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We Want to Hear From You!

Fog Horn is an initiative to bring together all members of the Synergy Family – our seafarers, shore staff, family members as well as the stakeholders. We would love to hear from you and have your contributions in forthcoming issues as well as for the website. You may share a write up on an inspiring event or your own experience on-board or ashore, a joyous occasion in your family, stories about life, health, fitness, photographs, sketches, drawings by children, poems, get together's or just jokes! Write to us at editorialteam@synergymarine.sg



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Fog Horn

Synergy Group Newsletter

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MD's Note



Dear team,

At the outset, wish you all once again a happy new year. Another year and it is time for us to begin a new chapter in our logs.

The past decade has been a moving experience. We have had our run-ins with highs and lows, but we believed in ourselves and persevered. And here we are; gaining from strength to strength.

Today, let us be grateful for all that we have achieved in the past decade. We started our operations with just a single ship, and we now operate around 130. The crossing has been an exhilarating experience which we as a family undertook. I take this opportunity to acknowledge each one of your efforts in making Synergy synonymous with quality.

Technology has made it mandatory for business models to adapt. We have seen numerous examples of success and failures around us. Apple, today is the world leader in the smartphone division. And they continue to innovate by designing better products. But a few years ago, Nokia was one of the giant leaders in mobile technology. Today it is a defunct company, and its failure to adapt to change is used as a case study.

Similarly, Sony was once the most powerful brand in the consumer electronics segment. Sony's Walkman was ubiquitous with music, and yet today it is struggling to remain relevant. Market ignorance and failure to innovate has taken the wind out of their sails. Undoubtedly, they always made great products, but that has not been enough for them to regain their top spot.

Continuous innovation and quickly adapting to change is the only way forward. Apart from the above, focus on quality and user experience will help us as companies to succeed. At Synergy, we realised this undercurrent much earlier and are gearing up for this change. We have taken calculated risks and hope our investments will pay dividends in future. Around us, we find large shipping companies who are competitors forming alliances. Taking a cue from them, if we should rough it out, the path ahead is clearly through innovation and collaboration.

The advancements and future technologies in the shipping industry are immense. There are likelihoods for industry consolidation, and our future holds boundless possibilities. At the same time let us take this as a learning prospect and work on innovating. With a renewed drive, let us embrace change and challenge ourselves to perform better. Let us remain inspired and commit to excellence. I am hopeful that our future will be enriching and rewarding.

May we experience exciting times ahead.

Stay blessed Stay together!

Capt. Rajesh Unni

X-PRESS FEEDERS - focusing on operational excellence

Xpress feeder organised a seminar for their senior seagoing staff at Courtyard by Marriot, Mumbai on 9th and 10th Dec. 2016. A total of 53 team members participated in this extremely interactive seminar, what stood out, though, were the effective follow-up discussions which ensued.

The proceedings started with a crisp and warm welcome by Mr Vaibhav Singhal, Director, Fleet Management, X-Press Feeders.

Mr Francis Goh, Managing Director, X-Press Feeders, then took the stage and spoke about the vision and mission of the company. He also gave a brief overview of the fleet size (110 Ships of 400 to 6000 TEU sizes), 5.1 Million TEUS were carried by X-press Feeders in 2015; he emphasised the importance of feeder services for the crucial 'last mile' connectivity.

Mr Goh also highlighted that X-press Feeders is amongst the top-20 container vessels operators. This was followed by Mr Vaibhav Singhal's thoughts on 'Fleet Management Objectives'. He spoke about the ownership aspect and the challenges being faced in the prolonged weak market and the opportunities that exist!



Capt Sumit Kumar from Marine Solutions then spoke about 'Crewing concerns in the Feeder Industry'-highlighting the importance of maintaining professionalism and good seamanship to cope with fast turnaround of these type of vessels.

Capt Sumit Fernandez then spoke about 'Chartering operations and challenges' with particular emphasis on the new regulation on SOLAS VGM and challenges during bunkering and the importance of following proper bunkering practices.

The post-lunch session saw Capt Prabhat Nigam conduct a workshop on reflective learning. Capt. Vinay Sanyal then updated the participants about the latest regulatory changes, which was followed by a presentation on 'Owners Policies, Requirements and Objectives' - by Marine Superintendent Capt Brajesh Kumar.

Mr Sumit Chandra, Tech Superintendent, X-press Feeder finished proceedings with a presentation on 'MARPOL awareness' - emphasising on how MARPOL has to be part of an organisation's culture - it ought to be a way of life!

The participants and the management team were seen mingling with each other during the evening cocktail and dinner party at the pool lawn.

Day 2, saw Capt. Prabhat Nigam starting off the day with another workshop on 'Resilience', following which Capt JS Gill shed some light on the 'Agency and Port Operations.' Capt Vijay Sanyal then conducted a training session on media handling.

The curtains were drawn on this extremely well organised and fruitful seminar with a presentation by Mr Vaibhav Singhal on PMS and spare management; he then extended a vote of thanks, for the seafarers who took the time out from their leave to attend the seminar and also the organising committee which did a job par excellence.

The following team members attended the seminar on behalf of Synergy Group

1. Capt Sudarsan Srinivasan
2. Capt Ashish Joshi
3. Second Engineer Mr. Palaniyandi Sellamuthu Kalaiselvan
4. Chief officer Vijay Agnel Pari



Another feather in the cap of our new building and site supervision team!

The first of the two state of the art 38,000 CBM MGC was launched on 12th of December 2016 at Hanjin Heavy Industries & Construction Co. Ltd Yeong-do, Busan, South Korea.

Apart from being fitted with latest machinery/equipment, these ships are equipped with data acquisition systems to capture data from most machinery & equipment. The data acquired will be used for building condition monitoring algorithms and also to support data driven decision making by the ship's crew.

Synergy Group's new ship building and site supervision team is carrying out the project management and site supervision on behalf of our esteemed principals - Global United.

Here's wishing the crew and the vessel fair winds and following seas!



Riders Club -Synergy Kochi

Albert Einstein once said "Life is like a bike. To keep your balance, you must keep moving". A group of enthusiastic riders from our Synergy Oceanic team add life and spirit to these words.

"Riders Club" is a unique blend of power, grace and passion having a diverse mix of motorbikes with the likes of Royal Enfields, Triumphs and Harley Davidsons. Weekend getaways are organised once every month to picturesque destinations away from the maddening city hustle and bustle. Each ride leaves the riders rejuvenated and refreshed for an action-packed month ahead while looking forward to the next weekend getaways.

The first ride was to Tanneermukkam, (Kerala) the largest mud regulator (bund) in India. The scenic crossroads, with brackish waters of Vembanad lake on one side and fresh water on

the other, is a visual treat. The next sabbatical was to Athirapally waterfalls, nicknamed "The Niagara of India". Basking in the sun and wading in the sheltered waters were reminiscent of our carefree childhood.

Every day at Synergy Oceanic passes by with vigour and enthusiasm, thanks to the invigorating weekend getaways, courtesy Riders Club. End of every month reminds us of monthly vessel reviews, budget standings and the NEXT RIDE- all in the same stride. Eagerly looking forward to our next getaway.

Vvrrooommmmm.... Vvrrooommmmm...
Vvrrooommmmm....

Contributed by,
Name: Mr. Deepak Sasikumar
Designation: Technical Superintendent



Ready to sail the high seas – ● Cadet and TME induction

Synergy Maritime Recruitment Services has launched its training activities from its Mumbai office. It has been our constant effort to expand our training activities in our offices across the globe. In line with this vision, training for crew, officers and cadets have commenced at our Mumbai office.

Earlier MAST, in Chennai, was the only centre to conduct the Deck cadet and TME induction program. Several courses are being held at our Mumbai office which include, crew safety training, officer safety training, cadet induction programs, to name a few.

Capt. Sudarshan (Director- Training) and Mr Debabrata (Superintendent- Competency) conducted the TME induction training in November. It was a weeklong program where the new entrants to Synergy were made familiar with Synergy's mission, vision, policies and ideals.

The program consisted of engaging presentations, videos and animations on an array of topics. Capt. Sudarshan led many interesting interactive sessions on reflective learning. Mr Debabrata discussed topics ranging from safety consciousness to Synergy's commitment to our environment and the planet. Ms. Disha Kapadi(Competency Management Executive) along with Mr Debabrata held a session on communication with the active involvement of cadets by way of interactive tasks. Capt. Sudarshan and Mr Debabrata used humorous anecdotes and shared real-life experiences to make the sessions engaging and fruitful.

Besides reflective learning and introduction to Synergy's policies, the sessions included topics on safety culture, personal protective equipment, attitude development, intercultural training, environment protection, energy management and communication skills.



Capt. Rajesh Unni's recorded video address and Capt. Anshul Rajvanshi's introductory address elucidating the values that Synergy cherishes, set the tone for the weeklong program.

The trainee engineers also underwent psychometric assessment and counselling sessions to prepare them well for the tough life ahead. They went back a happy lot waiting eagerly for their first assignment on a Synergy ship.

We welcome them wholeheartedly into the Synergy family and wish them all the best for the adventures, enriching, fun-filled and life changing journey ahead.



Samudra Manthan Award ●

At the recently held Samudra Manthan Award Ceremony in Mumbai, Synergy was awarded "Caring Company of the Year". Receiving this award is a matter of pride for us as it reinforces faith in our core beliefs. The awards were organized by Bhandarkar Shipping Events with the support of CARE rating agency for their professional opinion in choosing the winners along with the jury. We were also finalists in the Ship Management Category. The award ceremony was well managed and was attended by DG, MMD personnel's and representatives of most shipping companies.



Notes from main engine training program

I recently had the opportunity to attend the ME training program at the MPA Hudong ship-building yard in Shanghai.

The meticulously planned program provides one with professional training given by experienced and dedicated instructors in a state-of-the-art environment with all amenities. The training institute is equipped with a real-time simulator for the complete ME Engine controls and the complete set of all hardware components.

Hudong also has the entire MAN ME-C engine assembly floor for new ships and their test bed run facilities. It was fascinating to witness the assembling of the complete engine and test bed run of the same.

For the benefit of my fellow engineers and the readers of Foghorn, I have put together the detailed curriculum of the training program which is spread over five days.

DAY 1

The program started off with a questionnaire to check the individual's basic knowledge about the ME engine. ME engine module training commenced, initially, the primary components of the system were explained. FIVA (fuel injection valve activation, HPS (hydraulic power supply),

HCU (hydraulic control unit), ECS (engine control system), ECU (engine control unit), EICU (engine interface control unit), ACU (auxiliary control unit), MPC (Multipurpose control unit). MOP (main operating panel), LOP(local operation panel).

The primary difference between MAN MC and ME engines along with the ME engine operation principles were explained. Swapping of MPC was discussed and demonstrated.

DAY 2

HCU (Hydraulic control unit) block design was discussed. The dismantling of FIVA, Hydraulic distribution block, fuel booster, exhaust actuator and then lubricators was carried out.

DAY 3

HPS (hydraulic power supply) system was discussed. The safety block design was discussed and was also dismantled and explained. We then visited the Hudong Ship Building Engine Assembling and Testing site. Engines were tested for shop bed testing using the hydraulic brakes. I am sure every marine engineer would love to witness the testing of the giant machine ashore. The physical location of various components of the ME engine along with the electrical components was shown.



Day 4

Introduction to MOP (main operating panel) along with the discussion on various parameters settings. Adjustment of estimated load to real load was explained for the optimisation of the engine. MAN, B&W ME engine service letter for the setting of cylinder lubrication for various conditions of an engine was also discussed.

DAY 5

MOP (main operating panel) function test, various troubleshooting was discussed. The difference between the older MPC-10 (multipurpose controller) and the latest MPC was reviewed and also practically displayed. Re-initiation of new MPC card after a replacement was explained. The various terminals on MPC board were distinguished. Along with this the different critical terminals and various troubleshooting symptoms were discussed and simulated for crystal clear understanding. Trainees were asked to carry out swapping and re-initiation of the MPC, In the afternoon, the four groups of trainees took a practical assessment test. Various troubles were injected and simulated. Each group was given ten mins to solve the same. Team Synergy completed

this within a very short time.

Before I sign-off, I would like to thank Synergy Group for giving me the opportunity for attending this course. This training has helped me to become a better engineer and team player!

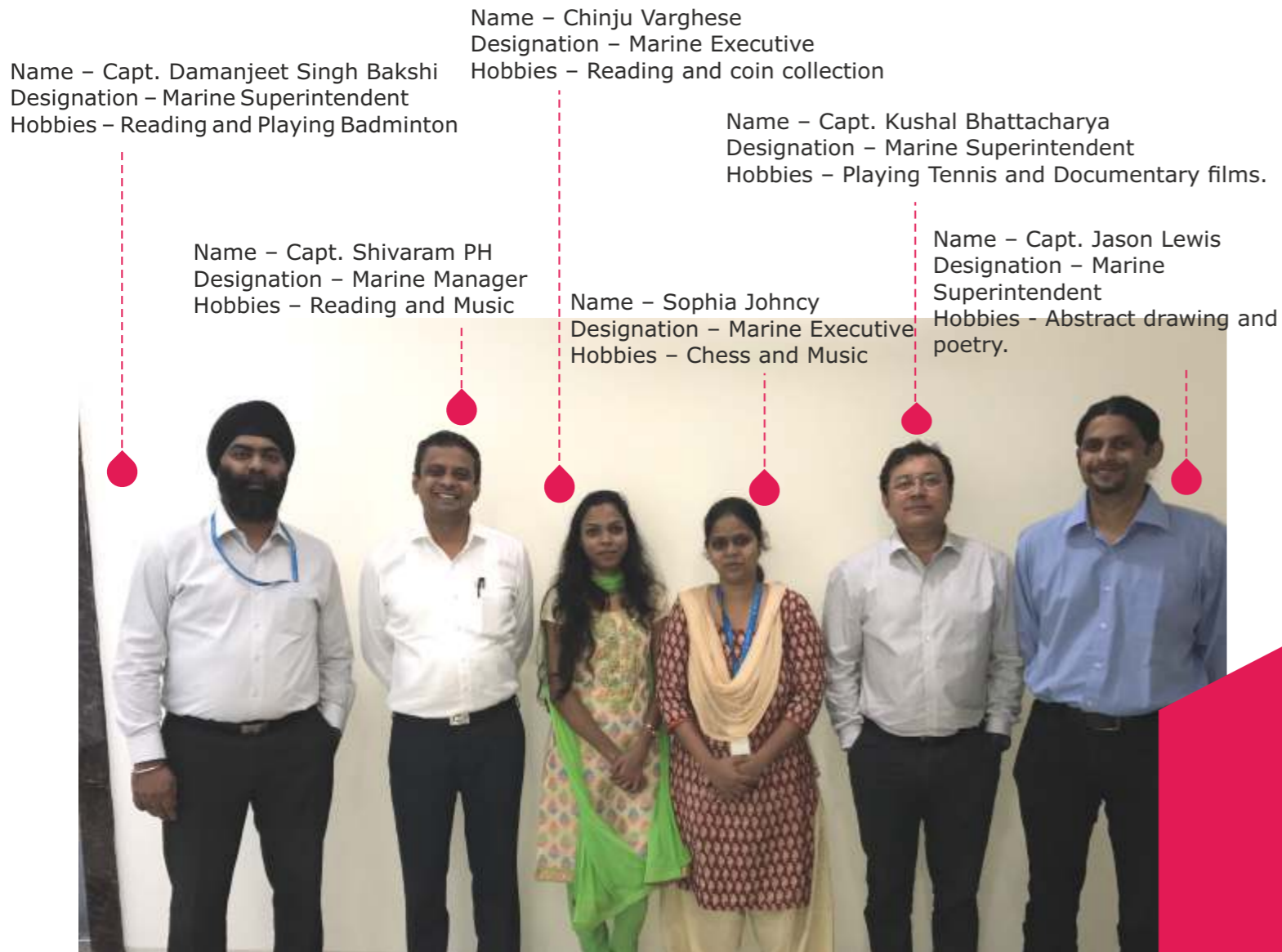
Contributed by,
Mr. Sai Kishore V.K.
2/Engg. - Ex. Pacific Endeavor

List of Promotions

Congratulations and best wishes to the following sailing staff who have recently achieved their promotions at the Synergy Group

Chief Engineer	Mr. Ankur Pradhan Vivekanda Perumal
Chief Engineer	Mr. Mark Paul Torre
Chief Engineer	Mr. Hernandez Arden
Chief Engineer	Mr. Antonio Sanchez
Addn. Chief Engineer	Mr. Ankur Pradhan
Chief Officer	Mr. Rishi Kant Kukreti
Chief Officer	Mr. Himmat Dhillon
Chief Officer	Mr. Ronnel Yongot
Second Engineer	Mr. Praveenkumar Victor Lazarrus

Team Introduction- Bulk Carrier operations team - Chennai



Paper cutting art

This papercut piece of art depicts the birth of Jesus Christ in a manger, with the city of Bethlehem at a distance and the three kings on their way to pay their respects bearing gifts. Wishing all employees of the Synergy Group a Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year 2017

Contributed by: Gladston Dsouza
Chief Engineer, M V Vinayak

Proud to be Synergian



Name: John Chandy
Designation – Travel Manager
No. of Years in Synergy – 7
Location: Cochin

Synergy is a company where you feel inspired, energised and happy to work. In Synergy, every staff member is respected and appreciated for his/her contribution. It has taught me all about the shipping industry and nurtured my association with some great colleagues. Thank you Synergy for the many opportunities to work and have fun.

Name: Silvia Catherine. D
Designation: Manning Executive
No. of Years in Synergy - 4
Location: Chennai

It's been a constant learning curve for me ever since I joined Since "Synergy Group" almost four years. This is a company where you always have a voice which is heard no matter who you are, and good ideas are encouraged and fully supported. Colleagues taught me about the industry and shared their knowledge with me. I will always be thankful to the people who believed in me and gave me this opportunity to grow, not only within the company but also as a person. The friendly atmosphere of the office makes every working day a pleasure. At Synergy, I have learned so much – I laughed, I cried, I faced challenges, and I also experienced very beautiful moments that I shall cherish forever!



Name: Ramprakash
Designation: Office Executive – Visa Desk
No. of Years in Synergy: 3
Location: Delhi

I am very thankful to Synergy for trusting me and giving me an opportunity as this is my first shore job as I was sailing previously. I can remember my first day in Synergy, I was very confident to deliver and justify the responsibilities given to me. I have been working at Synergy for over three years now. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for the support extended to me at various stage and adding to this wonderful experience.



Name: Maricar L. Andaya
Designation: Receptionist
No. of Years in Synergy: 06 Months
Location: Manila

"Confidence and Hard work is the best medicine to kill the disease called Failure."

It's an honour to be part of this growing company. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to learn the value of hard work. I believe that this company is a great help for people aspiring to be successful in life. All employees and crew are supportive and friendly towards each other. I'm happy to see myself learning and taking challenges to be a better person and a better team player. Proud be Synergian.



Synergy Group toasts 10th anniversary!

'Surabhi' our two-day annual event, was held on October 5 and 6 2016. This year marked the tenth anniversary of our Group. The aim of this event was to embrace the values on which the company was founded and to make excellence a habit, rather than a mere objective.

The venue for the event was the resplendent Radisson Blu Resort — Temple Bay Mamallapuram. The first day kicked off with a brief welcome address by Capt. H.S. Swaminathan. This was followed by an informative presentation by Mr. John Martin — Managing Director, Gard (Singapore) — entitled, "Risks of Power Distance on Board Ships". Power distance refers to the way in which power is distributed, and the extent to which the less powerful accept that power is distributed unequally.

Next to take the stage was Brijesh Bassi, who presented the company review and answered questions posed by the audience. Later, another interesting presentation focusing on navigation accidents and their impact was quartered. Subsequently, Mandeep Singh — Manager of Marine Assurance, Shell International, London — gave a presentation, entitled "'Keep My Barrier Strong' — Reflective Learning". Mr. Singh is firmly focused on improving the HSSE performance and efficiency of shipping and maritime operations.



After a refreshing lunch break, there was a presentation on new regulations and the distribution of vessel awards. This was followed by speeches of our esteemed clients who had flown in from across the globe to participate in the event. Luis Benito then took the stage and gave the audience: "A View on how Digital Technology is Shaping the Future of Shipping". This was followed by the presentation of mementoes to the Group's partners.

The most applauded moment was the launch of the Synergy anthem which beautifully captures the collective pride, commitment, values and a sense of common purpose of the otherwise diverse group through its lyrics. Capt. Rajesh Unni joined other team members on the stage to sing the anthem and was greeted with rapturous applause from the audience. The new branding of the company in the form of a logo was unveiled as a part of the next generation leap. The new identity carved out of the vastness of the form, the stripes of an epaulette and a shield personify the core values that Synergy is committed to i.e. to inspire, innovate and deliver.

Katsuya Abe, President, Nissen Kaiun, Japan and Hiromichi Yagi, Managing Operating Officer of Integrated Transportation Systems Business Unit, Mitsui and Co, addressed the audience. The keynote address was delivered by Junichiro Ikeda, Representative Director, President and CEO MOL. After this, the audience was enthralled by the display of Synergy's journey entitled, "Milestones: Sand Art", which consisted of artist Vivek Patil's unique art on sand. This was done using his bare hands on sand, using a specially designed table with an under lit glass top.

This was followed by "Synergy 10 — Path and the Vision" by Capt. Rajesh Unni, Founder & CEO of Synergy Group, who recounted the story of its founding. Capt. Unni talked about Synergy's initial failures, and how crucial it is to learn from the same, as long as one always sticks to one's values and principles. He opined that the service-oriented industry business has to be platform based. He also expressed that the group is ready to collaborate with like-minded people on this platform, even if they are from the same industry. Emphasising on the need to be responsible to society and giving back, he aptly summed it as;

life is beyond profit and loss. With the inspiring words; "We will always try to improvise and do better. We will put our hands up when we are wrong. We are open to criticism and learning." He ended by thanking everyone for their support and expressed that Synergy Group is a collective effort and not a one-man army.

About the launch of the logo, he stated, "The new logo talks about taking responsibility, inspiration, a greater role to play — for our own people, clients and the industry. It also talks about our responsibility for the future maritime generation."

This was followed by a presentation on CSR activity. The presentation was about an Integrated Village Development Project. The Synergy Group has selected Adigathur Panchayat in Tamil Nadu to attempt its integrated development. Adigathur panchayat consists of 8 wards, about 2800 people and 630 households. It has a mix of communities which include cobblers, old snake charmers, nomadic communities, etc. A group photo followed this presentation.

A grand cocktail dinner along with some spectacular entertainment concluded the days proceedings.





Day two began with a presentation by Capt. Savraj Mehta, Global Director (Underwriting) North of England P&I Association Limited. Mandeep Singh then gave a presentation entitled "Resilience".

After a short tea break, the delegates left for a sightseeing trip where they visited the group of monuments in Mahabalipuram, which is a UNESCO world heritage site. It was a seaport during the time of Periplus (first century AD) and Ptolemy (140 AD), and many Indian colonists sailed to South-East Asia through this port town. The guests also visited the school for migrant workers' children supported by Synergy in Egattur on the outskirts of Chennai.

The guests returned for a workshop on "Media Training" provided by MTI Network. The post-lunch session saw the seafarers interacting with the management team.





Synergy's Lil Champs



Name: Risha Sivakumar
Age : 07 Years
D/o – Mr. Sivakumar Palani
Earned her Karate - yellow belt

Name: Aarnav Bhamaria
Age : 10 Years
S/o – Capt. Ritesh Bhamaria
with his ECO friendly Ganesha



Name: Anabel Robin
Age : 04 Years
D/o – Mr. Jaswin Jose
First place in fancy dress competition

Name: Sanjana Sairaj
Age : Years
D/o – Capt. M. Sairaj
Cartoon Sketch



Name : Diya Arputharaj
Age : 07 Years
D/o: Capt. Arputharaj
Hand made Season's Greetings

Name: Rose Maria Dominic
Age : 06 Years
D/o – Capt. Dominic Jerry
Got first place in Fancy dress competition



Name: Risha Sivakumar
Age : 07 Years
D/o – Mr. Sivakumar Palani
Sketch of Christmas Tree

Name: C. Aradhana
Age : 05 Years
D/o – Mr. G Chakravarthy
Sketch of Santa Claus



Proud to be Synergian



Name: Capt. L. Punitha Alto
Rank: Master
No of Years in Synergy: 10

I joined synergy as a second officer on Dec-2007, I was part of the take-over crew for the yard delivery of the IS China. Now I am stepping into my tenth year (2017) of my association with Synergy. From 2nd Officer to Master - the voyage has been fulfilling, and I cherish every moment of this association. I thank God for his grace, and I thank Team Synergy for the guidance and support throughout my career and in all my ups and downs. I am proud and glad to be a Synergian

Name : Mr. Muthiah Chandran
Rank : Chief Engineer
Vessel : MOL Presence

I joined Synergy for the takeover of one of their earliest ships in 2008. It was as a small organisation back then, but the management was very friendly and supportive. Almost a decade later, that's something which impresses me even today- the senior management is very accessible, and the entire organisation exudes the same friendly and supportive attitude! I would continue to be a part of Synergy and a part of its remarkable growth story. They have been helping their seafarers both on-board and ashore in many ways. I am euphoric to see that the company has scaled such heights in the maritime industry. Would like to thank top management especially Capt.Ramadass, Capt.Swami and Mr. Mathavan for making me a part of Synergy. Proud to be a Synergian.



Name : Perumal Devan
Rank : Bosun
Vessel : Ex. Apl Oregon

I am Proud to be a synergian because.....
S-Synergy has people full of energy.
Y-Your own homely global shipping company.
N-Nearest office for the crew like us in Chennai.
E-Efforts saved to go far off and look for a job.
R-Recruitment made in fair and transparent manner.
Y-Yes of course because I am in SYNERGY!!!!!!!

We are sailing with Synergy which is a world-class company by all standards. Punctuality, timely salary credit. Zero tolerance to unsafe practices, responsible officers and crew. Pre-joining familiarisation is detailed almost like having already joined the ship.

Name : Mr. Shivang
Rank : Deck Cadet
Vessel : Ex. MOL Presence

SYNERGY, the name says it all. A few months ago, my life was entirely different, and everything looked bleak- I was searching for a job as a cadet in this competitive world, I saw a lot of failure and disappointment in the quest, felt as if I had no identity. That's when Synergy showed me a RAY OF HOPE. They believed and gave me an opportunity to prove myself. The trust they placed in me made me even more responsible. I would also like to thank my Captain and all the senior officers on-board for the excellent mentoring I have been receiving on-board. PROUD TO BE SYNERGIAN, PROUD TO BE A SEAFARER!



Personal Social Responsibility - PSR

In a world characterised by climate change, social injustice and corporate greed, companies and individuals are becoming aware of their responsibilities to the environment and the impact they have on the community and everything around them both locally and globally. Wikipedia defines social responsibility as an ethical framework and suggests that entity, be it an organisation or an individual, has an obligation to act for the benefit of society at large. Social responsibility is a duty that every individual should perform to maintain a balance of a sustainable economy and the ecosystems. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is no longer just a buzz word. Corporations around the world are moving beyond just talking CSR and into doing something.

They are transforming themselves from just good companies to great companies by their ability to express and implement their values and mission in everything they do. This enables them to attract great talent and helps them to establish themselves as authentic trailblazers in an upward spiral of value.

Just as CSR determines a company's reputation as a responsible corporation providing an excellent service or product, a personal social responsibility plan (PSR) can establish an individual's reputation at the workplace and in the society at large. Embracing PSR means doing our part to help the environment, volunteering our time to those in need, mentoring our youth and marginalised, and being ethical, conscientious and courteous in all we do. To be a socially responsible individual not only means participating but making socially responsible activities a part of our lifestyle.

These could include active participation like in Swach Bharat (Clean India) campaign, recycling, literacy campaigns, entrepreneurship and skill development, volunteering and mentoring.

The following narration of my journey into the PSR space, albeit I was totally unaware of how a small action can positively impact a fellow human being's life and can lift an entire family out of poverty. It also highlights the immense potential that a little act of support and mentoring the marginalised in our society can have a lasting impact on the society as a whole.

Mr Ashraf Ansari came into our lives about 12 years ago as an 18-year-old boy having travelled hundreds of miles from a remote village in the impoverished state of Jharkhand to Mumbai to

work as a helper under a Master-Tailor specialising in ladies' garments in our locality. Ashraf's role was to assist his master in stitching, doing odd jobs at the shop, procuring consumables and delivering finished garments to the local households.

In his spare time, he developed a skill for hand embroidering intricate zari and bead patterns on ladies' clothes thereby enhancing its value for his master. His sincerity, polite mannerism and quick wit would endear to all in our locality, and he was a favourite with our children. After a couple of years of establishing a good rapport and confidence with us, he expressed his desire to start his zari and bead hand embroidering business in Surat (the textile hub of India) and requested for a loan of Rs. 28,000 to buy some jigs and fixtures. He had tried to raise this within his family and relatives and had failed. Although we refused initially, his persistence and enthusiasm in explaining his business plan and the opportunities for himself made us loosen our purse strings, and we relented based on his personal assurance to have this returned after one year. He set off on his journey and established his enterprise in a small rental shack in Surat. It took nearly three years for him to return our money but nevertheless he continued to keep in touch and update us regularly on his success and the challenges he faced, we continued to mentor and support him.

Last August we were invited to his house as a special guest of honour at his Jharkhand village for his marriage. He had especially insisted and timed his marriage around my availability. I was astounded at the respect showered on us by his family, friends and neighbours of his village.

We grasped the real impact of our action when I inquired about the status of his business. He has by now developed a thriving business employing 15 skilled artisans, and he proudly showcased some of the products produced by his men and



being retailed in some of the large showrooms around the country.

At Rs. 15000 per employee plus consumables he had a monthly expenditure of close to half a million a month and an annual turnover of about Rs.10 million. He was not only able to improve the standard of his family by building a large concrete house for his large family of 4 brothers and marry off his only sister but also provide employment to 15 persons and support their families indirectly. Impactful indeed what a little handholding to the deserving in our society can do at large.

For an organisation to enhance its global reputation as socially responsible, it is the duty of every individual to exercise his PSR- personal social responsibility. How then does an individual become socially accountable and establish his reputation in the workplace? It's simple- Do unto others as you wish to be done unto you.

We at Synergy have in place a dynamic CSR team led by the very charismatic Lijo Chacko. A chance meeting with him at the company guest house and sharing a personal story of my PSR journey brought on the motivation to share this journey and the impact it had on the community as a whole.

Contributed by,
Mr. Henry D'sa
C.Engg - Tirumala Gas



A tribute to Captain Nikolaos Frangos, one of the founders of modern Greek shipping!

Capt. Nikolaos Frangos, 90, Ship-owner, Philanthropist, Family Man, Passes Away.

Captain Nikolos Frangos was born in Kardamyla, on the island of Chios, in 1926. In 1947, he salvaged a family ship that was sunk by Germans, and this would mark the beginning of his professional career travelling the Mediterranean until 1951 when his father passed away. In 1960, he purchased his first ship, the Captain Frangos, which started his trajectory as ship-owner. During the many years of its operation, their company managed more than 150 ships, and by the end of 1990, it had become the largest company of Greek-owned fleet. The Chinese awarded him the Golden Star, the highest honour of recognition that is conferred on a foreign citizen.

One of his great characteristics was his ability to approach fellow beings through a prism of geniality and graciousness. His door was always open to everyone who wanted to talk to him, to ask advice, or to ask for a favour. The funeral service was held at Metamorfofi Sotiros, Kefalari on 12th December 2016.

As a mark of respect for the departed soul, team members from our Chennai office visited the 'Little drops Home for the Aged / Destitute' and hosted a lunch in fond memory of Capt. Nikolos Frangos.

Team Synergy salutes this legend as we offer our deepest condolences to the bereaved family.



The world of randonneuring

Randonneuring is long-distance, unsupported, non-competitive cycling within prescribed time limits. The events—called brevets—are 200km (13.5-hour time cut-off), 300km (20 hours), 400km (27 hours), 600km (40 hours), and 1000km (75 hours). Grand Randonnées are 1200km, and riders must finish in 90 hours or less. The original Grand Randonnée, Paris-Brest-Paris (PBP), was first held in 1891 and inspired the modern Olympic Games and the Tour de France.

Capt. Venkataraman (Marine Superintendent), based out of our Chennai office has always been a cycling enthusiast and earned the coveted 'Super Randonneur' status not once but twice last season.

Our Editorial team got in touch with Capt. Venkataraman recently to congratulate him on this remarkable achievement, and for being one of the very few of us who has managed to keep the passion for cycling burning through all these years! We also did an informal interview - here is how it unfolded.

ET: For the benefit of our readers, could you please elaborate a bit on Randonneuring and the club.

Venkat: Randonneuring (also known as Audax in the UK, Australia and Brazil) is a long-distance cycling sport with its origins in audax cycling. In randonneuring, riders attempt courses of 200 km or more, passing through predetermined "controls" (checkpoints) every few tens of kilometres.

Events are conducted worldwide under the aegis of Audax Club Parisian (France) called Brevets or BRM (Brevets de Randonneur Mondiaux) comprising of cycling events for 200kms, 300kms, 400kms and 600kms in a seasonal year. All these events are timed with control points positioned strategically along the route. One who completes all the above events in a season bags the much coveted 'Super Randonneur' title.

Long endurance rides are not just riding for long distances and pedal for a medal.

We are well equipped with a puncture kit, a portable air pump, spare tubes, bright lights, reflectors and a first aid kit. Rehydration and nutrition is a critical aspect during long distance rides. We are loaded with water bottles, electrolytes, energy bars, and eat maximum on the saddle and eat less off the saddle! Isn't this wonderful?

ET: What drew you to cycling?

Venkat: Like every other lad, back then, cycling was the only mode of transportation available for our daily commute to school and other places nearby. Public transport was still in its nascent stages in India.



But it was during 1994 -1998 when my sailing time was on board the tankers on the transatlantic trade North Sea to Quebec (Canada) back and forth, that's when I met one of the Canadian Ice advisors, Capt. Andres Lavoie - who went on to become a good friend of mine, he introduced me to the world of cycling by gifting me a racing bike. This nurtured my love for cycling and every time the vessel called at Quebec (during good weather), I used to go cycling during my off-watch hours, at the end of my tenure, I brought home my cycle neatly packed.

Subsequently, I started cycling in Chennai. 1995, at a time when you hardly saw anyone cycling for leisure or exercise, maintenance and spares too were hard to come by!

ET: What's the scenario today?

Venkat: I have settled ashore with Synergy since 2013. I was surprised and impressed to find a huge cycling community here in Chennai, with perhaps a 1000+ members or more, the cycling community here is the largest in the country for sure, imported bikes / spares and mechanics are no longer a deterrent.

Today, we have lots to learn on the correct technique and strategy to improve the fitness levels by cycling. Accessories, GPS speedometers with heart rate monitors and what not. Cycles can cost anywhere from Rs. 10,000 to 5 lakh rupees for a carbon frame light weight road bikes.

We have an excellent, fun loving community of cycling enthusiasts here in Chennai, and folks from all walks of life come together for a common passion for cycling!



Synergy in Pictures



Christmas Celebrations



From underdogs to champions - an incredible journey !

"A Journey of a thousand miles begins with a Single Step." No other quote can summarise more aptly this incredible journey of the Merchant Navy Officer's Cricket Club (MOCC).

The Second Edition of the Swanton Corporate Cricket Tournament was around the corner in Oct 2015. When a group of Mariners brimming with ideas met at the Merchant Navy Club, Kochi, they felt that the tournament presented them an opportunity to put into action their ideas and thus was born the "MOCC."

The journey was not easy. For the game, a minimum of 11 players is required. MOCC consisted of just five members. Another seven like-minded mariners were roped in. A TEAM had to be built, and that would not be possible with just numbers, a fact these mariners knew very well.

Team Building and Team Motivation are concepts that are not new to seafarers, having experienced it all throughout their careers. MOCC Played two matches in the tournament and lost both. Though we lost the matches, we gained experience. The seeds for success were sown.

After the First Swanton's Tournament, MOCC began to grow by word of mouth. Many more active members joined, and a core committee was formed.

We began to follow a two-pronged strategy of fun and fitness through sports. We hoped that along with the fun and fitness the feeling of belongingness among fellow mariners would grow. Our most valuable tool to achieve our goals are the weekly matches called "Super Saturdays". Super Saturday matches are the soul of MOCC.

Just as it is on board where seniors mentor juniors, here in MOCC the aim is to groom all members into leaders. Juniors suggest ways to improve cricket and fitness and seniors coach. This helped in nurturing an environment of mutual respect and positivity. With such an environment, mariners who had not taken to the field in ages came forward to play. Some of them rediscovered their dormant skills. The knee pains, the muscle aches

all began to disappear. All inhibitions disappeared. A team lunch celebrated failures and successes on the field. Post-match bonding sessions increased the camaraderie among the members.

Swanton's soon announced it would be conducting the 3rd edition of its Corporate Cricket tournament. MOCC was ready to take up the challenge. We had exited last year's tournament in the first round. We knew that this year was going to be different. We had worked hard, and we had our team in place. With a huge talent pool, it was a challenge in itself to choose the final playing squad.

Every match that MOCC played, the ground was covered in a sea of blue. Moccians were there all over the ground supporting their team. Game updates were being sent on WhatsApp which were closely followed by our members who were sailing across the seven seas!

MOCC's sportsman spirit came to the fore when one of the opposition team members developed a strain on his back. While the entire opposition team looked clueless, our players and supporters rushed from the stands and carried him back for medical attention. An outstanding example of sailor's spirit and presence of mind. As we crossed one hurdle after the other, Moccians celebrated each victory in their trademark style. For many opponents, it was their first brush with Mariners; the tides were turning!

On the day of the title-clash, our team walked onto the ground supported by a sea of Moccians. The opposition knew that they were in for a tough challenge. MOCC didn't just give a fight in that match but dominated the match from the word 'go'. The team played like champions, and in the end, the very sweet taste of victory was finally ours - not just for 11 players but for the entire seafaring community!!

We won the Cup and also the hearts of many.

Contributed by,
Capt. Dominic Jerry
Marine Superintendent



Staff day celebration in Chennai

As an employer of choice, Synergy Group is committed to acknowledging the contributions of our outstanding employees and the vital roles they play to fulfil our mission of safe and efficient operations of our ships.

This year the Annual Staff Day celebration was held at the upscale MGM beach resort on 27th September'2016. Team Synergy was welcomed to the resort with the beats of the Dhol (traditional Indian double handed drum) and a welcome drink; what followed was a memorable day full of fun and frolic. The various group activities and fun events which were organized helped bring team members from different departments come closer.

'Synergy's got Talent' a unique song and dance performance by various team members proved that we are an exceptionally talented team both at and away from work. The show started with a dance performance on sizzling Bollywood numbers followed by singing performances by familiar faces from within Synergy. The long service awards soon followed with Capt. Rajesh Unni doing the honours.

The most memorable moment of the evening was when the senior management took charge of the stage and shook a leg to a foot tapping number, this drove the audience into a frenzy and set the mood for an electrifying evening.

