

Opening Address

Simon Horsington, Vice-President d'Honneur, Fondateur, Franco-British Lawyers' Society

On behalf of the Franco-British Lawyers' Society, may I thank you all for coming to the Society's 4th Biennial Maritime Colloquium in these magnificent riverside buildings.

The Society has dedicated this 4th Biennial Maritime Conference to the memory of the late Admiral Bertrand LEPEU (13 October 1949 – 23 March 2012), retired, Marine Nationale. His family are aware of this dedication and I have been asked to pass on by Madame Marie-Noëlle Lepeu, Marie-Alix, François, Agnès and their families, their appreciation to you and those of the Society who attended the Memorial Mass at the Chapel of the Ecole Militaire.

Bertrand Lepeu and I were neighbours for 23 years at La Foy in Charente-Maritime, France. Our friendship truly began in 1990 when as Capitaine de Vaisseau at the beginning of the summer holidays he was recalled to his ship, *Montcalme* to steam out to the "First Gulf War". It posed some family logistical problems and my wife and I helped out. From then on as Bertrand moved through his promotions and became Directeur du Centre d'Enseignement Supérieure de La Marine in the Ecole Militaire in Paris. Agreed by the Society, I had suggested to him a Biennial Maritime Colloquium of the Royal Navy, Marine Nationale and maritime academics, merchant marine, lawyers, student cadets and students. Bertrand arranged for me to have a breakfast meeting with 2e Commissaire en Chef de la Marine, Jean-Louis Fillon. After coffee and croissants in the Etat Major, Bertrand conveyed the good news the Society had the support of the Marine Nationale and the venue of the French Navy's Officer Cadet College on an island off Brest to launch the colloquium. Bertrand assisted in the subsequent colloquiums in his role as Délégué Général de L'Institut de la Mer, his membership of the Cercle de la Mer, and as Président of the Marine Nationale Naval Réserve of Poitou-Charente. We acknowledge his great contribution and remember him for it.

As a man of firm views, positive action and great personal Christian faith, it seems appropriate to quote this:

"FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS UNSEEN."
These lines are inscribed above the War Memorial in The Chapel of St Peter and St Paul in this the Old Royal Naval College

It is impossible to name all who have made the continuance of these maritime conferences possible, but we thank them all. However, critical to the success of these conferences has been the support of the Directors of the Naval Legal Services Department, Commodores Robert Fraser, Neil Brown and now Andrew Jameson. Equally the support of the Marine Nationale and the Ambassador and French Embassy in the UK, in particular the Attachés de Défense, Admirals Yann Tainguy, Charles Edouard de Coriolis, Capitaine de Vaisseau Yves Le Corre and now Admiral Henri Schricke, whom we welcome.

I mentioned that Jean-Louis Fillon's support launched this biennial maritime colloquium hosted by the Director, (Villon), at the Ecole des Officiers de la Marine, Lanveoc-Brest in 2006 with a reception by the Préfet Maritime de l'Atlantique at his official residence, la Citadelle de Brest. For this the Society had the support of the President of the Supreme Court in Paris, M Canivet and for the second in the UK hosted by the Director (Alabaster) at Royal Naval College Dartmouth, the Society had the support of support of Lord Phillips, now the first President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. In 2010 the Director, Admiral Vichot, hosted the last colloquium as Directeur at the Centre d'Enseignement Supérieure de La Marine in the Ecole Militaire. For this, the Society's 4th Biennial Colloquium, we are indeed grateful to the Maritime Institute as our hosts and in particular to its eminent Director, Professor Christopher Bellamy.

I will now hand over to our host, the Director of the Maritime Institute, Professor Bellamy.