

# THE POST WAR YEARS

## Fisheries Research Resumes after the War

During the years 1939-1945 when the second world war took place, the work at CEFAS was put on hold due to the fact that all available shipping was given to the command of the Royal Navy, this included the RV George Bligh which although she survived the war, did not resume her post as a fisheries research vessel.



With fisheries research being resumed in 1945 and no research vessel being available, the ministry arranged with the admiralty to temporarily fit out for trawling and research a surplus 90ft MFV then under construction in Lowestoft. RV Platessa as she was then named entered service in 1946 and continued through to 1967.

In 1947 the 138ft steam trawler, Sir Lancelot built for the admiralty in war time was bought by the ministry and fitted out as a research vessel. Sir Lancelot worked out of Lowestoft from 1948 to 1961 in waters around the British isles, with one voyage to the Mediterranean for underwater photography.

After the war a group of workers were brought back to Lowestoft by Michael Graham, the new director of fisheries research and work got under way again. New premises were required for a radiobiological section, which by this time was needed to advise the ministry on safe disposal of noxious substances at sea. These were found in huts vacated by the navy that had been built alongside Hamilton Dock. Offices were also found in rooms above the food office at the south end of the town for the hydrographic section, that was more interested in the nature and movement of the water in which fish live than in the fish themselves.

## THE NEW LABORATORY 'GRAND HOTEL SITE'



By the early 1950s it was becoming apparent that the work of the 22 scientists and 30 supporting staff at the laboratory was suffering from the fact that nearly all its land based facilities were improvised, and in many cases merely adaptations of those built elsewhere specifically for the study of fish in controlled scientific conditions.

Michael Graham, the director of fisheries research, had been considering the alternative ways of improving matters that were laid before him. He commented that the most recent of these was the taking over of a derelict building known as the 'Grand Hotel'. This proposal went through and in 1955 the current staff moved onto the Grand Hotel site. Up to 1974 there was an extension built with plans for another larger one in the future which can be seen in the photograph today.

## A NEW ELECTRONICS INSTRUMENTATION SECTION



On the instruction of the Director. The electronics section and the workshop have been combined to form a new section- ELECTRONICS AND INSTRUMENTATION. This section which is the world

leader in fisheries biotelemetry is responsible for making fish tags for use all over the world. The tag shown was developed by this section for deep sea fisheries research, and to measure movements and migration routes. The most up to date tags are shown on the third board.

## Radiobiological research Programme

The late 1940s was a time of increasing concern for the marine environment generally and in that context a radiobiological research programme was started in Lowestoft at the Hamilton Dock Laboratory in 1949. This was to address the potential hazard of Radioisotopes entering the human food chain via fish, shellfish and edible seaweed. The potential came from the expanding programme of atomic weapons and atomic energy research, both with potential for introducing radioisotopes into the marine environment. The Commission on Nuclear Power in the Marine Environment's report in 1977 was an important milestone underpinning the vital research and monitoring being carried out by DFR, whilst casting a few doubts along the "Gamekeeper Poacher Line", about who should do the work.

## Change for the better

After the second world war everything about the fishlab changed and became more serious, business like and professional. Part of this trend may have stemmed from the fact that a 'fleet' of research vessels were now put in the hands of the scientists for the first time and there was the need to organise the laboratory on more of a service basis so that they could be put to maximum use. Certainly the arrival of the RV SIR LANCELOT and the PLATESSA must have been a

fundamental change for the laboratory as a whole. Then when the RV

ERNEST HOLT was planned as an arctic-going research vessel, from the very first it must have been readily apparent that the laboratory was moving into a very distinct new phase in its development. For the whole of the 1950s, in fact, it is clear that that the cruises of the RV ERNEST HOLT to Spitzbergen, the Barents Sea, the White Sea and Greenland were the most important part of the laboratory's day to day programme.



R.V. Clione 1961-1989

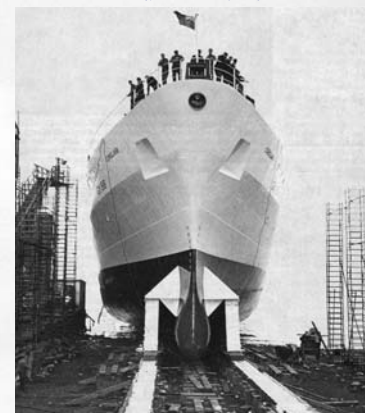
## R.V. Ernest Holt 1948-1970



In 1948 the purpose built 193 ft distant water research vessel Ernest Holt came into service with the Ministry. Being of too deep a draught for convenient operation from Lowestoft and being crewed for and operated in primarily the arctic fisheries based on Humberside, Ernest Holt worked from Grimsby although managed and directed from the Fisheries Laboratory Lowestoft.

In her later years she carried out some of the very first exploratory voyages to the deep water grounds of the continental slope to the west of Britain. Sadly she ended her days in the Scottish Fishery Protection Fleet aground in the Firth of Forth and subsequently blown up as a hazard to shipping!

## RV Cirolana



In 1970 Cefas took the delivery of a 'luxury liner' the RV CIROLANA named after a Sea Louse and replacing the late RV ERNEST HOLT



This photograph shows the three research vessels- the RV CIROLANA, the RV CLIONE and the RV CORELLA. you can see the difference in size between the CIROLANA and the two earlier research vessels. The CIROLANA is still in service in 2002 but is due to be replaced by a new research vessel in march 2003.