

Tug@zine

all about tugs

*Neptun to
Switzer...*

vol. 7 nr. 34

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The first part of the Kooren Story. For part 2 and 3 see TugeZine 32, download via QR code below

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VASA Salvage by Neptun Bjergrning og Dykeri

I.T.S. Gothenburg

On the occasion of this event this issue of TugeZine – as media partner – is in part dedicated to towage and salvage in Gothenburg and Sweden from past to present. The two major players that emerged after WW2 were Neptun Bolaget (Neptun Bergning och Dykeri) and Göteborg Bogsering (better known as Rödabolaget). Where one started as a salvage company, the other started as a shiphandler. Both adapted to market demands and ended up as a maritime service provider, albeit in different categories.

Both companies disappeared and via take-overs ended up with a former competitor – the Danish Svitzer company. We follow the route from Neptun to Svitzer, with some diversions. Svitzer started as a salvor but relatively quickly also became a shiphandler. In this case it was competition in the salvage market in Denmark – in the old days there were plenty casualties so it was easier to earn a living. Many of those were simple groundings requiring tug power. Lightering in most cases did not require specialised salvage vessels. In the end Svitzer survived all its competitors.

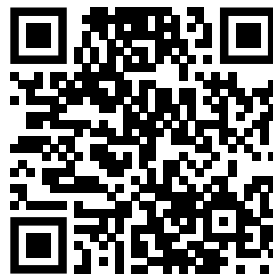
As a reminder to subscribers – it's a free e-only magazine – all previous issues of the TugeZine and TugeNewsletter can be downloaded or read in hi-res on our website. As this issue has been made available to all delegates and exhibitors at ITS we thought it prudent to include two back-issues for your interest.

TugeZine 32 and 33 can be downloaded using the QR-codes below.

Job van Eijk (editor)



TugeZine 32



TugeZine 33

Photo frontpage:

The tug BONDEN is one of a trio of sisters – the others being BOHUS and DYNAN built for account of 1971-formed Bohus Tugs at Uddevalla. 3.900 bhp, single screw. 40+ ttp. All three were delivered in 1974 by Asiverken. 1977 to Stockholms Frihamn AB, Stockholm as HEIMDAL. 1988 to Stockholms Hamngods AB, Stockholm. Same year to AB Neptun-Röda Bolaget, Lysekil, renamed BONDEN. 1990 to AB Emil Lundgren Finans, Lysekil and AB Probo Leasing, Lysekil. 1993 back to Röda Bolaget AB, Lysekil. Company sold to Svitzer in 1999. 2002 repainted in Svitzer colours. 233-2012 re-registered with P/F Switzer Faroe Islands, Hosvik. 8-2018 sold to Alfons Hakans, Turku, as HURTIG

photo: coll. Job van Eijk

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Göteborg Hamn



1900 - Göteborg Hamn

photo: Aron Jonason / Göteborgs Stadsmuseum



1922 - BJÖRN was built in 1915 at Eriksbergs Mek. Verkstad AB, Gothenburg, as ERIK for local AB Forsberg & Mark. 16,15 x 4,19 m). 2cy compound steam engine 120 lhp later replaced by 200 bhp diesel. Sold approx. 1922 to Vestkustens Petroleum AB, Gothenburg renamed BJÖRN. Approx. 1933 to Svenska Petroleum AB Standard, Gothenburg, same name but in 1950 renamed ESSOKRAFT 3. 1954 to Svenska Esso AB, Gothenburg and motorized She was sold a few times with new names ANNIE, MARIEANN, DYK-MARIEANN and in 1994 HERVOR.. 2004 still in service

photo: Sjöfartsmuseet Akvariet



1946 - Göteborg Hamn, left a Johnson cargo ship unloading
photo: Sjöfartsmuseet (K.W.Gullers)



Today - Göteborg Old Port

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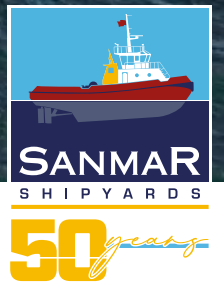
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From Neptun to Svitzer

On the occasion of the 28th International Tug & Salvage Convention in Gothenburg we present a potted history of salvage and towage in Sweden since the earliest days of steam.

by TDI Tugboat Publications



Edward Liljewalch, founder of Neptun and the Swedish salvage industry

exists. In the very old days salvage could be described at best as robbery and at worst as piracy. Ships fell victim of natural causes but also were deliberately lured into the shallows for the locals to plunder. Any survivors were simply murdered to avoid witnesses coming forward.

In Sweden it was in 1667 that King Karl XI presented a code of conduct regarding damage at sea that became maritime law. The king did not forget the interests of the Crown and thus made a difference between ships of friendly nations and of non-friendly powers. He did, however, regulate who was to pay for what and the ownership of salvaged goods. The code also set a tariff for the owner of goods and the salvors.

Salvage is older than towage. It has been around as long as shipping

In 1692 the **Southern Salvage Company** was granted a concession for salvage



NEPTUN, the first salvage steamer of Neptun Bjergning

photo: coll. Job van Eijk



POSEIDON, the second Neptun salvage steamer

photo: coll. Job van Eijk

along the coasts of Scania, Halland, Gothenburg and Bohuslän. Somewhat later a **Northern Company** was granted concession along the coast of Norrland. At the time the Kingdom of Sweden was much larger than today and stretched to both sides of the Baltic as well into part of Norway. This history may also account for some of the (much) later exploits of the salvage companies.

In 1802 the law was modified and regulations for salvage and diving became more precise including immediate active assistance to ships and people in distress. Of course, diving has been an important technique used in salvage and greatly improved chances of success. A salvor was entitled to compensation to be decided by a law court unless parties reached an amicable agreement. It also set a maximum on the salvage fee. Much later, salvors also adapted to No cure – No pay.

To put a bit of perspective on history: it was in 1816 that the first steamer appeared on the River Mersey. A year later a towing vessel was built at Dunbarton for towing on the Firth of Forth between Leith and Grangemouth. In 1823 the 1st purpose built tug appeared on the Mersey: *Druid*.

Before tackling Swedish towage and salvage we first turn to Denmark where in 1833 mr **Emil Zeuthen Svitzer**, merchant and shipowner, and **Capt. H.C. Larsen**, Master Mariner, established a salvage company. The fleet was started with three vessels – no steam but sail: the *Gammelholm* was a sloop-rigged cargo vessel, *Tendre Brode* a spritsail rigged vessel, and a gig. The fleet was stationed at Kastrup, Denmark. In 1842 they fitted their sailing cutter *Camilla* with a closed diving suit and gear from August Siebe. The first salvage steamer was acquired in 1860. This was the 1858-built *Skandinavien* which had been salvaged by the company in 1860 and purchased. Shareholders in the





HELIOS, seen here under new owner Finska Neptun

photo: coll. Job van Eijk

company were Em. Z. Svitzer (5/16), C.F. Stage (5/16), Julius Andersen (4/16) and the company Gjode Gjodesen (2/16).

The Baltic

saw a significant number of salvage operators operating from the countries surrounding the Baltic. The Baltic was commercially interesting for this type of work due to the amount of shipping but more important the difficult operating conditions and the geography: archipelagos, rocky coasts, shifting shoals, winter ice, fog, storms. The areas around the Danish Straits, the Gulf of Finland, and the Stockholm archipelago were especially dangerous with a fair amount of groundings, collisions, ice entrapments and sinkings. The relatively narrow passages between Denmark and Sweden, for instance, provided incentives for stationing salvage vessels and tugs.

Early days in Sweden

In Sweden, in 1865, **Edward Liljewalch** took a shareholding in the newbuild steamer *Assistance* equipped with salvage and diving gear. It was a short-lived venture as in 1867 the vessel was destroyed by fire. This did not discourage Mr Liljewalch as next he used a cargo vessel to carry out salvage work. Lessons learned, Edward Liljewalch in 1869 formed an investment group to build a new salvage steamer named *Neptun*. This salvage steamer was delivered the next year.

Two years later, in 1872, the salvage steamer *Poseidon* was delivered to the owners. A new company was formed at Stockholm to run the vessels, **Dykeribolaget Neptun**, with Edward Liljewalch elected as managing owner. The same year **Göteborgs Bogsering AB** was established by local traders



Emil Z. Svitzer established Svitzer Salvage in Denmark

photo: coll. Job van Eijk

and shipping companies. Three newbuilding tugs were ordered from Motala Shipyard: *Ivar*, *Erik* and *Oscar*. The company later became known as **Rödabolaget** due to its distinctive funnel marking. Eventually this also became the trade name. The company was aimed at harbour towage, mainly ship assists. An earlier – 1870 – entrant in the port of Stockholm was **Stockholms Transport- och Bogseringsbolag**. The company busied itself with port support activities for the largest part in connection with lighterage. Nine years after the start in 1870 the company operated 11 steam tugs and 83 lighters. In 1874 the port of Malmö became the base for newly established Malmö Bogser AB. The purpose was the provision of harbour towage.

Neptun Bergning

This company was a 100% salvor. In the first twenty years they acquired no less than 14 salvage steamers and only one (small) tug. Six of the salvage steamers were newbuilds with the others acquired in the second-hand market. In 1882 Neptun established the 100% subsidiary **Russisch Baltische Bergungs Gesellschaft Neptun** at Reval. In 1887 that company was dissolved. The next year the permits for Swedish salvage vessels to operate from Russian ports were withdrawn. To combat this Neptun in 1889 purchased three (small) salvage vessels from their German competitor **Nordischer Bergungs Verein** (NBV). The three vessels in question still had valid permits to operate from Russian



AEGIR - a 1906 built salvage steamer for account of Svitzer. The 365 ihp was built by Kobenhavn Flydedok. 1943 modernised and re-engined. Scrapped in 1955. AEGIR was the first 'foreign' salvage vessel to arrive in Poland post WW2 to help clear the ports (see also TugZine 33)

photo: coll. Job van Eijk





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ports. But in 1890 all permits to operate in Russian waters were withdrawn so the vessels were quickly sold again having lost their commercial value for Neptun. The four biggest salvage steamers acquired during this period provided a long time service to the company, up to the 1940s and beyond. These were *Neptun* (1), *Poseidon* (1) *Belos* and *Hermes* (2). The other big one, *Hermes* (1) was sold after just 14 years to a Finnish operator.

In 1901 E. Liljewalch and T. Liljewalch (Board Member on behalf of the Bank of Sweden) resigned from the Board and were appointed as Advisory Council to Neptun. Expansion during the early 1900s was quick, although mostly through agreements with competitors. In 1904 an agreement with **Finska Bergningsaktiebolaget Neptun** guaranteed Swedish Neptun exclusive right of salvage in the Northern Bothnian Sea and on the west coast of Åland. Operations in the Vasa district were for joint account. Another cooperation agreement was made with **Victoriabolaget**, Luleå, regarding salvage operations and shiphandling. The next year an agreement was reached with Svitzer, Nordischer Bergungs Verein and **Diedrichsen, Jepsen & Co** - Shanghai regarding salvage operations in the Far East.

In 1908 a majority shareholding was obtained in Stockholms Transport- och Bogeserings AB which was sold again in 1915. In 1910 the company took a majority shareholding in Victoria Bolaget thus strengthening the position it had acquired in the 1904 agreement.

In 1923 ownership of Neptun Bergnings changed. All shares were purchased by **Aktiebolaget Ebro** (Erik, Gustaf and Olof Brodin and the **Ocean Salvage and Towage Co Ltd**, London. New Board of Directors Erik Brodin (md) and Gustaf Brodin (deputy md). Six years later Ocean Salvage withdrew so 100% ownership by the **Brodin** family was the result. This situation lasted until 1939 when the family decided to sell the company for the right price. That price arrived in 1943 in the form of three investors: 2/3 shares were sold to **AB Tirfing** (a **Broström** company) and 1/3 went to Svitzer and **Norsk Bergning**. Neptun remained operating under



The 750 hp SALVATOR was one of the competing salvage vessels introduced by Nordischer Bergungs Verein. Established in 1886 by the Hamburg-based shipbroker H.H. Dahlström the NBV quickly became was a serious competitor in the Baltic and later in Europe. Initially they operated in Russian coastal waters, but soon appeared elsewhere. Salvors Svitzer and Swedish Neptun already in 1888 were forced to come to an agreement with NBV regarding territory and cooperation. In 1896 NBV acquired the Neue Bugsir Dampfer Companie thus removing competition in Germany. By 1914 NBV operated 10 (salvage) tugs and 4 dedicated salvage vessels. In 1923 NBV was merged into the Bugsier Reederei und Bergungs A.G. where for a number of years they operated under the NBV flag

postcard: coll. Job van Eijk

its own name although an agreement was made with Göteborg Bogsering which also was a subsidiary of Tirfing (Broström). Neptun's operations were to be restricted to salvage and deepsea towing while Göteborg Bogsering limited its activity to harbour work, although it retained a minor salvage capability aimed mainly at the port. In 1947 Neptun acquired Capt. **John Sörman's Salvage Company**, Stockholm.

Modern times arrived in 1966 in the form of a 50/50 joint-venture

with British **United Towing. Trident Salvage & Towage Co. Ltd** was set up to enter the North Sea offshore towing market. A year later **Neptun Bergungsgesellschaft mbH**, Hamburg was established. The 400-tonne sheerlegs *Magnus VII* was ordered for this business and was to be run jointly with **Ulrich Harms Bergung**. A further diversification happened in 1969 when Neptun ordered two non-propelled 10.000 dwt self-unloading pulpwood carriers and two 7.000 hp ocean salvage & towage tugs. The fleet



MUNIN in the colors of Stockholms Transport- och Bogsering

photo: Bernt Fogelberg



in 1970 consisted of the 2.500 hp salvage tug *Ajax*, the 3.000 hp salvage tugs *Atlas*, the 450 hp tug *Castor*, the salvage tugs *Mercur* (3.750 hp), *Neptun* and *Poseidon* (7.000 hp) and 1.600 hp *Thetis*. In addition the lifting vessel *Sleipner*, *Magnus VII*, the two chip carriers *Hera* and *Juno*, the dredger *Balder* and two dredge barges.

Thus, by 1970, Bergnings- och Dykeri AB Neptun was changing into a maritime services company including distance towing. It had become impossible to survive on salvage alone, not alone for Neptun, but all over the world as salvage operations had become more and more complicated requiring huge investments in equipment and vessels while on the other hand navigational security kept ships out of trouble.

The transport side of the operations increased with the acquisition of high-capacity seagoing flattop barges. By 1974 the remaining vessels – the two 7.000 hp tugs, the pulpwood barges and 5 Goliat flattop barges were marketed under the brand **Neptun Transport**, while the sheerlegs *Hebe 1* (ex *Magnus VII*) was still registered in Germany. As a maritime services company it had been decided to add two powerful sheerlegs to the fleet, the 1.600 tonne lift capacity *Hebe 2* and *Hebe 3*. No. 2 flew the German flag while no. 3 was registered in the U.K. with **Neptun Salvage & Marine Services Ltd**, Middlesbrough. The Hamburg branch was renamed

Neptun Transport & Marine Services GmbH, Hamburg. In 1980 Broström established **Neptune Carrier AB** under which umbrella all transport activities were assembled. This included maritime, land and air transport.

Meanwhile Broström had decided to enter the big league tug market and ordered two of the most powerful tugs in the world, the 12.800 bhp 160 tpb oceangoing salvage tugs *Neptun Suecia* and *Neptun Gothia*. Although the announcement was made under the name of **Neptun Transport & Marin Service AB** the tugs were delivered in **Broström** colours, black funnel with three red rings in which the white letters AB. The tugs arrived in a market in which the high-powered tugs already had to compete for a substantial tow. As luck would have it the **French Government** – under pressure due to the *Amoco Cadiz* massive oil spill on the French coast after grounding – decided that powerful tugs were needed to avoid a repeat. The French **Les Abeilles** had formulated a plan and the two Swedish tugs were initially chartered with right to purchase. This is what eventually happened and as *Abeille Flandre* and *Abeille Languedoc* they remained under French flag for the next 44 years before being scrapped. In 1987 the sheerlegs were sold to Smit Tak for further employment. The fleet of flattop barges was by then operated by **Neptun Marine Contracting A/S**, Hovik, Norway. However, the Neptun name in Sweden has disappeared.



Dan Broström in 1921. The Broström family owned a large shipping company and stepped into the shiphandling towage and salvage market in 1942

photo: Sjöfartsmuseet Akvariet

The interbellum competition

It all began with Svitzer. After the World War 1 wrecks around Europe had more or less been cleared the big salvors faced stiff competition. The Baltic area especially was a bit overcrowded. Svitzer had a few harbour tugs operating at isolated ports but otherwise it remained with salvage steamers. Also on the North Sea coast of Jutland Svitzer faced competition for her *Aegir*. Mr **Claus Sorensen** operated out of Esbjerg with his *Bjorn*. The German **Bugsier Reederei** also send big tugs northward. In 1924 Svitzer reached an agreement with Sorensen by taking a 50% share in his salvage steamer. In 1925 they countered Bugsier through the acquisition of a British Saint-class salvage tug *Garm* which they stationed at Frederikshavn. Another post-war competitor was the British **Ocean Salvage Co** with their *Dalhousie* and *Foremost*. They appeared not very successful and soon left the area. Another problem became the big company **Det Forenede Bugserelskab**. They had acquired a lot of salvage equipment from the **Dano-Russian Union**, based at St. Petersburg. As they could not find buyers they were forced to use it themselves so they began to tackle wrecks wherever they found them. As a retaliation Svitzer began stationing harbour tugs in the DFB ports. After a few years the companies made a non-interference agreement. This also led to the Svitzer tugs at Copenhagen being transferred to Forenede Bugserelskab.

As an aside – due to the stiff competition Svitzer purchased a number of fast



ATLAS was aquired by Neptun Bjergning immediate post-World War 2. The 1.000 ihp salvage tug belongs to the British WW-2 built Empire-class of tugs postcard: issued by Norsk Bjergning- och Dykeri



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POSEIDON (1970 – 45,00 x 10,84 m – 7.000 hp) seen here on 12 May, 1977, was sold in 1986 to Veneza-Neptun Towing and Salvage, Venezuela, as EL GUYANAS

photo: David Worthy.



STORMBOY (1966 – 16,59 x 5,52 m – 360 bhp) was built as TELL for C.L. Hanssons Stuveri AB. 1971 Bogserings AB Stormboy, 1984 transferred to Scantugs. 1997 sold to Bogser AB Sven as SUNE

photo: Job van Eijk



AXEL (1967 – 26,72 x 8,48 m – 2.500 bhp) was built for Rödabolaget. 1986 Sacantugs. 1987 sold to Halmstads Hamnförvaltning, same name

photo: coll. Job van Eijk



HERKULES (1939 – 24,43 x 6,21 m – 650 bhp) was built for C.L. Hanssons Stuveri AB. 1983 Johnson Bogser AB Marin Service AB, same name. 1985 to Föreningen Bogserbaten Herkules. Refurbished by the society and in 1989 donated for use as a museum tug

photo: coll. Job van Eijk



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*ACHILLES was built in 1962 by Handel & Scheepsbouw Maatschappij Kramer & Booy, Kootstertille, The Netherlands. Dimensions 32,73 x 8,62 x 4,11 m. Main engine Ruston & Hornsby 9 AT CM delivering 2.050 hp
postcard: issued by Norsk Bjergning- och Dykeri*

boats for use as contract-makers. They were sent ahead of the big but slower salvage steamer. A practice seen later in other parts of the world where stiff competition was going on.

Svitzer in 1889 – more or less pushed by competitors – had sent its biggest salvage steamer *Em.Z. Svitzer*, dating from 1885, to the **Mediterranean** where she was stationed at Marseilles. In 1898 she was replaced by the new and bigger *Danmark*. *Danmark* operated throughout the Med from ports like Marseilles, Malta and Messina. In 1915, however, she was seized by the Turkish Government never to return. Three salvage steamers had operated in Norwegian waters, cooperating with local salvors. These three returned home just prior to the 1912 establishment of **Norsk Bjergnings-kompagni**. In 1906 *Em.Z. Svitzer* returned to the Med for another 23 years. The third salvage steamer sent to the Med was *Valkyrien*, stationed at Almeria.

The 1906-built salvage steamer *Protector* was designed for service in the Far East, stationed at **Hong Kong**. In 1911 she returned to Denmark to be refitted. Following this she was sent to the Red Sea with **Suez** becoming her station for 28 years.

The Mediterranean Union (1)

had been in existence since 1889. Participants were Svitzer, Neptun and Nordischer Bergungs Verein. The companies each placed a number of



*FRITHIOF - Göteborg Bogsering - prior to her sale to Svitzer. Built 1921 by AB Götaverken, Göteborg. Dimensions 51,06 x 10,55 x 4,25 m. Main engines 2x Burmeister & Wain 6-cyl. total output 1.220 hp. In 1956 re-engined with 2x MaK 6-cyl. total output 2.300 hp. Renamed *Em. Z. SVITZER* which was altered to *SVITZER* in 1958. She survived until 1974 when she was broken up in Spain
photo: coll. Job van Eijk*

salvage steamers at the disposal of the Mediterranean Union based on mutual agreement about stations. During World War 1 Nordischer Bergungs Verein obviously had to leave the Union but this gap was filled when Norsk Bjergnings in 1919 joined with the salvage steamers *Nidaros* and *Salvator*, joining the Swedish *Belos* and *Hermes* and Svitzer's *Valkyrien* and *Em.Z. Svitzer*. *Valkyrien* in 1921 moved to Lisbon. Svitzer also had a joint venture with **Perim Salvage** and its salvage steamer *Preserver* with Svitzer's *Protector* in the Red Sea.

In the 1920s fierce competition in the form of the British Ocean Salvage Co. appeared on the scene. This resulted in

Norsk Bjergnings retreating from the Med selling their two salvage steamers to Svitzer. In 1932 Neptun also left the Med. In April 1940 Denmark was invaded and contact with the Med no longer possible. It had been, however, pre-arranged with the British that the Svitzer vessels were to sail from their respective ports to be 'seized' by British warships.

The Great Escape

In March, 1945, Germany announced all Danish vessels were to receive armed guards. A pre-conceived plan was now started to remove as much as possible tugs and salvage steamers by fleeing to neighbouring Sweden, across the water. At the appropriate date – the night of 8/9 April – salvage vessels and tugs were mobilised from their stations to attend to 'casualties' or perform regular wreck

clearing operations. In total 18 salvage vessels thus reached Sweden ready to return when Denmark was liberated.

The Mediterranean Union (2)

Post World War 2 the salvors returned to the Med. *Freja* was stationed at Messina, *Protector* returned to Aden. *Frithiof*, owned by Göteborgs Bogserings- och Bärnings AB (Rödabolaget) was run by Neptun, which had in the meantime been taken over by Bröstrom, owner of Rödabolaget. In 1955 *Frithiof* (1921) was purchased by Svitzer as *Em.Z. Svitzer* (2) and based at Messina. In 1952 Norsk Bjergningskompagni returned to the Union with *Salvator*. Neptun's *Herakles* was on station at Lisbon. From 1951 to



1954 **M.H. Bland & Co** joined the Union with their new salvage vessel *Hercules*.

Suez Canal

In 1956 the Suez Canal was blocked by scuttled vessels. To clear the essential waterway salvage was organised under United Nations command. As joint salvors were appointed **Svitzer** and the Dutch firm of **L. Smit & Co**. The salvors hired a lot of floating craft and gear from other salvors. Svitzer's own contribution was *Em.Z. Svitzer (2)*, *Protector*, *Sigyn* and the lifting pontoons *Odin* and *Thor*. The operation was completed in May, 1957.

Svitzer in the 1970s and 1980s

was a medium-sized tug operator adapting to the demands of those years. The fleet was modernised and an entry was sought into the North Sea offshore market. Two powerful 105 ttp anchorhandling distance towing tugs were added to the fleet. *Svitzer Garm* and *Svitzer Jarl* were, however, sold for further trading after some 10 years.

The fleet in 1970 consisted of 41 tugs, 3 flattop pontoons, the iconic 1904-built lifting pontoons *Odin* and *Thor*, the 500 dwt salvage lighters *Sif* and *Jarl* and 37 lighters for port use. The most powerful tug was the 1970-built oceangoing salvage tug *Skuld* with 3.650 hp, followed by the 1921-built 1956 re-engined / modernised savage tug *Svitzer* (ex *Frithiof*).

A new project was that of the tug / barge units (ATB). Several Svitzer tugs were fitted with barge couplers. The tug / barge units were operating in Danish waters as well as the North Sea. In Danish waters the ATB's were divested in 2006.

Rödabolaget

Rödabolaget itself originated from and expanded through various acquisitions. Founded in 1872 as Göteborgs Bogsering AB the company was acquired in 1918 by the Broström subsidiary Tirfing. Broströms saw an advantage in operating a towing company which also served Broströms ocean fleet of cargo ships, passenger vessels and tankers.. Primarily a shiphandling / harbour towage operator the company expanded into salvage. With the entry of the 1921-built oceangoing salvage tug *Fritiof* the company name was changed to Göteborgs Bogser och Bärgnings A/B.

When in 1942 Tirfing purchased the shares of Bergnings- och Dykeri Neptun it became necessary to create boundaries of interest. Neptun was to focus primarily on ocean towing, heavy transport and salvage, Rödabolaget on shiphandling and harbour towage. Both companies continued operating under their own name.

The acquisition in 1954 by Rödabolaget of AB Bogserkompaniet brought a further 5 tugs into the fleet although the company kept its own name until 1975.

In 1961, **Göteborgs Bogserings AB Stormking**, Gothenburg, was acquired. The company had been founded in 1890 by **J.A. Eriksson & Co**, Gothenburg. It

had a large number of boats that were used in the port of Gothenburg for various purposes. Following problems caused by the crisis that arose after the First World War, the name was changed for a short time to **Nya Bogserings Stormking**, but the original name was later restored. At the time of the takeover, they had 4 small, somewhat outdated tugboats in service. Only in 1977 did the name disappear and it was completely absorbed into Göteborgs Bogser och Bärgnings A/B.

The Broström Group underwent major changes in the early 1980s. **Scandinavian Towage & Salvage AB (ScanTugs)** was founded by Neptune Carrier AB and the **Johnson Line**. The



FLINTRÄNNAN - Malmo Bogser - 450 ihp - 27,37 (oa) x 6,73 m

photo: coll. Job van Eijk



DAN - seen here in Rödabolaget livery - is the former HERAKLES (6.000 ohp) owned by Neptun Bjergning- och Dykeri. The tug changed colors when Neptun and Rödabolaget were united under the Broström banner

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The 10,000 dwt self-unloading Neptun Carrier type HERA is seen here in tow of the 2,500 hp 1960-built AJAX

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HANS- Johnson Line. Built 1967 for Rödabolaget. 25,00 (oa) x 8,50 (mld) m. 2.87- bhp - 28,5 ttp. 1992 sold to Oskarshamn s Hamn AB as HERBERT

photo: Job van Eijk



TIWAZ - Bohus Tugs - Built 1978. 43,39 x 12,23 m. 7.040 bhp / 85 ttp. 1986 sold to Bahmscan Towing & Salvage, Bahamas, as SCAN FORCE. 1989 to Bukser og Bjergning as BOB. 1991 BOA FORCE. 1994. Collided and sank, raised and scuttled 5.000 m of water near Thevenard Island

photo: Job van Eijk

Johnson Line held 50% of the shares. The entire towage business of the various companies was consolidated in ScanTugs. Johnson contributed the towage companies **C.L. Hanssons** and **AB Bohus Tug**. Göteborgs Bogsering- och Bärnings A/B contributed 27 harbour and coastal tugs with an engine output between 500 and 4.150 hp. At that time Neptun no longer owned any tugboats but owned a number of pontoons and was to take management of six submersible heavy-lift vessels. All companies continued to operate under their own names until Johnson Line sold its shares as early as December 1985. The name ScanTugs disappeared again. The Swedish part became **AB Neptun Röda Bolaget**, and the names C.L. Hanssons and AB Bohus Tug disappeared. The Norwegian part remained as **Bukser & Bergings AB**. As of 1 January, 1988, the name AB Neptun

Röda Bolaget became simply Röda Bolaget. All the tugs were repainted in the orange / red colour scheme.

Johnson Line

was a big deepsea cargoship operator. For big operators it was not unusual to have some tugs. In 1915, two small tugboats were ordered by Axel Johnson for the port of Gothenburg: *Ajco* and *Ajco II*. In 1917, the company **Bogserings AB Johansson** was acquired. It was liquidated in 1934, and the two tugboats *Tell* and *Tyr*, were placed under the subsidiary **C.L. Hanssons Stuveri AB**. In 1936 and 1939, Johnson commissioned the construction of the tugboats *Victor Camp* and *Hercules* (500 hp), followed by more tugboats. In 1975, the company name was changed to **C.L. Hanssons Bogserings AB**. The last tugboat built for this company was the *Camp* in 1981. That year, **Bohus Tug AB** was acquired by the

Johnson group. The fleet was merged with that of C.L. Hanssons Bogserings AB, bringing the tugboats *Tiwaz*, *Dynan*, and *Bohus* into Hanssons' possession.

Bohus Tug

was founded in 1971. In the late 1950s, various tugboats had been purchased by **Rederi AB Tyr**, Uddevalla. The tugs of the **Uddevalla Shipyard** were also acquired. In 1971, the company continued under the name Bohus Tug. After the acquisition by C.L. Hanssons in 1981, the company moved to Gothenburg. Two tugs, *Ted* and *Tom*, were left behind in Uddevalla and became the property of the city.

A.P. Moller / Maersk

had held shares in Svitzer since the 1940s. This was a strategic shareholding aimed at blocking investors from breaking up the company. In the 1970's a 80% shareholding was build up and in 1979 Svitzer became a subsidiary of A.P. Moller / Maersk.

In 1981 the fleet was expanded through the acquisition of the remaining 50% share in **Det Forenede Bugserelskab**. A year later the remaining shares in the shiphandling company **Goliath** were acquired followed in 1983 by the purchase of **A/S Claus Jorgensens Bugserbade**. Also in 1982 the provision of rescue vessels to the offshore industry was started through the joint-venture **Esvagt**. In 1998 Svitzer had built up a 75% shareholding in Esvagt.

In the mid-1990s it was decided that the ship assist business offered opportunities while also being supportive to other segments of the A.P. Moller / Maersk portfolio. A worldwide geographic expansion was to follow. In 1999 Svitzer purchased the Swedish **Rödabolaget** from Norwegian Bukser og Berging, adding 16 tugs to the fleet. The big bang came in 2001 when Svitzer acquired the Dutch **Wijsmuller Group**. This brought some 140 vessels in over 20 countries worldwide. The company name now changed to SvitzerWijsmuller. Wijsmuller had been building a worldwide shiphandling, salvage and deepsea towing organisation but had run out of steam when the intended entry in the stock market could not be realised. In 2007 Svitzer purchased Australia-based **Adsteam**.



That company was deeply embedded in Australia and had since been expanding to the U.K. Some 150 tugs plus barges, workboats and launches joined Svitzer. The same year the remaining shares owned by Smit in the **SmitWijs** joint venture ocean towing operation were acquired bringing a number of the most powerful tugs into the Svitzer fold.

In 2005 Portuguese **Lisboa Tugs** was added. Svitzer initially continued expansion by taking substantial shareholdings in local tug operators but later changed to full take-overs or controlling shareholdings.

Svitzer today is one of the two biggest tug operators in the world and by far the biggest operator with tugs servicing all major ports. With the purchase of Rödabolaget the Svitzer Sweden division (now Svitzer Scandinavia) was formed and the Rödabolaget name disappeared.

Note: the above article sketches the historical development of salvage and towage mainly related to the companies that have eventually been integrated in Svitzer. Apart from those companies there were many more. For instance, Sweden had a big forest industry and the resulting wood and wood products had to be transported to factories and paper mills. Thus a fairly large number of tugs were specialised in the towing of the log rafts along the coast. Port owners also had a need for tugs. Not only for shiphandling but also for icebreaking. In wintertime many of



SVITZER BJÖRN, ex BJÖRN operated by Rödabolaget. This is one of a series of three stern drive tugs acquired in Japan. Built 1991 for Rödabolaget. 32,89 (oa) x 10,23 m. 3.950 bhp./ 54 ttp. Reverse tractor with Kawasaki Rexpellers. Sisters JOHN and LARS
photo: Ko Rusman

the ports are frozen and sometimes inaccessible. The obvious reason for icebreaking tugs owned by port owners / operators is the necessity to keep the port accessible for shipping. Over the past years a number of these ports have acquired powerful tug / icebreakers for that purpose. Those tugs have not been highlighted in the history presented here due to space constraints. And after all – the Tug Convention is being held at Gothenburg . . .

Sources

This article is partly based on an earlier publication in Lekko NL by Cock Peterse and in Lekko International by Jaap Bijl, files Job van Eijk, files Jasju van Haarlem, Norges

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SVITZER EMBLA. Built 2021 by Med Marine's Eregli yard in Turkey. 30 x 12,6 m. M.A.N. Energy Solutions, 4.080 kW. Tug was designed by Robert Allan for shiphandling and icebreaking in the Göta River and Trollhattan Canal

photo: Med Marine



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BB POWER seen at Rotterdam on 14 January, 2026

photo: Frits van der Hoek

Norwegian Bukser og Berging awarded the contract for *BB Power* to the Turkish shipbuilder Uzmar. The design was by Robert Allan from their RAmpage series, in this case a RAmpage 4100-BB-H hybrid offshore tug. Dimensions are 41,20 (oa) x 14,50 (mld) x 7,55 m with a draft of 6,60 m. She is fitted with a hybrid drive train consisting of two medium speed ABC main engines with a total output 5.600 kW and two 900 kW inline

electrical motor/shaft generators (PTI/PTO) ABB Hybrid Systems driving two 3700 kW each Berg azimuthing propellers delivering a maximum of 120 tbp.

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anchorhandling wire is 670 m x 64 mm. Two storage reels accommodate 3x 550 and 2x 600 m x 75 mm. Two 70-tonne tugger winches, two 120-tonne tow pins, two 300-tonne Sharkjaws and a 6-metre stern roller complete the towing / anchorhandling gear. For mooring purposes two 8-tonne windlasses, 2x 17-tonne tugger winches and 2x 6-tonne capstans have been fitted. Accommodation for a crew of 20.



BB POWER with the rig HAEVA assisted by FAIRPLAY 27, FAIRPLAY 84, FAIRPLAY 33 and FAIRPLAY X

photo: Ruud Zegwaard



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Kooren: to boldly go . . .

From a single tugboat with a captain-owner to a world-wide tugboat operator. The Kotug story itself started in 1985 but this would not have been possible without events started in 1874.

by Job van Eijk and Ad van Zanten



Antonie Kooren started what many years later became one of the most innovative and progressive tug operators

The beginning: Antonie Kooren

Antonie Kooren was born on April 16, 1874, as the son of the owner / skipper of a small inland waters sailing vessel. From the age of 11 he learned the trade from his father but the boy wanted to be something more than a "common" skipper which he had become at the age of 19. Three years later - 1896 - he married Mathilde van den Wijngaart. This marriage produced no fewer than six sons as well as a daughter. In 1911 Antonie had himself a tug built at Sliedrecht. He named this vessel after his wife Mathilda. This is what started it all.

Mathilda was powered by a 60 ihp steam-engine. With this tug he sailed for account of ao. the Stoomsleepdienst 'Maas' (Steam Towing Co 'Maas' and the Rotterdamsche Stoomsleepdienst (Rotterdam Steam Towing Co.). Both companies were cooperations of independent tugowners. In 1919 Antonie decided to go at it alone and a second tug, *Corrie*, was purchased. The Kooren funnel mark: a white "K" on a black funnel, also dates from these years.

Antonie used an office at Delfshaven (now a part of Rotterdam). Most of



MATHILDA was the first tug owned by Antonie Kooren and is seen here alongside a dump barge. On the left the height of the sand in the hold is measured to determine the total load and thus the value of the 'cargo'. In the distance a barge-discharge dredger is waiting to pump the sand ashore photo: coll. Job van Eijk

his work was with the gravel and sand traders. They traded to The Hague and Delft but had to go all the way upriver towed by Antonie's tugs from Delfshaven into the provinces of Limburg and

Brabant to load. One of Antonie's neighbours was the operator of the liner-towage-service between Delfshaven and The Hague, the 'sGravenhaagsche Sleepdienst (The Hague Towing Co.). This



ADMA was acquired in 1945 by Adriaan Kooren from M.J. Oord, Blokzijl, as TERRA NOVA. Purchase price 13.927 Dutch Guilders. Renamed in 1951 as ADMA and refitted with 90 hp Caterpillar. 1968 re-engined with 145 hp Caterpillar. 1987-1988 total overhaul. In use as museum tug. This was the first motor tug owned by Adriaan Kooren. photo: coll. Job van Eijk





WARMOND (1942 - 120 hp - 2-cyl Brons engine) was acquired in 1947. Sold 1981 to R. Lodewijks, Warmond. 1982 to R.A. Beye, Puttershoek, for use as recreation vessel.
photo: Job van Eijk

company ran into a fierce competition with Sleepdienst P. Smit Jr. (P. Smit Jr. Towage Services) which wanted a piece of the cake or rather the entire cake. In the end they managed to obtain a 50% split of the named liner service. They then moved into Antonie's territory by towing the barges non-stop from The Hague to Limburg.

Antonie's answer to that was a fierce competition and he also started towing directly to The Hague / Delft. His sons – Petrus (Piet), Johannes, Adriaan, Frans, Henk and Anton - were stationed at Schiemond, the old entrance to Delfshaven, with standing orders to board every barge coming in and offer the services of the Kooren tugs. After a while the other companies of course noticed this and Schiemond became a

crowded place. Next step was to go and collect the barges already at Rotterdam. The towing tariff dropped from 5 cents a ton to 2½ cents a ton and sometimes even lower. Finally a settlement was reached: on January 1, 1934, the competitors bought Antonie out of the liner trade.

The sons

By 1934 the third tug, renamed *Antonie* was purchased. She was completed in 1928 and fitted out with a 150 ihp triple-expansion engine. *Mathilda* was now leased to sons Frans and Adriaan, *Corrie* to son Henk. When young Adriaan had asked his father to teach him to become a tugboat captain Antonie's reply had been (as the story goes) "Son, you haven't got what it takes". The main reason for this rejection was the fact



Adriaan Kooren

photo: Kooren

Anyway, by March 2, 1933, Adriaan established himself as a towage-broker at Rotterdam. In this capacity he also supplied his brothers and father with work. The Kooren's were successful throughout the thirties and in 1938 a newbuilding was completed - *Antonie II* (150 ihp). At about the same time a further second-hand tug named *Zeehond* was purchased. Just prior to the outbreak of the Second World War two new tugs were ordered from Shipyard Bijlsma for account of Antonie Kooren and his six sons.

1940-1945

When the German forces occupied Holland the Koorens saved their new construction by loading the steel plates in an old barge and literally had it disappearing below the surface. Both engines were transported to Wartena where they awaited better times in a deserted shed that looked like a transformer-station.



EDUARD FRANKLIN dates from 1952. The 172 hp tug was built by the Van den Beldt yard at West Graafthijk. Sold 1983 to L.J. van der Geer, Spijkenisse, as KIM. Refitted with 360 hp Caterpillar. This was the first of several newbuilds for Adriaan Kooren for employment mainly in the hydraulic engineering / dredging market

photo: coll. Job van Eijk



Towage of course did not stop but had to be done for account of the occupying forces through a "Towage Committee". Needless to say that every now and then things "disappeared" or "were lost". By the end of 1944 there was a shortage of food in the western part of Holland. A "Central Company for the Transport and Distribution of Food" was established. Adriaan was then asked to head the towage section which in fact meant he became some sort of civil servant. After the war he returned to the Kooren business or rather what was left of it. *Antonie II* had been requisitioned by the Germans. When she was returned the Kooren's sold her to the Dutch Government. *Mathilda* was mined in 1945 while *Corrie* was sold in 1947.



MARCO was a 1954 newbuild from shipyard Bijlsma, Wartena. 17,20 x 4,55 m. Draught 2,10 m. 220 bhp Caterpillar. Seen here at Rotterdam 27-11-1975. 1983 sold to L.J. van de Geer, Spijkenisse. Same name. Almost immediately resold to Scheffer Salvage, Urk, renamed *ARGO* photo: Frits van der Hoek

Inland Towage Foundation

During the occupation towage work in Holland had been contracted out on a rotation scheme. After the war it was considered useful to continue working according to this scheme. By 1948 talks were started on this subject between the many hundreds of so-called 'skipper-owners', the towage companies with an interest in inland towage and the towage. Adriaan Kooren was asked to chair the meetings. It wouldn't last long.....

The big towage companies wanted to keep the contracts from their regular customers out of the rotation scheme.

Furthermore the towage brokers didn't like the idea at all because they feared to lose their business entirely to the scheme. Adriaan however (although being a broker himself) was of the opinion that everyone should have equal rights to the benefit of the entire inland towage business and more specially to improve things for the small operators. So he walked out as a chairman. And he stayed out especially since a big-company director, mr P. Voorwinde of P.Smit's (the same P.Smit Kooren had competed with earlier), became chairman of a foundation largely supported by single-ship owners.

On 30 August, 1949, the Foundation became operational. Although Adriaan was asked by various members to join he refused. This move caused him to be excluded from the Towage-Brokers Association. Furthermore members of the newly formed A. Foundation were explicitly forbidden to undertake any contracts offered by Adriaan Kooren or to co-operate with him in any way or else

Kooren was now with his back against the wall but luckily some of the single-ship owners shared his ideas and defied the Foundation. Also the dredging companies (which used to be his biggest customers) kept ordering tugboats from Adriaan much to the annoyance of the larger towage companies. Opposition ended in 1953.



MARIUS seen here in 1972 - was built in 1962 by Shipyard Paans, Roodevaart (yn 237). 21,50 x 5,80 m. draught 2,35 m. Main engine 510 bhp Stork-Ricardo replaced in 1980 by 860 bhp Stork. 10 tpb. 1980 modernised by Van de Sande shipyard, Breskens. This was A. Kooren's first seagoing / coastal tug. 1986 to Kooren International. Mainly employed in civil engineering and occasionally as a shiphandling tug at Rotterdam. She has been active on projects far away from her home port Rotterdam. .1996 sold to A. Kaptein & Zn Duwsleepvaart, Urk. Renamed *COBY*. 2018 sold to Treffers Scrapyard, Haarlem. Same name photo: Job van Eijk

Reederij A. Kooren & Zoonen

Returning the story to the immediate post-war situation the Koorens were able to recover the materials for the new tugs. After a lot of rust-chipping by the brothers the two 240 hp diesel tugs *Antonie II* and *Antonie III* emerged. In September 1946 the 'Reederij A.Kooren & Zoonen' had been founded by Antonie and his six sons. The two new tugs were the assets of the company. Incidentally the 'Reederij'-form was chosen because it limited liability to the amount the respective partners were involved in the company. The partners named a bookkeeper (in this case Adriaan) who represented the company. Although the financial results were impressive the tugs were sold in 1952 to the Maatschappij Binnenvaart



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ADRIAAN was built in 1957 by Wortelboer, Gouderak, for account of Adriaan Kooren. 380 bhp Stork-Ricardo main engine. Operated mainly on dredging projects in The Netherlands, France and Germany. For many years operating in support of the Easterscheldt storm surge barrier construction as well as the construction of the Maeslant storm surge barrier. In 1986 transferred to Kooren International and used as a harbour / shiphandling tug. Still owned by Kotug she is now registered as maritime heritage. Part of the Maasluis Tugboat Port fleet she is maintained in top condition. Seen here in use as an operational museum tug photo: Hans Hoffmann

(Inland Shipping Company). This move, instituted by two members of the family, effectively caused a split in the family even though the sale itself was at a huge profit. The "Reederij A. Kooren" was liquidated. Antonie retired and left the running of the towage business (now without any tugs) to son Jan. Jan continued under his own name and tugs with the "JK" mark in the funnel.

The Kooren-brothers

When the Reederij A. Kooren & Zoonen was liquidated in 1952 the Kooren's were scattered all over the towage industry in Holland. Jan as mentioned continued under his own name. Brother Frans had the *Liberty* built and was active in towage until his death in 1963. Henk purchased the second-hand *Henja* and also managed a few others. In 1972 he sold his tug and retired from towage. Henk died in 1978. Anton purchased the *Mathilda* of 135 hp, later joined by the 220 hp *Vlieland*. He worked with this vessel until his death in 1971. Brother Piet (deceased in 1974) was employed by the Government Harbour Services but had a stake in Adriaan's tugs *Zeehond* and *Warmond*. It is of interest to note that Anton's sons Anton Jr. and Kees also have been operating as tugboat-owners.

1953

On February 1, 1953, the dikes in many parts of the provinces of Zeeland and South-Holland gave way during an

extremely heavy gale coupled with spring-tides. Massive flooding of the low-lying areas occurred. Reconstruction was started immediately by the Dutch Government. Dutch hydraulic engineering firms joined hands. Work was undertaken at cost-price plus a fixed profit. Tugs were hired according to a fixed tariff-structure and as Adriaan already was working for the said firms his tugs were at the job right from the start.

The committee of the Inland Towage Foundation was of the opinion that all towage should be undertaken at the same prices and on the same conditions. So they invited Adriaan Kooren to talk about these items. The final outcome was that all parties agreed on conditions and prices; a committee consisting of mr Voorwinde (for the Foundation), mr Vegter (for the brokers) and Adriaan Kooren was to have talks with the Dutch Government on this.

Adriaan's company continued to grow in line with the amount of hydraulic engineering that had to be carried out in order to protect Holland against flooding once-and-for-all. This culminated in the works on the Easter Scheldt storm-surge barrier (1976-87) where Adriaan's company was main contractor for all towage-work to be carried out. During peak periods 40 to 50 tugs were required. Not only the smaller type of inland-waterways tug but also heavy seagoing tugs (the sea at times could be very rough over there) while with the progress of the barrier the current increased making work very difficult. Heavy tugs were chartered from ao. Smit International, Wessels of Emden and the Hamburg Petersen & Alpers company. The *Karl* and *Cornelie Wessels* - both Schottel tractors - were even bareboat chartered and repainted in Kooren-colours.



ANTONIE JUNIOR was built by Kramer & Booy, Kootstertille, for account of Adriaan Kooren. The 1.320 bhp 21 tpb tug was designed for deepsea work as well as for use on hydraulic engineering projects. In 1988 transferred to Kooren International. 30-12-1996 to Engelsman, Makkum. Same name. 2002 sold to Remolcatuna (Tom Juijn) for use in the tuna industry. Renamed ANTONIE and based at Cartagena. 2004 renamed ANTONIE X. 12-2013 sunk off the North African coast. It is of interest to note that the two main engines originate from the tug VIKINGBANK which was lost during a salvage attempt off Hoek van Holland, raised and later sank again when the lifting gear of the sheerlegs broke. Again raised and demolished but the engines were overhauled and purchased by Kooren photo: coll. Job van Eijk



Sleepdienst Adriaan Kooren

In 1945 Adriaan (besides being a partner in the Reederij A.Kooren) had a stake in the tug *Zeehond*. In that same year he purchased the tug *Terra Nova*, later to become the *Adma*. Originally fitted with a 60 hp Kromhout she was later refitted with a 90 hp Caterpillar; still later with a 145 hp Cat. Adriaan was also involved in harbour towage in Rotterdam - the traditional harbour-towage companies had had their fleets scattered all over Europe - with twelve chartered tugs. General harbour towage was carried out on a small scale even in later years but it was gradually phased out.

The Adriaan Kooren owned fleet (with the familiar white 'K' on a black funnel) continued to grow. The 180 hp *Mariton* was acquired in 1947. In 1971 she finally was sold locally at Bantry Bay where she had operated on a contract for some years. The *Warmond* with 120 hp Brons was bought from the Dutch Government. She was named after the village where Adriaan had lived with his family during the war. In 1952 another tug was acquired, the 150 hp *Zeehond* which before the war was owned jointly by father and sons Kooren. During the war she had been requisitioned by



EDUARD was acquired in 1983. The tug was built in 1968 as *ARGUS 5* by Gutehoffnungshutte Sterkrade Rheinwerft, Walsum, Germany, as one of a series of harbour / coastal tugs for account of Harms Bergung, Hamburg. Their main task was support for the company's sheerlegs which were operated worldwide. Sank 22-12-1972 during a manoeuvre with the drillship *SEALET* in The Channel off Calais. capsized and sank in 20 meters of water, declared a total loss. Raised in 1976 and sold to L.J.van de Geer. Repaired / reconstructed by H.de Haas Shipyard at Maassluis. The 960 bhp Deutz engine replaced by 900 bhp G.M. 15 tbp. 01-03-1979 again operational as *JUMBO*. Sold 1983 and renamed *EDUARD*. 1986 transferred to Kooren International - Rotterdam. Per 1-1-1988 in use as shiphandling tug at Rotterdam. 11-2001 sold as *SEA CHALLENGE II* to Foster Yeoman Ltd. (Alan C. Bennett & Sons Ltd.) - Rochester. It is of interest that the tug was to be renamed *EDUARD FRANKLIN* by Kooren. However, once the new name was to be painted the space available at the bow was inadequate so they dropped the *FRANKLIN* part

photo: Leen van der Meijden

the Germans. They beached her near Stavenisse after being used for target-practice by British fighter-planes. Later she was salvaged.

Meanwhile Adriaan Kooren had again become involved with dredging

companies. This generated an increasing amount of work so Kooren instead of purchasing second-hand tonnage started a series of newbuildings especially designed for 'dredge-towing'. This requires fairly deep-draught vessels, heavily constructed to withstand a constant battering from dredgers, barges and the like, with the ability to move the very large barges with dredge-spoil over quite large distances to the dumping grounds; operating in often remote corners of the earth in sometimes atrocious weather.

In 1952 the *Eduard Franklin* of 172 hp was delivered. She stayed with Kooren until 1983 when she, together with the 1954 built *Marco* of 240 hp, went to mr L.J. van.de.Geer in exchange for his *Jumbo*. In 1956 a more powerful tug named *Jacoba* was delivered fitted out with a 196 hp diesel. The final tug in the newbuilding series was the 380 hp *Adriaan*.

By 1955 Adriaan Kooren had moved office to a site at the Boompjes Quay in the centre of Rotterdam on the banks of the Nieuwe Maas. Almost at the same time the name Sleepdienst Adriaan Kooren (Adriaan Kooren Towage Services) was introduced.

The Kooren sons

From 1956 to 1963 the sons of Adriaan entered the family business. Adriaan was



CORNELIE WESSELS was chartered by Adriaan Kooren for the Easterscheldt storm surge barrier project. The construction equipment to be handled required powerful highly manoeuvrable tugs suitable for rough open water. The 2.320 bhp 34,8 tbp Schottel tractor suited this profile. She was built in 1976 by Mützelfeldwerft, Cuxhaven, for account of Petersen & Alpers, Hamburg. Delivered as *JOHANNA* soon after delivery she was sold to Emden Bugsier (P.W. Wessels). After her charter with Kooren where she sailed with a Kooren funnel she returned to Emden. 1986 sold to Alexandra Towing, Liverpool, as *FLYING OSPREY*. In 1993 the company was sold to Australia-based Howard Smith which had set up shop in the U.K. In 2001 Howard Smith U.K. sold its business to Adsteam U.K. - another with an Australian parent. 2004 sold to Norwegian Taubat Kompaniet, Trondheim, as *BOA SUND*. In 205v registration changed to Trond A. Kittelsen Shipping with management carried out by Boa Management



The 1941-built 249 bhp SIMCA-B was acquired by Ton Kooren in 1980 from B. Boompjes, Rotterdam. Former names: CHARLOTTE, GEESJE, MONOPOL nr ?? She was shipped out to Ton Kooren's project in the Gulf of Mexico area. Returned to The Netherlands and fitted with 800 hpm GM she was sold in 1985 to C. de Uyl, Woudrichem, and renamed MARCO
photo: J.W.F. Smallegange

a great believer of starting at the bottom so Marius, Aad and Ton started their training as deckhand on board the tugs. Eduard started out in the office. After

prolonged training Marius finally became general manager of the company, Aad assistant-manager, Ton headed the technical department and Eduard



VIKING - seen here on 2 March, 1999 entering Hoek van Holland - owned by J. Koerts, Delfzijl, was managed for several years by Ton Kooren / Kooren International and Kotug. The tug was built by Arnhemsche Scheepsbouw Maatschappij N.V., Arnhem (yn 373) as a shiphandling tug for account of N.V. Reederij v/h Gebr. Goedkoop, Amsterdam, named HERMINA E. GOEDKOOP. Delivered in 1957 the tug measured 28,51 x 6,96 x 3,20 m. Engine output 2x 300 bhp, later boosted 2x 450 hp, single screw. In 1969 sold to J. & S. Engelsman, Badhoevedorp and in use as a seagoing / coastal tug. Renamed DIANA. 1973 re-engined with 2x SK total output 1.320 bhp - bollard pull 18 tonnes. 1978 re-registered with R. Engelsman, Makkum. 1983 sold to J. Koerts, Delfzijl, renamed VIKING. 1983 re-registered with Koerts International Towing Services, Delfzijl. Vessel reconstructed and fitted with new wheelhouse.. 1996 re-engined with 2.400m hp, bollard pull increased from 18 to 30 tonnes. 2002 or 2004 (sources differ) sold to Tom Juijn, Sleenwijk and registered under La Union Remolcatuna at Cartagena, Spain, as VIKING X, for use in the tuna fishing industry. 2014 sold to Soc. Tunesienne de Remorquage, Sfax, Tunisia. Renamed VIKING. 7 December, 2018, while en route Alexandra to Palma de Mallorca towing the dredger NEPTUN KHAN run aground on the rocks near Matala, Crete
photo: Jan van der Klooster

the administrative section. Adriaan remained as director of the company.

It was in this period that many civil engineering projects were being started outside Holland. Large ports were being constructed sometimes on open shores. Kooren followed the dredging companies and as a result a different, more seaworthy type of tug became necessary. So in 1962 *Marius* appeared in the fleet. With 510 hp she was extremely suited for this work. Already in 1963 *Marius* undertook the first ever deepsea tow for Kooren: a barge loaded with dredging equipment from Rotterdam to St. Nazaire. The tug herself was to stay at Nantes where she operated for some years supporting a dredger.

Next to come was *Frans*, a former Volker Dredging tug which was re-engined with 450 hp Cat. In 1967 followed a smaller type of tug; *Tilly*, and in January 1971 the tug *Antonie Junior* completed trials. This 135 grt vessel became the flagship of the company for many years to come. She was a 1.320 bhp deepsea tug equipped equally well for long distance towing as for dredge-towing. Being a very compact tug she could also be used for shiphandling or salvage work. The last tug acquired during this period of expansion was *Marlène* which entered the fleet in 1974 after being re-engined with 565 hp Caterpillar.

However, by this time trouble brewed within the family, an all too familiar happening within this type of father and sons operations.

In 1977 Ton left the company to start up his own business. Adriaan wanted to concentrate on the local (Dutch) market but Ton believed that expansion into international operations was necessary.

Ton Kooren International

Ton Kooren International Marine Services BV at Rotterdam at first operated purely as a deepsea towage-, transport- and shipbroker. For instance from 1979-1981 Ton Kooren arranged all towage work for Hapag Lloyd Transport & Services' largest pontoon (then the biggest pontoon in the world) operating in the Caribbean. Furthermore the coastal tug *Helgoland* (2.650 hp / 33 ttp) was managed for her owners, Ems Schlepper AG of Emden, West Germany.



In 3½ years' time this tug carried out no less than 137 voyages.

In 1980 Ton Kooren was awarded a contract for a project in Mexico. The semi-submersible pontoon *P 10* was to maintain a shuttle service between Galveston (U.S.A.) and the Mexican ports of Coatzacoalcos and Tampico with loaded barges to Mexico and empty ones on the return trip. The Mexican contractor was NaVeSa. The 1978-built 25.310 dwt pontoon measured 144,20 x 36,05 m. Owner / operator was Hapag-Lloyd / Lütgens & Remers. For the onward transport in Mexico four tugs were available: *Concordia* (460 hp - 1942 - Garsten - temporary Mexican name was *Navesa 2*), *Hondsbosch* (565 bhp - 1944 - Viegers - 1981 sold to Ton Kooren - temporary Mexican name *Navesa 3*), *Simca-B* (480 bhp - 1941 - Ton Kooren - temporary Mexican name *Navesa 4*) and *Mexico* (1972 - 812 bhp - owner Garsten), the latter operating at Tampico with the other three at Coatzacoalcos. The tugs as well as two Eerland pontoons (*E 1503* - 45,10 x 15,00 m) and *E 2001* - 60 x 15,52 m) each fitted with a big Manitowoc were shipped out from Rotterdam to Galveston on board *P 10*. The barges that arrived on *P 10* were loaded with all kinds of cargo as well as offshore equipment for Pemex. The trips upriver with the push barges often was via the bush with no guiding lights or buoys with the tugs having to rely on radar and the local pilots. All tugs returned to The Netherlands piggy-back on the *P10* when the project was finished. *Hondsbosch* and *Simca B* after some time were sold by Ton Kooren while the others were returned to their respective owners for further trading.

In 1982 Ton also started branching out into deepsea towage with his own equipment: the 725 hp *Borkum* was acquired from Ems Schlepper.

In the meantime his father's (and brothers') towage company started feeling the general worldwide recession. Dredging work and civil engineering dropped considerably; also outside Holland. The Adriaan Kooren flag which had flown on the coasts of Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, the U.K., the Shetlands, France, Israel, Portugal, Gibraltar, Algeria, Lybia, Egypt and the Westcoast of Africa was to be seen outside Holland less and less. The



BORKUM was acquired in 1982 by Ton Kooren Marine Services from Ems Schlepper, Emden. 725 bhp - 10 tbp. With this tug Kooren carried out deepsea towage. In 1987 transferred to Kooren International under the Cyprus flag
photo: Nico Ouwehand

engineering companies in a bid to reduce costs developed new equipment requiring less tugboat attendance. Fewer and fewer tugs were hired by Sleepdienst Adriaan Kooren. New opportunities had to be found.

Marius had been modernised and in 1983 the seagoing tug *Eduard* was added to the fleet. Next to come and the last vessel to be acquired under Adriaan's regime was the former tug / supply vessel *Adamsturm* which was operated mainly as a deepsea tug named *Seatruck 1*. She was employed on short international voyages again

mainly in conjunction with the civil engineering industry.

Ton Kooren returns

Deepsea towage was also affected by the recession although at a later date than the civil engineering industry. But also in this sector an overcapacity of tugs occurred. By the end 1985 Ton was asked by his father to take over the Sleepdienst Adriaan Kooren. After consultation with his brothers it was decided to merge with the two companies with Ton becoming President of the group.



SEATRUCK 1 is the former tug / supply vessel *ADAMSTURM* owned by VTG Hansa (Offshore Supply Association). She was built in 1968 by J.G. Hitzler (yn 700). Dimensions 53,47 (oa) x 11,02 (oa) x 3,97 m. Draught 3,55 m. Main engines 2x 16-cyl .M.A.N. total output 2.740 bhp. Bollard pull 34 tonnes. Acquired by Adriaan Kooren in 1986. 1 January, 1988, transferred to Kooren International. 1990 sold to Venus Trading, London, renamed *SAFE CARRIER*. 1998 sold, owner unknown, as *DESTINEE*. 2011 sold, renamed *SIMONE*, registered at Sao Tomé. No further details
photo: coll. Job van Eijk.



In 1986 the holding company Kooren International was established. The various operating companies were: Ton Kooren International Marine Services, Sleepdienst Adriaan Kooren BV, Ton Kooren International Pontoon Services and Transport Offshore Marine Services. The time for new opportunities had arrived.

Adriaan Kooren retired from office in December 1986 at the age of 82. Nevertheless he could still regularly be found at his desk in the Boompjes office as he found it difficult to 'let go' entirely. It is clear though that he proved his father

- for whom he always had high regard - wrong. Yes, alright, he did not become a tugboat skipper but he had built (in later years together with his sons) a company that became a factor in Dutch towing to be reckoned with. The sons continued to build the company with the same determination and inventiveness their father and grandfather have displayed over the years.

Note: this article is based on articles published in Tugs, 3000 hp and over (issue 1990) and Lekko 142 (May 1989) by Job van Eijk jointly with Ad van Zanten.

Sources:

Archives: J. van Eijk, Sleepdienst Adriaan Kooren, Kooren International. Registers: Tugs, 3000 hp and over, 1986 edition; various editions of Lloyds register. Periodicals: Het Vrije Volk, Algemeen Dagblad, Scheepvaartkrant, Lloyds List, Marine Digest, Lekko International, Lekko NL Historic and technical literature: Proceedings of the 7th International Tug Convention, Proceedings of the 8th International Tug Convention, Lekko-Geschiedenis van de Sleepvaart (Goedkoop), Vastmaken (Hoogslag). Sleepvaart in Stroomversnelling – 40 jaar Nationaal Sleepvaart Museum (N.J. Ouweland). Furthermore use has been made of filed interviews with mr A. Kooren Sr.

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The photograph shows the entire salvage fleet on 24 April, 1961. Centre Neptunbolaget's lifting craft ODEN and FRIGG. To the right is the Navy tug BELOS. To the left (from r to l) Neptun's lifting vessel SLEIPNER, the salvage tug ATLAS and the tug AJAX
photo: Wasa Foto





Without doubt the best-known SWEDISH salvage operation known to the public is that of the wreck of the VASA. On 10 August, 1628, the latest addition to the Swedish Navy - the 64-gun VASA - had completed storing and was ready to start her maiden voyage. The 1.400 tons displacement vessel carried a crew of 133. Additional some 300 soldiers were on board. Sails were hoisted but there was only a light breeze to push her through the water. According to reports a sudden squall happened when VASA had sailed for between a half and one nm. She took on a list to port and then rolled over. The flagship of the Swedish Navy went down in 30 metres of water. There she remained until finally located by mr Anders Franzen. She was raised by Neptun Bjergning- och Dykeri 1961. The photograph shows the wreck being manoeuvred into a drydock in April, 1961. VASA was brought to the surface hanging between the two Neptun lifting craft ODEN and FRIGG. For those interested in the search, salvage and related matters the book 'The Warship Vasa - deep diving and marine archaeology in Stockholm' by Anders Franzen, re-published in 1970 is a good read. This book is still available in the second-hand market. Try online used-book stores."

photo: coll. Job van Eijk