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The Sea Pie Supper today is major event in the Maritime Calendar. It starts with a reception, and time to meet other guests.

The guests are then asked to move to their allotted seats. Shortly afterwards, the Top Table Guests make their entrance and are applauded as they make their way to their seats.

After Grace has been said, the meal is served, following which, the outgoing Captain of The Cachalots, installs the new Captain. The new Captain then introduces the Guest Speaker.

After this speech, there is time to mingle with the other guests. After a reasonable amount of time, the guests are asked to resume their seats and all enjoys singing several Sea Shanties.

During the evening, there is a raffle (envelopes will be found on each table, with a QR code on. If preferred, cash can be placed in the envelope) in aid of the Seafarers' Charities.

Some background and history of the Sea Pie Supper

A Club historian records that the term "Sea Pie" was accorded to a weekly gastronomic delight aboard cargo vessels comprising the "left over" scraps of meat, vegetables, and fish from the meals prepared over the previous six days and that "it was greeted with much keen anticipation by the ship's company". It was prepared in layers and in abundance. Suffice to say that although today's "Sea Pie" fare has come a long way its origins are still recognisable!

Since its inception in 1928 the Club has always endeavoured to stage a mixture of formal and relatively informal events annually and, in the early years, the Sea Pie Supper fell into the latter category. The most sedate occasion was the formal Annual Luncheon, held initially in

the South Western Hotel and later aboard one of the many liners that graced the Port of Southampton in that era and the guest speakers included Royalty, Admirals of the Fleet, a former Speaker of The House of Commons and men highly prominent in the world of shipping nationally and locally.

The annual Sea Pie Supper was, for many years, held in the South Western Hotel (and later the Polygon Hotel before its popularity dictated an increase in the seating capacity necessitating a move to the Guildhall) and Club members and their male guests dressed informally ("sports coat and flannels") and the entertainment comprised singers "sprightly cabaret artists and entertaining after dinner speakers". Beer was the preferred tippie.

The first Annual Luncheon was held in 1929 (where the guest of honour was Admiral of the Fleet, Earl Jellicoe of Scapa) and the first Sea Pie Supper was held in 1931 where the guest speaker was Mr. M.G.H McHaffie, Project Manager for the construction of the new Western Docks.

Thereafter, records of the event are few and far between until 1951 when it is recorded that at the event in the Polygon Hotel the guest speaker was Commander S.E.Baretto, Peruvian Navy and the after dinner entertainment was provided by B.C.Hilliam ("Flotsam" of "Flotsam and Jetsam" fame) and a Mr. Harry Riley who presented "Cartoons". Inevitably, the singing of Sea Shanties rounded off the evening.

The event continued to be staged at The Polygon until 1977 when it moved to the Guildhall and the dress code became "Black tie or Mess Undress". The guest speaker on that occasion was Admiral Sir Terence Lewin, the entertainment was provided by the band from HMS Collingwood and by Club member Barry Swindells and his banjo. A ticket cost £4.00.

Throughout, lady guests were not welcome but lady entertainers were and, for some ten years from 1964 the members were entertained by a local troupe called "The Vera Noyce Singers". The group comprised ladies "of a certain age" and they were great favourites with club members and their male guests. In 1967 it had been decided to invite the Mayor of Southampton to the 1968 event but, horror of horrors, the new Mayor (elected after the decision was taken) was a woman –Mrs. Kathy Johnston. Not to be outdone the Club promptly cancelled the invitation and invited the Town Clerk, Mr. A N Schofield and the night proceeded as planned. At the end of the evening, in keeping with tradition the Boatsteerer (Captain Percy Cooper) proposed a toast to the "Vera Noyce Party" and, at that stage, a party member stepped forward, removed her shawl and revealed one Mrs. Kathy Johnston, Mayor of Southampton in all her regalia. The entire assembly stood and cheered and within a few years ladies were welcomed at the event by most, if not all, Club members.

In 2012 we moved the venue and the Sea Pie Supper was held at the City Cruise Terminal. Catering was undertaken by "Halo" who are based at Southampton Football Club and the event was deemed to be a success by most of the attendees.

Since 2015 we have enjoyed being hosted at St. Mary's Stadium, home of Southampton Football Club, and this is where we returned in 2022 after the loss of the event in 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions.