

# Hydrographic Society Russia

A session of HSR Council took place on 1st February 2006. Under consideration was the IHO CL A'8/2006 announcement that the United Nations General Assembly on 29th November 2005 adopted Resolution A/60/30, welcoming "the adoption by the International Hydrographic Organization of the "World Hydrography Day"™, to be celebrated annually on 21 June, with the aim of giving suitable publicity to its work at all levels and of increasing the coverage of hydrographic information on a global basis" and urging all states to "cooperate with that organization to promote safe navigation, especially in the areas of international navigation, ports and where there are vulnerable or protected marine areas".

Members of the Council unanimously expressed their deep satisfaction that an appeal made by our Society in 1999-2000 to establish an International Day of the Hydrographer (see Hydrographic Journal No.96, April 2000, page 32) had finally, albeit in slightly different form, met with official approval at the highest international level. The Council expressed appreciation to the head of the Russian delegation to the last IHO conference, Admiral A. Komaritsin, who submitted our proposal to the governments of Monaco and Brazil, as well as to the Hydrographic Services of other countries which supported this initiative. Special gratitude was reserved for IHO president Vice-Admiral Alexandros Maratos, who not only supported the initiative but also carried out extensive preparatory work for this decision. Many words of gratitude were also passed on to the Hydrographic Journal, which published the HSR appeal in 2000.

Although the decision is now accepted at government level and addressed to government hydrographic services, members of Council emphasised that it also fully concerned all hydrographers and, of course, national hydrographic societies. It was therefore decided that the next session should consider what activities might be organised by the HSR for 21st June this year to mark this special day.

## 285 Years Cartographic Office

On 12th January 2006 the Central Cartographic Office of the Russian Navy celebrated 285 years of existence. The date of founding of this ancient marine institution is considered to be 2nd January 1721, when Russian tsar Peter the Great issued a nominal decree concerning establishment of a Printing House at the Sea Academy. In 1827 the Printing House was transferred into the hands of the Russian Navy Hydrographic Service. The Office is currently situated in a building specially constructed for it and equipped with modern typographical equipment. It publishes a full set of paper documents necessary for safety of navigation, including charts, notices to mariners and other manuals for navigation.

On the day of the anniversary representatives of divisions of the Hydrographic service and the Hydrographic Society were invited to the Office and visitors enjoyed an excursion to shops and other sites. There was also an exhibition of navigational editions. To further mark the anniversary, a solemn public prayer for health was said by the Orthodox priest.

The central celebration event was a reception for many workers at the Cartographic Office, during which guests could offer their congratulations and good wishes.

## New Arctic Voyage

On 28th September 2005 the ice-breaker Capitan Dranitsyn returned to the port of Murmansk after a voyage to the Laptev Sea. Over 23 days, the Russian scientists aboard, along with colleagues from the several countries, carried out research within the framework of the joint Russian-American project Nansen and Amundsen Basins Observational System (NABOS). This is being conducted by the Arctic and Antarctic Scientific Research Institute (Russia) and the International Arctic Center at the University of Alaska (USA).

HSR member and Captain of the 1st rank (retd.) Doctor Oleg Churkin was a participant on this expedition. He informed HSR Council regarding the research carried out during this voyage. As on previous ones, the basic direction of the programme of investigation involved output from new-generation autonomous semi-submersible buoy stations. In one area expedition participants descended onto drifting ice fields, where they determined characteristics of the ice, intensity of heat exchange between ocean and atmosphere, and other characteristics. Use of the ice-breaker made it possible to obtain valuable data on the natural environment in this poorly investigated and inaccessible area of the Arctic Ocean.

Another feature of this voyage was the presence onboard the Russian ice-breaker of a group of young scientists from several countries. They were lucky enough to attend a series of lectures prepared by outstanding scientists within the framework of the so-called "Summer School on Climate Change in the Arctic Ocean"™. These young scientists for the period of voyage again became students. They had the possibility to attend lectures within a wide range of disciplines, from oceanography and meteorology to biology, and chemistry to Arctic climatology. In addition to interesting lectures, the "students"™ had a unique chance to participate in research. Working with the international group of skilled polar researchers provided an excellent opportunity to learn more about modern methods of investigation in high-altitude areas and to participate personally in investigations concerning the quickly changing environment of Arctic regions.

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