

*My thanks for the following article to Pedro Alves, retired Chief Engineer, that many of our ex-Unicorn men will remember fondly.*

*I have been friends with Pedro for close on forty years but never had the pleasure of sailing with him. Doug Young, Editor*

## THE SEAMAN

Between the innocence of infancy and the recklessness of humanity, there is a being known as a seaman who can be found in bars, in bed, in debt and in-toxicated.

They are tall, short, fat, dark, fair but never normal.

They hate - ships food, chief engineers, writing letters, sailing on Saturdays and dry ships.

They like - receiving mail, pay-off day, nude pin-ups, sympathy, complaining and beer.

A seaman's secret ambition is to change places with the ship-owner, to own a brewery and to be loved by everyone in the world.

A seaman is a Sir Galahad in a Japanese brothel, a psychoanalyst with Readers Digest on his table, Don Quixote with a discharge book, the saviour of mankind with his back teeth awash, Valentino with a fiver in his pocket and democracy personified in a Red Chinese prison cell.

A seaman is a provider in war and a parasite in peace.

No one is subjected to so much abuse, wrongly accused so often and misunderstood by so many as a seaman.

He has the patience of Job, the honesty of a fool and the heaven-sent ability to laugh at himself.

When he returns home from a long voyage, no one but a seaman can create such an atmosphere as he walks through the door with the magic words on his lips – "I'm home. Have you got the beer in then?"

He tells of his adventures and, when the money runs out, he sadly says "Good-bye" and returns to the sea once again.

I know, because I am one of these great men.

## PEDRO