



First in



*Cedar Creek and Runmond III at Lerwick.
(Right) Ramform Challenger
at Dales Voe, Lerwick.*

On 27-28 June, 1964, two seismic ships, Cedar Creek from the USA and Runmond III, from Holland, which had been working in the North Sea, were stormbound at Lerwick – visits seen to mark the start of the port’s close relationship with the offshore industry. Cedar Creek was just 151 gross tonnes, Runmond III 241 gross tonnes, tiny compared with ships now calling – some Ramform seismic vessels weigh over 10,000 tonnes, reflecting the harbour’s increased capacity and the larger vessels operating.



The first 50 years of oil... ...and more to come

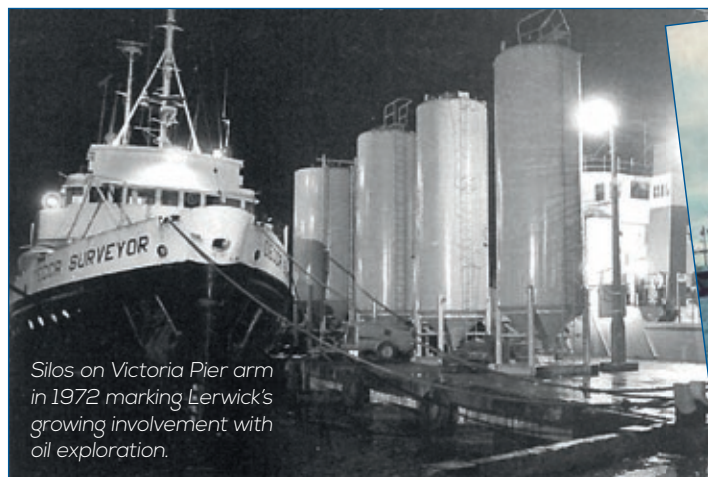
Five decades after the first oil-related vessels arrived in the Port of Lerwick, activity in support of industry operations off and onshore Shetland continues at a high level, with the prospect of involvement for at least as long again.

The harbour has been transformed since 1964 – and is still evolving its deep-water infrastructure to meet the changing requirements of multiple users. Fifty years’ experience is a building block for the future, with an established role servicing the sector in the North Sea increasingly complemented by growing support for operations in the Atlantic and by the developing decommissioning market.

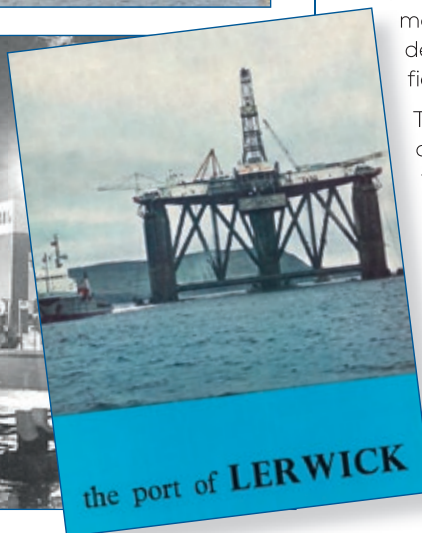
Proactive approach

With the first exploration wells drilled east of Shetland in 1971 and to the west in 1972, the impetus for Lerwick Harbour’s major role came in the 1970s with development of East Shetland Basin fields, including Brent and Ninian.

The then Harbour Trust was quick off the mark in making room for the industry. In 1970, the port estate measured five acres which increased to a land ownership area of 1,500 acres in 1972. The early ‘70s saw cement, mud and chemical companies moving in; service bases were developed. The proactive strategy of meeting the industry’s requirements has continued through subsequent decades and is ongoing today.



Silos on Victoria Pier arm in 1972 marking Lerwick’s growing involvement with oil exploration.



the port of **LERWICK**

Decades of development...

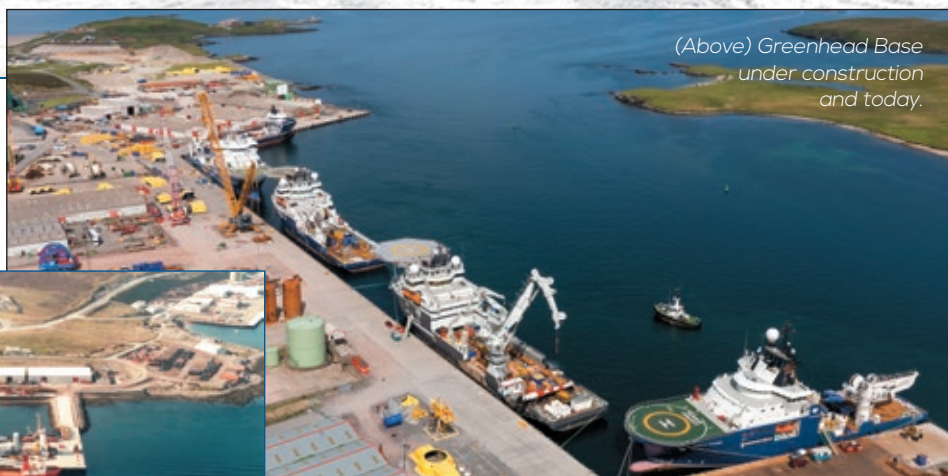


...quays to success

Go-ahead Greenhead

Greenhead Base continues to have a core role in Lerwick's involvement with the offshore industry, covering all phases of operations, including the latest - subsea project support and decommissioning.

The port's first purpose-built base specifically for the industry, Greenhead was originally developed by Norscot Services, part of Fred Olsen, creating a 45 acre site at the northern extremity of the harbour, with construction beginning in March, 1973. Changing ownership saw OIL (Ocean



(Above) Greenhead Base under construction and today.



1980's Gremista.

Inchcape Ltd) transferring from its base at neighbouring Gremista. The Port Authority (the Trust's successor in 1999) took ownership and control of the multi-user quays in 1997, rebuilding, strengthening and deepening these in 1997/99. Reclamation of land for further development took place

to the north in 2008. Two new berths, adding more than 200 metres, with nine metres water depth, were built to the south in 2012/13. Logistics provider, Peterson, operates at the base.

Lerwick Harbour today: Greenhead Base now has more than 780 metres of quays, including deep-water berths.

Expanded laydown

The importance of laydown areas for oilfield equipment was recognised from the outset with, for example, huge quantities of pipe stacked by Shell Expro and BP for the Brent and Ninian systems.

Recent projects have included modules trans-shipped to the Shetland Gas Plant near Sullom Voe and suction anchors and anchor chains for the new Glen Lyon FPSO west of Shetland.

The latest laydown area extends to around 45,000 square metres at Rova Head to support energy projects, particularly those associated with Greenhead Base and Dales Voe.

Lerwick Harbour today: dedicated laydown areas throughout the port now extend to 120,000 square metres.





Head start at Holmsgarth

The Holmsgarth area of the port made a major contribution to the exploration, development and servicing of the East Shetland Basin for over 25 years. By end 1973, the Harbour Trust was in initial discussions with Shell UK Exploration and Production and BP Petroleum, both interested in establishing quayside supply bases and pipeyards there.

In the meantime, Shell Expro became the first operator to use the port – in April 1971 to service the semi submersible rig, Staflo, which discovered Brent. In summer that year, it shipped 413 tonnes; in the year to March 1981, the tonnage for its expanding operations had grown to 172,837 tonnes. The port handled

710,806 tonnes of oil-related imports and exports in 1981.

Work began on bases at Holmsgarth for Shell Expro and BP in July, 1973, with completion the following year. Both facilities later expanded, operating

until 1999 when industry trends and changing requirements led to closure. The pipeyards are now Business Parks and Holmsgarth has been redeveloped as the centre of another major industry – fishing.



(Above) Shell Jetty at Holmsgarth.

(Left) Former Shell Pipeyard at Holmsgarth, with Lerwick Power Station under construction.



Lerwick Port Authority Board and management with representatives of Shell Expro, 1990.

1. Billy Smith. 2. David Polson. 3. Allan Wishart. 4. Peter Hunter, Shell. 5. W.A. Robertson, Shell.
6. Campbell Jamieson, Shell. 7. Tom Stove. 8. Ian Henderson, Shell. 9. Brian Ward, Shell.
10. John Rowan. 11. Arthur Laurenson. 12. Keith Allan, Shell

Getting in deep

Access to and movement in the all-weather, 24-hour port was improved by a £12 million dredging programme in 2008, including land reclamation for developments now well underway. Natural advantages as the closest port to northern oilfields includes water depths over 50 metres, providing locations for deballasting, mobilisation, lifts and support operations.

In 2014, Cosco Heavy Lift's transport vessel, Xiang Yun Kou deballasted to off-load a 10,000 tonne storage tank for Premier's Solan Field in the Atlantic. Work was carried out alongside at Holmsgarth. With displacement of 47,285 tonnes, the ship is the biggest displacement tonnage vessel to berth at Lerwick. Heerema's semi-submersible crane vessel, Thialf, mobilised in the port.



Future-proofing the port



Dales Voe Base, with illustration of extended quay. (Below) Illustration of Holmsgarth North jetty.

Lerwick Port Authority and third parties continue to invest in the harbour's future in the oil and gas industry, with further developments underway and planned, reinforcing the port as a service base, project support centre and decommissioning leader.

Aimed at creating a decommissioning centre of excellence, the Authority's £11.95m quay project is backed by the Scottish government and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The Authority is almost trebling the Dales Voe South quay to 130 metres, with 12.5 metres' water and load-bearing of 60 tonnes per square metre, by 2016.

Britain's Top Port

Work is underway on the Authority's 800-metre Holmsgarth North jetty which will ultimately have 10 metres of water alongside. Its outer arm will be used by oil-related vessels when completed in autumn, 2016.



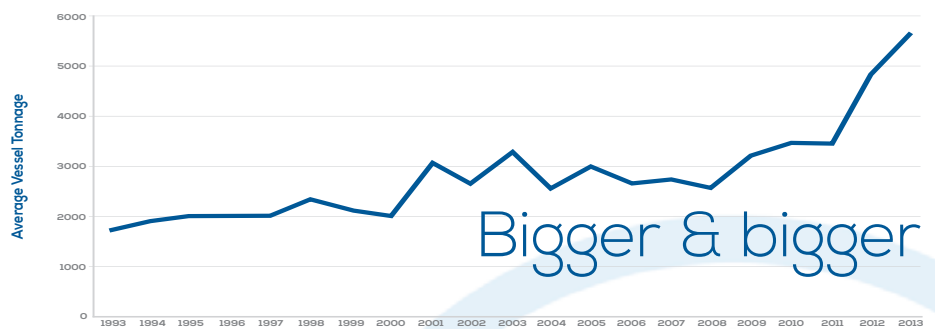
Decommissioning centre

The development of Lerwick as a leading centre for decommissioning offshore structures has been spearheaded at Greenhead Base. The track record includes an 8,800 tonne modules support frame from Total E&P Norge AS's Frigg Field.

The work was undertaken by Peterson SBS (now Peterson), with Veolia Environmental Services. Subsequent contracts have reinforced the port's position as a leader in a market with huge potential.



Thialf.



Bigger & bigger

The arrival of larger and larger oil vessels has been a feature at Lerwick since the outset, with the trend increasing in the last 20 years (see chart). The port's capacity to accommodate them has been highlighted by visits by Heerema's *Thialf*, at 136,709 gross tonnes, 202 metres in length and

88 metres wide, the world's largest ocean-going, semi-submersible crane vessel and the biggest oil vessel yet into Lerwick.

Lerwick Harbour today: Since oil vessels were first categorised in the port's records in the 1970s, around 40,000 have called.



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