He added that the award of the contract was likely to take "a few weeks at most".

According to officials in Piraeus, the port had hoped



that the blueprint for protecting the port during the Olympics could be used as the basis of its ISPS arrangements.

This notion was dashed when Athens 2004, the

organising committee for the games, turned down a request for the plans, kept at the committee's headquarters in Athens.

Tuesday

Books

Tales of sail in a bygone age

By Michael Grey

THE end of working sail, a long demise which began in the first half of the 19th century and took 100 or more years to reach mechanically propelled fruition, has attracted many commentators. "I have seen a great and enthralling chapter of human history close in the very short period of one lifespan," writes Max Wood at the conclusion of his book *Sailing Tall*.

It is an account of a boy growing into a man aboard the great steel barque *Passat*, a two-year apprenticeship, when Gustav Erikson of Mariehamn resumed trading with the surviving units of his fleet in 1946.

The author of this newly published book must now be quite old, but he tells a good tale of life aboard the last windships and their long voyages.

The steel nitrate barques were the final flourish of several thousand years of commercial sail, lean-manned ships with their crews complemented by large numbers of apprentices, many of whom were lured away from "modern" shipping by the apparent romance of deepwater sail and its few survivors.

Wood tells of the hazard-



The *Passat* beating into Bunbury, Western Australia.

ous work of "learning the ropes" of this big ship and the endless cycle of maintenance and sailmaking on a ship designed to operate without fuel.

In a world long before health and safety rules appeared, before hard hats and lifelines, he recounts with some relish the risks that were accepted quite routinely, just working these great wind-propelled projectiles that were so much at the mercy of wind and weather.

It is the length of the trips which would appal the modern mariner, "107 days out", six-hour watch after watch

and both watches called when any evolution, such as to wear ship or take in or make sail, was required.

No wonder they went a bit berserk in port, but then they tended to stay in port a very long time as they grubbed out the ballast and loaded and stowed bagged grain by hand.

Another world, certainly, and one that still has the capacity to attract adventurous folk who these days race around the world in yachts.

If one is looking for an exercise in patient scholarship in tracing the peregrinations of forgotten mariners, *Lives and Work at Sea*, by William

Scarratt, is a revelation. Beginning with the flimsiest of "evidence" with a couple of old photographs of relatives, a retired purser and a shipmaster, the author has discovered much about the world of deepwater sail.

Using records, including those of this newspaper, Mr Scarratt has undertaken some excellent detective work, discovering the voyages and lives of these two seafarers and their common voyaging on the sailing ship *Ladakh*.

Here is the world of maritime work in the 1880s onwards as he traces the careers of his relatives and the voyages of this ship.

Perhaps it is not a gripping narrative, but its sheer patience and skill commends it.

Sailing Tall, by Max Wood, ISBN 09542750 2 0 is published by Seafarer Books, 102 Redwald Road, Rendlesham, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 2TE £12.95

Lives and Work at Sea, by William Scarratt, published by Regatta Press, www.regattapress.com, ISBN 0-9674826-8-2

Lloyd's List Crossword No 256

Note pad

Answers
Lloyd's List Crossword 255

ACROSS
1 Handsome. 5 Angers. 8 Crews. 9 Data. 10 Needless. 12 Raced. 13 Bred. 14 Mass. 16 Portion. 18 Egghead. 21 Slap. 22 Draw. 23 Place. 25 Disquiet. 28 Once. 29 Endow. 30 Shades. 31 Slanders.

DOWN
1 Holder. 2 Decadent. 3 Open. 4 Ensnare. 5 Appendage. 6 Gaol. 7 Senses. 11 Elate. 15 Hoodwinks. 17 Reams. 19 Hallowed. 20 Hastens. 21 Sidles. 24 Events. 26 Quid. 27 Idea.

DOWN
2 Diana following in state (7)
3 Tibetan monk reported to be a wild animal (5)
4 Notices change in department (7)
6 Not in favour of work, sat! (7)
7 Put together an old garment which will do for the time being (9)
8 Lace makers in torn garments (7)
9 Threatened red letters, though lacking any aggression (6,7)
15 Thesis don composed is not truthful (9)
17 With less dirt daily? (7)
18 Parcels of land in Oriental countries (7)
20 Letters rewritten under the table? (7)
21 Rare gin cocktail which may make a lady look more attractive (7)
24 Sells five Roman objectives (5)

Compiled by Eddie Waltham

Importance of brand value in the world of the media

By James Brewer

WITH Lloyd's engaged in intensive research into branding, the insurance institution's marketeers might like to study a new book on how brands shine in another environment — the media.

Everyone agrees that the value of the Lloyd's brand is incalculable, seen as a seal of quality in every corner of the planet.

Mark Tungate, a Paris-based journalist specialising in media and communication, sees Lloyd's as one of the great brands of all time, with its name and iconic building known well beyond the insurance world itself.

It is one of those brands that capitalise on heritage and, somewhat daringly, Mr Tungate tells us that he saw it as the Nike of its field in its worldwide resonance.

Meanwhile Julian James, director of worldwide markets, says: "Lloyd's recognises the importance and strength of its brand. Like all of its strong brands, it is vital that it is actively managed and developed."

"Given all the changes and improvements within

the Lloyd's market in recent years, we launched a brand definition project earlier this year to identify the actions needed to leverage the Lloyd's brand better.

"Through this exercise we will ensure that the Lloyd's brand is developed for the benefit of all market participants and remains the strongest brand in the global insurance industry."

Only five media enterprises have featured recently in the top 100 companies by brand value identified by consultant Interbrand — Time, Wall Street Journal, Reuters, MTV and the Financial Times.

It may surprise some that the music television station is the top of the media pack while the overall king is Coca Cola, with a brand reckoned to be worth \$70bn.

Such rankings relate to companies where there is sufficient data available to the public to make an assessment, put forward as a reason why Lloyd's is excluded from the Interbrand listings, alongside the fact that much of its brand impact is seen as being within the insu-

rance market itself. In those cases where heritage is negligible, then "a really good idea" and imaginative use of new technology can make up for it, says Mr Tungate.

He interviewed leading figures including Sumner Redstone of Viacom, Christie Hefner of Playboy and the presidents of MTV and CNN International and newspaper editors for his book *Media Monoliths*.

He manages to find common strands in the way Playboy and The Economist have tickled the fancies of their respective readerships.

His study stopped short of including the world's oldest daily paper, Lloyd's List, but we might have to concede we would have to fight hard to convince him we possess the \$1bn brand name value that is the entry ticket to the top 100 globally.

Media Monoliths: How great media brands thrive and survive. £22.50 hardback. Published by Kogan Page, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN. www.kogan-page.co.uk