



**HIGHLIGHTS 2<sup>nd</sup> QUARTER 2021**

Inside this issue:	Page
Inside Story: Mr. Koehler	1
Celebrating the Crew	1
Konstantin Jacob Dry Dock	3
Nell Jacob: Farewell	4

- ✔ Takeover of Nordic Tatiana
- ✔ Georg Jacob dry docking underway
- ✔ Completed Dry-docking of Konstantin Jacob
- ✔ Suezmax Nell Jacob leaving the Jacob fleet after 18 years
- ✔ Installation of Air Seal from SKF on Konstantin Jacob
- ✔ Hempel anti-fouling coating X8 supplied on Konstantin Jacob

**INSIDE STORY: A WORKING LIFE MAINLY UNDER THE BLUE 'J'**

*We are happy to have Mr. Gert Koehler describe to us his maritime journey and in his words, "A working life mainly under the blue J"*

Where to start, when looking back on a working life which in a few years will come to an end? The best is at the beginning. Born in 1957 in a family of Master Mariners, my maritime life began early as a little boy, frequently sailing along with my father through North Sea and Baltic Sea. As soon as I started elementary school my trips were then limited to school holidays and the older I became the more I was 'kindly asked' to participate in crew work. Chipping, rust brushing and painting was daily business, and due to my smaller stature I sat mostly in the narrow corners – there were of course so many of them!

Later as youngster I was also 'invited' by my father to participate in navigational watch keeping and received intensive routine in terrestrial navigation. This all came to an end after my father finally settled down ashore in the mid seventies.



For many years yachting and racing ruled my life, a connection to water was a MUST, leading to the decision to become a sail maker, but that education did not pay out to my satisfaction. The sea was calling, and I prepared myself for my maritime education. But despite passing the door which was

already opened, I took the decision and opted for the engineering side, and among the many master mariners in my family, I became the only 'black-foot'.

Towards the end of 1981 and after passing my preparatory courses I signed on under Jacob flag. The first vessel was 'Brigitte Jacob', a new MR-tanker. Thanks to the initiative of Mr. Werner Jacob, father of our CEO Tom Jacob, she and her sister vessel 'Tanja Jacob' were well ahead in technology, with segregated ballast water tanks, IGG, shaft generator, ARPA, electronic tank level gauging system, and many features more – a sensation at that time! The trade for both vessels was highly demanding, cabotage trade for Pemex, Coatzacoalcos as permanent loading port and discharging in Vera Cruz, Tampico or Tuxpan (an SPM) with high frequency - like a floating pipeline.

My second assignment was on the bulk carrier 'Wera Jacob', she suffered under an extreme low market not earning the daily expenses. The complete opposite to the tankers, it gave nothing on board but a good mood. Improvisation and repairing of scrap was a daily task, there was never a dull moment and time simply flew by.

After completing my university 3 years later I stepped into a leading position ashore for a few years, but decided in summer '89 to resume sailing with Jacob. What a surprise for me to return as young 3/E to my old lady 'Brigitte Jacob'. It was like coming home after about 8 years of absence. She sailed in cabotage trade for Petrobras, again together with her sister vessel Tanja Jacob. Weeks later this played a prominent role in my career when her 2/E slipped down the stairs...

**Celebrating the Crew**

After more than 10 years with EJ, ETO Venelin Kurtev Valchev has signed his final extension contract before his retirement. We thank him for his loyal service and wish him all the best for his well deserved retirement.



**Happy International Seafarer's day**

Although this Newsletter will be published shortly after 25th June, we would like to recognise the valuable contribution all our crew make by celebrating them with a belated Happy International Seafarer's day! We thank you all for your constant hard work !



*continued from page 1*

...and broke numerous ribs. The company asked me to take over, and I grasped my chance! The Master urged me to bring two cans of Vienna sausages along to Tanja Jacob, as an “entrance fee”. For me this was a bad joke at my expense — which other fool would carry two cans of sausages from Santos to Belem!

Coming closer to the gangway in Belem, the Master of Tanja Jacob showed up in the bridge wing, shouting whether I have sausages in my luggage. Upon confirmation I was allowed to enter the vessel, and so I met Master Hans-Herrmann Schmidt (many of you remember him and the meaning of the sausages!). The most impressive during this assignment was a voyage up Rio Amazonas to Manaus. Three days and nights at sea speed, guided by two pilots, and don't believe that there did exist buoys or lighthouses – barely nothing. The last buoy was left behind at Macapa pilot station, the next light house stood just below the point where Rio Solimoes and Rio Negro merge and form the river Amazonas, and the satellite navigator - not GPS! -



**Project Manager Mr. Gert Koehler**

gave one fix per hour. Scary to look out of the windows into the half-moon night and to see nothing, and simultaneously listening the rudder commands of the pilot sitting often at the window only.

The next assignment led me on ‘Wera Jacob’ again, meanwhile 20 years old, with her second M/E (MAN 4-stroke V-engine with 14.000 BHP!) and the third crankshaft she was ill famed in the fleet. First lesson was to collect all engine crew in front of the main engine before starting, in case that another connecting rod dislocates and flies out—which actually happened twice! She was up for sale and finally we ended up near Venice for discharging and delivery to the buyers when I received a travel order to join Tanja Jacob. A few months later upon signing off, the C/E told me at a farewell beer that I should rush to get my full license issued during my leave, then I could relieve him in about 2 months. I thanked him for his trust and was smiling about that nice joke, but in fact that was exactly what happened. Twice fate had played into my hands, I was just at the right place and at the right time. Today this can't work anymore, at least not on tankers where the crew matrix simply disables that.

My first trip as C/E was an adventure trip, I could write an article longer than this one about it alone, and at the end some would ask me over how many years I had collected these stories. It started with the surprising Brazilian requirement to use IG for cargo operation when we entered into a new Pemex charter. Today a general requirement, but for that time rather exotic. The system had been only test run for about 12 years, it was never run on load, and it became a nightmare to get the IGG alive. The final story shortly prior to my off-signing was a M/E turbocharger retrofit to smaller TC-size, on the roads of Rio without yard or MAN assistance, only a local repair shop supported us, and our superintendent was in Scotland for hunting. We managed this in 6 days, and after he returned

home he was asking in a telex whether we did not invite the class. Actually we had been so focused on the organization and execution of the retrofit that we simply forgot that little detail! It of course cost him a splendid dinner and trip round the bars to clarify this issue with class staff, and I learnt another lesson.

The following years passed with assignments on tankers and reefer vessels (we had three of them in our fleet at that time), with challenges and also with calm voyages. Regretfully the fleet declined by sales, and in '95 Jacob terminated my contract due to lack of free positions.

I moved to Rickmers, a container company in Hamburg who had a strong newbuilding program, and I was employed with the task to work as site office member until delivery and to take-over as C/E for the maiden voyage, before I returned to the next project. For myself it was a demanding but rather fruitful time, gaining deep knowledge about construction, coating, commissioning of all kind of equipment and last but not least how to deal with yard's quality & guarantee departments and class surveyors. In the end it turned out that it was a fantastic training program for the position and the tasks of a superintendent.

Meanwhile the both brothers Rolf and Tom had since decided to continue the family business and had increased the fleet slowly again to 6 vessels. Mid of 2000 I received the call to come home and to serve under our Jacob flag again – this time in my hometown Flensburg by strengthening our inspection department! Our inspection, purchasing and quality departments were covered by a handful of colleagues only, and further activities to enlarge the fleet were ongoing. No surprise for me: among others I was in charge for our old lady ‘Tanja Jacob’, now 20 years old and with lots of bruises. Aside of the '98-built Kim Jacob, the entire fleet was of high age. But good business relations e.g. with Premuda and Scorpio paid out for the brothers in their wish to enlarge and rejuvenate their fleet. Within the next three years the fleet grew steadily and old vessels were replaced by younger 2nd hand vessels. The rising market made it possible to acquire investors for newbuilding contracts, and I was put in charge for these projects. In 2004 the company took delivery for the first newbuilding vessels since 20 years! A time followed that saw me sometimes more in air and in Asia than at home, but it was an interesting job, and I did like it. Finally we took delivery of 12 new buildings over the years, out of those 8 vessels left our fleet after longer or shorter periods. Aside of that a good number of 2nd hand vessels were acquired and sold again, a steady come and go over the years.

In 2014 Tom Jacob appointed me as Fleet Manager, and I took care for the business matters of our inspection and purchasing departments for numerous years until I passed the baton to our colleague Peter Christensen in 2020. Since then I work in a supporting position for the countless issues which need to be dealt with aside of the daily business of running the fleet. Looking back over the 40 busy years and successful working life I spent about 29 years under the Jacob flag with the blue ‘J’, at sea and ashore, and honestly I don't regret any period of that time!

***We thank Mr. Gert Koehler for sharing his story and giving us the chance to hear about his working career, including the many twists and turns of fate.***

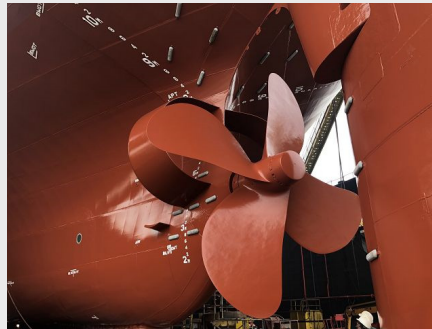


## MT Konstantin Jacob I Dry-docking 2021

MT Konstantin Jacob was built at Dalian Shipbuilding in China and has been delivered in March 2011. Therefore the second class renewal became due in March 2021. The docking took place at Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard (ASRY), Bahrain.



Next to the regular works Konstantin Jacob was the first vessel in our fleet to get the new silicon application, in order to obtain a better hull performance and consequently lower fuel consumption. In preparation for the new paint application, a full cleaning and blasting of the hull was needed. More than 1000 Tons of grit was used for blasting and removing the old paint, leaving the dock space with quite an enormous amount of dirt, all which had to be removed and cleaned before the application of the new paint could be initiated. Removing and cleaning such an amount was quite a challenge, especially because the dock size was just on the limits for a vessel this size, but eventually the blasting and painting works was all completed successfully.



The first 2 month of operation and test trials in laden condition have shown a significant improvement of the performance of the vessel. An improvement that we expect will last and which will be continuously monitored.

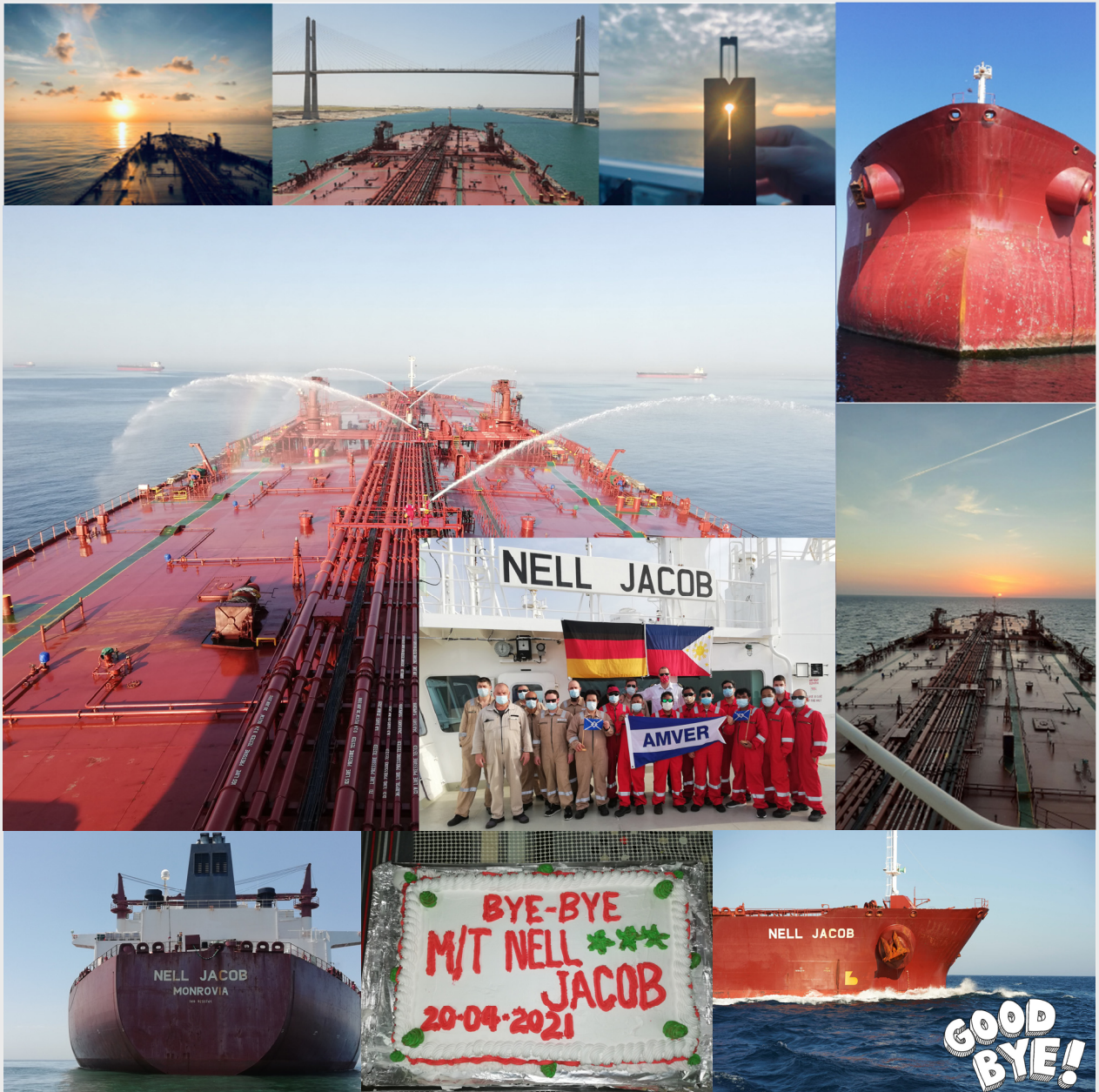
Another challenge we faced during the docking period, one which turned out to have a big, if not the biggest, impact on both the crew and vessel was the COVID-19 pandemic. The Maritime Industry continues to face overwhelming difficulties with regards to COVID-19 and during the Drydocking of Konstantin Jacob this was even more evident. The worries, the health problems, the costs, this virus caused was drastic and combined with anti-spread restrictions, local and world wide regulations, the outcome turned out to be one major player against the crew and vessel. Luckily no one was ever seriously infected and all involved and all works were able to be completed in a timely manner. The crew of Konstantin Jacob also participated in

a fire and safety drill, together with the fire brigade from the yard which was a great experience.



# MT Nell Jacob: Farewell and bonne voyage!

Shortly before her last voyage with Jacob Shipping back in April 2021, the crew of Nell Jacob were able to send us some wonderful photos to remember our good lady. Let's enjoy the wonderful memories and wish her calm seas and pleasant winds!



### Help us to create our Newsletter

- ✔ Do you have any news you would like to share with the Jacob Family?
- ✔ How about a thank you to a team/crew member for exceptional work or the help they have provided?

If so, please send us any items that you would like us to include and we will make sure that they are entered in to the next Newsletters.



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