

[Page 1 - The Berthing of Supertankers](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 6](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1973/12/1

The Berthing of Supertankers "Shiphandling is an art. It involves combinations of variables so numerous and complex that no amount of detailed predetermined instruction can bring a ship through a canal or dock it. Each time a ship moves, the precise influences acting on her are different than they were at any other time; and the ship responds to every one of them. A great many procedures and processes in the industrial world lend themselves to the kind of training in which definite actions at specific times can be taught in advance, and anyone with a good memory and a little practice can perform as instructed and obtain minimum results. Shiphandling is not one of them." from the Manual of Shiphandling, Port Revel Centre, where pilots of supertankers train. The T.G. Shaughnessy, 1105 feet long and 170 feet wide. 285,000 tons deadweight, at the Pilot Boarding Station in Chedabucto Bay. Seen from behind. Captain Jenkins and Pilot Alex Huntley during the nighttime berthing of the Shaughnessy at the Gulf Oil Terminal, August 12-13, 1973. Right, Pilot Roy Bennett. Pilot Roy Bennett: From the time those ships leave we'll say the Persian Gulf, we begin to hear that the ship is due at such a time. Personally I've never seen one arrive according to the computer's estimation yet. A year ago last February I went out for a Norwegian tanker of 230-some thousand tons and we waited hours and no sign of her. Came back in and then got word she was delayed and the master was so concerned he forgot to notify the pilots. Next morning went out and got her and she was encased in ice on one side of her • ice a foot thick • and it took about two hours work coming up the bay there to free the windlass and winches to be able to work lines when you got into the dock. He told me as she came up over the continental shelf, a tremendous sea running • the seas were coming right aboard her, he had to slow her down. Talk about those ships are like floating islands. They're not floating islands with a sea raging and solid water over the bow and spray further back turning to ice and adding greatly to the weight. They chopped an area by the ship's rail wide enough for me to get aboard. But she wouldn't completely encase

CAPB BRETON'S MAGAZINE, NUMBER SIX SKIR DHU, CAPB BRETON, NOVA SCOTIA SECOND CLASS MAIL • REGISTRATION NUMBER 3014