The idea for an organisation specifically designed to promote cruising in Northern Europe was first floated Anne Dunderdale in the Fontainebleau Hotel at Miami Beach during the Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention and Exhibition in March 1990. She was accompanying her husband Iain who was there with Gordon Ireland from Scottish Tourism to promote Invergordon, a port in Cromarty Firth, as a cruise destination and their kilts were to become a well-known feature of subsequent Seatrade Miami events. Their stand was next to that of the Chantiers de L’Atlantique which was then engaged in building new cruise ships for Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and when the karaoke machine on an opposite stand became too annoying, they asked the French yard to turn up the sound on its promotional video showing the launch of one of the ships in order to drown out the offending racket! Also in Miami at that time were representatives from the ports of Bordeaux and Stavanger.

Anne Dunderdale had previously worked in the tourism business and she suggested it might be a good idea to form an association of ports to market the whole of Northern Europe as a cruise destination, principally to the US cruise operators who at that time concentrated on the Caribbean and Alaska and had little idea of what Europe could offer other than perhaps some small knowledge of the Mediterranean. It is worth noting that a new marketing organisation called the Baltic Ports Co-Operative (BTC) was also present in Miami that year. It had 22 port members plus others drawn from the tourism industry including hotels and bus companies.

After his return home Iain Dunderdale, a master mariner who had served with Maersk Line amongst others, wrote a discussion paper citing the success of the BTC and elucidating the perceived desire of US cruise lines to see more such co-operatives being set up to aid their destination marketing. He went on to suggest a joint North Sea/Scandinavian organisation with a list of possible and probable port members.

Not much more happened until Seatrade the following year when the Invergordon stand was placed next to those of the Port of Tilbury and the Port of London. Building on Anne Dunderdale’s suggestion of the previous year and Iain’s discussion paper, representatives from the three stands, Iain and Gordon Ireland from Invergordon, Mike Meyjes, Sales & Marketing Manager for Property & Cruising from Tilbury and Peter Chambers from the Port of London Authority, discussed the co-operative idea in more detail and came up with the idea of ‘tea with the brits’ (a cup of tea and a scone) as a taster to attract the attention of cruise executives.

The next step involved sending invitations to all harbour masters and CEOs from ports in Northern Europe, as far south as Bordeaux but excluding the Baltic, to a meeting in Tilbury in May to explore the prospects of forming an association. At the meeting a working party drawn from the ports of Bergen, Cork, Cromarty Firth, Ghent, Oslo, Rouen and Tilbury was established to prepare a business prospectus and this was fine-tuned at a further meeting held in Ghent that September. It was distributed to potential members in October under the working title of the North European Ports Co-Operative.
Tilbury and Ghent hosted the first two exploratory meetings.

The external aim of the new marketing organisation was to ‘make cruise lines and tour operators aware of the benefits and features of cruising in Northern Europe by way of providing unique dedicated cruising options to all interested parties’, whilst the internal one was ‘to create for operators an attractive range of cruising options to bring about greater use of members’ facilities’. Basically the wish was to encourage more cruise visits to the area whilst at the same time endeavouring to extend the limited cruise season which until then had been mostly confined to the three summer months of June, July and August.

EGM 1991 - COPENHAGEN
The fledgling co-operative was formally constituted at an Extraordinary General Meeting held in Copenhagen in December 1991 at which 21 port members joined together under the more user-friendly title of ‘Cruise Europe’. Delegates voted in a governing council with three officers: an honorary president, an executive manager responsible for the day to day running of the organisation and a secretary/treasurer who would be in charge of administration and finances. The co-operative was registered in Amsterdam under Dutch law.

**First Office Holders**

Aris Zarpanely  
Mike Meyjes  
Ambrose Greenway

Aris Zarpanely from Equity Cruises was elected president, Mike Meyjes from Port of Tilbury became the first executive manager and Lord Ambrose Greenway from Eurolist Ltd, a port representation
company that worked closely with Tilbury and Le Havre amongst others, volunteered to fill the secretary/treasurer role. Modest financial provision was agreed for the latter two positions. The eight other council members were selected as follows: two nominated by each of the three regions and two floating members who would be chosen by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. The chosen eight were:

Bodil Andersen (Trondheim)
Nils Standal (Bergen)
Iain Dunderdale (Cromarty Firth)
Sean Geary (Cork)
Andre de Wilde (Ghent)
Per Schmidt (Copenhagen)
Jan Koster (Amsterdam)
Mike Deeks (Falmouth)

It had already been established that the new organization would not follow the example set by the Baltic Ports Co-Operative where membership was open to all those involved in cruise tourism. Instead it was limited solely to ports and at the meeting two categories of port membership were proposed and agreed as follows:

1- Principal port - one having full embarkation/dischark facilities and easy access to an international airport
2- Member port - mainly smaller ports which would only pay half the agreed membership fees

The geographical limits of the new organisation were agreed as being ‘the Atlantic Coast of Europe from the North Cape of Norway to the French/Spanish border including the UK, Ireland and Iceland but excluding the Baltic Sea’ and for ease of administration, it was divided up into three separate regions. The most northerly comprised Norway, Iceland and the Faroe Islands whilst the UK and Ireland formed a separate region and the remainder were classified under Mainland Europe.

From the outset the business plan included marketing initiatives such as a computerised information system providing data on ports, distances between ports, tourist data on ports and regions, general information on agents, customs and immigration together with berthing charges including passenger dues. Computers were not yet in widespread use and in practice it was to take a few years before such a system became a reality. Sales tours to cruise companies were also envisaged at a later date and it is worth noting that a deal had been done with American Airlines to give free business class flights to senior cruise line executives from all major cities in the USA to London in order to visit ports and tourist
regions in Northern Europe. The cost of on-flights to the regions would be borne by the port membership.

Mike Meyjes unveiled the new logo chosen by the steering committee from several prepared by advertising company Walker, Roast which had also been involved in the production of stationery etc. Not all members were complimentary, Ottar Grotte (Molde) suggested the colours were too similar to those used by Hapag Lloyd whilst Mike Deeks (Falmouth) thought them rather drab and depressing. Notwithstanding, the logo was agreed subject to the council agreeing to have another look at the colours.

All members were to receive a start-up pack comprising a supply of colour brochures, telephone access to the computer itinerary planning system held by the executive manager, notification of sales enquiries, a newsletter and an annual detailing major cruise operators and principal cruise industry news.

The official launch of Cruise Europe was planned for the coming March at the Seatrade Cruise Convention in Miami. This event had grown from modest beginnings in 1985, when only some 200 delegates attended, to become the major annual gathering of the cruise industry, attracting around 3,500 attendees. The Seatrade Organization, ably led by CEO Chris Hayman, had set aside a separate conference session with three speaking slots. An exhibition stand comprising four booth spaces had been negotiated, which with fitting out costs and the cost of slides would result in a total cost of around £8,300. It would provide a base for those members who were unable or unwilling to finance their own stands.

The day duly came and the presentations were made to a packed conference hall. executive manager Mike Meyjes gave an overview of Cruise Europe and what it could provide for cruise operators, Jean Werbowy (Port of Rouen) spoke on behalf of the principal ports and concluded his remarks with these words; ‘Europe is truly a whole wealth of untapped beauty and centres of interest to discover – the New World is in Europe as far as the future development of the cruise industry is concerned’. Bodil Andersen (Trondheim) spoke on behalf of the smaller member ports, which would benefit from Cruise Europe membership by promoting their individual attractions to a wider cruise audience. The diversity of port sizes in Northern Europe was one of its greatest strengths and there was ample opportunity
for themed cruises such as a Viking one linking Icelandic, Norwegian and Scottish ports. The presentations were well received despite the customary technical difficulties with a slide projector and it is worth noting that it was not too long before the widespread interest in what Cruise Europe was doing led to other areas of the world hurrying to follow its example. One of the first was Cruise Norway, a new marketing organisation set up for the locality of Bergen in 1992 but which very quickly increased to some 46 shareholders ranging from North Cape in the north to Kristiansand in the south.

Tim Harris, CEO of P&O Cruises, made a far-sighted remark during his conference speech by forecasting that over the next decade cruising would become a truly worldwide industry though the Caribbean would still remain its main volume base. Moreover John Teets, Chairman, President and CEO of the giant Dial Corporation which owned Premier Cruises, who was one of several executives to visit the Cruise Europe stand thanks to prompting by the president Aris Zarpanely, said he thought that ‘Cruise Europe was doing the right thing at just the right time.’ Several other cruise executives shared these sentiments and the membership could derive satisfaction that their efforts had placed Northern Europe more firmly the cruising map.

That April, the secretary/treasurer produced a first simple newsletter but production was sporadic and only three of these had appeared before new arrangements needed to be made.

The Cruise Europe message was still fresh in the minds of US-based executives when Mike Meyjes and Gunnar Lepsøe visited them that autumn. They were keen to gather as much information as possible about the new organisation and what its ports and local tourist attractions could offer, expressing a preference for it to be provided on a computer diskette rather than by means of a plethora of individual brochures. At that time the use of computers was still in its infancy but it nevertheless spurred on the Cruise Europe executive to work towards producing one.
Cruise Europe’s first Annual General Meeting was held at the Marriott Hotel in Amsterdam on 3rd November 1992. A set of conference papers had been distributed before the meeting outlining improvements thought necessary market penetration and to support the promotional activities undertaken during the first year of operation. Executive manager Mike Meyjes reported the intention in the coming year to concentrate on increasing awareness of member port’s facilities and the tourist features of their area. Membership had grown to 40 ports compared with 31 at the time of Seatrade Miami and represented good overall coverage of the region. He commented that September was the best time to visit the USA because operators were then planning their itineraries for the next 18 months to two years.

New marketing tools were discussed and the meeting fully endorsed the idea of a new computer diskette containing relevant port information. This would be accompanied by a printed distance table to assist those involved in planning cruise itineraries.

The Port of London queried the position of Gunnar Lepsøe (left) as chairman of the council, as the official representative for the port of Bergen was Nils Standal. Mike Meyjes replied that although the port was the official council member, it could nominate whoever it wished to attend meetings and had selected Gunnar on account of his specialist knowledge of the cruise industry. Following a question from Ghent, it was agreed that invoices for subscriptions would be sent to all members who would be allowed a grace period for payment from the end of Cruise Europe’s financial year on 31st October to the end of the following January, due to some ports inability to release funds until the New Year due to budget restraints.

Outlining the marketing plan, Mike Meyjes said that increasing competition in the Caribbean and Alaska was forcing operators to look elsewhere and Europe was attractive due to the higher per diems
available. It was therefore important to try to get ports such as Zeebrugge, Bremerhaven, Hamburg and Copenhagen to join to provide the best possible coverage of Cruise Europe’s core area. Moreover as the two identifiable cruising areas in Europe were Northern Europe and the Mediterranean, thought should be given to extending the current limits to include the Baltic. Council had recently rejected a proposal from The Baltic Ports Co-Operative for preferential block membership but this did not preclude individual Baltic ports joining if they so wished. Mike proposed that selected member ports of the BTC be invited to join on normal terms as part of a new fourth region as this would be important for Cruise Europe’s credibility. In the discussion that followed it was established that BTC had 22 port members in addition to tourist boards, bus companies etc. and both Bergen and Stavanger were already members of Cruise Europe.

Mike continued with a second proposition, namely that Cruise Europe’s southern limit of be extended to include the Atlantic Coast ports of Spain and Portugal. This led to a heated discussion with Norwegian ports united in their opposition, arguing that it was too soon for such a change. Mike countered by saying that cruising was a fast developing market and Iberian ports already featured in cruise schedules as entry (and exit) ports for ships coming from the Caribbean and Mediterranean to Northern Europe whilst in addition many cruises, particularly those commencing in the UK, already went south to the Mediterranean. Could Cruise Europe really afford to ignore the needs of the cruise market? The secretary added that Lisbon was a crucial entry port to the northern regions due to its cheap fuel and victualling charges.

Members complained that they had not been kept properly informed of the proposed changes in advance, partly due to the infrequency of the newsletter, and with the meeting still split on the issue, the executive manager proposed it be resolved by postal vote with a return period up to 10th January 1993 as it was vital to resolve the matter before the next Miami convention. This was agreed subject to there being two separate votes, one to include Baltic ports and the other Iberian ports.

The financial situation had shown a credit balance of just under £8,000 and capital reserve of just over £10,000 at the close of the financial year on 31st October.

The Miami stand, based on the same walk through principle as before, would be doubled in size (eight stands combined) for 1994 but would be in the same position opposite the exit to the conference hall. In addition Captain de Wilde of the Port of Ghent had agreed to present a paper on the changes in Europe and their effect on cruising.
By spring 1993 membership had grown to 47, more than double the initial figure of 21. At the Seatrade Convention in Miami Captain Andre de Wilde’s speech on the current cruise situation in Europe was well received and many other speakers referred to Europe as a potential market. In particular Rod Mcleod, Executive Vice President of RCCL and Chairman of CLIA, made a telling point in his keynote address when he talked about ‘a virtually untouched passenger source market in the nations of Western Europe… a market of more than 300 million people that have the time, the money and a strong inclination to vacation travel.’ The new information diskette, put together by Gunnar Lepsøe, created a great deal of interest and it had in effect replaced printed brochures.

Cruising patterns were changing and in 1993 Costa Cruises, which had traditionally concentrated on its home waters in the Mediterranean, dipped its toes in the North European market for the first time with its elderly Daphne and Enrico Costa. Cruises on both ships sold out so for 1994 season the larger four-star Costa Allegra replaced Daphne, proving equally popular. In 1995 she was joined by her sister Costa Marina in place of the now sold Enrico Costa. Few of the passengers were from the United States, the majority coming from France and most of the rest from the UK, Germany, Spain and Switzerland.
The 1993 AGM was held on 15-16 November in Normandy in the historic French city of Rouen on the River Seine. Hosted by Jean Werbowy (right) and the Port of Rouen, it included a dinner and an evening river cruise. In the course of the meeting at the Palais des Congrès, Hammerfest raised the legality under the constitution of the postal ballot held earlier in the year on boundary extensions.

Membership stood at 47, an increase of seven during the past year, and amongst those joining up were Copenhagen and Lisbon which had chosen to be principal ports and Caen, Leixoes, Waterford, and Zeebrugge as member ports. The two Portuguese ports together with Cadiz brought the number of members in the Iberian Peninsular up to three but as yet no Baltic port had joined and Per Schmidt had agreed to target the area shortly.

Miami had been deemed a success but nevertheless remained a very expensive exercise. As to future press coverage, Lloyd’s List would produce a special Cruise Europe feature in December and International Cruise Review planned a six-page feature for May 1994. It was recognized that both the major cruise areas, the Caribbean and Alaska, were becoming over-tonnaged whilst the proposed Far East market, based on Singapore, was not developing as hoped due to the long connecting flights and a distinct lack of interest from the Japanese. Mike Meyjes mentioned he had heard rumours of a similar organisation to Cruise Europe being set up to market the Mediterranean but at much higher subscription levels.
Turning to constitutional matters, Iain Dunderdale outlined the proposed changes required as a result of the earlier postal ballot, provision for which had been omitted when he drafted the original constitution. A ballot had been deemed necessary to avoid the expense of calling an Extraordinary General Meeting. As to the extension of boundaries, Leixoes/Oporto pointed out that confusion might arise through the use of the description Spanish Atlantic Coast, which generally referred to the northern coast of Spain, and after some discussion it was agreed to amend the wording to the Atlantic Coast of the Iberian Peninsula. Led by Hammerfest, Norwegian opposition to the southern extension remained implacable and the item was dropped from the agenda. The inclusion of the Baltic as a new fourth region however was carried without question and later that year Denmark was included in it.

At the end of the meeting, delegates welcomed a generous offer from the port of Reykjavik to produce a regular newsletter at its own expense to relieve pressure on the secretary, provided that members supplied enough information. Ágúst Ágústsson volunteered to assume the role of editor and the first issue appeared early in 1994.
At a council meeting held in London in May 1994 it was proposed to extend the annual AGM gathering to a 2-day event and invite a number of speakers from the cruise industry to speak on various topics on the first day and hold the AGM on the second day. In addition a ‘road show’ marketing trip to the UAS was planned for the autumn. The second edition of the computer information disk had been mailed out and Cruise Europe’s first regional meeting had been held in Glasgow at which Iain Dunderdale and Sean Geary had been re-elected as the UK/Ireland’s council members.

The summer cruise season saw Holland America Line, which had been concentrating on the Caribbean and Alaskan markets since its acquisition by Carnival in 1988, return to North European waters for series of cruises with its new Statendam (left) whilst June marked the 50th anniversary of the Normandy Invasion which marked the beginning of the final phase of WW2. A whole range of events had been planned around this and large numbers of visitors, many of them former US servicemen returning for the first time, were expected to attend. A number of English Channel ports were geared up for extra cruise ship calls as a result and although some benefited, the anticipated rush did not really materialise.

Towards the end of September the Port of Cork officially opened its new cruise terminal at Cobh (pronounced Cove) in the presence of Royal Cruise Line’s Crown Odyssey (left), built in Germany in 1988. Founded by Greek entrepreneur Pericles Panagopoulos in 1974, the up-market line had skilfully employed US marketing expertise and the fly-cruise concept to transport passengers from the US northwest coast over to Northern Europe. It was acquired by Kloster Cruise in 1989.
The annual gathering took place in November on the Channel Island of Guernsey where delegates and guests from 34 ports were based at the Duke of Richmond Hotel, just outside the capital St Peter Port. On the first day a training session was addressed by five speakers from the cruise industry: Mark Beaumont, Senior Vice President/Cunard spoke on the way ahead from an operator’s view of the market; Nigel Lingard, Director of Cruise Operations/Fred Olsen, on the European market and its development from a European perspective; Alan Mellins, a partner in Sterling Travel, talked about ground handling and Glen Weatherall, a director of Denholms Ship Agency, dealt with the role of shipping agents when handling cruise ships. Finally Captain Mikko Partanen from Kristina Cruises chose ‘Seeking new destination in Europe’ as his theme. One of these, Nigel Lingard, was to become a staunch supporter and firm favourite of Cruise Europe and always strived to include new ports in his itineraries whilst the attendance of one of Cunard’s senior executives meant that Cruise Europe had certainly become of age.
At the AGM on the following day, the chairman Gunnar Lepsøe reported that Council had been looking at ways of increasing membership, new advertising and marketing angles and seeking the best cooperation between ports and cruise lines. It had been agreed that the association had successfully achieved its initial aim for recognition and was now a credible marketing organisation for its member ports and the geographical area of Europe they represented.

Executive manager Mike Meyjes echoed the latter point, adding that it had been achieved through good PR and without resorting to costly advertising. He thanked Ágúst Ágústsson for his excellent new newsletter which was produced by the port of Reykjavik without cost to Cruise Europe. Ágúst intended to produce four issues a year, February/March and May/June to concentrate on Seatrade and September/October and November/December on the AGM. He stressed the importance of members supplying statistics on cruise calls for inclusion at the end of each season together with news and photographs of specific festivals and other such events.

The financial situation had greatly improved thanks to the previous year’s increase in subscription charges and the capital fund stood at some £15,600. The budget for 1994-95 showed a projected income of nearly £70,000 against expenditure of £58,000 of which Miami accounted for £30,000 with a further £7,500 set aside for a US Roadshow.

Votes were held on changes to the executive at the end of the statutory 3-year term. Delegates agreed that Mike Meyjes should continue as executive manager for an extra year in order to mastermind arrangements for the 1995 Seatrade Miami convention the following spring.

Jan Koster (Port of Amsterdam) was elected as the new secretary/treasurer, replacing Lord Greenway who had agreed to become the president in place of Aris Zarpanely. Jan had trained as a marine engineer and was deputy director of the port of Amsterdam. When asked during an interview for Cruise Europe News how the organisation had benefited its members, he replied, ‘promotion and information activities serving the cruise industry are the main product of Cruise Europe. It is very cost effective for us to do this together.’ He was confident that CE would help bring more cruise ships to NW Europe in the near future. In an editorial in the same issue, Gunnar Lepsøe emphasized that effective marketing was the key to local cruise growth, something already being done by shipowners, travel agents, port authorities and many others engaged in the travel industry. In addition, Ágúst Ágústsson and Mike Deeks (Falmouth) were voted onto the council as floating members.

Members were given a preview of the new computer diskette that was being changed to the more user-friendly Windows system which allowed the use of graphics and maps. It would be officially launched at the spring Seatrade Miami convention, possibly at a lunchtime reception aboard Silver Cloud or at a US Roadshow the week before. In addition a large screen would be sourced for the Cruise Europe stand to show off the system to the best advantage. The distance tables were in the course of being extended to include some 88 ports between Akureyri in the north and Cadiz in the south that were known to be visited by cruise ships but non-members would be marked as such and no further information provided.
Plans for a new yearbook as an adjunct to the diskette were outlined by Lord Greenway. It would be published free of charge by Contract Communications and would be funded by advertising. Cruise Europe would receive 5000 copies, some of which would be supplied direct to Miami for the Seatrade conference. Contract had also agreed to pass on some money to Cruise Europe if the publication became very profitable. Following a number of introductory articles, the main part of the publication would comprise a separate page for each member port which would be allowed 600 words and up to three colour photographs plus a table of port facilities.

During the year the association had welcomed its most southerly member Cadiz along with Jersey, Brest and Weymouth. The latter had enjoyed a visit by Holland America Line’s Statendam during the D-Day celebrations and had only joined up the previous week, becoming the association’s 50th member. Despite the efforts of Per Schmidt from Copenhagen, who chaired the Baltic Ports Co-operative, Baltic ports were still conspicuous by their absence. This was partly due to former Soviet bloc ports’ lack of hard currency which led them to seek special deals which were considered to be unacceptable. Mike Meyjes said he would formally invite the six major Baltic ports to join by early December. At the end of the meeting the choice to host the 1995 AGM saw Bordeaux preferred to Hammerfest.

Council meetings were generally held in the UK at the Heathrow Business Centre as the airport was a convenient hub for members who had to travel from Bergen, Iceland, Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands. It is worth mentioning that members paid their own travel costs and indeed it should be acknowledged that the generosity of some of the founding port members in terms of both money and time helped in no small part to putting Cruise Europe on the map. At these meetings much attention was given to discussing ways to improve the promotion of Cruise Europe and in 1995 the new glossy bi-annual yearbook was launched in time for Miami. This incorporated a number of articles from cruise line executives and journalists and each member port had a page to advertise its facilities and tourist attractions. Other plans included the replacement of the now somewhat outdated diskette with a more user friendly CD-Rom using the Windows system.

Commenting on Cruise Europe membership reaching the half century, the president said that things were really beginning to move in Northern Europe, a fact that cruise operators, many of whom were facing increased competition in Alaska and the Caribbean, could no longer afford to ignore. Whilst the top end of the market could be said to have reached saturation with the entry of newcomer Silversea Cruises, the medium-priced sector was an upward curve, born out by Costa Cruises’ capacity bookings in 1994 with most of the passengers emanating from France, Germany and Italy in a sign that the potential of continental Europe was beginning to become a reality. Growth was also expected at the cheaper end of the market where the scaling down of Russian activity following the break-up of the USSR was opening up the field to newcomers such as Airtours, who could attract the all-important first-time cruisers, the seed corn for the future. Cruise Europe could be proud of what it had achieved and could look to the future with confidence, perhaps the more so as both Carnival and Disney had Europe in their sights.
In November 1995 Messieurs Laurent and Hislaire welcomed 36 delegates from 32 member ports to Bordeaux for the annual meeting. The President was prevented from attending due to illness and as the chairman Gunnar Lepsøe would be arriving late following an Atlantic crossing on the QE2, Iain Dunderdale stood in for him and as a result had the unexpected honour of being inducted as an honorary commander of the Commanderie du Bontemps de Medoc et des Graves.

In his final report, outgoing executive manager Mike Meyjes said that the information diskette had created quite an impact with cruise lines expressing considerable interest but unfortunately some incorrect information had led to a complaint from Crystal Cruises. He emphasised the importance of all ports ensuring that their data was correct and called on harbourmasters to be responsible. Cruise Europe’s own stand for Seatrade Miami 1996 would be reduced from four to two booths, one to show off the diskette and the other to provide the usual information on member ports. Council had also decided to take a small stand at Seatrade’s first European cruise conference and exhibition due to be held in Genoa in September the following year and it would also be holding a Council meeting there. Mike was still investigating the possibility of mounting a US Roadshow.

Despite the original idea to have a biannual yearbook, council had decided that the fast increasing membership required an updated issue for 1996 and the meeting agreed. Distribution would be more cost-effective as the publisher had agreed to cover much of the mailing costs. It is worth noting that the organization was already looking ahead and considering placing the diskette and yearbook data on a CD-Rom or on the Internet even though only some 10% of members were using email at that time.
Later it was decided to amend the financial provision for the secretariat and assign the whole sum of £5,000 to the secretary/treasurer whilst at the same time allowing the executive manager to claim reasonable expenses incurred for Cruise Europe work.

Amongst new members who had joined during the year were Isafjördur, Dieppe, Plymouth, Rønne, Stockholm and Seville, the two Baltic ports being especially welcome, but sadly Oslo and Sandefjord had decided to leave. These changes brought overall membership up to 55 and Cherbourg and possibly Portland were expected to join in the near future.

Secretary/treasurer Jan Koster reported that he had undertaken the legal registration of Cruise Europe but regretted that virtually no income had been received from advertising on the diskette.

Captain Andre de Wilde (Port of Ghent) was the sole candidate for the post of executive manager, Iain Dunderdale having withdrawn, and he was duly appointed to replace Mike Meyjes. A former captain with Compagnie Maritime Belge, he subsequently taught on the training ships Mercator and Montalto and then acted as a Scheldt pilot before joining Port of Ghent as port commander in 1970. The following year he commanded the famous old cruise ship Andes on her final voyage from Southampton to Ghent breakers. The ship was still full of exotic provisions but whilst most of the crew enjoyed themselves, Andre was forced to remain on the bridge due to foggy weather. He became director general of the Port of Ghent in 1986.

His first task was to present Mike Meyjes with a crystal decanter for a ‘job well done’. Although the latter was a typical marketing man with a love of flip charts, he had undoubtedly played a considerable role in getting Cruise Europe firmly established and deemed it to be excellent value for money for its membership. In his own words he wrote ‘the difference between Cruise Europe and other regional promotional bodies has always been that all our material is targeted at cruise operators, it is precise
and to the point and does not involve a significant amount of external promotion. This approach ensured that the correct people receive information on our region and that we avoid needless promotion to non-interested parties’. In the absence of any other candidates, Terry Toohey (Isle of Man) and Gunnar Lepsøe (Bergen) were appointed as floating members of council.

The meeting was addressed by guest speakers Peter Hunter, an architect who talked about the design of cruise terminals, and Herbert Karrenberg, managing director of Seetours International, whose topic was ‘An operator’s view of the development of the Northern Europe cruise market’. Seetours and other German tour companies Albatros and Neckerman used the traditional German fondness for the Norwegian Fjords and Iceland to boost their sales and the cruises often called in Scotland on the way out or on their return. Cruise Europe’s own Jean Werbowy and Gunnar Lepsøe also spoke.

Five ports - Brest, Cadiz, Kristiansand, Londonderry and Molde - had put themselves forward to host the 1996 AGM and delegates opted for Londonderry, a northern Irish port on the river Foyle.

Immediately after the previous Seatrade Miami conference, Gunnar Lepsøe and a few Council members had taken a short local cruise which provided an opportunity to evaluate the event. Gunnar suggested that it might be a good idea to take a cruise before the 1996 conference in order to finalise preparations for it. Gunnar offered to contact some cruise lines for a special ‘Cruise Europe’ offer in case more members might wish to participate.

The updated diskette was issued in time for Seatrade Miami 1996 at which 40 member ports were represented.

Amongst notable events in the European cruise calendar was the homeporting of Royal Caribbean Cruise Line’s Splendour of the Seas (left) at Harwich for a series of 12-day cruises to Scandinavia. Further south, Dover opened a new cruise terminal in the old railway station that had served cross-Channel foot passengers for many years but had become redundant due to the development of car ferries. The port’s decision to market itself as a cruise port, both for transits and turnarounds, had been motivated by fears of a decline in its traditional cross-channel ferry traffic once the new Channel Tunnel was completed. It was actively marketing its geographical position in the Dover Strait on a well-worn cruise route requiring little deviation, especially for ships re-positioning from the Caribbean and Mediterranean to Northern Europe at both the start and end of the summer season.
Dover opens its new £9m terminal in the presence of Cunard’s Royal Viking Sun

AGM 1996 – LONDONDERRY
Derry by night

In November 1996 AGM delegates received a typical Irish welcome in Londonderry, hosted by genial port director Stan Macilvenny who was ably assisted by cruise marketing specialist Aideen Corr. Back in July 1995 the port had welcomed CTC’s *Southern Cross* (right) as the first cruise ship to call at a Northern Ireland port for 40 years.

(Left to right) Londonderry Port Director Stan Macilvenny, Waterford Harbourmaster Philip Cowman and Robert Travers from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

Only a few weeks before the Irish Republican Army had murdered some English troops at a nearby barracks, a stark reminder that the ‘Irish troubles’ were still ongoing and a number of delegates were somewhat taken aback when, returning to their hotel by taxi, they found themselves being driven through the notorious Bogside area, scene of many ugly skirmishes. Amongst the entertainment laid on was a splendid Irish-themed dinner with some very lively Irish singing and dancing.

The AGM was held in the Everglades Hotel and new executive manager Andre de Wilde said that he was still finding his way as Mike Meyjes had not left any instructions as to what the job entailed. He thought it had been worthwhile having a small Cruise Europe stand at Seatrade’s first Europe Cruise Convention in Genoa the previous September but had been greatly heartened by Seatrade’s decision
to hold the next conference in Amsterdam in September 1997, which would concentrate on Atlantic and Baltic ports. Thereafter it was proposed to alternate the event between Northern and Southern Europe.

Jan Koster announced that Seatrade wished to emphasize tourist destinations at the conference and had also asked whether the Port of Amsterdam might be prepared to host Cruise Europe’s AGM at the same time, a suggestion that met with the approval of delegates especially as it would be the first time that a Seatrade conference would be held in a Cruise Europe member port. Budgets were adjusted accordingly as it was felt that Amsterdam might prove to be more important than Miami as far as Cruise Europe was concerned. Following a suggestion from Kevin Richardson (Dover), it was agreed to form a steering group to plan the strategy for Amsterdam. Terry Toohey had agreed to chair the initial meeting which would include Jan Koster (vice-chairman), André de Wilde and Claes-Olow Edström (Stockholm).

In his treasurer’s report, Jan Koster reported that the Miami Conference stand had been successful but the need for new materials had made it expensive. As these could be used again, hopefully costs would be reduced for the following year. Additional costs had also been incurred through the legal registration of the organisation.

During the year Tilbury had resigned its membership following a management buyout but Peterhead on the north east Scottish coast had joined up making a total of 57 and three more new members were pending for 1997. Amongst changes to existing members, both Dover and Stockholm had decided to upgrade their membership to principal ports whilst Cadiz had opted for the opposite and demoted itself to a member port.

Terry Toohey reported that the 1996 Yearbook had been well produced and had even been scanned by Crystal Cruises for its own internal use. A questionnaire to members as to whether the publication should be produced annually or every other year had been inconclusive at 50/50 so a new issue would be needed for 1997 as not enough copies of the existing one remained. He requested new photos from member ports to keep the publication looking fresh. Together with the President, he was looking into the possibility of producing a diary instead of a yearbook as diaries were referred to daily throughout the year.

Gunnar Lepsøe outlined problems that had been experienced with the computer diskette due to it not being compatible with all operating systems. In future he recommended it should only be compatible with Windows 95 which offered more possibilities and the cost would be in the region of £4,200. Council had thought it a good idea to have a website as well and had already registered the address www.cruiseeurope.com. Each port could have its own page and an email address but itinerary planning was not yet possible. The initial cost would be £3,700 which would reduce to around £1,500 for ensuing years. Following some discussion, the meeting voiced its approval to proceed.

As a result of difficulties that had arisen regarding the resignation of Dundee, an amendment to the Constitution was agreed as follows: ‘In the event of any port member resigning from Cruise Europe, then the resignation in writing must be delivered to the secretary/treasurer before the 15th December, otherwise that port will be liable for the following year’s subscription’.

The two floating members of Council Gunnar Lepsøe and Terry Toohey stepped down but were returned unopposed.
As Amsterdam would now be hosting the next AGM, it was agreed that Invergordon, which had also been in the running, would now organise the 1998 annual meeting which would take place in May rather than November, setting a pattern for future years. The decision also avoided the unseemly rush to finalise the accounts between the end of the financial year on 31st October and the traditional November meeting.

In February 1997 executive manager Andre de Wilde produced a comprehensive paper for member ports on aspects of marketing and Gunnar Lepsøe had again organised a pre-Miami cruise, this time on the Royal Majesty. The new website masterminded by Gunnar was duly launched at the convention. It opened with a welcome page from which detailed information on member ports could be accessed after which came a section outlining all aspects of shore excursions and related issues. A separate part listed names and contacts for each member ports with an added facility for either printing out labels for all or singling out specific individual names. Finally a useful section listed all future events of interest due to take place in member ports up to and including the year 2000.

The information diskette was also being updated and redesigned to run on Windows 95 in a new, more powerful format. It now included an itinerary planner which gave cross-referenced distances between 100 ports in Europe and enabled users to construct itineraries with set arrival or departure dates together with a facility for varying speeds at sea. A map was also included which had a zoom facility for focussing on desired destinations as well as the ability to circle certain ports within a chosen radius. The cost of each CD-ROM would be £4 and production could proceed as soon as a budget had been agreed.

It must be remembered that Information Technology was still in its infancy and was not yet familiar to many within the Cruise Europe family.

Meanwhile events on the cruise front included Royal Caribbean Cruise Line’s purchase of Celebrity Cruises from the Chandris family. Both brands were kept separate and the former restyled itself Royal Caribbean International, RCCL being used for the parent company.

**AGM 1997 – AMSTERDAM**
In autumn 1997 the Seatrade organization launched its first Northern Europe cruise conference in the RAI Congress building, Amsterdam. It was deliberately kept small and Cruise Europe decided to take a stand however due to the large number of speakers at the conference, one of whom was the president, it had been decided to have no guest speakers at the AGM which took place on the eve of the conference in the old passenger terminal. The port had already embarked on building a new dedicated cruise terminal.

The AGM attracted the largest yet representation of 41 members (approx. 65%) which reflected the importance of the Seatrade event to the membership but attendance was also helped by the Dutch capital’s central location and excellent flight connections to Schipol airport. In the wash-up afterwards, council members thought that although the conference and exhibition had gone well and the cost of the stand was very reasonable, they were disappointed that only a handful of cruise executives had turned up. This was thought to be due to their attendance at the much larger Miami convention in the spring but from Cadiz (right) thought it had more to do with a question of September/October was when the US-based cruise lines were busy budget plans. It was agreed to discuss the evaluations with the Organisation’s chief executive Chris Hayman at the next Miami conference.

During the year both Bordeaux and Dundee had resigned but new members included Aarhus, Barrow-in-Furness, Boulogne, Fishguard, Helsinki, Kalmar, Oslo, Portree and St Petersburg, bringing total membership up to 63. In addition Aalborg had indicated a wish to join in 1998. Council member Jean Werbowy had retired as Cruise Development Manager from the Port of Rouen and the post had been filled by William Appleton who was already busy preparing for the port’s ‘Armada of the Century’ gathering scheduled for 9-18 July 1999 with a mixture of tall ships, warships and cruise ships.
Amongst other events was the formation of a new spin-off marketing association entitled Celtic Cruise by west coast ports Brest, Cork, Douglas, Dublin, Falmouth, Greenock, Holyhead, La Coruna, Londonderry and Stornoway. In Iceland, Princess Cruises had used Reykjavik as a turnaround port for the first time with its Pacific Princess during a round trip cruise from Dover which visited the Norwegian fjords, Spitsbergen, Iceland and Greenland.

Both the Amsterdam and Miami conventions had proved to be costly, the former due to marketing expenses and the latter because the anticipated re-use of materials purchased previously had not in fact been possible. This led to the Treasurer sounding a warning for the future and he offered a choice of three courses of action. Increase the membership fee, reduce forward budgets or amend what amounted to a subsidy to members for the cost of their individual booths in the ‘Cruise Europe Street’ in Miami. This price had been fixed back in 1995 at £500 for an empty booth with an additional £150 for furnishings but was now estimated to cost around $2,375. Delegates chose the latter option and in future members would have to pay the full cost for their booths.

As far as marketing was concerned, Terry Toohey reported that an income of just under £1,200 had been received from Contract Communications for the 1997 Yearbook and 500 copies were still available from Ghent. The meeting felt that it was too difficult to predict two cruise seasons ahead and that a new issue should be published in 1998.

Members were troubled by the European Commission’s plans to do away with duty free within the EU and the Council agreed to make strong representations to the appropriate department in Brussels.

At a Council meeting held in Copenhagen in late January 1998, a proposal was made for a permanent salaried secretariat to be run by London-based port representation company Eurolist Limited involving one or possibly two jobs. This would be subject to an overall review every three years and the cost would be £14,000 per annum, payable quarterly in advance and subject to UK retail price index. This was based on an anticipated 60 executive days per annum. Any travel and unforeseen expenditure would be reimbursed at cost subject to prior approval.

Why Eurolist? The firm had been closely involved in the setting up of Cruise Europe through its association with Port of Tilbury and had provided office facilities for the first secretary/treasurer and current president Ambrose Greenway, who also edited the Cruise Europe Yearbook. Eurolist was centrally located in Cruise Europe’s geographical area with good air connections and meetings could continue to be held at the Heathrow. Council members were not sold on the idea and after Eurolist’s managing director Hans Andersen had addressed them at Seatrade Miami, declined the offer as they felt the organisation was not yet ready or indeed large enough for such a change.
The year 1998 brought a change to Ágúst Ágústsson’s regular newsletter ‘Cruise Europe News’. From Volume 5 issue No. 1 (right) which appeared in February, better quality paper was used along with two colours, giving the publication a more professional look.

In March both Gunnar Lepsøe and Per Schmidt had speaking slots at the Seatrade Convention in Miami and the latter along with Cruise Copenhagen Network’s Birgit Fredsted was honoured at the Dream World Cruise awards for being Europe’s ‘most efficient port service’ and ‘best destination’ respectively. The Danish capital was also runner up in the ‘world best destination’ award. Proof that cruising brought significant revenue to the local community was borne out by an estimate of $40m generated by 150,000 passengers in 1997.

AGM 1998 – INVERGORDON

The first AGM to be held in the spring was held at Invergordon on Scotland’s Cromarty Firth in May 1998 and hosted by Cruise Europe founder member Iain Dunderdale in his hometown of Tain. There were three guest speakers at the conference which took place in the historic village of Cromarty, necessitating a ferry journey across the firth. Gwyn Hughes, managing director/P&O Cruises, opened with the growth of Information Technology (IT) and the World-Wide Web (Internet). Malcolm Payne and Robert Ashley of Aragon Tours chose ground handling as their topic and they were followed by Horst Kilian, managing director of Hapag Lloyd Cruises. Regional meetings, which had been coupled with the AGM for the first time in Amsterdam and had proved popular, were again included in the programme.
That evening in Tain, an excellent dinner of local fayre was held in the Morangie Hotel, complete with a haggis which was piped in and ‘addressed’ in the traditional way. Twenty five ports were present at the AGM the following day but forty were represented including proxy votes. In his executive manager’s report, André de Wilde said that with regard to Seatrade Miami, the stand contractor GES would in future invoice members directly thereby taking pressure off Cruise Europe’s budget. Prices for Seatrade Med in Genoa had risen sharply since the 1996 event so Cruise Europe would only be taking a small stand. He again mentioned marketing training for members and would be contacting the TRAINMAR department of UNCTAD to see what could be done.

The Latvian port of Riga had recently become a member, joining other new arrivals Aalborg, Bodø (soon cancelled), Bordeaux, Fredrikshavn, Klaksvik, Mariehamn, Ostend and Visby. Bordeaux was excused a rejoining fee as it had only just resigned. Others ports which had left were Arendal, Caen, Dieppe, Fishguard, Portland/Weymouth and Seville but amongst potential new members were Campbeltown, Ceuta, Gdansk, Gdynia, Geiranger, Gudvangen, Kiel and Nantes. The Baltic region was growing fast but some concern was expressed about Spain and Portugal where only a handful of members remained.

The president was re-elected for a further three years and secretary/treasurer Jan Koster for another two years from 1999. Gunnar Lepsøe and Terry Toohey were chosen to continue as floating members
of Council for a single year. The UK/Ireland region had re-elected Iain Dunderdale and Sean Geary for a further four years and the Norway/Iceland region had chosen Ola Hiis Bergh to replace Torbjørn Evenbye for a period of one year.

The meeting agreed to change the part of the Constitution relating to boundaries to read ‘Europe’ in place of ‘Northern Europe’ in order to better reflect the southern members in Spain and Portugal.

Secretary/treasurer Jan Koster reported reserves standing at around £23,000 which, although a seemingly large sum, would provide a safety net for emergencies and unexpected cash calls.

Gunnar Lepsøe suggested a need for auditors to be appointed as the organisation was growing fast and more money was involved. The large international companies which had been approached were too expensive so Council had decided to appoint two internal auditors for a period of two years but to maintain continuity, one of them would serve initially for just one year. John Turgoose (Dover) and Henrik Munch Jensen (Aarhus) were duly elected.

Both Cadiz and Copenhagen had offered to host the 1999 AGM but the Danish port wanted it to be held in September to coincide with the second Seatrade Europe Conference and Exhibition. In a vote, delegates gave preference to the Spanish port of Cadiz in the hope that it might encourage more ports from both Spain and Portugal to become members. Copenhagen then requested that a steering committee be set up for the Seatrade event and it was agreed it should be chaired by Per Schmidt (Copenhagen) working with Kevin Richardson (Dover), Terry Toohey (Isle of Man) and executive manager André de Wilde.

The meeting also agreed to define a cruise as ‘a voyage of at least 60 hours by a seagoing vessel, mainly for pleasure. No cargo/rolling stock will be transported but only passengers with tickets that should include accommodation and meals. The cruise voyage starts and ends in the same port and has at least two visiting ports in between’. Delegates voiced their discontent over the layout of the 1998 Yearbook and the presentation made by the publisher the day before, which included an unwillingness to give Cruise Europe a list of its mailing addresses. Council agreed to invite two more publishing houses to provide a quotation for future issues.

It goes without saying that quite a few of the excellent local malt whiskies were tasted over the course of a successful weekend!

Further changes in the cruise industry saw the rapacious Carnival Corporation gobble up both Cunard Line and Seabourn Cruises before proceeding to add Costa Cruises to its portfolio two years later, thereby cementing its participation in the European market and obviating the need to deploy its own distinctively-funnelled ships which had only made the occasional foray into North European waters.

That summer Celebrity Cruises deployed its relatively new Zenith to North European waters. Her previous owners the Chandris family had earlier used some of its ageing emigrant ships for cruising during the off season and their Regina Magna had made the first cruise out of Amsterdam back in 1967. In Scotland the port of Invergordon welcomed both QE2 and Norway on successive days in August in a 2-day cruise festival.
In mid-September Cruise Europe again took a small stand at the Seatrade Mediterranean Cruise & Ferry Convention in Genoa. It was transported and erected through the generosity of the Port of Ghent and manned by the executive manager’s assistant Karine Reynvoet. A number of Cruise Europe personnel attended including new executive manager John Turgoose (Dover), Claes-Olow Edström (Stockholm), Per William Appleton (Rouen) (Cadiz). As was to be expected, Medcruise dominated the event with a large number of stands sponsored by its member ports but André de Wilde found time to float the idea of a ‘sistership’ agreement with the new organisation (formed in 1996) which might possibly be formally signed at the next Miami Convention. Costa and Festival Cruises were present.

At a subsequent Council meeting, André de Wilde proposed setting up a series of training courses, funded by United Nations, on how a port could make itself attractive to the cruise industry but his idea of a sister agreement with Medcruise was rejected on the grounds that the still new and comparatively small organisation would gain considerably more from the arrangement than Cruise Europe. Also discussed was the planned Cruise Europe road show in the USA, a perennial topic yet to be acted upon due to budget restraints and the lack of a suitable person to lead it.

Secretary/treasurer Jan Koster reported that reserves would reach £20,000 by the year’s end and he suggested reducing the amount to £10,000, using the residue for special activities. Iain Dunderdale suggested an increase in the fees paid to the secretariat.

The port of Oslo had asked to be included in the Baltic region as it tended to work more closely with Baltic ports than Norwegian West Coast ports. Council saw the sense in this and agreed but was less happy with a suggestion that Ceuta, a port in the Spanish enclave in Morocco opposite Gibraltar, should be accepted as a member and shelved a decision until the AGM.

The meeting agreed to new job descriptions for office holders as follows:

**President** (elected every three years)

- An honorary role with responsibilities for promoting Cruise Europe’s interests and maintaining goodwill with the cruise industry and amongst the membership.

**Chairman** (elected every three years)

- To act as Chairman for Council meetings and the AGM
Executive Manager (elected every three years)

- To promote and market Cruise Europe to the cruise industry
- To increase Cruise Europe membership
- To prepare an annual report and business plan for the AGM
- To execute the business plan and report progress to Council on a regular basis
- To organise exhibition stands

Secretary/Treasurer (elected every three years)

- To process new membership enquiries and keep an up to date register of members
- To prepare and circulate agendas for Council meetings and the AGM
- To prepare and circulate minutes of Council meetings and the AGM
- To prepare an Annual Report for the AGM
- To maintain the Constitution and amend it if required by the AGM
- To assisting the Chairman and Executive Manager in their duties
- To manage the financial accounts and report regularly to Council
- To collecting membership fees and other monies including AGM fees
- To pay approved invoices and any other monies as instructed by Council
- To prepare annual accounts and a budget for adoption by the AGM
- To arrange an audit of accounts by an independent auditor approved by Council

Membership continued to grow in concert with the increasing popularity of cruising, in Europe’s case as an alternative to the shore-based package holidays traditionally taken in Spain and Greece.

In an article in Cruise Europe News at that time, Fred Olsen’s Nigel Lingard outlined the usefulness of Cruise Europe to cruise lines:

- The ‘selling in’ of the Northern Europe region to operators who have not previously considered it
- Provision of itinerary planning ideas and destination details to lines setting up new projects
- Information on new cruise receptive ports for those developing more repeater oriented cruises
- Contacts for the whole cruise operational side from port agents to tourist boards

In the meantime Ágúst Ágústsson had proposed a further redesign of the publication, this time printed in four colours. Based on a print run of around 450 copies, the cost per issue would rise from around £600 to over £800 and in addition there would also be some initial set-up costs. His request for a budget of £5,000 was approved. After considering submissions from several publishers to produce the yearbook, the council had chosen the Seatrade Organization.
Cruise Europe News carried an interview with Mike Pawlus, Vice President Strategic Planning for Norwegian Cruise Line. The line had merged with Royal Viking Line and Royal Cruise Line and its long-term plans revolved around building smaller ships which were less crowded and more intimate and suited repeat passengers who numbered 25%, a figure that was even higher for the company’s flagship Norway (above), the former transatlantic liner France. These words sounded rather hollow when only eight years later the line built its 154,400gt Freedom of the Seas, the largest cruise ship in the world and first of a three ships series that would later be eclipsed by a quartet of even larger ships. Mike finished by quoting the CLIA statistic that only 8% of US citizens took cruises leaving a huge untapped market from the remaining 92%.

About this time a new Cruise Europe marketing sub-committee was established under the chairmanship of Terry Toohey (right), a member of Council and the representative for the Isle of Man ports, Douglas and Peel. Terry worked for the island’s tourist board and in a previous incarnation had been employed by Union Castle Line in South Africa where he hailed from.
In May 1999 delegates for the AGM journeyed south to the ancient city of Cadiz. After an initial press conference which attracted much local attention, the meeting was held in the magnificent surroundings of the Palacio Provincial where RCI’s Patrick Ryan opened the conference his presentation ‘The business of dreams’, saying that Cruise Europe was not in the transportation business but in the business of fulfilling people’s dreams. Over 50 new ships would be entering service in the next five years and US operators were moving ships to Europe for two reasons:

1. To offer US citizens the value-for-money option of cruising in a region which they would very much like to visit but were put off by the high cost of staying in hotels
2. In response to the growth of the European cruise passenger source market

RCL would be adding nine new ships by summer 2002 and planned to deploy seven of them in Europe (RCI and Celebrity) by 2003 compared with the present three. He stressed the need to coordinate the approach from ports, ports agents, local tourist boards, relevant public and private sector companies running local tourist attractions, shopping and entertainment centres and hotels. Finally ‘all-singing, all-dancing’ terminals were not necessary.

Cruise Director Tony Sher described the role of cruise directors and former Cunard executive Grant Laversuch (right), now running his Cruise Net UK consultancy, spoke from his experience as a Cunard itinerary planner, adding that experience and personality counted more amongst decision makers rather than mere reliance on their position. Revenue was paramount when planning a cruise and its length was crucial to this coupled with what type of cruise it was, for example luxury or 2-star.

Hamburg Cruise Centre’s managing director Karl Walterspiel (left), who had come from a distinguished background in the hotel business that included managing the city’s Atlantik Hotel and being a director of the prestigious Kempinsky Hotel chain for 27 years, announced that Hamburg was back on the cruise map after a gap of many years. The new terminal was run by the Hamburg Cruise Association formed by the port authority, hotel associations, airport, chamber of commerce, tourist associations and others numbering 40 in all. Two years of intensive marketing had
resulted in the decision to build a new terminal in Hafen City. It was designed to be used for out-of-season events such as conventions and banquets. Finally Robert Bass, the Port of London Authority’s commercial manager, outlined plans for a possible new terminal at Greenwich for 2001.

At the AGM an addendum to the Constitution was agreed, defining a cruise as a voyage that included at least two visiting ports apart from the starting and ending port. Membership had by now reached 69, the loss of Cowes and Lorient, which had resigned, being more than compensated for by new members Flåm, Hamburg, Tallinn, Tilbury and Tromsø. Hamburg was particularly pleasing as the executive had been trying to get a member port from Germany for some considerable time. In addition Fowey and Gothenburg had indicated a wish to join.

The treasurer reported that the decision to permit membership fees to be paid in euros, taken earlier, had been successful. Four Council members were re-elected, namely Ola Hiis Bergh (Bergen) and Ágúst Ágústsson (Reykjavik) representing the Norway/Iceland region and Gunnar Lepsøe (Bergen) and Terry Toohey (Isle of Man) as floating members. Down south the Spanish ports of A Coruna, Gijon, Santander and Bilbao had formed a new marketing organisation entitled ‘Spain’s Green Coast Cruise’. In a contest to host the 2000 AGM, Stockholm/Mariehamn beat Dover, Ghent having been eliminated in a first ballot.

Under ‘any other business’, it was revealed that the new arrangement with Seatrade for publishing the yearbook had resulted in a £5,000 return from advertising revenue. Iain Dunderdale suggested a possible change to the Cruise Europe logo during the coming year. Per Schmidt and Max Karlström reported that the man-made canal linking St Petersburg to the White Sea, originally built for Russian nuclear submarines, was now open to cruise ships which would allow the possibility of round Scandinavia itineraries, though it was recognised that logistics might be a problem.

It was regrettable that the number of delegates was fewer than usual at only 24, especially when the host port’s Emilio Medina and Sebastián García together with Juan Vlietman and the provincial governor had gone to so much trouble. Amongst attractions laid on were a sherry-tasting at Domecq and an unforgettable evening in Jerez which began with a private performance at the Royal Riding School followed by a starlight dinner outside the neighbouring chateau. Entertainment consisted of flamenco dancing and the elegant female dancer came down from the stage to ask the president for a dance. Initially reluctant, he was persuaded by the governor who said that he simple had to dance as they were playing his tune - La Via Verde (the green way)! Sadly a number of delegates missed the evening as they had been forced to leave early because an industrial dispute scheduled for the following day was due to close the bridge leading out of the city. The governor had kindly arranged for the president to cross the bay in an ancient
motorboat, somewhat reminiscent of the one used in the film ‘Jaws,’ to Puerto de Santa Maria where his own chauffeur-driven car was waiting to drive him to Jerez airport.

Cruise Europe had been gathering and collating making available cruise statistics from its member ports for a number of years and these were made available in the newsletter. It is interesting to note that in 1999 the top port in terms of cruise ship calls and passengers was Lisbon with 230 and 161,186 respectively, followed by St Petersburg with 187 and 114,517. Copenhagen was behind Helsinki in terms of calls but second to Lisbon in passenger numbers. A year later Lisbon with 237 calls was still top but had almost been caught by St Petersburg with 233. It was notable that Copenhagen’s average passenger number per call at 907 was way ahead of the other two but still fewer than Oslo at 949. Amongst new visitors to the Danish capital were Holland America’s new Amsterdam and Noordam (10 calls), Royal Caribbean International’s Rhapsody of the Seas, Celebrity’s new Mercury (13) and Galaxy (10)(above), Princess Cruises’ Grand Princess (10), NYK’s Asuka and The World, some of which are shown below.

In August 1999, Disney Cruise Line’s second new ship Disney Wonder passed through Southampton on her delivery voyage but 11 years were to pass before her by then Mediterranean-based sister Disney Magic made a few exploratory North European cruises, not finally undertaking a full season until 2016.

Donald Duck adorns the stern of Disney Wonder
The improved Cruise Europe News duly appeared in full colour for the first time with the September 1999 issue and was well received. At the end of that month, members were invited to submit application for the post of Executive Manager for the period 2000-2003 as André de Wilde would be completing his term the following spring. The new website launched earlier in the year was working well but members were asked to supply a photograph and a map of their port area together with a brief history. Useful links to other port-related material and a list of significant events over the next three years were also requested. Terry Toohey reported that he had been in contact with Seatrade and the new yearbook looked even better than the previous year and with plenty of advertising should again prove profitable.

At Seatrade Miami in March 2000, an added attraction on the Cruise Europe stand was ‘A taste of Europe’ with 10 members offering local specialities from their regions. By all events it was much appreciated. The new CD-ROM was also available on the Cruise Europe stand and was eagerly snapped up by cruise line representatives.
AGM 2000 – STOCKHOLM/MARIEHAMN

On 8th May 2000 delegates from 32 ports gathered in Stockholm en route to the Åland Islands for the AGM in Mariehamn. Sightseeing was organised by the port’s Claes-Olow Edström and took in the spectacularly preserved warship *Wasa* followed by a visit to the magnificent City Hall where the annual Nobel Peace prizes were awarded.

Later that evening the entourage embarked in the new cruise ferry *Birka Princess* for the overnight passage to Mariehamn. At a Council meeting held before dinner, it was revealed that Seatrade had asked if Cruise Europe would be prepared to sponsor, at no charge, its next Northern Europe cruise convention to be held in Hamburg in September 2001. Sean Geary (Port of Cork) queried the
usefulness of the previous Northern Europe Conferences in Amsterdam (1997) and Copenhagen (1999) at which few if any of the promised cruise executives had been present.

Mariehamn waterfront with Pommern and Birka Princess

After an early breakfast on board the following morning, delegates were bussed to the hotel Arkipelag for a morning seminar at City Hall at which representatives from Airtours, P&O, Sea Cloud Royal Caribbean and Holland America were present. Topics discussed included how might ports attract additional calls and also work with cruise companies to develop the cruise market in Europe. Also what might the next decade bring and how would the new mega ships being introduced affect the Baltic in terms of their impact on port infrastructure. The seminar continued after lunch together with a workshop on new marketing activities presented by the chairman of the Marketing Committee, Terry Toohey. Vanessa Stephens and Andrew Callaghan gave a presentation on Seatrade’s forthcoming Europe Convention due to take place in Hamburg in September.

Max Rune Karlstrom from the port had organised several tours and later that evening a reception was held in the excellent Maritime Museum followed by a rousing dinner at a neighbouring restaurant accompanied by much lusty singing from the various regions represented!

Following regional meetings, the AGM took place the following day in the City Hall. The Port of Dover’s marketing manager John Turgoose (right) was elected as the new executive manager, having been approved at an extra members meeting held in Copenhagen the previous September. He replaced Andre de Wilde who was stepping down after four years in the post and who had worked tirelessly for the organisation under his credo – ‘Cruise Europe does the marketing but the selling must be done by the members’. He warned of future complacency and was presented with a certificate of appreciation by the president. Gunnar Lepsøe and Iain Dunderdale were re-appointed as chairman and vice-chairman respectively with the former and Terry Toohey also re-elected as floating members of Council.

Jan Koster, who was re-elected as secretary/treasurer for a further three years, reported that the Swedish ports of Gothenburg and Ystad had recently become members and Lorient had re-joined after
a year’s absence however A Coruña had resigned, bringing total membership to 69. He identified a need to bring more German ports into the organization. Chairman Gunnar Lepsøe added that he had recently made a presentation on Cruise Europe to Cruise Norway but its members would prefer block membership of the larger organization. This was not possible as Cruise Europe confined its membership to ports alone whilst Cruise Norway’s included a number of other commercial organizations in the tourist business. Despite this four Norwegian ports subsequently asked for more details about Cruise Europe. A discussion also took place on quality standards and a request was made for a programme to set out quality benchmarks which all ports should endeavour to meet. The chairman agreed in principal but said it would be virtually impossible for Cruise Europe to set, maintain and monitor a quality programme.

The venue for the 2001 AGM was contested between Rotterdam and La Rochelle with the French port emerging the victor.

Looking ahead, the business plan forecast continued updating of CD-ROM details, particularly in regard to tourist attractions, festivals and events as well as the need to draw attention to the web site and itinerary planner, possibly through advertising. As to possible new members, the Costa Verde in Northern Spain and Germany were identified as targets.

Lunch was taken aboard the preserved 4-masted barque Pommern after which several sightseeing tours were organised including a visit to the Parliament building. For those not flying out from Mariehamn, the event ended with a ferry trip to Kapellskär in Sweden and a bus ride to Stockholm’s Arlanda airport.

In June Dover opened its second cruise terminal. The port had recently received its first 2,000-passenger ship and the £17.5m facility was built specifically to handle larger vessels. Its design was strictly functional with no frills, very much on the lines of some of the US terminals, to enable large passenger numbers to be processed simply and speedily.

Following Council’s earlier decision not to have a stand at the Seatrade Med Convention in Genoa, the executive manager and the secretary/treasurer represented Cruise Europe as delegates. Having by then had a chance to look more closely at Cruise Europe since he took up his new post, John Turgoose had noted that two geographical areas of Cruise Europe lacked members and needed closer attention, namely the Southern Baltic between Kiel and Poland and Northern Spain.

Secondly greater use should be made of the internet following the marketing sub-committee’s presentation at the AGM and the information on the CD-ROM should be put on the website.
The new website, which included an itinerary planner, was duly launched at Seatrade Miami 2001 where Cruise Europe had been allocated 36 stands in a rearranged floor plan.

At the beginning of the year Copenhagen and Malmo had merged to form Copenhagen Malmo Port which soon afterwards opened its new Free Port Terminal in the Danish capital. This could accommodate 2-3 ships at any one time, adding to the five that could be berthed at nearby Langelinie Quay, and was anticipating 215 calls by 60 ships, up 22 on the 2000 figure. Thirty of the Free Port calls would be turnarounds.

AGM 2001 – LA ROCHELLE

The annual May gathering which was held in La Rochelle with delegates staying in the Relais Mercure Oceanide Hotel.

Proceedings, which had been excellently organised by council member Yves Bouvart, ably assisted by Marie Guégan, began with a welcome by Madame Normandin, Vice President of the Poitou-Charentes region, in the Normandin-Mercier cognac cellar and the seminar took place the following day in the City Hall. Peter Cox from Seabourn said that no matter how good a port’s facilities might be and how professionally, courteously and cost effectively ships might be handled, if passengers were not satisfied with the destination then the port might fail as a cruise port. He went on that there must be
a product the cruise could sell and there must be the infrastructure to deliver that product. Finally the port and the community must be committed to consistent delivery of a cost-effective and satisfying service to passengers, crew and ship. That evening delegates from 28 member ports witnessed a ‘Ronde de Nuit’ in the streets of La Rochelle before moving on to a memorable function in the Chambre de Commerce et de l’Industrie where individual booths had been set up, manned by people in local dress, dispensing different examples of food peculiar to the region, presented by L’Ambassade des Confrères du Poitou-Charentes.

The AGM took place back at the hotel the following day. During the past year Bilbao, Helsingör, Keflavik, Milford Haven, Rostock and Turku had become members bringing the total up to 75 and in a competition to host the 2002 AGM Bergen/Flåm narrowly beat Tallinn by 22 votes to 19. At an extra meeting held afterwards, Mai Elmar from Rotterdam was welcomed onto the council which comprised: Gunnar Lepsøe (chairman), Iain Dunderdale (vice-chairman, John Turgoose (executive manager), Jan Koster (secretary/treasurer), Ágúst Ágústsson, Yves Bouvart, Janis Challenor, Claes-Olow Edström, Sean Geary, Lord Greenway (president), Ola Hiis Bergh, Per Schmidt and Terry Toohey. It was agreed that future Council meetings would take place in Rotterdam at the end of August, at Heathrow in January and at Miami in March.

Finally a number of delegates visited the famous shipyard of Chantiers de l’Atlantique at St Nazaire, which had been responsible for building the famous liners Normandie and France and was at that time engaged in building a number of new cruise ships: Millennium, first of a series of three 90,000 tonners for Celebrity Cruises, Seven Seas Mariner and Renaissance 7, penultimate vessel in an 8-ship, 30,000-ton series for Renaissance Cruises.

On 11th September 2001 the world was shocked by the terrible events in America when terrorists flew two passenger aircraft into New York’s World Trade centre, bringing both towers down, whilst another was crashed into the Pentagon and a fourth was brought down prematurely thanks to the courage of some of the passengers. This cast something of a sombre mood over the Seatrade Europe Convention which took place in Hamburg later that month and the main topic of conversation was what effect such momentous events might have on the cruise industry. It was not long before the expected downturn, especially in the US market, hastened the demise of financially troubled Renaissance Cruises. The good services of the Port of Ghent were no longer available for the design and construction of the Cruise Europe stand so alternative arrangements had to be made.
That November, Princess Cruises replaced its ageing but popular *Sea Princess* (right) with *Ocean Princess* and announced that in 2002 the much larger *Grand Princess* would make a series of 10 cruises in the Baltic based on Copenhagen. Her capacity of 2,600 passengers would mark a giant increase in the average ship capacity of just under 1,000 and pointed the way to the future development of European cruising. From the operator’s point of view, larger ships meant greater economies of scale but they were limited in the number of ports they could visit.

**AGM 2002 – BERGEN/FLÅM**

![Bergen from the top of the Fløibanen](image)

It was Norway’s turn to host the AGM in May 2002 and delegates met in Bergen at the Radisson Blu Hotel. The following day included a visit to Edvard Grieg’s house for a recital on his piano and lunch was taken at the top of the Fløibanen funicular railway which afforded spectacular views of the city and its surroundings.
Next afternoon the party took the Oslo Express to Myrdal where it disembarked onto the world-renowned Flåmsbana for the spectacular descent to Flåm. Along the way the train stopped at a small platform set between two tunnels to allow passengers to view the impressive Kjosfossen waterfall. They were surprised by a ghostly female figure dressed in what looked like a nightie who emerged from behind a rock to the accompaniment of strange music emanating from a hidden loudspeaker!
Delegates alight to view the Kjosfossen waterfall

Flåm had extended its pier back in May 1999 in order to take two vessels simultaneously and although it had raised its port fees, these were often offset by no requirement for tendering. Back then along with nearby Gudvangen, 155 calls were recorded and the both venues remained popular.
The theme of the seminar was ‘Itinerary Planning Baltic & Scandinavia – how to incorporate small ports’. Opening speaker Giora Israel, VP Strategic Planning for Carnival Cruises said that a destination must have a strong and positive consumer image and be attractive because it helped shore excursions to appeal and unique features. A friendly experience while the passengers. When selecting a port, cruise companies had to consider future growth as ships would soon grow to 300 metres. “Develop cruise concepts, not itineraries and beware of weak links in your operations”.

Tim Harwood, Director Shore Excursion Programmes/Radisson Seven Seas, emphasised the need for innovation and creative thinking when designing a shore excursion. Thinking outside the box was the key to maintaining a high level of passenger satisfaction. He mentioned bicycling, fishing and other activities where passengers could ‘do their own thing’. Lloyd’s International editor Sue Parker, later to become editor of Cruise Europe’s digital newsletter, said that 55 cruise ships with a total potential passenger volume of over 290,000 would be sailing in Northern Europe in 2002. Demand had more than doubled from 1 million in 1995 to 2.1 million in 2000 and was estimated to reach 3.1 million by 2007. As a result nine new ships would be needed in both 2006 and 2007 and that number would grow in 2008, 2009 and 2010. would be sailing in Northern Europe in 2002. The conference ended with Steinar Saeterdal from Norwegian Coastal Voyages who said his company was planning to enter the international cruise business with some of its popular hurtigrute ships during the northern winter season.

A pleasant 90-minute boat trip down the fjord took delegates to Gudvangen where the first course of the evening meal was taken deep underground in a brand new cave attraction that was being tried out for the first time. The remainder of the meal was taken in a neighbouring restaurant and after a somewhat raucous and hugely enjoyable evening, the return journey to Flåm by bus took barely 15 minutes via a long and spectacular tunnel.
Delegates enjoyed an evening boat trip to Gudvangen

At the AGM the following day, the president and the UK/Ireland nominated council members were re-elected as were floating members Gunnar Lepsoe and Terry Toohey. Finances were in good shape and the secretary/treasurer reported that although Ghent and Klaksvik had resigned, two new members from Norway, Ålesund and Gudvangen, together with the UK’s Whitehaven and three Spanish ports - A Coruña, Gijon and Santander – had brought membership up to 80. During the meeting a presentation on ‘The Early Warning Booking System’ generated much interest. It comprised a system on the Internet where each port could list its seasonal bookings for berths thereby allowing cruise lines to avoid congestion. Stockholm had already used the system for over a year to the satisfaction of the cruise lines. Members suggested harmonising all booking and placing them on the Cruise Europe website. The meeting concluded by agreeing that Tallinn should host next year’s event following a lively presentation by the port’s Erik Sakkov.

In August Herman van Deursen, a great friend and supporter of Cruise Europe Herman van Deursen, retired as Holland America Line’s likeable director of Cruise Development,. He had been with the company for 46 years but intended to remain in touch with the industry as a consultant.

Back in 1996 German company Seetours had pioneered ways of encouraging younger and less well off passengers to go cruising with its AIDA concept and this was expanded with the introduction in 2002 of the 70,000-ton A’Rosa Blu with its informal atmosphere and accent on education and entertainment. Passengers could choose their own activities and 50 bicycles were provided for shore excursions.

In early July Cruise Europe members were deeply saddened to learn of the death of former executive manager Andre de Wilde.
P&O/Princess had recently absorbed AIDA Cruises but during the winter of 2002/2003 it had been in talks regarding a possible takeover by Royal Caribbean. Carnival then stepped in with a higher offer which was accepted, confirming it as the undisputed leader in the cruise market. Its Cunard subsidiary introduced its new flagship, the 150,000gt Queen Mary 2 during the year. Designed with the hull of a traditional Atlantic liner, she was designed to offer a number of transatlantic voyages during the summer but would otherwise be employed cruising. Member ports were naturally keen to attract a call from this prestigious new addition to the cruise scene.

Queen Mary 2 enters the cruise market and becomes an important target for member ports

Local initiatives continued to flourish and early in 2004 Invergordon established a new joint marketing organisation with Bannermans of Tain called Cruise Highlands. A large increase in bookings was foreseen with a 74% increase in cruise calls and 60% rise in tonnage and the old Admiralty Pier had been re-fendered and re-opened in anticipation of visits by the Queen Mary 2 and Grand Princess. Port of Cork had also witnessed steady growth from 26 ships with 26,000 passengers in 2002 to an expected 37 calls in 2004, bringing 35,000 persons.

In the Baltic Region, Helsinki, Mariehamn and Turku had established Cruise Finland to market their respective ports in conjunction with the local communities and the Finnish capital had lengthened its Hernesaari cruise pier from 330 to 375 metres. Its first chairman was Helsinki harbourmaster Kari Wallin but he retired not long afterwards and was replaced by Eeva Oitiinen. In April Hamburg opened its new cruise terminal, constructed out of shipping containers, which could handle up to 2,100 passengers at the same time. Fully ISPS compliant, it included the latest baggage handling and customs facilities as well as travel services.

AGM 2003 - TALLINN
In May 2003 a most enjoyable conference and AGM took place in the Estonian capital Tallinn, thanks largely to the port’s larger than life Cruise Europe representative Erik Sakkov.

Amongst the interesting (and to some, rather testing) events laid on were lunch in a garlic restaurant, where even the drinks and ice cream were flavoured with garlic, a harbour tour and in the evening a banquet where the main course was bear!

During the AGM in the town hall Lord Greenway, who had been closely involved with Cruise Europe since its inception, ended his long run as president and handed over to his successor Horst Kilian (left). Horst had spent many years with Hapag Lloyd, ending up as marketing director, before becoming managing partner of Hansa Kreuzfahrten in Bremen which operated the cruise ship Delphin, formerly the Russian Byelorussia.

The gathering ended on a high note that evening with a most enjoyable dinner in the port office where some very lively entertainment was provided by the staff, including Erik Sakkov’s pop group.
AGM 2004 - BILBAO

In May 2004 Cruise AGM in Spain for a second time, this time in the north, and guidance of Luis Amaya Sarasola did pulling out all the welcome lunch at the representatives from associate members, speakers, members guests and partners by boat to the Port Marina and dinner was held at the Molino Alkzerotta restaurant in Getxo. The traditional Friday seminar was opened by the President of the port authority Jose Angel Corres and speakers in the morning session included John Azua (Guggenheim Solomon Foundation), cruise analyst Peter Wild, Bill Gibbons (Director - Passenger Shipping Association), Juan Madrid (Commercial Director - Port of Barcelona) and Diego Teurelinx (DG – the EU Energy & Transport Commission). The afternoon session concentrated on the cruise lines with addresses by Nick Lighton (MD – Ocean Village), Nigel Lingard (Marketing Director - Fred Olsen Cruise Line), James Duguid (Commercial Director – Saga Shipping) and Greg Saunders (Planning & Product Development Manager – Thomson Cruises). Lunch was taken at the Portuondo restaurant overlooking the Udaibi estuary following by a visit to the Nature Reserve and in the late afternoon seminar/workshop session took place at the Azti Marine Reserve Centre situated on an island in the estuary. Following the return to Bilbao, a splendid dinner had been laid on in the famous new Guggenheim museum, complete with entertainment by members of the Madrid opera. The museum was already proving to be a magnet for attracting cruise ships to the port.

On the final day delegates travelled to the celebrated Marques de Riscal vineyard in La Rioja for regional meetings followed by the AGM. During the latter it was agreed to make major changes to the secretariat as two stalwarts of the organization, executive manager John Turgoose and secretary/treasurer Jan Koster had left the employ of their respective ports, the latter to fulfil a life-long ambition to cross the Atlantic under sail in the fine new Dutch sail training ship Stad Amsterdam, a near copy of the famous Cutty Sark. The candidate chosen to replace John as executive manager was Mai Elmar (left), Director/Cruise Port Rotterdam and Honorary Norwegian Consul General in the Netherlands, whilst Helsinki’s Eeva Oittinen (right), chairman of Cruise Finland, took over the role of secretary/treasurer. John was asked to remain a member of council to give the benefit of his wide experience.

The organisation had by now grown to 85 ports, four times the number at its inception some 12 years previously. During the year Flåm, Peterhead, Plymouth and Whitehaven had resigned but Esbjerg, Gdansk, Gdynia, Hardangerfjord and Tyne/Newcastle had become new members. During the year the council had been wrestling with the problem of whether to expand membership into spheres other
than ports and this had resulted in an amendment to the constitution which made provision for associate membership, following which the first two candidates, the tourist boards of Copenhagen and Stockholm, were admitted. After lunch, delegates enjoyed a tour of one of the famous Rioja cellars.

**ISPS Code**

On 1st July 2004 the International Ship & Port Security Code (ISPS) came into effect. An amendment to the International Maritime Organisation’s SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) Convention, it had come about in reaction to the horrific 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States and mandated the minimum security arrangements required by ships, ports and government agencies. No longer would it be possible for the public to get close to ships, a factor that upset many Scandinavian ports where traditionally the public had always been able to stroll along the open quays where ships berthed.

In the September newsletter John Turgoose summarised the experience and lessons learnt from the first season of the ISPS Code: how were the additional costs being financed and were standards consistent? An EU Directive had gold-plated the Code by mandating some of the optional sections and each European nation had had to appoint an assessment authority with the power to inspect and certify compliance. The Code had led to increased thinking about security in member ports and considerable investment had been made in security equipment, particularly in turnaround ports.

The first three months had shown up inconsistencies between the US and Europe, particularly in relation to funding. US ports had managed to obtain millions of dollars in Federal funding whereas costs in Europe and the UK in particular, where ports tended to be privately owned, fell on the ports themselves. Some of these could be considerable, for instance x-ray machines cost around £35,000 each and five or six might be needed in a busy turnaround terminal handling 2,000-passenger ships with some ports having as many as two or three such facilities. In addition there were charges for extra fencing to prevent public access to berths and costs for employing and training extra security staff. Charges for the smaller transit ports were less and they could always hire security equipment for individual turnarounds but they still had to pay for extra fencing and security staff.

Overall it was clear that there was some latitude in implementation with some ports maintaining a high level of security and others the bare minimum. Some shipping agents had been requested to provide additional security and others to minimise costs.

In the UK security was already tighter as a result of the Aviation and Maritime Security Act of 1990 and in some cases the Coastguard Agency had required extra security.

Interviews with some member ports revealed that Stockholm, where ports were city-owned, charged 10kr per passenger for security. Niklas Oscarsson thought that cruise lines would benefit from consistent charges across Europe but this would be impractical to implement due to differing standards in different countries, different investment levels and different employment costs.

Knut Bendeiksen from Tromso said that different ships required different levels of security but his port had not make an extra charge on passengers in 2004 but was awaiting further guidance from the Government. He favoured a consistent charge in all Norwegian ports but if state funds were not
forthcoming, ports would have to charge the cruise lines. From Akureyri in Iceland Petur Olaffsson said that ISPS implementation had gone well and some cruise lines had reported that security levels in Iceland were higher than in some other ports. His port charged €315 per passenger plus extra for security guards. He did not see these charges leading to competitive issues with other ports.

In summary John Turgoose commented that the numbers of security staff and their employment costs, coupled with the number of passengers handled were the main determinants in charging cruise lines. Finally he warned that the European Commission would be making pan-Europe security checks to achieve greater consistency.

September saw the launch of the Cruise Baltic Project to build on the impressive growth in the area and to ensure an even stronger future in the cruise market. The 3-year project comprised 10 countries and 17 destinations which had committed to common standards for service and port facilities. Its strategy was to set up local cruise networks whereby stakeholders in the cruise destination could work together to improve infrastructure and facilities. The most popular Baltic destinations were Cruise Europe members Copenhagen, St Petersburg and Tallin, which had received around 300,000 passengers during 2003 however the greatest growth had been recorded by smaller ports such as Klaipeda and Riga, up 46% and 38% respectively. American visitors accounted for more than a third of the total.

At the World Travel Market in London that November, Copenhagen won two prestigious awards: ‘The world’s leading cruise ship harbour’ and ‘Europe’s leading cruise ship destination’. They were accepted by council member Per Schmidt, general manager of Copenhagen-Malmö, who attributed the port’s success to the excellent cooperation within Cruise Copenhagen Network.

AGM 2005 - CORK
In early May 2005, Council member Sean Geary and the Port of Cork welcomed 46 Cruise Europe colleagues from 16 nations to the City of Cork – the traditional conference and AGM.

At the Friday seminar in the Clarion Hotel, Bruce Krumrine (Director Shore Operations/Cunard and Princess) said that each passenger with around $135 per port from 3 ships visited with an additional $25 each crew member. This amounted to some $88.4m in the course of three ships. Mike Pawlus (Radisson Seven Seas) said that the trend was towards larger ships in the 3,000-plus passenger range but warned that the weak dollar was affecting operational costs and fuel costs were rising. He asked ports to keep an eye on their charges and not to increase them. Enda Conellan (Chairman/Cruise Ireland) and Geir Gjaerde (Managing Director of Destination Geirangerfjord) outlined the attractions of Geiranger. That evening delegates travelled by coach to Kinsale to enjoy a typical Irish evening at the Actors Hotel. The following day was taken up with the usual regional meetings and the AGM after which lunch was taken at the Rushbrooke Hotel in nearby Cobh where the cruise facilities for the larger ships could be inspected.

Cruise Europe celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2006 with a happy hour on its stand at Seatrade Miami. Membership had grown to 93, an increase of 18 since the 10th anniversary. Writing in the spring issue of Cruise Europe News, executive manager Mai Elmar attributed the success of the organisation, over and above the essentials of communication and marketing, down to enthusiasm, the diversification created by the membership and the professionalism gained by learning from fellow members. Membership of Cruise Europe was perceived by the cruise lines as a certain measure of quality.
The May 2006 seminar and AGM were held in executive manager Mai Elmar’s home city of Rotterdam and events centred on the N H Atlanta Hotel. Pre-conference committee and Council meetings and a marketing workshop were held on the Thursday and the seminar began the following day with an industry presentation. After lunch industry spokesmen contributed to a members’ workshop and in the evening dinner was taken during a river cruise around Rotterdam’s extensive harbour.

Following regional meetings on Saturday morning, the AGM was opened by the chairman Gunnar Lepsøe in the absence of the president. He reported that the Council had met four times during the previous year and Cruise Europe had been represented at Seatrade Cruise conventions in both Hamburg and Miami. Membership had increased during the year and the opportunity had been taken for successful informal membership meetings at both events. During the meeting executive manager Mai Elmar said that the focus on workshops on the previous day had been well supported and went on to explain that in conjunction with the council of MedCruise, Cruise Europe was willing to participate in a survey by G P Wild looking into the European cruise business. This would involve a cost of 10,000 euros in both 2006 and 2007 and input from ports would be needed to ensure equal representation from the regions. Cruise Europe would also be taking a stand at the Seatrade Med convention to be held in Naples that September and many members had indicated a wish to attend. She ended by saying that in order to improve the way it worked, the association needed to work more closely with the European Union and with that in mind the European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO) had offered Cruise Europe a pié-d-a-terre in Brussels. Further cooperation with Medcruise was under discussion and budget provision had been made for this.

Secretary-treasurer Eeva Oittinen reported that the association now had 91 port members and three associate members. Sean Geary was re-appointed as a member auditor and René Kouwenberg took the place of Mia Cameron.

Strategic and development committee chairman Iain Dunderdale reported that a wish list of potential new members had been distributed to the regional chairmen and the president. Extension of Cruise
Europe’s boundaries had been discussed and the Black Sea firmly rejected however Greenland and the Atlantic Islands of Spain and Portugal had been noted as a future possibility. Co-operation with Medcruise had been found to be valuable but a merger was out of question. Greater participation by the membership in Cruise Europe’s activities was being sought and it had become clear that some ports thought they had more in common with regions other than their own. A possible solution might be cross-regional marketing. Cruise Europe needed a business plan looking three to five years ahead. Also the organisation of the association with its president, chairman and executive manager had been discussed on several occasions but with no proposal yet for a change in the Constitution.

Marketing committee chairman Terry Toohey reported that the committee had considered two approaches for production of the 2007/8 Cruise Europe Yearbook and after careful deliberation had decided to remain with the Seatrade organization on account of its ability to include the publication in the Miami visitors pack. The current yearbook, the first not to include advertising, had been well received. New artwork (right) had been produced and incorporated in the production of an “Appreciation Certificate” for presentation to the outgoing chairman Gunnar Lepsøe. Plans for a marketing trip in the USA were proceeding well but the regions had yet to nominate their representatives.

As to council changes, Iain Dunderdale was elected to replace Gunnar as chairman and both Dirk Moldenhauer (Hamburg) and Henrik Cars (Stockholm) were voted on as floating members.

The meeting agreed to a major change on how ports wishing to host the AGM should be chosen. In future council would have the power to choose the venue after due consultation with potential candidates. Rønne on the island of Bornholm would host the 2007 event followed by Klaipeda in 2008 and Amsterdam /Ijmuiden in 2009. Finally Dreamworld Cruises magazine promised to look into producing a special report to mark Cruise Europe’s first 15 years.

The second US Roadshow duly took place in September, led by Terry Toohey for UK/Ireland and comprising Bente Saxon from the Norway/Iceland/Faroes region, Ágúst Ágústsson from the Baltic and Marie Guégan from the Atlantic Coast. It started in Miami before moving on to the West Coast, firstly to Los Angeles and then Vancouver.
The first European Cruise Industry Conference took place in Brussels. It was organised by Chris Ashcroft and was by all accounts a resounding success. Some 20 countries were represented, including somewhat surprisingly Austria and Switzerland, and delegates found it much easier than Miami to make contact with cruise executives. G P Wild’s 2005 report ‘Contribution of Cruise Tourism to the economies of Europe’ to which Cruise Europe had lent some financial support had revealed that some Euros 8.3bn was directly spent by cruise lines and their passengers, 3.1bn of which had gone to European shipyards. Including indirect and induced impacts, the total reached Euros 19.1bn showing that every euro spent could be multiplied by a factor of 2.3. Employment directly benefited to the tune of 90,000 jobs. Financial benefits broken down by country showed Italy receiving €2.3m, the UK 1.7bn and Germany 1.1bn. In 1995 an estimated one million European took a cruise but that figure had grown to 3.3m by 2005, representing a growth of 230%. Looking ahead five years to 2010, the report forecast direct expenditure growing to €12.7bn, direct employment to reach 117,000 and total employment to almost a quarter of a million.

At the conference, John Richardson, head of the EC Maritime Policy Task Force and Paolo Costa, chairman of the European Parliament’s Transport & Tourism Committee both mentioned the new Green Paper ‘A European vision for the oceans and seas’. Richardson urged cruise lines to take part in educating their passengers about environmental issues in order to enlist their help when back on shore. He added that most EU policies impacted the cruise industry but perhaps those having the most effect were the transport, environmental and regional policies.

Costa Cruises’ chairman and CEO Pier Luigi Foschi stressed the importance of maintaining a dialogue between the industry and the EU and that human, technical and legal areas were the most important for future growth. Carnival UK’s managing director David Dingle said that the European source market was recording the fastest growth and Europe would continue to grow as a destination. It was important for the EU, when contemplating cruise legislation, to keep it global and liberal rather than
protectionist. Aida Cruises’ Michael Thamm estimated the buoyant German market would grow to 1m passengers by 2010 and his company’s building programme was based on this figure.

In February 2007 the EU had participated in the first European Cruise Industry Conference in Brussels.

**AGM 2007 RØNNE**

The 2007 annual gathering took place on the Danish island of Bornholm located off the southernmost part of Sweden. Rønne the capital had ferry connections with Ystad, Koge and Sassnitz and events centred on the Hotel Pepita just south of the harbour with 54 representatives from 41 port members being present. Bus tours of the island were offered which included a visit to a glass blowing works but the fact that no guides were provided caused some consternation. At the customary seminar which year on year had become more important, Regent Cruises’ Darius Mehta said smaller cruise ships were on the increase and their more affluent passengers wanted to enjoy a different way to destinations in ordinary cruise guests such as eco-tours. Philip Naylor (right) P&O Cruises’ emphasised the importance of Cruise helped the smaller ports to become destinations for the
industry and also maintained standards in the port communities. Cruise lines were going to need more ports in the future. Fred Olsen’s Nigel Lingard (left) said that different types of guests, for instance the elderly, needed different levels of service and also warned that some ports should learn to say ‘no’ to avoid unnecessary congestion which reduced the quality of service and therefore passenger satisfaction. MSC Cruises’ Peter Pate (left) said his company would be taking delivery of four new ships by 2010 and that expanded operations would require new ports of call. He called for unified port service standards as there was currently a great deal of inconsistency, adding that port charges did not always follow the level of quality which was unacceptable to the industry in the longer term. In response, a number of ports pointed to the fact that larger ships meant more on board spending and less consumption ashore.

The AGM took place on the morning of 11th May with Iain Dunderdale in the chair. Following a welcome by the president, Sander Dores outlined changes made to the Cruise Europe website including the reinstatement of the early warning system which flagged up possible congestion in certain ports. He also floated the idea of a cruise community addition which would allow more detailed information to be given on each port but as there would be a cost involved this would be optional.

Iain Dunderdale reported that the Council had met in Naples during Seatrade Med, in Brussels at the launch of the well-attended and valuable European Cruise Council passenger study and also at Seatrade Miami where a record number of 128 representatives from 70 ports attended.

Executive manager Mai Elmar outlined arrangements for a reception to be held at the Four Seasons Hotel on 26th September during Seatrade Hamburg but said numbers would be limited due to the high
cost and it would not be possible to accommodate all those manning members’ exhibition stands. She called for more news for August’s newsletter and touched on European matters, including Interreg IV, the new interregional programme scheduled for approval in June and due to come into force that September. This would offer possibilities for interregional projects, with a minimum of 3 to 4 regions taking part. Cruise Europe would respond to the European Commission on matters concerning CE regulations and cruise business activities on shore.

Secretary/treasurer Eeva Oittinen announced the welcome news that the Spanish port of Vigo had become Cruise Europe’s 100th member, adding that a press release to that effect would be issued at Seatrade Hamburg. The Council’s proposed 20% increase in fees, 10% due on 1st January 2008 and 10% a year later, was put to the meeting and approved. Under the new arrangement, principal ports would pay £3,000 per annum, smaller ports £1,500 and Associate members £750. For security, the usual reserve of around £70,000 was being maintained.

Iain Dunderdale reported on the strategic and development committee which had been wrestling with the chairman/executive manager issue and asked for proposals to be given to Mai Elmar for further discussion in Hamburg. The meeting approved a new definition of a principal port, effective 31st December 2007, as being one that ‘in the previous year had recorded more than 150,000 cruise passengers’. These were to be counted only once in the case of passengers embarking and disembarking at the same port. Finally Terry Toohey outlined the marketing committee’s 5-year plan. Per Schmidt was elected as the floating member of council and in a vote for the venue of the 2008 AGM Klaipeda convincingly beat Stavanger.

One of Cruise Europe’s original aims had been to extend the cruise season so the tentative introduction of Christmas shopping cruises by some cruise lines marked a welcome development. Initially tried out in Copenhagen in 2005, Artemis, Black Watch and Queen Victoria were due to make them in 2007.

Christmas in Copenhagen

Early in 2008 Cruise Europe welcomed Southampton, which had long been a target, to its membership. With its historic liner connections going back many years, due in large part to its unique double high tides, the port had switched to the cruise business when air travel decimated the traditional liner services. As the UK’s premier cruise port, it had just signed a 20-year agreement with Carnival UK and was about to embark on building a fourth cruise terminal. The port had also agreed a priority arrangement with Royal Caribbean for use of the City Cruise Terminal and the brand new Independence of the Seas (above), third of the company’s 154,400gt/4,370-passenger Freedom class ships, was due to be
homeported there from April for her inaugural summer season. In addition Norwegian Cruise Line was also inaugurating a season of Mediterranean cruises from the port.

AGM 2008 - KLAIPEDA

Klaipeda

The 2008 annual gathering was held in Klaipeda from 8-10th May. After lunch at the Navalis restaurant, delegates from 39 ports met for workshop sessions geared towards wards ‘customer relations’ and in the evening the port authority hosted a dinner in the Klaipeda Hotel. The conference on the following day was chaired by Chris Ashcroft and centred on the topic ‘Communications with clients’. Mary Bond, editor of Seatrade Review set the tone with her ‘Europe rules OK!’ presentation - a vision of the immediate future of the cruise industry. She cited a 23% growth in capacity in European waters with many US companies deploying more ships.

David Selby, Programme Director/Thomson Cruises stressed the importance of good communications between cruise lines and shore- that each cruise operator had different needs which database for members to access. The director of department Michael Schulze said lines were looking reasonable port charges with reductions for multiple the need for long-term relationships between ports and cruise lines with the former showing flexibility and an understanding of the tourist industry. Ports should also realise their limits when booking calls
to avoid congestion. Other speakers were the Director-General of Klaipeda port Sigitas Dobilinskas, Shirley Henderson (Manager Shore Excursions/Carnival UK), Andrew Harmer (MD Association of Cruise Experts) and Sue Parker (Editor Lloyds Cruise International). The partner programme included a long coach ride and a visit to an amber museum.

The general impression was that Lithuania was somewhat beset with regulations and at a rather difficult AGM the following day, a surprise decision saw Iain Dunderdale defeated in a vote to continue his role as chairman by Hamburg’s Dirk Moldenhauer (left), who won on the casting vote of the president. A master mariner, Dirk had set up Hanseatic Tours which operated the only 5-star expedition ship Hanseatic and had briefly been managing director of Hapag Lloyd Cruises, later overseeing the construction of the new Europa. At the time he was running the new Hamburg Cruise Centre following the untimely death of its first managing director Karl Walterspiel. Other offices were also due for renewal and Kattina Glasinovich (Antwerp) was elected to replace Mai Elmar as executive manager whilst Nadine Palatz (Hamburg Cruise Centre) far right took over the secretary/treasurer role from Helsinki’s Eeva Oittinen. In a further change Monica Bengtsson (Helsingborg) replaced Terry Toohey as chair of the marketing committee.

Both the new Council and the marketing committee met for the first time in Amsterdam that September.

Executive manager Kattina Glasinovich introduced a revised organisational structure, a new budget and future actions. The marketing committee proposed a 5-year action plan concentrating on the website and electronic marketing.

During the year a new regional marketing organisation, Cruise Atlantic Europe, had been formed by a partnership of the ports of Cork, Dover, Brittany, Bilbao, A Coruña, Lisbon and Oporto. Its aim was to promote the region as a whole and also to sell it to cruise lines as a product by with the ports’ locations making it easy to organise overnight passages, allowing passengers a full day in port.
The December issue of Cruise Europe News (Volume 14 No.4) was the last one to be printed in hard copy. In future it would be distributed to subscribers online as a PDF.

**AGM 2009 - VIGO**

Cruise Europe returned to Spain for a third time in May 2009 when the port of Vigo hosted the annual gathering. A new format had been adopted with members being offered four different workshops instead of the traditional seminar. Delegates were split up into four groups and each group attended the different workshops. Four main topics were chosen for discussion consisting of Land Operations (Shore Excursions and pre-/post tours); Market Research; Innovative Marketing Strategies and finally Port Services, Operations & Security. Up to four speakers from the cruise industry presented each topic and led the discussions. They included:

- Hugues Lamy, Cruise Management, Consultant, Director
- Ressel Daya, Disney Cruise Lines / Director Security
- Chris Perry, Fred Olsen Cruise Line / Operations
- Capt. André Mahr, Aida Cruises / Senior Superintendent
- Mark Robinson, Intercruises / Managing Director
- Bruce Krumrine, Princess Cruises / VP Shore Operations
- Belén Wangüemert, RCCL / Director for Spain
- Ralph Grizzle, Avid Traveler Media / Director
- Emiliano González, MSC Cruises / General Director Spain
- Mario Martini, Iberocruceros / President
- Han van Midden, Policy Research Corporation / Consultant
- Chris Ashcroft, Ashcroft & Associates / Editor
In the marketing workshop it became clear that, when marketing their destinations, most ports had been focusing on the cruise lines however during the session the focus was reversed with priority being afforded to travel agents followed by consumers and finally cruise lines. The new format received broad approval subject to some fine-tuning.

The new chairman Dirk Moldenhauer opened the AGM on the second day by thanking Dolores Rio for organising the event which included a splendid dinner in a mansion on a hill however the late arrival of the mayor meant delegates had had to suppress their appetites for the sumptuous-looking buffet on view for longer than some might have wished.

The past year had been a challenging one for the new management team and Dirk thanked Kattina and Monica Bengtsson for their support and hard work, also secretary/treasurer Nadine. He also thanked the outgoing management team, Iain Dunderdale, Per Schmidt, Mai Elmar, Eeva Oittinen, Terry Toohey and Sean Geary. The changeover had taken place in Hamburg on 21st July 2008 when the treasurer’s position had been brought back in house and placed in the capable hands of Nadine Palatz.

Turning to finances, a small loss of €3,468 had been incurred but reserves had stood at a handsome €122,800 at the end of the previous year. This was considered to be far too much and Council had agreed to reduce the amount year on year by investing in marketing projects. Payment for the Yearbook 2009/10 had been made in two tranches in 2008 and2009 and Terry Toohey had been recompensed for his work in its creation.

Administrative costs had been particularly high due mainly to funding meeting attendance and the associated travel costs of the outsourced treasurer Gerard van den Berg and Cruise Europe had suffered as a result. Road show costing had also altered and those participating would no longer be paid up front as almost no receipts had been forthcoming. In future ports would have to pay their respective delegate’s costs and then claim the money back from the treasurer. Due to a miscalculation by the old management team, costs incurred in connection with the Miami Convention had been €9,000 higher than expected and the amount had had to be written off.

The new executive manager Kattina Glasinovich had expressed a wish to resign with effect from the AGM due to differences with the chairman and it had been agreed that her place would be taken for one year only by Vibeke Jorgensen from Aalborg who had been involved with Cruise Europe since 1997.

Marketing Manager Monica Bengtsson from Visit Helsingborg, which worked closely with Port of Helsingborg, reported progress on the development of a new corporate identity for Cruise Europe which had earlier been trailered to members in Miami. The Marketing Committee had been working on the package with a firm called Fort Knox which had begun by defining Cruise Europe as ‘The organization committed to promoting Europe as world class cruise destination’. It had suggested that this could best be achieved by adopting the following measures:

- More active and visible regions (active marketing)
• Cruise Europe was an organisation with the aim of creating:
  - Awareness - Attention - Interest
  - A strong platform for the ports and destinations
  - A strong network
  - A “One door in” with the website being the entrance
  - Give service to the cruise industry
  - One voice to the industry and EU

Fort Knox had provided Monica with some draft designs for a new corporate logo, one of which found favour with Council members. The completed package, including a graphic guideline, would be presented to the membership in September and in the meantime the committee would note and deliberate further comments from the floor which included:
  - create a slogan for the logo
  - create “badges” or pins for the members to identify themselves with Cruise Europe when at cruise related events
  - the words “Cruise Europe” are too small

Turning to the website, Monica commented that as every company and organisation now gave priority their websites, Cruise Europe should do the same. The new sitemap had been discussed and then presented to the membership but it remained a work in progress and any changes requested could still be incorporated. The overall structure would cover:
  • Cruise Lines
  • Media
  • Members (external)
  • Intranet (+ extra intranet)
  • Consumer

Members would be asked for further information by email and the new website would be launched during the Seatrade Hamburg conference in September.

Secretary/treasurer Nadine Palatz announced that membership currently stood at 101 with 5 associated members. The Port of Visby had cancelled its membership for 2009 and Edinburgh would be cancelling in 2010 but there were four potential new members in the pipeline.

She unveiled a new benefit structure for the three categories of membership which had been approved by Council.
As this was to be the last AGM for long-standing council member Per Schmidt, who had opted for early retirement, the chairman thanked him for his outstanding contribution to the organisation over the past 15 years. He was replaced by Arnt Möller Petersen, also from Copenhagen. Thanks were also given to outgoing executive manager Kattina Glasinovich. The Baltic region voted in a new chair, Margrethe Austad from Oslo, with Henrik Cars from Stockholm remaining as vice-chair.

Dick de Graaff and Ron Maes showed a preview video for the next AGM in Amsterdam which would take place on 27-29 April and recommended that delegates stayed on an extra day as the 30th would be Queen’s Day.

On the cruise front, Royal Caribbean had enlarged its European portfolio through an arrangement with German tour company TUI AG. A new joint company entitled TUI Cruises had been established with each company holding a 50% share and Celebrity Cruises’ 76,500gt Celebrity Galaxy transferred to the new concern, emerging from a refit to prepare her for the German-speaking market as Mein Schiff. The suffix 1 was added in 2011 when her sister ship Celebrity Mercury joined her as Mein Schiff 2 (above).

To meet the rising demand of would-be German cruisers, TUI then ordered a new ship of nearly 100,000 tons from STX in Turku which appeared in 2014 as Mein Schiff 3 and another three sisters were due to follow by 2017. At the same time TUI’s UK subsidiary Thomson Cruises, which had been concentrating on the Mediterranean, returned to Northern Europe after chartering Holland America Line’s Nieuw Amsterdam which was renamed Thomson Spirit (left).
A new beginning

In pursuance of its aim to keep abreast and ahead of the industry, Cruise Europe was duly relaunched during Seatrade Europe in Hamburg that September. The ‘new look’ comprised a new corporate identity and logo, meeting the need for a more interactive liaison with the cruise lines, and a completely new website. The chairman commented, ‘We live in a time where everything changes and develops faster than ever, so we must be able to adapt to what is going on in the world quickly and professionally.’ He continued that Cruise Europe recognised that the web was the only way to provide up-to-the-minute information whilst also meeting the growing demand for paperless offices. ‘We think it is very important to keep up with the trend, especially amongst US cruise lines, where companies such as Holland America Line are reducing their costs and moving towards totally eliminating all printed matter.’

The new website was a much more elaborate affair with over 400 pages and 500 web links. It included information for the cruise lines and an intranet for the members as well as access for consumers to information about Cruise Europe’s regions and destinations. Additions were a media gallery, more than 300 FAQs, statements from cruise passengers and a 'what's on' page listing more than 300 future events. Later that autumn, an online news service was added.

With 106 members ranging from North Cape in the north to Lisbon in the south, Cruise Europe issued a new brand statement as follows: ‘Cruise Europe is an association committed to promoting Northern and Western Europe as a world-class destination. Representing a strong network, it is dedicating marketing expertise to serve both its members and the industry. The unique qualities of each port will be accentuated as Cruise Europe creates the cruise destinations of tomorrow.’

Cruise Europe's annual statistics demonstrated the incredible growth that was taking place in the region. In 2008 7.86 million passengers were recorded on 6,333 calls compared with 6.44 million and 5,684 respectively in 2007. Despite the global recession, figures for 2009 were looking strong and the chairman concluded - 'Talking to our member ports, it looks as though the figures for this year will be about the same as 2008 which shows just how well the cruise sector is coping with the financial crisis but also what a popular destination Northern and Western Europe has become.'

Throughout the winter the council had been wrestling not only with the fallout from the disastrous decision to appoint a full-time outside treasurer but also with the increasing concern regarding the size of the organization. The latter was beginning to make the job of running it too arduous for the executive team who also had to cope with the demands of their full-time employment as senior port executives. Finally after much deliberation it was decided to grasp the nettle and appoint a full-time
salaried chief executive. Potential candidates were sought through advertisements and those who applied were duly interviewed. At the end of the process Jens Skrede from Norway had been singled out as the council’s preferred choice. He was no stranger to the cruise business, having been managing director of Destination Stryn and Nordfjord since 1999, and would be introduced to the membership for final approval at the spring AGM in Amsterdam.

AGM 2010 - AMSTERDAM

AGM delegates from 55 member ports journeyed to Amsterdam for the third time in May 2010. The seminar was held in the new cruise terminal at Ijmuiden followed by a boat trip to Forteiland, a World Heritage Site. Back in Amsterdam the Cruise Terminal where temporary (right) unveiled a chart showing how managing director were to replace the had remained unchanged since Cruise managing committee of the Council everyday work would be transferred to AGM was held the following day in the Executive Manager Vibeke Jorgensen the organisation would look if a salaried existing management structure which Europe’s inception back in 1991. The would remain in place but much of the the new incumbent who would undergo
a probationary period of 1½ years at the start of 5-year contract, dependent upon satisfactory progress.

Both Vibeke and Marketing Committee chair Monica Bengtsson would remain on Council in an advisory capacity and the number of council and management meetings would be increased in order to develop a strategy for the future.

The design of the new website was approved and delegates particularly welcomed the ‘homepage’ idea.

For the benefit of delegates the benefits of membership were defined as follows:

- Access to good networks (AGM/members/cruise companies/press/tour operators)
- Sharing knowledge from industry representatives and member ports
- Participation in cruise conventions at reduced rates
- The Website – an extra distribution channel with added exposure to cruise companies, travel agents, networks and media
- Articles and news distributed via e-letters and sent out to industry and media
- Access to market intelligence, surveys, statistics etc
- Peer support on various issues regarding EU etc

Future benefits to be included:

- Yearbook to be added to website (all agreed)
- Benchmarking with MedCruise should be improved (new MD to establish good contact)

A proposal for a new scale of membership fees was unveiled in order to meet the extra costs involved but this met with a measure of resistance from some of the smaller ports who deemed it unfair and therefore further revision was agreed upon. A query arose as to how to count turnaround passengers and the answer was to be found in the Constitution which read ‘Transit calls counted once, turnarounds embarking once and disembarking once.’ It was thought that the larger ports should have to pay more as the gap on passenger numbers between them and the smaller ports was growing.

With only five ports dissenting, members agreed a new sliding scale for fees which would be put before the 2011 AGM for final approval.

Group A - ports with 0-49,999 passengers per annum = € 1,500
Group B – ports with 50,000-99,999 passengers per annum = €1,500
Group C – ports with 100,000-149,999 passengers per annum = €1,500
Group D – ports with 150,000-199,999 passengers per annum = €3,000
Group E – ports with 200,000 – 299,999 passengers per annum = €3,000
Group F – ports with over 300,000 passengers per annum = €3,000

Associate member fees were not included as the terms and benefits of associate membership needed to be defined but in future full membership fees should be paid.
Council had decided at a meeting prior to the AGM to create a new business plan and raise fees by 10% per annum for three years from 2012. Groups A to C would pay €1,650 in 2012, €1,825 in 2013 and €2,000 in 2014. Corresponding fees for the larger ports in Groups D to F would be €3,300, €3,650 and €4,000 respectively.

Marketing Manager Monica Bengtsson reported on development of the re-designed website, touching on marketing the focussing areas agreed upon, the web and its purpose and audience, its structure and content and ongoing development. A list of improvements for the future had already been decided upon, including digitisation of the Yearbook. Future development of the website and the inclusion of social networks would be a task for the new managing director. Current hits on the website averaged about 250 a day.

As to future cruise conventions, Cruise Europe would take a small stand close to the seminar halls at Seatrade Med in Cannes in November/December. For Seatrade Miami the following March, discussions were underway to change the traditional Cruise Europe ‘street’ to an island stand open on all four sides with space being sold to members. Many members chose to exhibit in their national pavilions and it was not clear if they would return. Perhaps the exhibit should act as an umbrella with the four regions being sub-exhibitors.

Secretary/treasurer Nadine’s report stated that in 2009 there were 101 members comprising 14 principal ports, 87 member ports and four associate members, namely Stockholm Cruise Network, Cruise Malmo Network, Wonderful Copenhagen and Liverpool City Council Cruise Terminal. The European Cruise Council was a member. During the past year Alta, Orkney, Lorient and Belle Isle had cancelled their membership but Liverpool had upgraded to a principal port and Sonderborg had joined up. As a result membership had declined slightly to 99.

As to financial matters, the year had ended with a small loss of €2,234 but a sum of €52,234 had been extracted from reserves as approved by the 2009 AGM, leaving €70,484. Amongst budget changes were an unplanned payment for European Cruise Council sponsorship, press work and the US ‘Road Show’. Increased Yearbook costs had arisen from a wrong booking for 2009 instead of 2008 and extra expenditure for the secretary/treasurer was due to the addition of VAT. The annual report was duly approved.

**New Managing Director**

Toward the end of the meeting a formal vote was taken on whether to appoint a new full-time salaried managing director. Explaned to the meeting that, candidate would start work and he or she would report to remaining within the agreed available, including proxies, and 12 against, an approval choice, Jens Skrede (right), was. He expressed himself and added that he believed to become an even more important association for the cruise industry.
As a result of this major change, the position of president would cease with effect from 31st May. The chairman, executive director and marketing executive had already been elected for a term of four years at the 2008 AGM in Klaipeda and had a further two years to run while Vibeke Jorgensen remained as temporary secretary/treasurer. Arnt Møller Pedersen had another year to run as a directly elected floating member but Valerie Dubuc had completed her two year stint and was replaced by Ron Maes from Ijmuiden who defeated Sue Blanchard Williams in a vote. The UK/Ireland region representative also stood down and Mike Reynolds from Falmouth stepped into the breach. Ágúst Ágústsson also stepped down as vice-chairman of the Norway, Iceland, Faroes region and his place was taken by Guomundur Kristjansson, harbourmaster of Isafjördur. Finally changes to the Europe West Coast region included a new chairman in Dick de Graaff from Amsterdam and vice-chair Valerie Dubuc from Le Havre, the former replacing Dirk Moldenhauer.

During the meeting a further two votes were held on constitutional matters, the first on an extension to the geographical limits to include Greenland and the Atlantic Islands and the second on the proposed management changes. Both were approved with just a single dissenting voice on the boundary extension. All changes consequent upon the appointment of the new Managing Director were also approved.

There was less enthusiasm, however, for the proposed changes to subscription levels and it was agreed that further discussion was needed before taking a vote. In addition Council was tasked with formulating a package defining associate membership to be presented at the next AGM and it was made clear that associate members should not enjoy the same rights as member ports – a point that had arisen from fact that the 2010 Annual Meeting had been mainly sponsored by potential associate members.

In a final vote which was carried by 56 to 14, the business plan for 2011-2014 was approved with no increase in fees for 2011 but with a 10% increase on a sliding scale for each of the following three years.

Anders Andersen from Port of Stavanger, which had announced that it would change to a principal port in 2011, made a presentation to host a future AGM which would include a fjord visit and members agreed that in future all AGM presentation bids would be posted on the web page.

In conclusion the chairman thanked everyone for a good meeting and added that the membership had made some very important decisions for the future of Cruise Europe. Departing members of council, apart from Iain Dunderdale who had already received a token of gratitude, namely Horst Killian, Ágúst Ágústsson and Nadine Palatz were presented with small gifts.

That autumn, following a probationary period of just three months, the new managing director Jens was confirmed in his position and awarded a 5-year contract from 1st October.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2011 - STAVANGER
Delegates from 45 ports journeyed to Stavanger for the 2011 annual gathering, which took place aboard the former coastal steamer *Sandnes*. In his introductory remarks chairman Dirk Moldenhauer emphasized that Europe was enjoying something of a boom as a cruise destination with members reporting the highest growth levels yet. Signs for the future were equally promising and new managing director Jens had made a promising start, a feeling that was endorsed by the meeting which the chairman accepted as a vote of confidence.

Jens presented a thorough management report which had already been sent to all members and posted online in the member’s section of the website.

Amongst matters touched upon, the 13-strong council had met five times during the previous year and he himself had visited or met with 34 member ports. A well-received development had been the dropping of the title ‘Annual General Meeting’ in favour of the more descriptive ‘Cruise Europe Conference’ which better reflected the importance placed by Cruise Europe on enabling members and invited guest speakers from the cruise industry to meet in a professional but relaxed atmosphere. Well-known cruise journalist Tony Peisley chaired the conference.

Overall membership remained unaltered at 99 and cancellations with effect from 2011, by the ports of Bayonne, Hamburg, Reykjavik, Rostock and Southampton had been redressed by new members Bodo, Bronnoysund, Floro, Fredrikstad and Runavik. Amongst the associated members, the resignation of Cruise Malmo Network had been more than compensated for by the signing up Agenatramp and European Cruise Service. In future associate membership would be limited to cruise-related organisations operating throughout cruise Europe’s geographical area or in a minimum of two or more countries and these could be drawn from but not limited to: tour operators, shore excursion operators, international or regional airlines, hotel chains, trade press/media and shipping agents. The only exception would be national or other such large tourist organisations based in one country but promoting their country, region or city internationally.
As to finances, the chairman reported a profit of €18,083 which would be carried over to 2011 while savings remained at around €70,000. Changes to the constitution were approved as were alterations to council, Guðmundur Kristjánsson replacing Bente Saxon (after 8 years) and Ingvar Mathisen, harbormaster of new member Bodø, being elected vice-chairman. Directly-elected council member Arnt Møller Pedersen was reappointed for a further two years.

The meeting ended with a short presentation from Greenwich, the chosen venue for the 2012 conference and proceedings closed with a lunch aboard the green-hulled Sandnes (above).

For the coming year the Cruise Europe council comprised the following members:

Chairman: Dirk Moldenhauer.
Managing director: Jens Skrede
Baltic Region: Margrethe Austad and Henrik Cars
N-I-F Region: Guðmundur Kristjánsson and Ingvar Mathisen
UK& Ireland: Michael McCarthy and Mike Reynolds
Europe West Coast: Dick de Graaf and Valerie Dubuc
Floating Members: Ron Maes (elected 2010) and Arnt Møller Pedersen (re-elected 2011)
Co-opted Members (Advisory): Vibeke Jørgensen and Monica Frisk

In late September Cruise Europe celebrated its 20th Anniversary in style with a well-attended reception at the prestigious Vier Jahreszeit (Four Seasons) Hotel in Hamburg. It took place during the 6th Seatrade Europe Exhibition at the Hamburg Messe which had grown to a very large event with 250 exhibitors from 50 different countries.
At the Seatrade awards party held at Schmidts Tivoli Theatre, Cruise Copenhagen Network won the Destination of the Year title and Iceland Travel’s ‘Reykjavik to the Rescue’ scooped the Innovative Shorex award. Michael Thamm, president of AIDA Cruises, was named North European Cruise Personality of the Year for developing one of the most admired brands in Europe with its innovative global deployment strategy and its unique onboard offering. Under his stewardship the fleet has expanded significantly, with a new ship added every year for the past five years and the company had another four vessels on order, including two significantly larger, new-generation Clubships, recently ordered from Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in Japan.

Figures released showed that in 2010 the European source market accounted for almost 5.5 million passengers with seemingly no end to the inexorable rise of German passengers. According to analysis by Deutscher Reise Verband (the German Travel Association) 1.6 million Germans booked a cruise that year – 1.2 million on ocean cruise ships (an increase of 18.9%) and around 433,000 on river cruise ships, representing a 9.3% increase. Germany was now second only to the UK in the European ocean cruise market.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2012 - GREENWICH
In April 2012 85 delegates travelled to London for the Annual Conference held in historic Royal Greenwich. Also present were a dozen executives from the cruise industry to discuss the issues most likely to impact business in Northern and Western Europe during the coming years. The conference took place in Devonport House and was chaired by journalist Mary Bond, editor of Seatrade Cruise Review and Seatrade Insider. Before it began, a few early birds braved the torrential rain to glimpse HM Queen Elizabeth who was in Greenwich with Prince Philip to reopen the refurbished clipper ship Cutty Sark following a serious fire.
The *Costa Concordia* disaster was still fresh in the memory and keynote speaker David Dingle, CEO/Carnival UK (*below between Dirk Moldenhauer and Jens Skrede*) began his ‘Challenges and Outlook’ presentation by saying: ‘The *Concordia* tragedy reminds us that safety must always be our first duty. Safety will and can never be perfect. Our duty is to reduce risk to the absolute minimum so that while absolutely perfect, our duty must be perfect.’

Moving on, he outlined the industry’s concern over the impact Emissions Control Areas (ECAs), particularly those in the North Sea and Baltic, would have on future operations. The sulphur emission limit 2015 would mean burning more expensive fuel but the major problem facing the industry would be the global cap of 0.5% due in 2020, possibly 2025. ‘Without abatement technologies or alternative fuels we will have to move from HFO (heavy fuel oil) to MGO (marine gas oil) with a cost premium of 50%.’ Reducing fuel consumption was the key which meant slower speeds leading to fewer and/or different ports which might give more opportunities to some. ‘Your port could be a net beneficiary. Ports on the northern Spanish coast for example become very, very interesting as ships travel closer to the UK.’ However the emphasis on the ship as the destination was changing: ‘If cruise ships cannot go to as many ports, it will be more about what happens aboard the ship.’

David was followed by Mark Conroy, President & CEO/Regent Seven Seas Cruises and Peter Pate, Chairman/MSC Cruises (UK & Ireland).

In the afternoon session Adam Sharp, Manager Port Operations UK, Northern Europe/RCCL commented that Northern Europe delivered exceptional scores on both desirability of destination and satisfaction. As to ECAs he added: ‘Perhaps ports of call closer to marquee ports may become ports in their own right but they will need to have the infrastructure and capability of handling a Freedom-class vessel.’

Grant Laversuch, Operations Director/Saga Cruises, said that Baltic and North Sea cruises delivered high per diems and as his company already burnt a lot of gas oil in its ships, it would be less affected than many and as a result overall content would only suffer a slight reduction.

The general consensus was that Northern Europe was likely to see a decline in calls with ECAs but as Sharp said: ‘There is cause for concern but we are all in this together so we will have to find a solution.’
Robert Ashdown, director of technical, environment and operations/European Cruise Council, said he hoped ports were reinforcing the industry voice in Europe on the potential impact of ECAs.

After tea, James Blakely, Planning Director/West Properties, outlined plans for a new cruise terminal at nearby Enderby Wharf and finally Lord Sterling, Life President of P&O Cruises and Chairman of both Royal Museums Greenwich and Cutty Sark, who had hosted Her Majesty’s visit that morning, championed the many attractions of Greenwich. The day closed with a grand dinner in the magnificent surroundings of the Painted Hall, which had previously been part of the Royal Naval College.

The AGM was held the following day in the Picturehouse and retiring chairman Dirk Moldenhauer expressed his thanks to council members and said how much he had enjoyed working with them over the past four years. He commented on how the organization had evolved during his tenure with considerable investment having been made in corporate identity and the website, the appointment of a full-time managing director and the celebration of Cruise Europe’s 20th anniversary. Despite all, the organisation’s finances remained solid and he could hand Cruise Europe over to the next chairman in good shape for the future.

Managing director Jens Skrede gave a short management report, noting a financial loss Euros 25,788 which was largely due to extra expenditure incurred in connection with Cruise Europe’s 20th anniversary celebrations at Seatrade Hamburg. Reserves were slightly down at Euros 62,778. Jens ended his report by stressing that Cruise Europe offered excellent value for money and that benefits to members would be highlighted even more in the future.
New chairman - Port of Cork’s Mike McCarthy

Mike Reynolds (Falmouth) (right) acted as adjudicator for the election of a new chairman to replace Dirk Moldenhauer and Captain Michael McCarthy (Commercial Manager/Port of Cork) was unanimously elected to the post for a 4-year term. Michael, a genial Irishman who had acquired 40 years of maritime experience in positions as varied as a master at sea, marine surveyor and deputy harbour master, thanked Dirk for steering Cruise Europe through the modernisation process and making it more professional and responsive to the requirements of its members. He said Cruise Europe’s vision was ‘to deliver to the cruise companies a world class cruise destination on behalf of its members’ and that he would continue working with members to promote and develop ‘must see’ Northern and Atlantic European destinations. He added: ‘We are facing major challenges and it is vital that Cruise Europe members support the cruise lines through greater communication and develop outstanding service while keeping costs tightly under control, particularly as lines adapt to the Emission Control Area regulations from 2015.’

Changes to council were agreed as follows: Dolores Rois (Vigo) replaced Valerie Conan (formerly Dubuc) who was standing down as Europe West Coast region representative and in the UK/Ireland region Kate O’Hara took over Mike McCarthy’s place. Ron Maes (Ijmuiden) fought off a challenge from Marta Rodrigues Pantin (A Coruña) to be re-elected as a floating member for a further two years.

Finally Valerie Conan gave a short presentation on Le Havre which would be hosting the 2013 event and Jens said that those ports wishing to host future conferences would be informed as to how to approach Council regarding their candidacy. Riga and Santander had already been identified as hosts for 2014 and 2015 respectively and each made short presentations.

The year 2012 marked the 150th anniversary of the founding of the celebrated P&O shipping company and in a special event in June all seven of P&O Cruises’ ships left Southampton at short intervals before
steaming off on individual cruises in line ahead, passing either side of the Trinity House Vessel Patricia from which HRH the Princess Royal, Master of Trinity House, took the salute.

In late evening, P&O Cruises’ seven ships steam into the English Channel after celebrating the 150th Anniversary

At the Seatrade Insider Awards in Hamburg in September, Cruise Highlands won the coveted ‘Cruise Destination of the Year’ award which was accepted by its Cruise Development Director Iain Dunderdale.
41 ports were represented at the 2013 annual conference held in the Novotel Hotel, Le Havre. Topics were based around the introduction of Emission Control Areas (ECAs) and how to alleviate the consequences including cold-ironing and the use of LNG as fuel.

Opening speaker Simon Douwes, Holland America Line’s director deployment & itinerary planning, affirmed his company’s commitment to the European market and ports, adding that some ships were almost totally filled with Europeans. However fuel prices were impacting itineraries due to slower steaming, in some instances speed being reduced by two knots bringing huge savings. ECAs were also having an effect with Baltic sailings using Copenhagen instead of Amsterdam the following year, thereby cutting over 1,000 miles steaming every 12 days. Ports costs were also affecting itinerary planning with Scotland losing some business to Norway. In some cases shore excursion revenue was less than ports charges.

Steven Young, Carnival UK’s Head of Port Operations and Service *(left of picture)* advised ports not to over-invest in terminal infrastructure as there were only a few ports that were going to be homeports. Even tents could be functional and efficient in certain cases and terminals should have other uses outside the cruise business, a point reinforced by Luis de Carvalho, CEO of Consult DK. Looking ahead, Young foresaw the possible introduction of online check-in allowing passengers to go straight to their cabins,
streamlined baggage services and improved passenger security flows. A system of slots for arrival times was also a possibility.

Cruise analyst Peter Wild added some figures on the European source market which reached 6.2m out of the world total of 20.6m in 2012. This figure could be as high as 8-12m by 2020. MSC Cruises’ head of port operations Captain Luigi Pastena said that his company made 467 calls at European ports the previous year carrying 1.4 million passengers. He estimated overall port costs totalled €18.5m of which port charges contributed 63%.

Kay-Uwe Maross, senior manager port operations and itinerary planning for AIDA Cruises, said that a port was a technical facility connecting land and sea and its challenge was to combine both and become a destination. He called for fee structures to be standardised and for ports to be free of non-contracted tour operators. Finally Brian Powell, Celebrity Cruises’ associate vice-president customer insight & market planning, asked ports to ‘tell their story’ when it came to showing what they had on offer. ‘Sex it up a bit’ was his message, adding that a brief punchy message was far better than reams of information.

On the subject of emission control, both the chairman and Ton Van Breeman, Port of Amsterdam’s environmental affairs manager, described the process of cold-ironing which involved ships plugging in to onshore power whilst in port. Amsterdam wished to set up a discussion project around the subject with perhaps five other ports and three shipowners taking part and Cruise Europe possibly providing the platform. The ports of Rotterdam and Gothenburg, with financial assistance from the EU, were cooperating to supply LNG fuel by 2015 and the former was offering a 10% discount on port5 fees for ships meeting 31 points or more on the environmental ship register.

Chairman Mike McCarthy opened the AGM the following day and handed over to managing director Jens to provide an extensive management report which focussed on:

a) Organisation including level of subscriptions
b) Marketing Issues
c) Strategic issues
d) Cruise Europe - Essence and Benefits

As to the financial situation, a small profit of Euros 5.518 had been recorded which showed that the organisation’s finances were solid enough to support the new business model with its full-time manager. Jens went on to present the budget agreed by Council for the period 2103-2016 and added that with reserves standing at €68,296, no increase in membership fees would be required for 2014. For many years it had been customary for two of Cruise Europe’s personnel to carry out an internal audit of the finances and one of the regulars to perform this task was Renè Kouwenberg.

As both council members from the Baltic region, Margrethe Austad and Henrik Cars, had decided to step down, they were replaced by floating member Arnt Möller Pedersen and Henrik Ahlqvist. Arnt would also chair the region for the next two years and his directly elected council position was taken up by Valerie Conan from Port of Le Havre who beat Nikolay Krøyer from Port of Aarhus in a written election. Amongst new members joining were Bekkjarvik and Enderby Wharf (Greenwich.)

Eeva Hiettainen, chair of the ESPO Passengers Committee, on which Mai Elmar represented Cruise Europe, gave a short report on the work of the committee.
That summer witnessed the delivery of the fourth of MSC Cruises’ 138,000gt Fantasia class ships which with the earlier 90,000gt Musica class quartet and several older ships brought the fast expanding cruise arm of the MSC container shipping group up to fourth place in the cruise league behind Carnival, Royal Caribbean and Norwegian Cruise Line. This was welcome news for Cruise Europe’s ports as it cemented a major incursion into the North European cruise market by a company that had traditionally been a Mediterranean operator.

At Seatrade Hamburg in September, Cruise Europe hosted a reception jointly with Columbus Cruise Centre and the chairman Mike McCarthy spoke at the conference, his topic being sustainability but he highlighted developments in some member ports in relation to cold-ironing and the provision of LNG. The following month he attended a panel discussion on port infrastructure at Cruise Summit 2013 in Madrid. Cruise Copenhagen Network again won the Seatrade Insider Award for best destination and the European Personality of the Year went to Pierfrancesco Vago of MSC Cruises.

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014 - RIGA**

On the morning of 6th May Cruise Europe chairman Michael McCarthy welcomed 83 representatives from 52 ports to the Latvian capital for the 2014 Annual Conference held in the Radisson Blu Latvija Hotel. The session opened with Harald von der Osten-Secken/Vice President Destination Management of the Costa Group (AIDA Cruises, Costa Crociere and Ibercruizeros) - one company sailing in two locations Northern Western Europe and the Mediterranean. The group operated 27 ships offering around 54,000 lower berths. Posing the question ‘What attracts cruise lines to ports?’, he answered by saying first and foremost passenger satisfaction followed by geographical location and opportunities for shore excursions, revenue from which had to be placed
against port charges. He also outlined operational issues that taxed cruise lines such as the cost of fuel, customs clearance, safety and security.

In a personal view, John Tercek/Vice President Commercial Development for Royal Caribbean Cruise Line said that his company accounted for almost a quarter of world volumes, deploying 42 ships under six different brands – Azzamara, Celebrity, Croisières de France, Pullmantur and Royal Caribbean International. The group carried 5.5m passengers in 2013 and employed 60,000 people worldwide. It had ‘raised the bar’ in the industry with its Oasis and Quantum series but the larger ships were putting pressure on ports with serious implications for infrastructure, guides and buses. Eighteen of the 28 new ships under construction were over 100,000grt, 16 of them over 125,000. His main message as far as operators were concerned was ‘profitability drives all decisions’. Ships were being deployed closer to new source markets and whilst the US market had declined by 13% since 2000, Europe had increased by 22%. The industry had quickly recovered from the financial crash of 2009 but Europe had ‘hit a wall’ in 2012 when both the Costa Concordia disaster and a recession had impacted demand.

At the AGM on the afternoon of the following day managing director Jens Skrede reported on activities, finances, budgets and other business. Extra costs incurred for a new stand at Seatrade Hamburg and excellent turnouts at CE receptions in Hamburg and Miami had resulted in a financial loss of €10,710 however other expenditure was either on or below budget and income was close to budget. Reserves stood at €57,586 and therefore no increase in fees was proposed.

Internal auditor Renè Kouwenberg produced a written audit report for the AGM, confirming that he had visited the association’s accountants in Nootdorp, checked the documents and found everything to be in order.

Jens presented a comprehensive management report focusing on four main issues:

a) Organisation including level of subscriptions
b) Marketing Issues
c) Strategic issues
d) Cruise Europe - Essence and Benefits

The report had been sent to the members and made available on the members’ area of the website.

The UK/Ireland region had to appoint a new council member and Mike Reynolds was replaced by Andrew Hemphill from Greenock. Two candidates had put themselves forward for the directly elected council member for a two-year period and Agnes Mathisen Woodworth (Flåm) beat Ron Maes (IJmuiden) by a clear majority.

Council composition for the coming year was as follows:

Chairman: Michael McCarthy
Managing Director: Jend Skrede
Baltic Region: Arnt Møller Pedersen and Henrik Ahlqvist
Norway/Iceland/Faroes Region: Gudmundur Kristjansson and Ingvar Mathisen
UK& Ireland: Kate O’Hara and Andrew Hemphill
Europe West Coast: Dick de Graaf and Dolores Rois
Directly Elected Members:
Valerie Conan (elected 2013)
Agnes Mathisen Woodworth (elected 2014)
Council also co-opted Monica Frisk and Helena Gomez Fernandes for their special skills.

The chairman addressed the current hot topic of CLIA Europe. In February Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) announced the establishment of a global ports committee, saying it was now focusing more on engaging directly with port communities.

The press release stated that ‘the committee will serve as a forum where cruise lines and ports from around the world can come together to discuss port development and operations within the larger cruise industry’. This was exactly what associations such as Cruise Europe and Medcruise had been doing for years so the question had to asked - what effect might the policy have on the established port associations? The chairman voiced his concern that CLIA Europe might create a two-tier industry but recommended that members be patient and await further developments from CLIA before making any decisions to join. His views were supported by a number of members who also questioned the value of becoming members of CLIA.

Before the meeting, invitations had gone out to members wishing to register interest in hosting the Cruise Europe Conferences from 2016 onwards. Six ports had responded and the council would discuss the candidates at a meeting to be held in Barcelona before a final decision was taken by members.

As this was the last Cruise Europe AGM for Per Schmidt from Copenhagen, the Chairman warmly thanked him for his outstanding contribution to the organisation over the past 15 years. Per, one of the early Cruise Europe stalwarts and longstanding council member, had chosen to retire early following a distinguished career with the port of Copenhagen which had become one of Europe’s premier cruise ports largely as a result of his efforts and the award of Seatrade Insider’s Port of the Year to Copenhagen Malmo that year cemented his achievements. Thanks were also given to executive manager Kattina Glasinovich, who had decided to step down from her position.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2015 - SANTANDER
The 2015 annual spring gathering was hosted by the port of Santander on Spain’s northern coast. The conference took place in the Deluz restaurant where members from 54 ports were regaled by a number of cruise industry speakers including Carnival UK’s Port Service Development & Planning Manager Claire Foote who outlined the needs of small and medium-sized ships, based on P&O Cruises’ 710-berth Adonia (right), which had previously sailed for the P&O Group as Royal Princess and Minerva II and had been built in 2001 as Renaissance Cruises’ R8, the last of a series of eight sisters. Smaller ships, Claire continued, enjoyed a greater choice of ports and could try out new ports, enabling them to target repeaters. However profit margins were smaller and they generated limited shore excursion sales. A good welcome was very important and a feature common to successful ports was one where all stakeholders worked as a team for the same common goal.

Chris Coates, commercial director of Cruise & Maritime Voyages, spoke about the EX UK no fly cruises. The company was established in 2010 and is 50% owned by Athens-based Global Maritime Group. It operates cheaper cruises for mainly UK adult passengers and has filled the space previously held by Russia and then some of the UK tour companies. Its four small to medium sized second-hand ships Astor, Azores, Marco Polo and Magellan offer a traditional cruise experience around 3,500 passengers, average age 65, 70% of whom are past cruisers and 45% repeaters. In total 53 ships operated out of the UK and numbers were down on for 2014 due to downturn and deployment to the Med and Caribbean but the capacity dip would be corrected in the current season with P&O Cruises’ recently delivered Britannia, RCCL’s Anthem of the Seas and C&M’s own Magellan. The average length of ex UK cruises was 11.2 nights.
Jens reported a profit of €12,665. Additional income from Cruise Shipping Miami had boosted turnover to €322,558. Miami costs had risen due to the new pavilion and the euro/dollar conversion rate costs were such that the event was some €20,000 over budget, necessitating a review of other expenditure to balance the books. Reserves totalled €70,252.

New members included three Irish ports, Belfast, Dun Laoghaire and Warrenpoint, Djúpivogur and Siglufjörður from Iceland, Hundested, Kotka and the Canary island of Tenerife. Amongst former members returning to the Cruise Europe family after an absence were Hamburg, Rostock and Visby.

As to council changes, Anfiass Hjelm from Torshavn replaced Guomundur Kristjansson as the Norway Iceland Faroes region representative and Andrea Kamjunke-Weber (Bremerhaven) beat Pat Ward (Dublin) in a vote to replace Valerie Conan as one of the directly elected members.

At the suggestion of council, the meeting agreed that the 2016 Conference and AGM would be held in Dublin. A decision on the venue for 2017 was postponed as no port had yet come forward from the Norway/Iceland/Faroes region whose turn it was. Two other ports however, Bremerhaven and Zeebrugge, had expressed interest.

At the Seatrade Hamburg conference that autumn, Cruise Europe members again featured in the Seatrader Insider Awards presented at the customary Schmidts Tivoli Theatre. Liverpool won Destination of the Year and the Amsterdam passenger terminal Port of the Year whilst Iain Dunderdale was presented with an Outstanding Achievement Award for his work as Cruise Development Manager of Cruise Highlands.

At a full day Council meeting in Amsterdam in January 2016, a new timetable for four meetings a year was agreed, the dates being fixed for Seatrade Port Everglades, the annual spring conference and the autumn Seatrade Europe conference held alternatively in the Mediterranean and Hamburg.
Following construction delays, Aida Cruises’ new Japanese-built 125,000gt AIDAprimasailed from Hamburg (for Berlin) in late April on the first of her year-round weekly ‘Metropolis’ cruises, visiting Southampton (for London), Le Havre (for Paris), Zeebrugge (for Brussels) and Rotterdam (for Amsterdam). The largest ship in the AIDA fleet, she set new environmental standards with a 90% reduction in Nox, Sox and particle emissions coupled with a reliance on LNG fuel whilst in port. A sister AIDaperla was due to follow in 2017. A year round cruise schedule in Northern Europe was an exciting new development, something that would have been beyond the wildest dreams of the early Cruise Europe members.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016 – DUBLIN

In early June 2016 a record number of 160 delegates from around 100 ports and 10 cruise company executives travelled to Dublin’s ‘Fair City’ for the annual conference most generously hosted by the Dublin Port Company and Dublin City Council. The 3-day session opened on the Tuesday with internal meetings followed by the AGM which took place in the Gibson Hotel on the River Liffey close to the port offices. Mike McCarthy was confirmed as chairman for a further four years and managing director Jens Skrede’s contract was extended to December 2021. That evening the council dinner was held in Malahide Castle.
On the following day the all-day conference was opened by the Republic of Ireland’s Minister of State for Tourism and Sport Patrick O'Donovan who announced that Dublin was expecting 113 calls and 180,000 passengers in 2016, figures which were expected to double over the next decade. He went on to outline a Euros 230 million project to bring larger ships into the city centre. Between 2011 and 2015 passenger numbers had increased by 61% to 346,000 with 70% of those saying they intended to return.

Pat Ward, head of corporate services for Dublin Port Company described the Cruise Europe conference as a must-attend event in the calendar year. From the go, delegates had worked hard but also played hard in the Irish capital and had viewed some of Europe's most unique and sought after venues.’ The sunny weather had demonstrated a taster of what the city could offer both to cruise passengers and those wishing to come back again.

The keynote state of the industry address was given by David Dingle/Chairman Carnival UK who concentrated his remarks on growth and change within the cruise market. The industry was buoyant with European cruising having recorded an 18% increase over the past five years, mostly during a recession. New orders were running at unprecedented levels however there were indications of a shift in both destination and source markets and lines still had to grapple with a plethora of regulatory and fiscal concerns. Cruising brought huge economic value totalling around $125 million globally with 23 million passengers and $40 million in Europe (6.6m passengers), creating 950,000 and 350,000 jobs respectively.

Although demand in Europe had slowed, the sector had continued to grow in 2015 recording a 3% increase in passengers and 1.5% growth in European embarkations. US passengers still remained cautious but the North European source market was rebounding well. The global order book comprised 61 new ships, 13 of them due in 2019, at a cost of around $43.5 billion. This would result in around 185,000 additional lower berths, some of which were aimed at emerging markets in China and Australia, though the true potential of the latter two had yet to be realised. Economies of scale continued to drive up ship size with over 3,000 passengers becoming the norm, a factor that would discourage tendering calls in future to the possible detriment of smaller ports.

The environment continued to provide operational problems and LNG was likely to become a new fuel source, requiring the provision of an adequate supply chain. Emission regulations must be implemented in a supportive way and full co-operation was needed between cruise lines and port associations to influence the regulatory agenda by supporting market initiatives such as the IMO’s global initiatives on carbon emissions, as opposed to the EU’s unilateral regional approach, and also trying to change to current visa restrictions to help unlock tourists from China and other emerging markets.

Europe had to rise to opportunities and create year-round itineraries whilst developing port infrastructure to accommodate more of the larger vessels. In addition, full co-operation was needed between cruise lines and port associations to support market initiatives and also influence the regulatory agenda by supporting IMO global initiatives such as that on carbon rather than EU unilateral
action. In addition current visa restrictions needed looking at to help unlock tourists from China and other emerging markets.

The next speaker was Royal Caribbean’s commercial director Miguel Reyna who said the company had six brands owning 47 ships which in 2015 visited 490 different destinations in seven continents and carried some 5.4 million passengers. In terms of source markets, the USA provided 54% of passengers, Europe 28% and the Asia/Pacific region 14%. His company had ‘raised the bar’ with its Quantum, Anthem, Ovation and Harmony class ships and had a dozen new vessels on order. He made the telling point that in 2013 only 10% of cruise ships were over 1,000ft in length but that figure was due to rise to 30% in 2020 and could even go as high as 65% by 2040.

Reyna’s main thrust was geared to the design of turnaround terminals for 6,000-passenger ships of over 360m in length which required intermodal transportation to match the source market. These could be either iconic or functional in design and he contrasted the iconic, expansive and very expensive new facilities recently built in Asia with the smaller, more functional and practical equivalents in North America, which offered curb to gangway transit in 10 minutes and could disembark or embark 3,000 passengers in just over three hours.
Other speakers included Viking Cruises’ Nikolai Skogland who said that the comparatively new entrant to the oceangoing cruise business now had two ships in operation but this number would grow to six by 2020, making it the largest of the ‘small ship’ companies. The company was true to its name and deployed all its ships in Northern Europe during the summer months but it would like to see more cooperation between ports and local tourist attractions, especially when making presentations to the cruise lines. He welcomed the concern for the environment but was not so happy with the resulting overlapping, disparate and fragmented regulations and called for environmentally graded discounts - substantial and standardised - on port fees which would be a great way to encourage cruise lines to build ‘greener’ ships.

Amongst those attending the conference had been CLIA secretary-general Raphael von Heereman (right) and government affairs director Marco Digioia. In the evening the Guinness Storehouse offered fantastic views of the city, a chance to look into the brewing of Guinness and ample opportunity to down a few pints before dinner. The stunning welcome by a 4-man drummer band and subsequent entertainment by Rainsford Lane left everyone reeling!

The third day was taken up with the AGM which took place in the Gibson Hotel, close to the port offices on the River Liffey. Michael McCarthy was confirmed as chairman for a further four years and managing director Jens Skrede’s contract was extended to December 2021. Tours of the city in open-topped buses were followed by an informal evening at the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, where music and traditional Irish ‘river dancing’ on table tops brought a warm and friendly gathering to a fitting end.

On the Friday a number of Cruise Europe members stayed on to attend the ESPO conference which was also being held in Dublin. A new Code of Practice for Cruise and Ferry Ports was officially unveiled and its five sections dealt with the following topics:-

- Discussion of competition and cooperation between ports
- Importance of infrastructure developments
- Security of cruise operations
- Improvement of relations between ports, hosting cities and destinations
- Structuring of relationships between ports, cruise and ferry lines and their associations
Cruise Europe along with other regional European cruise associations had worked closely with ESPO in order to represent the sector at the various European institutions. The Code was the first major outcome from the work conducted within this pan-European network and provided a united voice to inform policy makers and the public of the characteristics, challenges, and bottom-up initiatives undertaken by European cruise ports. At the same time it strengthened the efforts of ports to endorse best practices and enhance performance.

Cruise Europe and ESPO were forging a partnership that would bring added value to the cruise industry. Vice-chairman of CLIA Europe David Dingle commented that it was an exciting time for Cruise Europe with many opportunities as the cruise industry continued to expand its capacity. Together both organizations could drive that growth through mutual cooperation, particularly in helping to create the right regulatory conditions. Cruise Europe’s chairman Michael McCarthy added: “With 25 years of history, Cruise Europe is well placed to discuss and lobby on local, national and international regulatory issues. We can draw on a wealth of experience from the Cruise Europe family of members which numbers over 100 ports.” He added that the Cruise Europe management team was looking forward to a collaborative approach with CLIA to drive the exciting industry forward.

Summary

Looking back there can be no doubting the fact that, whether by luck or judgement, Cruise Europe was formed at the right time and in the right place and tribute should be paid to those whose vision led to its formation and to all those early executives and council members who steered it through its formative years, many of them going on to serve for considerable periods. The organization has survived and prospered over its first 25 years of existence and it success can be measured by the fact that its membership has grown from an initial 21 to nearly 120 in 2016. Cruise Europe is now a much respected player in the wider cruise industry which reflects its commitment and professionalism and it is quietly pleasing to ponder on the fact that the Norwegian fjords where cruising first began back in the 1880s in very small ships run by temperance societies are now visited on a regular basis by ships of over 100,000 tons equipped with multiple bars to assuage the thirst of their many thousands of passengers.

Looking ahead we live in uncertain times with terrorism on the increase and sabre rattling again occurring in some parts of the world. It would take a brave man to forecast exactly what the next quarter century will bring and the recent decision of the UK to leave the European Union can only add to the challenges that lie ahead, challenges that Cruise Europe will no doubt confront as it has done in the past. For the time being the membership should be thankful that, despite all, the cruise industry continues to expand. The 2017 season is shaping up to be a bumper one as cruise lines move some of their ships from troubled parts of the Mediterranean to more secure waters further north but beyond this there is a generally held opinion that the North European market is still far from saturation point and this alone is a cause for continued optimism.

Ambrose Greenway

(With acknowledgement of help received from many quarters but especially the invaluable run of Cruise Europe News compiled and edited by Ágúst Ágústsson who also supplied many of the earlier illustrations as well as the more recent online newsletters produced by Sue Parker)