



Half a century on and plenty to look back on with pride

As teenagers, they were among the first students at Glasgow's new nautical college – now City of Glasgow College - and met Lord Mountbatten at the official opening in 1969.

After successful careers in engineering, Colin Hill and Alex Marjoribanks returned to celebrate the half-century of the college, now transformed into a multimillion-pound state of the art facility. Both have very fond memories of their student days and believe the college set them up for their careers.

“At the nautical college, we had lecturers who had real-life experience. They had all been to sea and had more of a feel for what we were going to be doing,” says Mr Hill, who went on to gain an HND with distinction and an honours degree in engineering after his Ordinary National Diploma (OND) at the nautical college. He became a chartered engineer in 1988.

“Joining the Merchant Navy gave you a great opportunity that wasn't available to us at the time,” he says. “We weren't exactly wealthy but we made the most of our time at the Nautical College and made great friends for life. We still keep in touch 50 years on.”

After completing his college course, Mr Hill worked as a marine engineer and worked in Africa before coming back to Scotland to work for Weirs of Cathcart where he spent the next 10 years. He went on to Yarrow and Howdens where he was a design engineer before going back to Weirs of Cathcart who were making phosphate reduction plants at that time.

“You can see that the college course sets you up for a future in many areas” he points out.

Mr Marjoribanks, from Aberdeen, also studied for the OND at the nautical college.

“I spent a year at sea as an engineering cadet then went back to the college for some more studying before going to sea as an engineering officer. I joined about three ships and they were quite long trips in those days of around six or seven months” he says.

After meeting his future wife, he came back ashore, became a draughtsman then a chartered engineer and finally a chief mechanical engineer in the Aberdeen design office of Subsea 7, which has a large fleet of ships.

“The Nautical College gave us a good solid grounding and the discipline of real life working,” says Marjoribanks. “Many students have travelled far and wide in their work, playing vital roles in modern maritime history. I hope that will continue for many more years to come.”