



75 Years of Going Its Own Way

The story of the Thun dry-cargo business is in many ways also the story of the Erik Thun Group: It begins in the 1930s, with a young Helge Källsson in a rowboat. 20 years later he heads a growing shipowning company.

The story continues through a long line of strategic turning points. Now, 75 years after the start, the group is a major player in Lake Vänern, the North and Baltic Seas, and beyond.

The robust family company today involves a third generation. Its core values, however, have not changed. They are still about cost efficiency, long-term customer relationships and continuous development of the business – not by following the crowd, but by going its own way.



Young Helge. At the age of 25, Helge Källsson applied for a job as a charterer with a shipowner in Lidköpina.



The same building. In the 1950s, the Thun fleet consisted mainly of motor-sailing ships. The two-storey office building, centre picture, is still in use as the head office today.



Eye for detail. Helge Källsson was very much a hands-on manager, personally involved in every part of his business.



The Mrs. Alice Källsson godmothered several of the Thun ships. She was an industrious woman who took care of the house and raised the three children. As a hostess she was renowned for never being at a loss for an answer. At the family country house she grew every possible fruit tree and vegetable and kept up to 30 sheep.

The Son of a Steam Train Driver

Helge Källsson was the founder of the shipowning company the Erik Thun Group. But his career started in a rowboat, in a much more modest way. As a teenager, his first job was to row out to the ships calling at the port of Karlskrona, in the southwest of Sweden, with paperwork for the local shipbroker.

Helge was the son of a steam train driver and a farmer's daughter. As he was one of 12 children, there wasn't enough money for his further education. So he rowed. And took a correspondence course in business studies on the side.

In 1931, at the age of 25, he applied

for a job as a charterer with a shipowner, a man named Erik Thun in Lidköping by Lake Vänern. Helge took on more and more responsibility as time went by. His employer, Erik Thun suffered from tuberculosis. In his absence, Helge was soon running the whole operation.

The obvious choice

When Erik Thun died in 1938, the ships and business were inherited by a mix of family and employees. The business was officially registered as a joint stock company, bearing the name of its former owner. Helge Källsson was the obvious choice for manager.

At that time, the company managed a handful of ships, mostly motor-sailing ships and but also a steamship and a tug. Helge had a nose for business, an eye for detail, a stubborn nature and a fiery temper. He also had a huge capacity for work. He was known for speaking on several phones at the same time and admitted his work was his hobby as well as his occupation.

A variety of business areas

With his special talent for buying, building and selling ships at the right time, Helge expanded the company in the years that followed. During the oil boom in the early 1950s, Helge bought his first tankers. By 1960, the Thun fleet consisted of more than 20 vessels. Still mostly dry-cargo ships.

By then, Helge had also bought out several of the minority owners, leaving him with a majority of the shares. His

Makes It in Shipowning

enterprising spirit led him into a variety of business areas. The Erik Thun Group began to diversify at a high rate from the end of the 1950s.

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Helge's investments were always strategic, but in different ways. Sometimes the purpose was to strengthen the shipping business – like when he bought a shipyard or invested in the local port terminal, or even when he bought a coal

merchant to secure it as a customer. Or after the World War II, when the competition from trucking intensified, and he simply started a trucking business.

Trimming the portfolio

At other times the purpose was to balance the fluctuations in the shipping market. Like when he bought a builders' merchant, and ended up adding a sawmill, a plastics factory, a door manufacturer and a flooring company.

At the end of the 1980s, however, when Helge handed over the management to the next generation, the process of trimming the portfolio and reverting back to the core business of shipowning began.



Diverse businesses

A selection of subsidiaries 1948-1968

- Godsbilcentralen i Lidköping AB
- Nya Falkenbergs Varv AB
- S-Man Marin AB
- S-Man Väremteknik AB
- Lidköpings Kol & Koks AB
- Dahllöfs Bränsle AB
- Lidköpings Hamnterminal AB
- Jubels Bygghandels ABLovene Dörrfabriks AB
- Timmersdala Sågverk
- AB Kinneverken
- TI C ...
- Thunfastigheter
- Sydvästen
- Rederi AB Göta Kanal



Opinion maker. Jan Källsson advanced shipping on the political agenda during his many years on the board of the Swedish Shipowners' Association.



Coasters. The venture into cleverly designed coastal tankers was made in the 1990s, laying the ground for what would later become Thun Tankers.





Planes and property. For 19 years the Erik Thun Group ran the airline Golden Air, which during this period went from smallest to largest Swedish airline. The head office above is just one of the Thun properties in Lidköpina.



Business developer. Anders Källsson has always taken a special interest in how vessels might be tailor-made to be as efficient as possible for the clients needs.

Helge's Sons Make their Mark

Helge Källsson was succeeded as CEO of the Erik Thun Group by his eldest son Jan in 1986. His youngest son Anders was put in charge of the day-to-day running of the shipowning part of the business, as well as being the technical manager.

The group was still fairly diverse at this time, and Jan focused his efforts at a corporate level. He was a natural problem solver and immersed himself in the situations that arose in different parts of the group. He also initiated the collaborations with other shipowners during the 1990s which meant investment in larger ship segments.

For over 20 years Jan was on the

board of the Swedish Shipowners' Association, for four years as its chair.

Government studies

As a board member, he was especially involved in the various studies that were commissioned by the Swedish government, concerning issues like port development or overall goods transportation. He gained a high reputation for his knowledge and ability to become familiar with complex subjects, and his name carried weight at the concerned ministries.

Altogether he made a great effort to advance shipping on the political agenda. To this day, he remains the only person to have ever received an honorary medal from the Shipowners' Association.

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In 1990 the Erik Thun Group invested all of its tankers into United Tankers, a joint venture with a fellow shipowner. The Erik Thun Group sold its shares after only a few years, temporarily ending the Thun tanker phase.

(Read more in the folder Thun Tankers – a new shipowner with a long history.)

A transition in management

In 2004, Jan Källsson was succeeded as CEO by his brother Anders Källsson. By then, Anders had been in charge

on the Family Company

Ever since the 1960s Anders Källsson has been the mastermind behind the custom-designed vessels.

of the shipowning operation for many years. Before that, during the diversified years, he had enjoyed the challenge of acquainting himself with one business area after another; from trucking business to plastics factory to sawmill.

Up in the air

When the Erik Thun Group in the early 1990s unintentionally became the owner of a passenger aeroplane, it was Jan who investigated the best way of getting some value out of it, but it was

Anders who started up and ran the airline. In 19 years, this airline, Golden Air Flyg AB, went from smallest to largest Swedish-owned airline as regards number of aircraft. (Read more in the folder Golden Air – det oavsiktliga flygbolaget.)

Tailor-made vessels

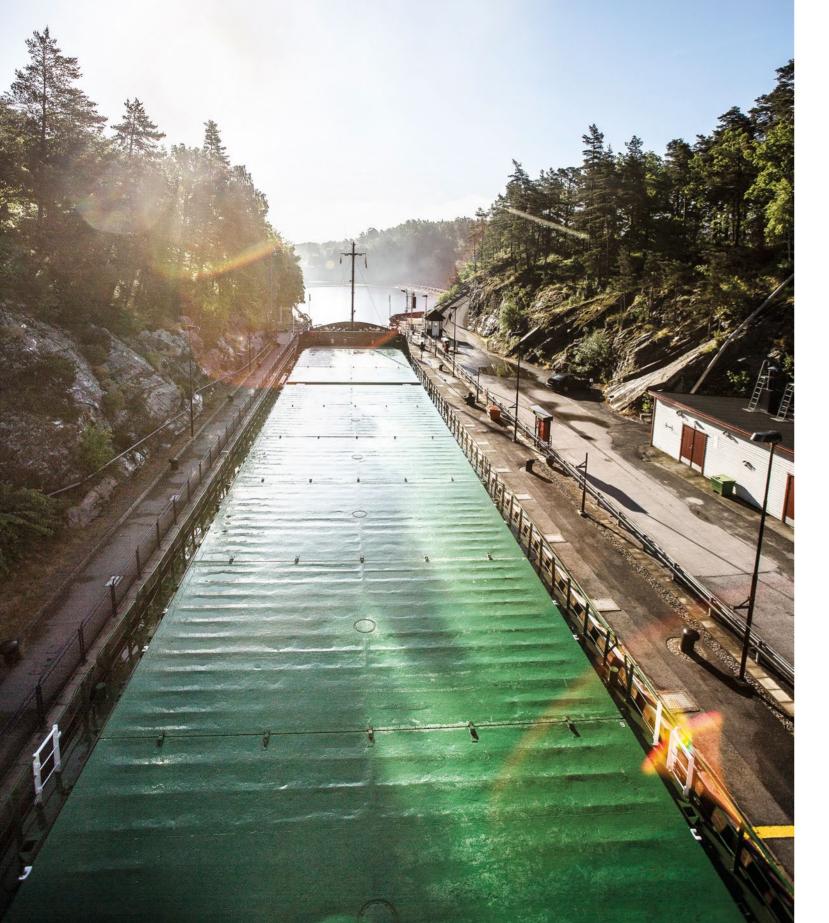
Anders had always taken a special interest in the design of the newbuildings: how one might twist and turn the limitations of lock sizes and crewing regulations to be able to tailor-make ships that were as efficient as possible for the client's needs. Ever since the 1960s he has been the mastermind behind the custom-designed vessels, which have become the hallmark of the Erik Thun Group.



Daughter takes over Steamship business

In 1986 Helges daughter Britmari Brax bought the Göta Canal Steamship Company from the Erik Thun Group. A company which she lifted with major marketing and quality efforts, until it was sold in 2001.

▶ Read more about this on page 28.



A New Strategy where Every Millimetre Counts

1970 The pilot tightens his grasp on the wheel as the cargo ship Alice approaches the massive stone walls surrounding the first lock in the Trollhättan Canal. He is about to guide the largest ship ever in the history of the canal through the series of locks. Positioning the bow is crucial for fitting the rest of the ship in. And there isn't much of a margin. Alice has been tailor-made to carry as much cargo as possible to Lake Vänern. The shipowner has received special permission to make her wider than what had previously been allowed. This is her trial run, the moment of truth.

For several decades, shipowners had had no interest in maximizing the size of their vessels in relation to lock sizes. On the contrary, virtually all ships sailing to and from Lake Vänern, including those owned by the Erik Thun Group, were slightly smaller than 2,000 tons. This was due to crewing regulations passed in 1948, making every ship over this limit unprofitable. New crewing regulations in 1970 had, however, given an incentive to start increasing cargo intake.

The Trollhättan Canal had (and still has) the same locks as when it was built in 1916. The permitted ship width had for many years been limited to 12.5 metres, and the draught to 4.6 metres. The Erik Thun Group, however, had applied for permission for a newbuilding 12.6 metres wide. After intense discussions, it was granted. But only after the Canal authorities had stipulated that the newbuilding must have an extra large rudder, high manoeuvrability, increased rudder speed, good visibility from the bridge, a large ballast volume and stern anchors.

This was the first time the Erik Thun Group had built a vessel custom-made for the canal, something that would prove to be a veritable milestone in the history of the company.

To be on the safe side, Alice's trial run was undertaken with a reduced draught. But it soon became clear that her manoeuvring abilities were excellent. A year later she was joined by her sister ship Anders. The Canal authorities gradually permitted larger dimensions on the canal – but only after special permission and individual trial runs. Hence, the next Thun ship, Eos, was built even larger (13.00 metres wide), as were her sisters, another Alice and Östanhav. Through the years, the Erik Thun Group has continued to push the limits of vessel size on the canal, decimetre by decimetre.

But there were also other limits to push - those of efficient cargo handling.

Specialist. "Thun are the real specialists at tailoring ships for the canal, always developing new ones", says Ingvar Dyberg, former Canal Manager. This picture is of Thun ship Eken.



Helge Källsson (right) on the bridge, talking to captain John Rumenius during Alice's trial run in 1970.

This was the first time the Erik Thun Group had built a vessel custom-made for the canal.

Thun dry-cargo ships built to fit the locks 1970–1985

(Name, year built, DWAT*)

Alice, 1970, 3,240 Anders, 1971, 3,240 Eos, 1972, 4,950 Alice, 1974, 4,950

Vestanhav, 1974, 4,950 Skogcell Forrester, 1975, 3,930 Nordanhav, 1978, 4,950

Nordanhav, 1978, 4,950 Östanhav, 1983, 4,750

* DWAT = deadweight all told



Thun Goes into Self-Unloaders

1983 cargo port to see Östanhav. This novelty, an automatically unloading ship has arrived with a cargo of coal, to attempt her first discharge. Several of the people on the quayside are would-be customers, and some have frankly been a little sceptical. The charterer, Conny Sundving, is also there, eager to see the outcome. The ship's conveyor boom has been swung out to release the cargo over a fence, onto the quay. And there, above the noise from the machinery, is the distinct rustle of coal falling onto a growing pile. Conny Sundving smiles to himself.

Ever since the 1970s, Anders Källsson had wanted to build a self-unloader. When the Erik Thun Group's own shipyard had a slow period, it was decided it was time. Östanhav was based on the same blueprints as the previous Thun ships. The design work was a joint project between the shipowner, the shipyard and Kvaerner which delivered the discharge equipment.

Östanhav was launched in 1983. But while she was still being built, the Erik Thun Group landed a contract with Cementa to transport limestone. To fullfill the contract, Thun bought a temporary ship, Nordanvik, which was sold shortly after Östanhav was delivered.

This was the heyday of coal-burning plants and Östanhav was busy from the start. Due to the increasing demand, a Dutch second-hand ship was soon bought and also adapted to become a self-unloader. She continued sailing under the Dutch flag and was given the name Eos.

An early setback was the reaction from the dockworkers. At the public cargo ports the collective agreements stipulated a crew of at least three men during the entire discharging process, even if it meant three men standing idle. The discharging also had to be stopped during their breaks. This was initially often solved by offering them meals onboard. Today the situation has stabilized and at most public ports the ships are only required to engage the one or two dockhands needed to man the receiving unit or operate loaders ashore.

At the unmanned industrial ports however, the advantages of the selfunloaders could be put to full use right from the start.

Regardless, there was market capacity for more self-unloaders. What nobody knew was that the shipyard where Östanhav had been built would soon shut down.

Feeders. The conveyors in the holds are equipped with scrapes, which feed the cargo toward the bucket elevator. The scrape conveyors are gradually lowered, as the cargo level falls.



Conny Sundving commercially managed the Thun self-unloaders from the very beginning in 1983. In 1990, he moved to Helsingborg and formed Citadel Shipping. He did this in agreement with the Erik Thun Group: a majority of the customers were to be found in this region. The location was also a good place for shipbroking.

This was the heyday of coal-burning plants and Östanhav was busy from the start. Due to the increasing demand another ship was soon bought.

Early Thun self-unloaders

(Name, year built/rebuilt, DWAT)

Nordanvik, 1960/83, 3,270* Östanhav, 1983/87, 5,815* Eos, 1976/84, 6,200*

- * After rebuilding
- Read all about how the self discharging process works on page 31.



The Pros and Cons of Owning a Shipyard

Håkan Nilsson takes an evening stroll down to the yard with his

father Valter, the shipyard manager. They're off to have a look
at the newly built 14,000 tonner. She has been launched, but
awaits her delivery trials. In spite of the late hour the shipyard is bursting
with activity. Everywhere engines and nautical equipment are being tested.
The radar is revolving, hydraulics are roaring, surveillance alarms are going
off. There is the smell of new interiors and fresh paint. At this moment none
of them can imagine that this is the last Thun ship the shipyard will ever build.

The Erik Thun Group had bought Falkenberg Shipyard after its bankruptcy in 1955. The shipowner had hoped its own shipyard would be an advantage when developing new designs. That it would be easier to make special adaptions for the benefit of the client. The intention had, of course, also been for the shipyard to tend to other clients. The geographical location gave it great potential as a repair and conversion yard. During difficult times, the Erik Thun Group would quarantee a sufficient inflow of orders.

At its peak, the shipyard employed 350 people. As expected, the Erik Thun Group became its biggest and most loyal customer, ordering 22 newbuildings in all.

The profit was, however, not quite as expected. At times, difficulties with price calculations would empty the accumulated financial reserves. Having a shipowner as an owner also turned out to be a bit of a drawback. Other shipowners tended to be afraid to share their plans with the shipyard, suspicious that they would be revealed to the parent company – no matter how the shipyard assured them this would not happen.

In 1985, the Erik Thun Group finally sold most of its shares in the shipyard. Partly to help the shipyard broaden its customer base. But also as a part of the ongoing return to its core business. Two years after the sale, however, Falkenberg Shipyard filed for bankruptcy. Times had long been hard, with growing competition from Asia, and other Swedish shipyards had given in, one by one. Falkenberg Shipyard was the very last of the privately owned ones to go.

But out of the ashes a new shipyard arose: Falkvarv, committed solely to repairs and conversions. The Erik Thun Group was closely involved in the startup (and to this day is still the yards biggest customer).

But where was the Erik Thun Group going to build its new ships in the future?



Håkan Nilsson is now the production manager at the shipyard Falkvarv, which employs about 40 people.

22 Thun ships from Falkenberg Shipyard 1955–1985

(Name, built, DWAT, type: G=general cargo, S=self-unloader, T=tanker)

Sunnanhav, 1955, 930, G
Anders, 1957, 940, G
Sunnanhav, 1959, 960, G
Sunnanhav, 1962, 1,065, G
Thuntank 11, 1964, 2,030*, T
Sunnanhav, 1966, 2,625, G
Thuntank 2, 1967, 1,945*, T
Thuntank 3, 1968, 1,940*, T
Thuntank 4, 1969, 2,885*, T
Alice, 1970, 3,240, G
Anders, 1971, 3,240, G
Eos, 1972, 4,950, G
Thuntank 1, 1973, 6,100*, T
Alice, 1973, 4,950, G
Vestanhav, 1974, 4,950, G

Skogcell Forrester/Annika, 1975, 3,930, G

Thuntank **6**, 1976, 7,220, T Nordanhav, 1978, 4,950, G Lurö, 1981, 3,890, T

Leckö av Lidköping, 1982, 4,165, T Östanhav, 1983, 5,815*, S

Ostanhav, 1983, 5,815*, S Thuntank **8**, 1985, 14,330, T

* After rebuilding

Dry-docked. Yet another Thun ship is being built at Falkenberg Shipyard in the early 1980s.

Thun Explores Dutch Expertise in Coasters



Hans Mulder is the technical manager att Ferus Smit Shipyard.

28 Thun ships from Ferus Smit Shipyard 1990–2013

(Name, built, DWAT, type: G=general cargo, S=self-unloader, T=tanker)

Nossan, 1990, 4,250, G Tidan, 1990, 4,250, G Lidan, 1991, 3,960, S Mornes, 1991, 9,125, S

Moxnes/Nordanhav, 1992, 9,890, S

Malmnes, 1993, 9,890, S **Snow Star**, 1996, 5,400, G

Ice Star, 1997, 5,400, G Bro Grace, 1999, 6,535, T

Bro Glory, 2000, 6,535, T **Bro Globe**, 2001, 7,560, T

Bro Galaxy, 2001, 7,560, T **Bro Gemini**, 2003, 7,560, T

Eken, 2003, 4,800, G **Bro Genius**, 2003, 7,560, T

Leckö, 2003, 4,800, G **Bro Gratitude**, 2003, 7,560, T

Lurö, 2003, 4,800, G **Bro Granite**, 2004, 7,560, T **Kinne**, 2004, 4,780, G

Tuna, 2004, 4,780, G Sunnanhav, 2006, 9,400, S

Sunnanhav, 2006, 9,400, S Kalkvik, 2007, 9,400, S Bro Gazelle, 2009, 7,560, T

Bro Garland, 2009, 7,560, T **Vestanhav**, 2011, 10,040, S

Alice, 2013, 5,100, G **Helge**, 2013, 5,100, G 1988 nodding towards the anchor chains. He is standing onboard a small ship at quay in Delfzijl together with Hans Mulder and Jan Smit from Ferus Smit Shipyard. They had met for the very first time that same day, when Anders had walked into their office with a set of blueprints, wondering if they could build something similar. They are now looking at the yard's latest newbuilding. A very simple ship – much to Anders' liking.

After the shipyard in Falkenberg was sold, the Erik Thun Group turned to the Netherlands, with its rich tradition of coaster shipbuilding. The first Dutch Thun ship was built at the Niuwe Noord Nederlandse shipyard in Groningen. Anders Källsson wanted to keep pushing the limits for how much cargo a Lake Vänern ship could take: from 3,200 tons to 3,900. The shipyard went bankrupt during the building, but the ship, Olivier, was completed and launched in 1986 and became an instant success in Lake Vänern.

As Olivier had been designed in accordance with Dutch shipbuilding tradition, the ship was built according to Dutch flag regulations. When Olivier was eventually passed by the Swedish surveyors a new ship type was implicitly established in Sweden, paving the way for future sister ships under the Swedish flag.

A new shipyard was soon found for the next newbuilding, Ferus Smit, close to Groningen. This yard was used to making small ships, mostly for captains who owned their own vessel and lived on board. Nothing fancy, the contracts were sometimes specified on the back of a cardboard box, and a handshake was sufficient to seal the deal. This suited the Erik Thun Group fine, mutual trust and understanding being worth more than fancy papers.

The blueprints from Olivier were brought along and are, to this day, the concept from which all the subsequent Thun dry-cargo ships have been developed.

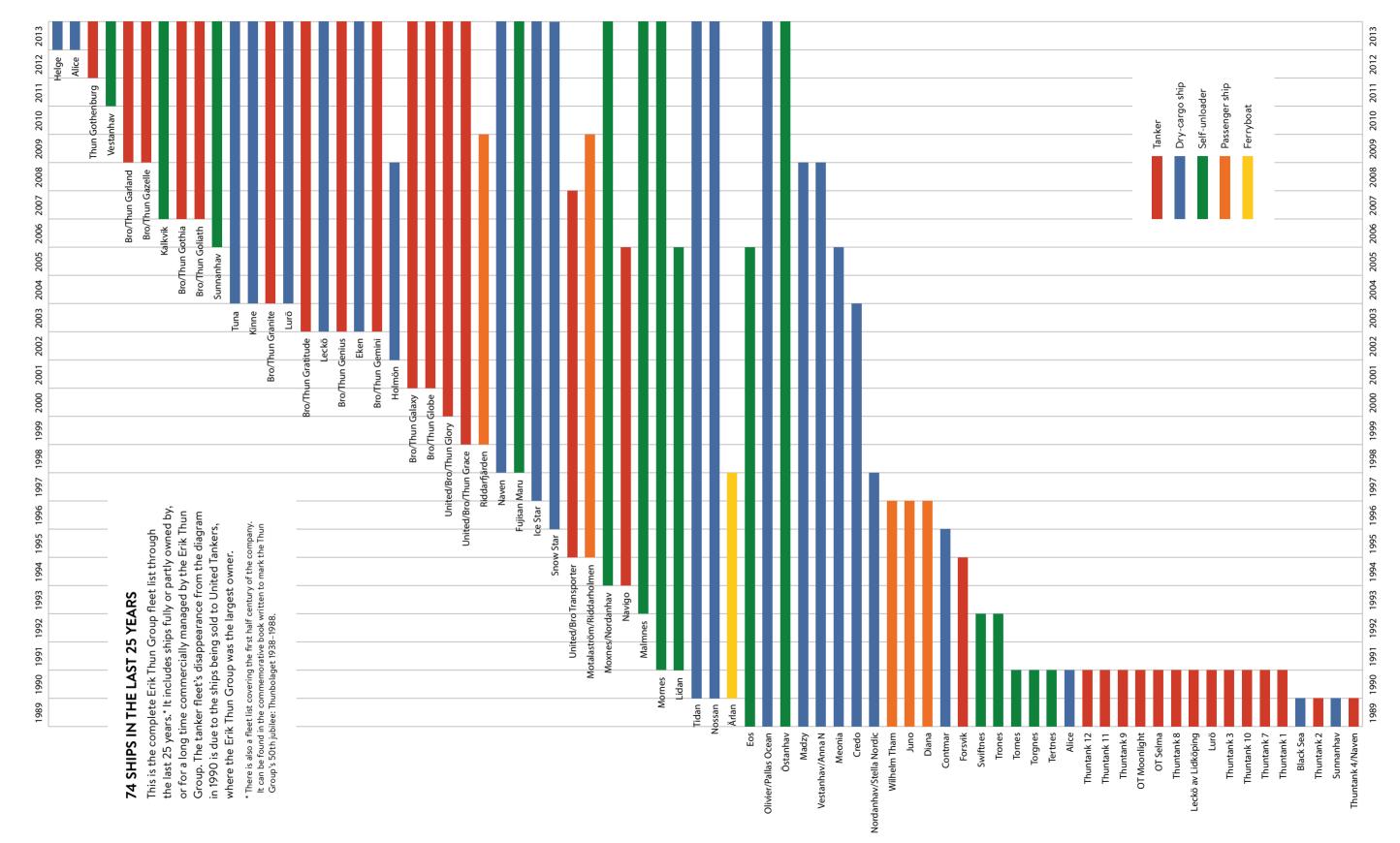
The sister ships Nossan and Tidan were built with the same hull, but a slightly increased draught, since the authorities had agreed to even larger dimensions in the Trollhättan Canal. To make a profit on the development work, the shipyard also sold the blueprints to another yard, where several sister ships were built for other customers. The Erik Thun Group later bought one of these, Naven, second-hand.

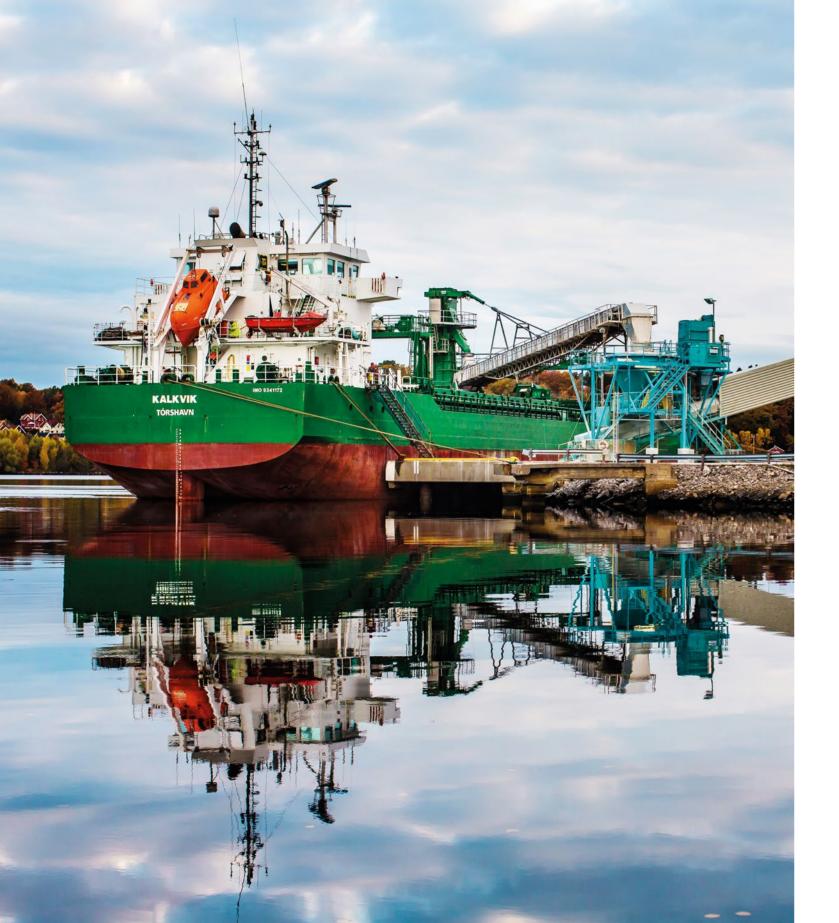
And there was more to come. Around the corner a large order for new self-unloaders awaited.

Bird's eye view. The bulb of this Thun ship was photographed from above during construction at Ferus Smit Shipyard. So far 28 Thun ships have been built there. All with galvanized steel anchor chains.



The Thun Fleet 1989-2013





Self-Unloader Business Goes Worldwide

OCTOBER A chartered aeroplane lands at the small airport outside 1989 Lidköping. A whole delegation of men in business suits climbs out and heads toward the Thun head office. It's Atle Jebsen and his people from the Norwegian shipowner Kristian Jebsens Rederi. a company with seven self-unloaders and sales offices in the UK, France, Italy, Denmark, Norway, Spain, Russia, Canada and the US. Thun has two self-unloaders and engages a charterer in Helsingborg. Still, Jebsens wants to form a new company with the Erik Thun Group.

The two companies had already pooled their self-unloaders for several years and now dominated the North European market with their joint fleet. Jebsens' many sales offices had opened up new markets for the Erik Thun Group, whose self-unloaders were now not only shipping coal and limestone in the North and Baltic Seas, but also ilmenite slag, split and clay in Northern Europe and alumina in the Black Sea.

The market was ready for even more ships. Hence the visit from the Norwegians - whose proposition was accepted. To be able to commission new ships together, a jointly owned company was formed in December 1989: Jebsen Thun Beltships. Both shipowners invested their self-unloaders. Citadel Shipping was also made part of the new company. The newbuildings Lidan and Mornes were delivered in 1991 and Nordanhav and Malmnes in the following two years.

But already it had become clear that the two shipowning companies had very different cultures. While Thun liked to keep expenses down and invest carefully, Jebsens was constantly expanding, investing profits not yet made. It was Jebsens' financial situation that finally persuaded the Erik Thun Group to opt out of the collaboration in 1995. That and the fees they had to pay for the foreign sales offices.

"But still today, many of Thun's self-unloader customer contacts date back to the Jebsens collaboration", says recently retired charterer Conny Sundving.

The Erik Thun Group bought back its original two ships, all of the four newbuildings, and the chartering and brokerage company Citadel Shipping. With a fleet of six ships Thun carried on. Lidan and Eos were sold, but were replaced by Sunnanhav and Kalkvik in 2006 and 2007, and Vestahav in 2011.

All self-unloaders so far had been built according to Swedish flag regulations, but the last three were built according to Dutch ... for a very good reason.

In action. The self-unloader Kalkvik has her boom swung out, discharging china clay straight into a hopper on the quayside for Norske Skog at the industrial port in Halden.

Two kinds of self-unloaders

- The Thun self-unloaders have always had box shaped holds and Kvaerner equipment.
- The Jebsens ships had v-shaped holds and Stephen-Adamson equipment. They were also somewhat larger.
- The jointly owned newbuildings were built at Ferus Smit Shipyard, according to the Thun design.



Jebsen Thun Beltships was a jointly owned company.

"Still today, many of Thun's self-unloader customer contacts date back to the Jebsens collaboration,"

Thun self-unloaders 1983-2013

(name, built/rebuilt, DWAT)

Nordanvik, 1960/83, 3,270* Östanhav, 1983/87, 5,815* Eos, 1976/85, 6,200* Lidan, 1991, 3,960 Mornes, 1991, 9,125 Nordanhav, 1992, 9,890 Malmnes, 1993, 9,890 Sunnanhav, 2006, 9,400 Kalkvik, 2007, 9,400

Vestanhav, 2011, 10,040

* After rebuilding

Thun Makes a Choice – Builds for Dutch Flag



Karin Orsel, CEO of Management Facilities Group.

"With similar values and mutual respect, we have built up a trusting cooperation through the years. It's almost like we're one family."

Thun dry-cargo ships managed by MFG:

(name, built, DWAT)

Snow-Star, 1996, 5,400 Ice-Star, 1997, 5,400 Leckö, 2003, 4,800 Lurö, 2003, 4,800 Kinne, 2004, 4,780 Tuna, 2004, 4,780 Vestanhav, 2011, 10,040

Alice, 2013, 5,100 Helge, 2013, 5,100

MFG also manages the Erik Thun Group's 13 tankers: Thun Grace, Thun Glory, Thun Galaxy, Thun Globe, Thun Gemini, Thun Genius, Thun Gratitude, Thun Granite, Thun Gazelle, Thun Garland, Thun Gothia, Thun Goliath and Thun Gothenburg. APRIL Karin Orsel, CEO of Management Facilities Group puts down the phone and looks at it thoughtfully. Her frowning eyebrows slowly relax, then a smile spreads across her face. The call was from Anders Källsson at The Erik Thun Group, whose ship Olivier they already manage. Now it seems he wants them to take care of their next newbuilding ... and possibly also the ones after that. She gets up and walks into the next room: "OK, folks, we're having a meeting, there's something I want to tell you!"

The Erik Thun Group had long had dry-cargo assignments in the north of Sweden and for this purpose kept a couple of ships with the Swedish ice class 1A. In the mid 1990s, this part of the fleet came up for renewal. Plans were made for two newbuildings, based on the same blueprints as Olivier, Nossan and Tidan, but slightly heavier as their engines needed to be more powerful, their draught larger and their hull shape slimmer (to sail through the ice). This way they would be able to sail to and from Lake Vänern – even though they would be able to load considerably more outside the lake.

The Erik Thun Group fully intended to build its ships under Swedish flag. At this time, however, new Swedish regulations were introduced concerning ship interiors.

"The purpose of the new regulations was to prevent crew cabins on passenger ships from being placed under the car decks", says Anders Källsson. "But no consideration was taken concerning the effects on smaller cargo ships. Cabins were now required for crew members we had been granted exemption for, cabins that we would never use."

In practice, this would mean adding another deck to the ships, something ships under other flags did not require. The seafarers' union had accepted the shipowner's proposal for an agreement with an unaltered number of cabins. But the officers' union hadn't. "Fortunately", adds Anders Källsson.

The initial crisis became a pivotal point. The Erik Thun Group dropped the Swedish flag regulations, in favor of the Dutch. This let them off the extra deck and allowed for an increased trading area. When there was a cargo shortage, the ships could sail to and from the US, which Swedish flagged ships were unable to do. Since then, all new ships have been built according to the Dutch regulations.

The next ships to be built were Eken, Leckö, Lurö, Kinne and Tuna, based on the blueprints from Tidan and Nossan, but increased to 4,800 tons thanks to an increase in size permitted by the canal authorities.

Surely a Lake Vänern ship couldn't get any larger than this. Or could it?



Dutch home port. Ice Star was among the first Thun ships to be built according to Dutch flag regulations, with Delfzijl as her home port.

Management Facilities Group (MFG)

With ships under the Dutch flag, local ship management was needed, and the same company that already managed Eos and Olivier was engaged. It was initially called Sandfirden, but in 1994 a few of the employees had taken over and created what is today known as the Management Facilities Group. They had started out with five managed vessels, four employees in the office and 50 at sea.

Today, the group manages a fleet of over 50 ships, employs 52 office workers and over 1,000 maritime personnel. The growth of the Erik Thun Group has been an important factor, along with the Dutch flag's growing appeal for foreign shipowners.

"Thun is our most important customer", says founder and CEO Karin Orsel.

"With similar values and mutual respect, we have built up a good, trusting cooperation through the years. It's almost like we're one family."

The Management Facilites group takes care of all aspects of ship management for the Dutch Thun ships, including nautical-technical management, financial management, crew management, quality assurance and strategic management.

Non-Dutch ships reflagged

In 2012 most of the non-Dutch Thun ships were reflagged to the Faroe Islands. The Swedish flag had long been a competitive disadvantage compared to other EU-flags.



A New Hull Shape Does Wonders for Fuel Efficiency

MARCH The blue ship model sweeps gracefully across the calm surface of the 260 metre long towing tank. All you can hear is the humming of the electric motor inside, the soft parting of the water and the over-head train squeaking on its rails. Researchers from SSPA and the naval architect from Ferus Smit are looking on. So far it looks good, but can it be true? When the computed fluid dynamics had shown a 15 percent increase in fuel efficiency compared to the last ship, they had laughed a little and agreed that five percent would be more realistic, but still good. Later that afternoon, the results came through. The improvement was up to 19.4 percent.

Anders Källsson had been convinced that it was possible to build ships that could carry even more cargo and still make it through the Trollhättan Canal. So he had challenged the shipyard when he ordered two new dry-cargo ships.

The new ship type was therefore designed with an even fuller hull form than before, now including a very large bulb. Together with an increased draft this resulted in a deadweight capacity of 5,100 tons – compared to the previous models' 4,800. The hull shape was also optimised for minimal water resistance, in its turn increasing fuel efficiency. The new bulb shape was part of that, helping to reduce the waves around the bow. The results from the SSPA test tank were a validation of many months of hard work.

The electrical system was also modified to enable the ship to run more fuel-efficiently at reduced engine speed.

All of this was expected to be very helpful in view of the stricter sulphur limits to be introduced in 2015. On the same note, the new ships were equipped with a system for purification of ballast water, to prevent the undesirable spread of marine organisms, and water lubricated stern tubes, to avoid oil pollution from the propellers.

The first full-scale ship, Alice, was delivered in June 2013, the next, Helge, in September.

"This way we are affirming our presence on Lake Vänern, showing our customers that they can trust us to maintain a high standard of service also with future environmental regulations", says Anders Källsson.

Because while vessel design and fuel efficiency is very important, there is something even more crucial: customer relationships.

Splash! The full size version of Alice was launched at Ferus Smit Shipyard in May 2013, with a fuller hull shape and larger bulb than any previous Thun ship.



Canal pilot Esther Karlsson.

"Not only has her width increased, but also her whole volume. You can really tell."

Record journey

The current record is held by the newly built Alice, 13.40 metres at her widest point. Canal pilot Esther Karlsson took her on her trial voyage through the canal. "The first time with a new ship is always exciting. Not only has her width increased, but also her whole volume. You can really tell, she's slower in her movements. This reguires my full attention, especially on the way into or out of the locks. I need to react immediately to any deviation, it takes time to adjust her position. Her rudder speed has been improved since then, it was something I remarked on after the trial. Which goes to show there's a working dialogue between the canal authorities and the shipowners."



On her way. Thun self-unloader Kalkvik is about to leave Norway and head towards the Continent.

Shipbroking

The Erik Thun Group runs two port agencies. One is an integrated part of Citadel Shipping, and serves the Helsingborg, Malmö and Landskrona ports. The other is the subsidiary Segerhammars, co-owned with shipowner Ahlmarks since 1958, but fully owned by Thun since 2012. Segerhammars serves all the ports in Gothenburg, Stenungsund, Åmål, along the Trollhättan Canal, and Falkenberg Shipyard.

Commercial management

All Thun dry-cargo ships are commercially managed by the Erik Thun Group. The conventional dry-cargo ships are managed from the head office in Lidköping by a staff of five. The self-unloaders are managed from the subsidiary Citadel Shipping in Helsingborg, by a staff of two. In the Erik Thun Group charterers and operators work closely together, also constantly cooperating with the technical departments.

Tank owners once more

In 2012 the Erik Thun Group became full owner of 13 coastal tankers, of which 10 were designed by Anders Källsson and built at Ferus Smit Shipyard 1999–2009. 12 of the 13 were previously co-owned 50/50 with fellow shipowner Broström, which had also managed them commercially. Thun Tankers BV was now formed, with a commercial office in Gothenburg.

Ever Present on Lake Vänern and Beyond

NOVEMBER Lasse Grandelius at Citaldel Shipping picks up the phone.

2013 "Hello, this is Carina. Look, I need an extra shipment on short notice. Our last coal shipment had a too high sulphur content.

Do you think you could help us?" Lasse replies: "You know we'll do whatever we can. Let me have a look ... if you can accept Sunnanhav, I could have her in position for loading on Monday afternoon. Is that acceptable?" Carina is relieved: "That would be great, if it were possible".

Ever since the start, the Erik Thun Group has worked hard to achieve long-term, trusting relationships with its customers, through good times and bad. The aim has always been to operate on large and long cargo contracts. Today the vast majority of the business is based on such contracts, most dating decades back.

The energy company Fortum Värme is one of the long-standing customers. It employs the Thun self-unloaders to discharge coal in central Stockholm, a restricted area requiring a completely closed system, where the coal goes straight into a hopper without any dust or pollution.

"The Thun self-unloaders are just the right size, larger ships don't fit into the port and take too long to discharge", says Carina Olofsson, chartering and logistics. "We have a really good relationship with Citadel, we've worked together for so long, we can have a very open dialogue. And with the large fleet, there's often a ship available nearby when we sometimes need to load on short notice."

On the whole, the Thun self-unloaders mainly transport limestone, quicklime, coal, china clay, aggregates and cement – materials which dust or pollute.

A long-standing client on the conventional dry-cargo side is pulp and paper producer BillerudKorsnäs AB, which employs the Thun ships to import pulpwood and woodchips from the Baltic Sea region.

"Our plant in Grums is separated from the Sea by lakes and locks, and the Erik Thun Group has very suitable vessels for this. They meet our demands and requirements in a good way and have shown the ability to follow us through both ups and downs in volume, without much fuss. On the whole, they are very comptetitive compared to other solutions", says wood import manager Björn Fredriksson.

The conventional dry-cargo ships mainly transport dense cargo, that's where the heavy Thun ships become truly economical. Mostly they carry zinc and lead concentrate, ferromanganese, salt, pulp wood logs, sawn timber and fertilizer.

While customer relationships are important for the business of today, they are also a key to the future.



Carina Olofsson, chartering and loaistics at Fortum Värme.

"We've worked together for so long that we can have a very open dialogue."

Self-unloader trading area

- The cargo is mainly shipped in the Baltic and North Seas.
- One ship shuttles between Brazil and Canada.
- Since 2013, two ships have been engaged exclusively in shipping cement in the Mediterranean.
- 80-90 percent of the operation is covered by contracts.

Dry-cargo trading area

- The cargo is mainly shipped in the Baltic and North Seas.
- Two to three Thun ships sail in shuttle traffic between southern Norway and the Mediterranean.
- 75-80 percent of the operation is based on contracts.



Tailwind. The Erik Thun Groups' anniversary was celebrated during the Lysekil Women's Match Cup, where it was a main sponsor.



Gas ships. This computer generated drawing of a gas-powered ship was one of the first prototypes drafted. The future gas ships will, however, look quite different.



Development. Constantly developing the fleet with ever more fuel-efficient ships is a continuous challenge for the Erik Thun Group.



Grandchildren. The cousins Johan and Henrik Källsson were appointed deputy Managing Directors in 2013, to pave the way for the Erik Thun Group to remain a family company also in the future.

The Next Generation of Thun

After 75 years, the family company still carries the same values as ever. And a new generation is preparing to take over.

In august 2013, the Erik Thun Group celebrated its 75th anniversary in Lysekil, together with staff, customers, suppliers and business partners.

The Thun fleet today consists of over 30 vessels. The shipping part of the Erik Thun Group employs a total of around 600 people.

Continuity and development

The group was handed on to Helge's sons in the 1980s. Today, all seven of Helge's grandchildren are in one way or another involved in the wellbeing of the family firm. Two of them, Johan and Henrik Källsson, were appointed

Deputy Managing Directors in 2013, thus laying the ground for the future.

The Erik Thun Group sees family continuity as a guarantee that the business will preserve its core values also in the future: To grow organically with the customers – in long-term relationships during good times and bad. To be cost efficient, but never ever to compromise quality. To invest a large portion of the earnings back into the business, enabling self-financing of new ventures. To continuously develop the business – not by following the crowd, but by going their own way.

The development of the fleet is constantly ongoing, adapting it to developments in the surrounding world.

The closest new venture is a collaboration with shipowner K G Jebsen (not the same as the Jebsens

The Erik Thun Group sees family continuity as a guarantee that the business will preserve its core values.

of the 1990s). Plans are now being made to invest in a new fleet of cement ships, to trade on the North Sea.

Future fuel

One unknown variable ahead is the upcoming government policy concerning the Swedish inland waterways. This policy could mean the beginning of a whole new Swedish transport modality, with special regulations for ships sailing on inland waters. The Erik Thun Group has long lobbied for conditions that would allow for fair competition with the polluting road

Looks into the Future

traffic and the overburdened railways. Depending on the outcome, it *could* mean a new market for Thun. "But much remains to be seen", says Anders Källsson.

The Erik Thun Group has for centuries worked at designing increasingly economic and fuel efficient ships. An obvious task will be to continue this pursuit.

"This is the key to the future", says Johan Källsson, "both considering cost and being able to compete as a sustainable transport mode".

Modern fleet

The environmental issues are always high on the agenda: staying a step ahead, keeping a modern fleet and making this a competitive advantage. The next endeavor will probably be

something as drastic as a change of fuel type. For a few years, the Erik Thun Group has been investigating the possibility of running future ships on liquid natural gas (LNG). Something that has as yet only been applied to a handful of cargo ships worldwide. When it is no longer possible to use heavy fuel oil, LNG would be an economical alternative to gas oil. Not only reducing the crucial fuel costs, but greatly assisting compliance with stricter emission regulations concerning sulphur and nitrogen oxides and particulate matter. Type blueprints have already been drafted, awaiting a potential enterprise. The first one may not be far off.

"As this publication goes to print, several customers have already shown an interest", says Henrik Källsson.



About the author

Sofia Brax is a journalist by profession and has explored the history of the Erik Thun Group. This has resulted in a series of folders and short film.

The Thun Side Projects

Along side the main line of business with the Vänermax drycargo ships, the self-unloaders and the coastal tankers, the Erik Thun Group has from time to time invested in ships in completely different segments.

THE GÖTA CANAL STEAMSHIP COMPANY AND RIDDARHOLMEN

The Erik Thun Group had already in 1957 bought the Göta Canal Steamship Company, with its three vintage passenger ships Juno, Diana and Wilhelm Tham, all sailing on the scenic Göta Canal between Gothenburg and Stockholm. In 1986 Helge Källsson's daughter, Britmari Brax, bought and ran the passenger line. Ten years later she also bought the ships themselves, which had remained in the Erik Thun Group. In 1995 she also bought the vintage cargo ship Vielle Montagne III, which she had converted into a passenger ship for charter and renamed first Motalaström, then Riddarholmen. The Erik Thun Group was co-investor. When Britmari retired and sold the passenger line in 2001, the Erik Thun Group bought out Motalaström. Another ship, Disa, was also acquired, converted and renamed Riddarfjärden. These two ships were sold in 2008, but still today, Riddarholmen is chartered every year for the traditional dinner cruise for Thun customers and staff.

OIL TANK SWEDEN AND UNITED TANKERS

Since the 1950s, the Erik Thun Group's main business had been Vänermax cargo ships and tankers ranging from Vänermax up to 18,000 tons. At the end of the 1980s, the group had 13 tankers and nine dry-cargo ships. This was, however, about to change.

In 1988, Swedish shipowner Shipinvest approached the Erik Thun Group with a proposition to jointly invest in four large tankers of between 55,000 and 82,000 tons. This led to a joint project with the name Oil Tank Sweden. The investment was doing well and the two shipowners would happily have carried on, had there not been a shortage on the second-hand



Variation. The Thun side projects ranged from vintage passenger ships like Riddarholmen, only 30 meters long ...

market. To raise enough capital to commission new ships, they jointly formed the company United Tankers in 1990 in which they invested all of their tankers. The company was then listed on the stock exchange. This venture was, however, not as successful as expected. After five years, Thun sold its shares to its co-founder. Not until 2012 did the Erik Thun Group again commercially manage any tank ships. Read more about this and the tankers at Thun, in the folder Thun Tankers – a new shipowner with a long history.

However, all through the United Tanker years the Erik Thun Group continued to technically manage and crew the former Thun tankers. Even when Thun left United Tankers, it still maintained these tasks for the two ships Trapper and Bro Transporter, until they were sold in 2006 and 2007. The Thun Group was also a part owner of the latter 1995–2007.

MARINVEST AND THE TANKER NORTHERN BELL

In 1989, Swedish shipowner Marinvest was looking for its first ship, and had taken an interest in an 80,000 ton tanker. It was a Croatian not

yet finalized newbuilding where the original client had gone bankrupt. Marinvest was looking to invest, but needed co-investors. The Erik Thun Group went in as a joint owner, eventually increasing its share to 62%. Finalising the newbuilding was more costly than expected, but after that the ship was a success. Subsequently the Erik Thun Group also co-invested in a couple more Marinvest ships, Panamax ships, which were soon sold on to new owners. The collaboration with Marinvest was ended in 1993, to enable the Erik Thun Group to invest elsewhere.

JEBSENS AND THE 28,800 TONNER SWIFTNES

During the beginning of the collaboration with Jebsens in the 1980s, the Erik Thun Group bought one of Jebsens' 28,800 ton bulk carriers, Swiftnes. The ship sailed mainly between Australia and North America, and was part of the Thun fleet from 1989 to 1992, when she was transferred into the joint company Jebsen Thun Beltships. The Thun group was at this time also a part owner of the Jebsens ships Trones, Tornes, Torgnes and Tertnes.



... to 80.000 ton tankers like United Moonlight.

ANCHOR HOLDINGS AND ITS ANCHOR LINE GAS SHIPS

In 1990 the Swedish company Avena bought a Scottish company group to get its hands on a vault manufacturing company. The other part in the group was a shipowning company, Runciman Holdings, with half a dozen liquid gas carriers of 3,000-9,000 tons, sailing for what remained of the reputable Anchor Line. Avena, however, had little interest in this business, and asked the Erik Thun Group and fellow Swedish shipowner Transmark to become co-owners at 26% each. Following Avenas bankruptcy in 1992, the Erik Thun Group and Transmark took over the remaining shares, making Thun 50% owner of the company, now renamed Anchor Holdings. This venture was never very profitable. Thun's involvement ended in 1995.

PRECIOUS SHIPPING AND FUJISAN MARU

At the end of the 1990s, a Singaporian shipowner, Precious Shipping, contacted the Erik Thun Group to ask for advice about a cement ship destined to trade in India. It was proposed that a Swedish discharging solution be used. The ship, 17,000 ton Fujisan Maru was rebuilt accordingly and in 1998 the Erik Thun Group acquired a 35% share in the vessel. She has shipped cement in India even since, fully managed by Precious Shipping, until January 2014, when she was scrapped after almost 40 years of service.

SIDE PROJECTS TODAY - NOT ONLY SHIPS

During the years of owning the airline Golden Air Flyg AB (1993-2012) the Erik Thun Group also got involved in aircraft sales and leasing. This operation is still maintained, even though the airline has been sold.

Ever since the diversified years, the Erik Thun Group has property holdings comprising 30,000 square meters for hire in Lidköping.

Since 2005 the Erik Thun Group also owns the meat processing company Direkt Chark with plants in Gothenburg and Vänersborg.

SIDE PROJECT SHIPS

Vintage passenger ships

(Name, built)

Juno, 1874 Wilhelm Tha

Wilhelm Tham, 1912 Diana, 1931

Riddarholmen, 1916 Riddarfjärden, 1936

Ships in collaboration with:

(Name, built, DWAT)

Shipinvest

OT Daylight, 1981, 55,000 OT Sunrise, 1982, 55,000 OT Selma, 1987, 82,000 OT Moonlight, 1982, 55,000

Marinvest

Norhern Bell, 1990, 83,700 Marianne, 1977, 64,100 Marita, 1978, 56,000

Jebsens

Swiftnes, 1984, 28,800 Tornes, 1984, 8,710 Torgnes, 1985, 8,710 Tertnes, 1985, 8,910 Trones, 1986, 12,090

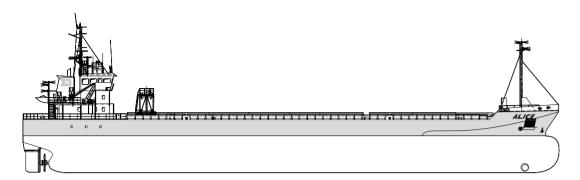
Anchor Holdings

Melrose, 1971, 2,700 Heriot, 1972, 2,600 Borthwick, 1977, 2,100 Quentin, 1977, 2,100 Traquair, 1982, 7,200 Teviot,1989, 9,400 Ettrick, 1991, 3,600 Lanrick, 1992, 3,600

Precious Shipping

Fujisan Maru, 1976, 17,000

Dry Cargo Fleetlist 2013-12-31



13 conventional dry-cargo ships:

M/S Helge + M/S Alice

- Built: 2013 DWAT: 5,100 S. Draft: 6.156 m
- Cbm: 5,949 Ice class: 1B

M/S Tuna + M/S Kinne

- Built: 2004 DWAT: 4.780 S. Draft: 5.852 m
- Cbm: 5,968 Ice class: 1B

M/S Lurö + M/S Leckö + M/S Eken

- Built: 2003 DWAT: 4,800 S. Draft: 5.852 m
- Cbm: 5,100 Ice class: 1B

M/S Ice Star + M/S Snow Star

- Built: 1997 DWAT: 5.400 S. Draft: 7.006 m
- Cbm: 5,990 Ice class: 1A

M/S Naven

- Built: 1991 DWAT: 4.190 S. Draft: 5.460 m
- Cbm: 5,595 Ice class: 1B

M/S Tidan + M/S Nossan

- Built: 1990 DWAT: 4.250 S. Draft: 5.460 m
- Cbm: 4.850 Ice class: 1B/1C

A closer look at one of the conventional dry-cargo ships: Alice

Special features of Alice

- Built especially for Lake V\u00e4nern traffic and provided with ice-class to enable year-round traffic, just like the other Thun dry-cargo ships.
- Bulkheads make it possible to separate the hold into two to three compartments. Pontoon hatch covers.
- A ballast water purification system prevents the undesirable spread of marine organisms.
- Water lubricated stern tubes eliminates oil pollution from the propellers.

- A new hull design optimised for minimal water resistance brings down fuel cost, thus reducing sulphur emission.
- A modified electrical system which enables the ship to run more fuelefficiently also at reduced engine speed.
- No boiler is needed, as cooling water from the engines is used to heat the interior, the tap water and the fuel tanks. This solution is applied on all of the Thun ships.

Facts and figures

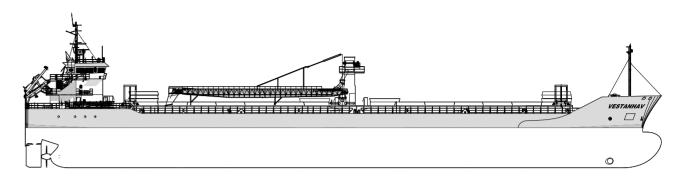
Flag: Netherlands Port of registry: Delfzijl Built at: Ferus Smit Shipyard Year: 2013

Ice class: 1B GRT/NRT: 2,911/1,453 DWAT: 5.100

Length over all: 89.00 m Breadth extreme: 13.40 m Depth moulded: 8.70 m

DWCC: 5,000 Cargo capacity: 5,949 cbm Main engine: Wärtsilä 6L26F,

Main engine: Wärtsilä 6L26 1.860 KW/2.494 BHP



7 self-unloading ships:

M/S Vestanhay

- Built: 2011 DWAT: 10.040 S. Draft: 7.661 m
- Cbm: 11,197 Ice class: 1A

M/S Kalkvik + M/S Sunnanhav

- Built: Kalkvik 2007, Sunnanhav 2006
- DWAT: 9,400 S. Draft: 7.840 m
- Cbm: 9.220 Ice class: 1A

M/S Malmnes + M/S Nordanhay

- Built: Malmnes 1993, Nordanhav 1992
- DWAT: 9,890 S. Draft: 7.690 m Cbm: 11,870
- Ice class: 1B

M/S Mornes

- Built: 1991 DWAT: 9.125 S. Draft: 7.882 m
- Cbm: 10,429 Ice class: 1B

M/S Östanhav

- Built/rebuilt: 1983/87 DWAT: 5,815
- S. Draft: 6.470 m Cbm: 7,200 Ice class: 1A

A closer look at one of the self-unloaders: Vestanhav

Self-unloading: how it works

- The ship has two box-shaped cargo holds, each equipped with two scrape conveyors at right angles to one another. One conveyor moves across the hold, feeding cargo to the other one, which is fixed and conveys the cargo to a bucket elevator.
- The bucket elevator brings the cargo above deck and empties it onto a horizontal conveyor belt encased in a boom, which can be swung from the ship and delivers the cargo onto the quay or into a container.
- Discharging can be controlled from the bridge and can be carried out completely by the crew on board, without the aid of any shore hands. This means it can be done regardless of shore working hours, which can save a lot of time.
- The system works for material smaller than 45 millimetres. It's ideal for cargo which is dusty, polluting or dangerous to handle, such as china clay or quicklime, as it is discharged within a closed system. The system is independent of weather and pollution-free.

Facts and figures

Flag: Netherlands
Port of Registry: Delfzijl
Built at: Ferus Smit Shipyard
Year: 2011

Ice Class: 1A GRT/NRT: 6069/ 3100 DWAT: 10,040 Length overall: 123,3 m Breadth moulded: 15.85 m Moulded depth: 10.46 m Draught summer: 7.661 m DWCC: 9,800

Cargo capacity: 11,197 cbm Boom outreach: up to 30 m Main engine: Wärtsilä 8L32, 3,840 KW/5,184 BHP

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▶ See how it works. Watch the 3D animated film on the Thun website.



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Thun dry cargo – a history

This is the history of dry-cargo shipping within the Erik Thun Group, over the years. To great extent it also coincides with the history of the group in all. The folder was commissioned by the Erik Thun Group.

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