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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

<http://www.generalbotha.co.za>

MAY 2003

JOINT NEWSLETTER

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A small group of Bothie Old Boys has been very busy the past years looking after the rich heritage of the Ship's history. The General Botha Trust has, amongst other duties, to see to the collection and preservation of memorabilia from the Ship and from subsequent shore establishments. You will have noted from previous Newsletters the many reports and appeals from the Committee. This is important work, and we are indebted to the devotion of Bothie Boys such as Vice Adm. Glen Syndercombe (#1571,1948/49) and Capt. Ian Manning (#1956, 1955/56), amongst others, who have recently overseen the moving and setting up of the display at the Simon's Town Museum. Glen has an interesting and challenging request:

- He is looking for any information, accounts, reminiscences, photos, etc. regarding the moving ashore of the Honour Boards during WW II. This would have occurred as part of the move up to Red Hill. Glen writes "I have heard somewhere that the boards were pulled ashore in the Ship's cutters, which seems quite amazing, given the bulk and mass of the boards. The stability problem alone is enough to make one's hair stand on end! I think it would be very interesting to hear how they were lowered into the boats and how they were lifted from the boats onto the Town Jetty. It must have been a hairy operation to say the least!"

Well that is some feat, but consider this story. Apparently a Clan Line ship at anchor for over a month off Luanda, had run out of beer and it was Christmas. So, nothing to stop a thirsty Scott, they lashed two life boats together and lowered the mess room piano abreast and proceeded to circumnavigate the anchorage playing piano and singing carols to the rest of the waiting vessels. Their reward was cases of beer (or was it whisky?). Now whether or not that is a true story I would be intrigued to know, but if there is any one who can achieve such seamanship, it must be a Bothie Boy.

- Ian Manning is concerned about the position and state of the General Botha War Memorial on the Heerengracht, Cape Town. It was not possible to hold the annual service there this year due to the weather.

However, had the weather been favourable, there was another obstacle that would have disrupted the proceedings – a group of demonstrators in the vicinity. Even worse was that the stonework was defaced with graffiti. Is the Memorial in the wrong place? Should it be relocated to a more suitable place? Wherever it is, should there not be some description and/or history about it mounted on a plaque to explain to passers by why it is there? There have been suggestions about moving it to Jubilee Square in Simon's Town, or to Cape Town Harbour in front of the Tower where the Merchant Navy Memorial is. These are possible positions where tourists and people interested in maritime history would pass, stop and pay their respects.

- What do you think? The Trust and your Cape Town Branch Committee would appreciate your input. Please drop us a line or call any of the contacts listed at the top of page one.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST NEWSLETTER.

It is encouraging how far this letter scatters in the wind, and how many interested people there are who read it. One such person is Mrs A. Ingram, Mother of Gavin Durell (#2438: 1973). She wrote in response to the last February newsletter with the following interesting observations:

- K. MEIKLEJOHN 1954/55 #1899 – “I enjoyed catching up with KM in your newsletter. The Durell family holidayed at Giants Castle in the ‘60s/70s and found him there as a Gameranger. We had grown up on Crown Mines together where our fathers had been colleagues.” She recalls a jeep trip in the reserve and encountering Black Wildebeest and Roan Antelope, as well as a hand reared Bearded Vulture called Charlie. *(Well I guess that if a sailor has a pet Parrot, then an Obie turned Ranger can have a vulture on his shoulder – Scribe).*

- Page 3 Where is Farrarmere (Roy Ternent 1984, last known address in Farrarmere, wherever that may be)? Mrs. Ingram writes, “it’s a suburb of Benoni named after Sir George Farrar, owner of the house ‘Bedford’ now St. Anns School, Bedfordview.”

- Mrs Ingram writes on – “My first connection with a ‘Bothie Boy’ happened about 1929. Duncan Brown was the son of a neighbour George Brown at P P Cement (Cape Portland) De Hoek near Piquetberg. He and his sisters went to school in Piquetberg in a donkey cart supplied by the Education Department. After school the donkey was released into the veld to graze. I used to go out with Duncan when he haltered it for stabling ready for the morning. I was allowed to ride on it. On leaving school he joined the G.B. at Simonstown. He graduated as top student. He fell overboard one night while sleep walking and was rescued presumably by an on duty Cadet! Later he set off for RNC College at Dartmouth and was later in the 1939-45 war serving in the RN in the Med when they captured an Italian craft. Duncan was assigned to sail the craft to Malta. En route the prize was bombed and sank with all hands (I don’t know if the RAF or an Allied ship did it. I guess air/land/sea communications were not as sophisticated 60 odd years ago). *Judging by recent reports from Iraq, I don’t think things have changed much since – Scribe!!*

- She writes on – “In 1950 I boarded with a Captain & Mrs A. E. Gadd in Southampton while on a teaching exchange. He was a Master Mariner and had served before the mast on the Tea Cutters, Ceylon to Calcutta, and during the war was called back to the Pilot Cutter at Southampton as younger men, i.e. his son et al, also later a Master Mariner (Kenneth Gadd) were called to sea. Capt Gadd regularly went to his ‘Sea Pie Supper’ in Swannys. He’d join P&O after the tea cutters. He turned 80 in 1954 and P&O gave him a round Africa ticket on one of the Castle Liners, and when we visited him at L.M. he said he’d danced every night. He painted water colour pictures of many of the sailing ships – every detail of masts, riggings hulls, seas and skies dead accurately.”

- She concludes – “A wonderful experience with several Master Mariners. May your Branch and its newsletter go from strength to strength. Aerial Ingram.”

Thank you very much for that interesting contribution – Scribe.

From the bridge of s.s. Cape Town.

Tony Nicholas.

Perhaps we of the Cape Town branch should not be modest and name our vessel “Nuclear Powered” instead of “Steam Ship”. No doubt that will bring some comment.

Our March activities went off well without a hitch. The AGM & Commissioning Day Dinner was well attended with a number of out of town visitors. This included Tony Turner and Ivor Little who drove down from

Pretoria, Ted Fisher from England, Jannie Bekker from Spain and many others. Captain Hub Stohr was the guest of honour at the dinner to mark his retirement after more than 30 years of lecturing on the Bothie. Hub was the draw card bringing in a number of Obies who wished to celebrate this milestone with Hub, this also indicative of the high esteem in which Hub is held by all those who were taught by him, more about Hub later in this newsletter. Inclement weather [in fact a typical Cape winter storm] as well as a protest in the vicinity of our cenotaph necessitated hosting the War Memorial Service held on the following Sunday indoors at SAS Unities. With the S.A. Navy band in attendance, it was yet again a memorable occasion to remember those who paid the supreme sacrifice during WWII and those others that have weighed anchors over all the years.

After some deliberation our March 2004 dates have been set. In order to avoid clashing with the cycle race and another long weekend the AGM & Commissioning Day Dinner have been brought forward to the beginning of the month. Therefore we look forward to a good turn out of Obies. Honour and Duty requires you all to attend. As follows:

- Friday 5th March 2004 - AGM & Commissioning Day Dinner.
- Sunday 7th March 2004 - War Memorial Service.
- Tuesday 9th March 2004 - Monthly lunch meeting.
- Saturday 6th March 2004 - Quadrangular yacht race.

Now with this information in your logbooks we look forward to class reunions coinciding with our March 2004 activities. So, both Watches to the classes of 1984/74/64/54/44/34/24.

*Our monthly pub lunch meetings continue from strength to strength on the **second Tuesday of each and every month, 1230 for 1300 at the Royal Cape Yacht Club, Table Bay Harbour.** On average some 36 Obies sit down to lunch with frequent out of town visitors gracing our tables. The proposal to combine our Xmas lunch with the Society of Master Mariners' Cape Town branch was tabled at our recent AGM. The proposal met with approval by all members and the date is set for Tuesday 9th December. It is expected that we may have a guest speaker preceding the lunch, watch this publication for further details. See ya all there.*

SOS

Allow me to wind up the old gramophone again, mail returned from Obies continues unabated taking up my time that I would rather spend hiking in the mountains, driving my 4x4 in the wild or relaxing in my caravan in the National Parks. Please add the GBOBA to your list to advise when you change address, including your email address.

- **Peter Miles** 1939/40, last known to reside in Wynberg, Cape Town.
- **Davis Pike** 1945/46, last known to reside in the Mark Hotel, Berea, Durban.
- **Jonathan Wanliss**, Technikon student, last known sailing with De Beers Marine.
- **Alan Harvey**, 1944/45, last known to reside in Klaver, Western Cape.

So, kindly all take out your sleuthing kit and find them. That's an order directly from the chairman. Any leads contact Tony Nicholas as per details on cover page.

SEARCH AND RESCUE – S.P.A. NEWHOUSE 1939/40 #1052

Dave Powell writes; "I was in a corvette just before the end of the war with a SAN (F) Sub Lieut. S.P. Newhouse, ex GB. His brother D. Newhouse also ex GB was killed during the war. I have over the years asked about Sid Newhouse without luck". I am sure there is someone in our ranks that can locate Sidney for us. What about past or present serving Royal Navy? Please advise soonest.

ANCHORS AWEIGH.

J.F. OBERHOLZER 1933/34 #708. "Ancient Mariner", Obie [as he was affectionately known], passed away 1st February this year. Little is known of Obies early years after Bothie and we would appreciate any information that you may be able to advise.

1963 and 1964 Obie was mayor of Johannesburg and was dubbed "Mr Johannesburg". He was a Freeman of the City of Johannesburg, also chairman of the city management committee for 16 years. In 1989 he was awarded a honorary doctorate at the Rand Afrikaans University and also awarded the State President's Order of Merit. In recognition of this very special Old Boy the M2 was named "The Francois Oberholzer Motorway" as well as a park in Johannesburg and a resort gate at Heidelbergkloof are named after Obie. During his 37 years

as a member of the city of Johannesburg he served as chairman of major bodies and served on 93 committees associated with local, provincial and central government. A most remarkable man, but then what do you expect from the Bothie Boys.

W.D. De La Bat van ALPHEN 1932/33 # 657. Willem, the eldest of the three brothers, sadly passed away on the 6th February this year. We have no details of his career and would appreciate being advised of same.

D.E. HENY 1933/34 #688. Douglas sadly passed over the side on the 11th September 2002. We have no details of his career and would appreciate being advised of same.

“CHIPS” BIERMANN – former Officer Commanding of S.A. Nautical College General Botha at Gordon’s Bay weighed anchor on the 18th February this year. Chips had a varied navy career starting on the lower deck and eventually retiring from the S.A. Navy in 1976 as Rear Admiral. He was serving on the Loch Class frigate HMSAS Natal when, in March 1945, just four hours into its maiden voyage, detected and sank an enemy submarine off the East Coast of Scotland. This feat was described at the time as being “unique in the annals of the Royal Navy”.

HONOUR AND DUTY - ICE RESCUE

KEVIN ALAN TATE 1976 # 2542 was recently awarded the Russian Federation’s highest peacetime medal for bravery. The award was made for Kevin’s pivotal role, as Master of the S.A. Agulhas, in rescuing a Russian Antarctic expedition team from the deck of the German research ship, Magdalena Oldendorff, after the ship was trapped in pack ice in June last year. The rescue team travelled to the pack ice rim aboard the S.A. Agulhas to enable the S.A. Airforce pilots to fly in extreme cold, fierce gales and near darkness over 360 km, the helicopters extreme range, of frozen ocean to lift the expedition team to safety. They had to contend with extreme, highly changeable weather conditions and low visibility. The Russian ambassador commended Captain Tate on the keen skills he displayed in manoeuvring his vessel into a suitable position to allow the helicopters to lift off and land and keeping it stationed under tough conditions. Even more remarkable is that Kevin made this successful voyage and rescue in the winter months, a period when voyages to the Antarctic are unheard of, in the best traditions of the brotherhood of the seas.

Together with the Cape Town branch of the Society of Master Mariner’s, Kevin was invited to give us a presentation of the rescue at our April monthly lunch meeting. In excess of 80 persons attended, vast majority being Bothie Boys, this very interesting and riveting account of the rescue mission. Those that missed it, rouse yourselves next time. Thanks again, Kevin.

SCRANBAG

IAN MILL 1992. Our web site continues to draw in Old Boys, Ian being one who found us by surfing the net. “I joined Safmarine in 1991 and sailed with them until 1994, was at Cape Technikon in 1992 and 1994 (General Botha Campus in Granger Bay). Worked on harbour tugs in Cape Town and Durban 1994-1996. Then joined FFS Bunkers as Second Mate/Mate on the Dolphin Coast for 2 years. Then as Master of the Livingstone in Richard's Bay for a year, we then moved to the U.K. for a year and then moved back to S.A. and worked for 5 months again as Master of Livingstone in 2001. We then moved back to the U.K. and I have been working for Forth Ports on their fleet of tugs on the River Forth in Scotland as Trainee Mate. I have discovered the General Botha web site and was thrilled to go through the cadet lists, picking out familiar names and faces.” Welcome aboard Ian.

W.R. FLANAGAN 1977 #2585. We lost contact with Walter in 1997 and nobody appeared to know where he got to. All is not lost though as Walter found us through our web site. “We left Richard’s Bay in 1997 and sailed (by yacht) via E Africa/Asia/OZ to New Zealand, where we have settled (for the moment). The boat was sold last Easter to a youngster with a dream (mostly of South Pacific beauties). I noticed a few familiar GBOB names in this part of the world, and the Australia activities. I have very good memories of the characters I met and sailed with. Good to see what Merriman, Nunes, Webster (Bryan), Needham (Godfrey) et al have been up to. My regards to all of them. Would have liked to see more info on each, but I guess those of us in S.A. keep up to date by word of mouth-just the more widespread ones such as I that would like to see more.” So, all of you, send in a new summary of your activities since leaving the Ship, you as well Walter.

M.P. FLEMING 1979 #2670. Now that the *Rooi Gevaar* has been dealt with, Mike has sailed north. “I left Smit Mossel Bay at the end of 2000, after an interesting 8 year stretch there. I am currently working for Smit in Novorossyisk, Black Sea, Russia as Mooring Master for the 2 Single Point Moorings there”.

W.D. STODEL 1946/47 #1487. “The knowledge gleaned from my Bothie training stood me in good stead to pursue my love for fishing by way of crewing for some of the privately owned recreational tuna craft in the early days when tuna fishing first caught on in Cape Town. In 1956 I went to Israel and joined their army. After completing my basic training I applied for and was accepted into their Torpedo Boats Unit stationed at Haifa harbour. It was not an easy unit to get into and I have no doubt my past experience at Bothie as set out in my curriculum vitae to them swung the deal. Prior to going to Israel I had seven years with African Consolidated Theatres as a theatre manager, and later on my return from Israel pursued many different forms of employment covering advertising, sales and finally manufacturing before I retired some years ago”.

R.J. PATERSON 1972 #2422. Rod has recently moved to Canada. We know not what he is doing there and wait anxiously for his signal.

C.F. STURGES 1980 #2702. “Joined Safmarine from Hilton College, Natal in 1979 as a Cadet. Left Safmarine in 1982 and studied Civil Engineering at Natal Technikon, Durban. At present, am the Deputy Provincial Program Manager for the Build, Operate and Transfer contract in Kwa- Zulu Natal implementing water reticulation and sanitation projects in rural areas as part of the Government’s National Rural Development program. Fondest memories of sea life was the Cadet ship " Constantia " in 1980 on the Far East run - what a party, we were the Captains worst nightmare - no names mentioned! Very best wishes to all those Obies of 1980, time to have another re-union - 25th coming up soon (2005) - Boogie let's organize.” Now Boogi, Chris has thrown down the gauntlet, raise to the challenge.

M.J. ACKLAND 1978 #2594. Mark has left Diamond Shipping and has taken up a position of Operations manager at Cape Reefers, a fast growing export business.

IAN WESTWORTH 1955/56 #1979. The success of our very own web site remains unparalleled in the annals of the GBOBA. Ian is another Obie that found us by surfing the net. “Now running 3 bunker barges on the river Mersey. Over the years have met up with Dennis Heiden and Phil Prest of my year and would be pleased to hear from any of the old boys”. Ian, reunions are periodically arranged by Ted Fisher in the UK. If the location not convenient to you then why not arrange a local function in your area? Let me know if you require all the details of ex cadets in your area. Cheers.

G. HARKER 1956/57 #2001. Graham has reported in to let us know that he is now semi-retired doing the occasional rig moves. So, anybody needing a rig moved?

K.H. BURCHELL 1960/61 #2169. Keith was another AWOL member but as usual my detective work found him. “I must apologize for not updating GBOBA on my whereabouts or replying to e-mails as, with all of us these days, 24 hours is not enough. Especially when you are directly involved with the development of a new worldwide maritime technology standard (AIS or Automatic Identification System) -a South African first!!!, the internal development of the Equipment to meet that standard, its production, worldwide sales and the distribution to meet the recently invoked IMO SOLAS requirement. The time scales of which have subsequently been shortened as a result of September 11th 2001, with the implementation of the SOLAS requirement for Class A AIS to be fitted to ALL IMO /SOLAS vessels by December 2004. This requirement has been extended in many counties to other vessels and all countries have to plan to implement shore infrastructure by July 2004 with all infrastructure in place by 2007-We are busy tendering for projects all over the world. A further standard for Class B and associated technology is being developed and we are in design stage on that. This has required my undivided attention for the last three years and has required me to extensively travel the world attending all the relevant forums, setting up distribution networks and promoting AIS and MDS, besides being responsible for Production and all the overseas offices. As an example, I have just returned from Norway and discussions on expansion of the business with a company there. Also our UK office where we are putting in AIS Network software for the Port of London and networking AIS to the Dover VTS (English Channel) and Tilbury and Harwich Ports, amongst others. So I am sure you will accept my apologies for not updating you before”. Apology accepted Keith, as this sounds very impressive to us landlubbers.

R.E. HALL 1961/62 #2203. Rod was another AWOL that I managed to locate. “Thanks for the e-mail and Bothie news letter and for taking the trouble to track me down. I got out of Game in 1998 after 20 years with them - 10 of which as Planning and Development Director. I am still associated with them as a consultant and am fairly involved with the Project Management of the construction of their stores and shopping centres throughout sub-Saharan Africa. In addition I am involved in my own business as a property portfolio manager for a Johannesburg property holding company and am also involved in commercial and residential property broking as well as small shopping centre development with investor /partners. Let’s just say that I keep very

busy. I still dive, spear fish and work out at gym 4 days a week and generally try to pretend that I am not getting beyond the Old Salt stage. I have finally conceded that maybe next year I'll be old enough to take up a little golf."

R.G.W. TERNENT 1984 #2848. Word has come my way that Roy presently has an advertising agency in Gauteng. Thought occurs to me Roy, could you arrange to place ads in certain publications or TV adverts to locate AWOL Obies and have them contact us?

P.D. MURRAY 1952/53 #1784. Received an interesting signal from Peter recently in which he has advised of Wally Bisset 1934/35 and Neville Bulmer 1942/43, living next door to him. Peter writes; "As you can see from the letter head I am involved with The Mission to Seafarers in Port Elizabeth, in fact I have been manager for the last seven years. I enjoy it as it keeps me involved with Seafarers also out of the wife's hair. Should any Old Boy be passing through, please drop by". A haven for any Obie in the area. Good nosh and a pub on station. Also note that we have no career details of Neville Bulmar on our database. So, look lively and send your details in without delay, Neville.

G.C. SPIRES 1975 #2508. Graham joined Pentow [now Smit] in 1997 as SPM pilot, primarily for the EBT project. He writes; "I was first pilot on the Knock Dee, for South Africa's first cargo of crude oil. In 1998 I took over management of the EB-T SPM and as relief pilot as required. I also did some piloting in Ghana at this stage. A new project started up in late 1999 in Sudan, requiring two mooring masters. This stretched our resources to the limit and I handed over the management portfolio to Mike Fleming [1979], then our manager in Mossel Bay. I spent the millennium in Port Sudan – hooray! From January 2000 until July 2001 I was employed as Marine Advisor / Pilot in Georgia, USSR, with relief trips to Sudan and Ghana as Pilot / Loading Master. Since August 2001 I have been a SPM pilot on the CPC project near Novorossiysk, Russia. This is on the Black Sea if you have forgotten your geography. I have the dubious honour of being the first pilot here. Am really enjoying the diversity of my work over the last few years. In 2002 I left Smit South Africa to work for Smit Europe on contract". Phew, suppose you speak the language as well? Look forward to seeing you at the next monthly pub lunch in Cape Town, Graham.

W.G. BRODERICK 1944/45 #1343. Bill served 18 months with Union Castle on the Roslin Castle and the Richmond Castle. He returned ashore and served an apprenticeship as motor mechanic. Had own business which he sold before joining Leyland Motors in 1956, was manager Northern Natal and Zululand. 1981 joined MAN truck and bus as manager in Ermelo before retiring from there in 1992. 1997 built a factory for his son and continues to work for his son in the reinforcing business.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Signals exchanged with Warwick Stodel revealed that his Uncle Cyril was one of the Ship's commissioning draft. "Regarding your query re Jack Cyril Stodel of 1922/23, yes he was my 'uncle Cyril', my late father's youngest brother. Cyril died in 1976 at the age of 70. I think he was sent to the Bothie because he was such a naughty bugger around the house and his dad hoped he would find some discipline there. He was involved in many diversified business interests in his life. In his early days in advertising I believe he designed the **K logo** for Solly Kramer Bottle Stores which I think is still used today. He founded Denver Soap Works in the Transvaal [now Gauteng]. Founder/Director of McCullum and Stevens in Cape Town, a company which manufactured number plates, signs and metal badges and later, with Sam Collins, was responsible for bringing into commission the first diamond mining barge off the west coast. In his latter life he managed, as a co-owner/director, the block of flats "Chartleigh House" on Beach Road, Three Anchor Bay, Cape Town"

CAPTAIN HUB STOHR – PAYING OFF PENNANT

After more than 30 years on the Bothie [and the Technikon that followed] Hub has finally stowed his anchors. Hubertus Stohr was born in Vught (Netherlands) on the 14th. January 1939. He began his nautical career by attending (& passing) the maritime courses at the Flushing Nautical College during 1957 & 1958. He then went to sea with "V.N.S." Verienigne Nederlandse Skeesmaartschappy" - the forerunner to Nedlloyd. In 1967 he came to settle in South Africa with his wife, Nicole, who had her parents in SA (Eastern Transvaal). He then joined the S.A. Navy in their Hydrographic Branch during the years 1970 - 71. On the 1st. February 1972 he began a long and rewarding career in maritime education with the General Botha Academy at Granger Bay. First as a Nautical Lecturer then on to be Senior Nautical Lecturer and before the closing of the Academy he was Chief Officer under Captain. Denys Pitcher. On the change of flag from the "Bothie" to the Cape

Technikon on 1st. July 1990 he was to take over command as Head of the Department. He says his highlight is when past students' graduate through their studies and carry on to succeed to even greater heights in industry. For Hub it has been a privilege to be a part of that cycle. Hub was guest of honour at the 2003 Commissioning Day Dinner. His words to the gathering stressed the importance of training ship discipline and the wearing of uniforms on the training ship in fostering strong characters that are able to meet the challenges of life and rise to senior and successful positions in all walks of life. There was many a wet eye among the younger members present who came to share this very special moment with Hub. A great number of well wishes were received from Obies worldwide which were read out at the dinner. A testimony to Hub's ability, dedication, personality and above all, his immense contribution to the South African maritime fraternity. Hub was presented with a retirement gift comprising a brass clock showing the silent periods mounted on a beautiful beech wood board together with our GBOBA crest and a brass plate inscribed with our words of gratitude. I can attest to the fact that the party continued in the Wardroom well into the small hours of Saturday and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Hub, is this now slow ahead engines or full ahead on passage? (*Written by Tony Nicholas*).

Gavin Durell #2438, 1973 also had this to report on the Captain Hub Stohr):

Tributes to Hub had arrived from ex-cadets, colleagues and friends from all corners of the world where they now reside. Almost everyone had some anecdote involving Hub to recall and many paid tribute to his special brand of teaching, deep sense of humility and his uncanny ability to get even the thickest cadets or students to understand the subject matter. Hub could relate easily to almost anyone he met and his cheerful and friendly disposition has made him popular with all.

Many recalled how helpful he had been in subjects other than those he regularly taught and the great lengths he would go to help cadets and students through their respective 'tickets'. Hub would always go the extra mile to help those that needed assistance in their studies at any time. The length and volume of these tributes bear testimony to a unique individual who has the common touch and who embodied the motto of "Honour and Duty" whilst training students.

Hub's address was punctuated with many humorous incidents that he recalled over the years involving cadets, students and staff. However, it was not all light hearted. Those who know Hub well will know of his passion for the industry and his intense desire to ensure nothing but the best in educating people for a professional environment. There is a serious side to Hub and he gave us some interesting food for thought on the future of maritime training as well as a unique view of how changes in the industry and related maritime education fields over the years have impacted these respective fields.

The last 30 years have probably seen more significant changes than in any other period in the Bothie history and Hub made us acutely aware of sometimes, how the powers that be had failed to heed the warning signs and take enough corrective action to ensure a thriving industry. The older salts may not have fully appreciated how things have changed in recent times, but for the many still in the maritime world, Hub's message was sobering (even at that stage of the evening!) and clear.

The dinner ended with what now appears to be establishing itself as part of a tradition – an auction of items of interest or value to swell the funds of our erstwhile association and keep it in good shape for the years to come. Two rivals bid heavily for a 'collectors' bottle in the famous Bells whisky collection series featuring one of the royal princes. A tidy sum was raised and the generous winning bidder (**Nick Sloane #2750, 1981**) then donated the bottle to Hub – a wonderful gesture, enthusiastically endorsed and applauded by all present.

THE LEGEND LIVES ON – BADGES AND FLAGS

We have had a few requests for new blazer badges but our in-house stocks have long been expended. Research revealed that wire badges are no longer available and, with the assistance of Old Boy Ian Manning, we located the manufacturer of all S.A. military badges. These are made of some synthetic material and are of the highest quality. In fact I hazard to say that they are even better than our original wire badges. These new ones are 3 dimensional, will not tarnish, and have virtually a life guarantee. Many of us have blazers that are far too small to fit around our waists and many of the blazer badges are almost black with age. Thus now is the time to smarten up, as any Bothie Boy should. The estimated cost for a few of these badges is presently R100 each. However, with a substantial order the cost would be SUBSTANTIALLY lower.

Some of our yacht owning Obies have enquired after Bothie burgees to fly on their yards. Again, these are not in stock and new ones would need to be manufactured. We presently do not have a cost for these and need to

have an idea of how many to manufacture. It should be a requirement that all serving Masters who trained on the Bothie fly their Bothie burgee on board. Also, what is to stop us desk jockeys from flying our Bothie burgee on our desks or on a flagpole in our front gardens at home?

In order for us to gauge the numbers for manufacture of the blazer badge and the burgee, please urgently contact TONY NICHOLAS to place your orders. Contact details on page one.

Quadrangular yacht race. (Ian Lindsay #2227, 1963).

The GB contingent in this years annual Quadrangular commemorative yacht race were Nic Sloane, Neil Mouton, Mike Riddel, Ian Lindsay [skipper] & Andre Kruger. Russel Volmer, vice commodore of RCYC, very kindly made his Muira, "CHEN", available for the GBOB entry and was present to keep us in order and informed regarding the finer points on his vessel. The race took place on the 15th March from the RCYC and was staged over a standard triangular course designed to permit a morning race, followed by lunch at Granger Bay wardroom and an afternoon race over the same course.

The first race was scheduled to start at 10:00. As matters turned out, we were about 5 minutes late for the start, due to our having to wait for a member of Russel's usual crew, who ultimately failed to materialize. (It later turned out he had been unavoidably delayed due to a load on his bakkie coming adrift whilst on the way to the RCYC). In any event, despite this initial set back, we managed to work our way up through the fleet and eventually won the first race. On reflection this probably had as much to do with the fact that we took a different line to the remainder of the fleet to the 1st mark and were favoured by the wind. The weather conditions during the 1st race could possibly best be described as 'character building' in that it rained frequently and was definitely a precursor of the winter to come. Following the morning race, the fleet made for Grainger Bay, where we moored at the GB mooring and enjoyed a very pleasant snack lunch (and the *odd* refreshment) in the Maritime Room.

Fortune did not favour the GBOB's in the afternoon race – again we took a different line to the 1st mark from the remainder of the fleet, however on this occasion we were definitely not advantaged, as the NW'ly weather became squally with dead wind patches. Unfortunately we found more dead wind patches than squalls, so ultimately came last in the final race.

Following the final race all yachts returned to the RCYC and the prize giving at SAS Unity. Trophies won as follows:

- Barrel Trophy - SAS Unitie
- Mickey's Mug - RCYC
- Bell Trophy - SAS Yselstein
- Van Winsen Trophy - RCYC
- Barry's Board - GBOBA
- Old Salt's Trophy - SAS Yselstein
- Yselstein Trophy - RCYC

A particular vote of thanks needs to be made to Russel, who made his yacht "CHEN" available to the GBOB's contingent and accompanied us for the race to keep us in order and informed about his yacht. Russel is remarkable in that despite his considerable disabilities, remains totally positive and un-phased, and no matter what unfolds. Thanks again Russel. *[May the Bothie Boat win].*

Message from the Durban Chairman.

It is with regret that we report the passing of Obie Oberholtzer. Johannes Francois Oberholtzer, fondly known to all as Obie was along time supporter of the Old Boys' Association. Born in 1917 on a farm in Langlaagte, he attended the Sir John Adamson school in Johannesburg. In 1932/33 he spent his years on the ship and was a keen boxer. During his school days he was advised by his teacher to obey the rules and to keep out of trouble. (Maybe the reason for his dispatch to Simonstown) One evening there was a knock at the door and a mother appeared with her son complaining that her son had been well and truly beaten by one of the boys. His dad knew Obie was the culprit and when he took him to the door, the lady in question proceeded to give her son a damn good hiding for allowing someone half his size to thrash him!

As a junior on the ship he was always at the receiving end of the usual punishment. In those days there were two trains running daily to Johannesburg – 6 hours apart. Obie sat in the De Aar station for the 6 hour lapse and dished out the same punishment to the offending senior while returning home on leave.

After Bothy he became an apprentice rigger on the mines and qualified as such. In 1951 he joined the Johannesburg council and later served in various capacities. He was mayor of the city in 1963/64 and chairman of the management committee for 16 years prior to his retirement in 1988. The M2 was named the Oberholtzer Highway after him. He founded the Suikerbosrand nature reserve which extends from Heidelberg to Randfontein. Obie passed away on the 1st February 2003 and he was buried at Suikerbosrand, a most fitting resting place. Our Natal lunches were always attended by a host of the '32 models and it was always the old boys club getting together when he made the trip to Durban. Farewell Obie. He is survived by a son and three daughters, 12 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Whilst on the Bothy subject, there is a reported incident that goes something like this: - The duty officer once received a call from an irate father to the effect that a cadet had been caught nude in bed with his daughter to which the officer replied, “one of my cadets nude in bed with your daughter, impossible? We issue them with sufficient clothing!!”

I picked up a book the other day and was amazed to read the following: - In 1941 there was an urgent need to replace the losses suffered by the merchant marine in that year. More than 2700 Liberty ships were being built and assembled in 4 days; 15 ½ hours after the keel was laid. That amounts to about 700 per year – 2 ships per day. The ships were obviously not built in Africa.

Andrew McBride Martin reports as follows:

Man overboard.

Whilst on passage to Curacao in the Dutch West Indies a radio emergency was received to the effect that a cadet had been lost overboard from a Shell vessel ahead. Apparently two cadets, both Bothy boys, were refurbishing the lifeboats – one on each side of the ship. An hour had lapsed and the ship steamed on a reciprocal course, located the missing crew member and took him on board 2 hours later. When Andrew Martin arrived in Curacao he learned that the cadet in question had developed appendicitis and subsequently passed away in hospital there. How sad to survive such an ordeal and then succumb to illness on arrival at the next port. Time dulls the memory but the other cadet was John Bartelson Payn of '29/30 No. 463 who went on to join the harbour service in Durban.

The following report was received from Ian Buckley: “During December 2002 I was delighted to receive an invitation to the wedding of Gwen to Roy Martin, which was to take place in January 2003. Well, the day duly dawned and what a memorable day it was! The wedding ceremony was celebrated at the Musgrave Methodist Church and it was one of those rare inspirational services in which everybody felt as though they were personally involved. The year of '72 was not exactly renowned for its romantic side and looking around I noticed the odd tear in an old boys eye as we witnessed one of the last great Mammoths being saddled up and led into the sunset of blissful domesticity. To our lady readers who are keen followers of bridal fashion, I unfortunately, due to my non-existent knowledge of haute coutier, can only state that Gwen looked stunningly beautiful. From the church we travelled to the Chantecler Hotel which is situated in the scenic valley of a Thousand Hills. Navigational responsibility for this epic trip was placed in the ever capable hands of Alan Rathbone who duly proceeded to get us totally lost. I can now vouch for the fact that there are indeed 1000 hills as we visited each of them personally. Fortunately for us, we crossed paths with guests heading for the reception who were kind enough to guide us back to civilization. Alan insists the former had GPS at their disposal. If any of you ever happen to undertake a journey in excess of three kilometers with Alan, please ensure that you have a GPS plus a five day survival kit which includes snake bite serum, shark repellent and distress flares. The reception, like the church service, was truly first class with food fit for royalty and more than enough of the happy juice being provided. The party carried on until late into the night. To my amazement we (year of '72) were allocated a table which Roy actually allowed to be placed inside the hall with the other guests and family! I am delighted to report that not a single member of that group fell into the flower arrangement, fishpond nor passed wind at an appropriate moment. If points were to be awarded to Roy for his

choice of a perfect bride, he would be given 100%. Sadly, Gwen, we cannot award points for your choice but we gladly welcome you into the ranks of the year of '72 which is a truly noble year. Wishing you both all the health and every happiness for many years to come and a big thank you to you both for sharing that special day with us. Present from 1972 with their partners were Alan Rathbone, Rod Patterson, Allister Snyder and Ian Buckley

Durban AGM

The AGM was once again held at the R.N.Y.C. and attended by 22 members. Although small in number, it turned out to be a sociable occasion nevertheless. Pressure of work saw both Tony da Silva vacate the secretarial slot and Bryan Webster the treasury duties. Thanks to Tony and Bryan for their past input. Ernest Nellmapius was elected to handle the secretarial duties while Dave Freeman will control the purse strings. For my sins, I remain at the helm for a further year with Ray Walker as vice chairman. The other committee members are Colin Knowler, Tony da Silva, Graham Douglas, George Foulis and Allan Pembroke.

Annual dance

The annual dance was held at the Elangeni Hotel on 27 September 2002 and was attended by 188 people. It was a memorable occasion with a gathering of the class of 1972 celebrating their 30th anniversary. Good support was received from the various shipping companies, surveyors and services' associates with added support from the local law firms. This year the dance will be held at the same venue on the last Saturday of September and we are aiming at in excess of 200 people!! Further details will follow in the August newsletter.

GBOBA – UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH NEWS

Greetings from Ted Fisher at Storrington West Sussex

Well, we are safely returned from a most enjoyable holiday in South Africa – away for a period of six weeks seemed an awfully long time when we started out but it was over in a flash. Caroline and I were once again taken with the friendship of everyone with whom we came into contact both friends and family. For me the opportunity of meeting up with 'Obies' together with ex-Union Castle colleagues was much appreciated. I certainly enjoyed the Commissioning Day Dinner on the 21st March at SANF Task Force West Silvermine this also the farewell to Captain Hub Stohr after 30 years in maritime training. The AGM preceded the dinner. The Sunday service had to be held at SAS 'Unitie' in Cape Town Docks due to inclement weather – a very good address with some reminiscence on the 'Bothy' by Chaplain Ralph Thornby. So to UK news of which there is very little to report. The Saturday 15th March lunch in London had to be abandoned due to lack of 'takers' however, a number of stalwarts with wives and friends some twenty in all rallied to a lunch at an Italian Restaurant in Port Solent – we all had a most convivial time – my thanks to those who attended, also for those who apologised in advance. It would appear that due to circumstances of distance and travel future events will have to be locally in the south. We hope to organise a further event during the summer, Chris Nash has finally returned from a four month working stint in US of A and has offered to host a Braai at his home near Woking!! Further details on any events will be advised through e-mail and once again please contact me if you are on e-mail – tedefisher@aol.com or phone or write.

Don't forget 1st Sunday of the month at The Rising Sun Warsash – no advance warning required.

A most enjoyable summer to everyone where ever you may be going. Ted Fisher. April 03.

AUSTRALIAN BRANCH NEWS.

Peter O'Hare.

The Annual Commissioning Day Dinner was held in Sydney on Saturday 22d March and was judged a great success. The newly chosen venue was great as was the food and company. Total attendance was 30 and included 14 Old Boys. Hon. Member (and ex S.A.N.) Captain Allan Du Toit R.A.N addressed the group after dinner telling of his exploits as task group commander in the Persian Gulf in 2001/2002. Considering that the second Gulf war had commenced two days prior to the dinner it was very interesting and indeed topical. Allan is now Director of Naval Strategy and Futures at Defence HQ in Canberra. Recently arrived Old Boy Frans Kies (2282 '66) was welcomed as was Otto Peetoom (2248 '64) who was visiting these shores.

We have 50 known Old Boys in Australia but we are spread throughout this large country. Our next planned get together will be a Braai in November but we may find an excuse earlier. If any Old Boys from anywhere is visiting Sydney please get in touch preferably well prior to arrival and we will try to put something together. Peter O'Hare (2247 '64) Hon. Secretary. Email peteroh@bigpond.com. Tel 0417 028809.

GAUTENG FUNCTION (Ivor Little).

The Gauteng Branch got together at a bring and share braai day on Sunday 5 April. The function was held in an open sided dining room at the side of a sparkling pool at the gracious Rivonia home of Jill and Gerard Marais (58/59). It was an absolutely glorious Highveld day and a very pleasant time was had by all. Over 40 people attended, the group being made up of ex-cadets, their wives, visitors from the UK and even one grandchild! Those attending were, in order of seniority: Jimmy (PTI) Smith (ex-staff), John Birt (41/42), John Galloway (43/44), Ted Page (44/45), Laurie Barnes and Gordon Bennett (46/47), Gordon Cross and Jack Gemmell (47/48), Alec Hunter (48/49), Vic Albert, Mike Crewe and Graham Jooste (52/53), Tony Hunter and Ivor Little (53/54), John Orrock (54/55), Archie Campbell (55/56), Alistair Douglas and Gerard Marais (58/59) and Frank Pascoe (59/60). Apologies were received from a further 19 ex -cadets covering the years 39/40 to 1971. The meeting observed a few moments of silence in memory of Murray McGregor (24/25) and "Obie" Oberholzer (33/34), both members of our branch who had passed on since our last get together, as well as former Capt Supt "Chips" Biermann.

We have completely lost track of Dave Pike (45/46) who has moved without letting us know where he is, but have gained Mike Muller (1966) who has moved up from the Cape.

Our next function will be in September and will be hosted by Jack and Marge Gemmell at their home in Lone Hill.

THE GBOBA WEBSITE UPDATE (BILL SCOTT).

Latest additions to the web site are: -

New link's page link to the interesting site of Cape Windjammers on the contacts page. This is a Cape based organization whose members have served on sailing ships. They are currently negotiating the purchase of the Howard Davis for the purpose of sail training.

While you're there have a look at the Department of Environmental Affairs site, go to "Antarctic" in the search window, and browse down the selection of reports on the recent fascinating and very successful rescue undertaken by the S A Agulhas under the command of Captain Kevin Tate (1976, #2542) in Antarctic winter conditions.

The **Annual Commissioning Day Dinner** in Cape Town in March can be viewed on a slide show presentation in the "Gallery>Activities>Annual Dinners" page.

APPEAL FOR UPCOMING RE-UNIONS (Dave Powell).

1943-44-45 Cadet Years. Following upon our very successful 50th Re Union ten years ago we are hoping to have another get together next March to coincide with the AGM. This time because of the sadly dwindling numbers we would like all cadets who were there in the years 1942, - 43, 1943 - 44 and 1944 - 45 to participate. Contact Dave Powell 021 790 1973 or at e.mail davepowell@saol.com. You can also visit the website for info.

Class of 1973 - Reunion

A small gathering of classmates gathered in Cape Town over the weekend of 21-23 February to mark the 30th anniversary of their year at SAMNA General Botha. As is normal with these types of gathering, it is not easy to assemble great numbers in one place at one time. The class has scattered around the globe but seven brave souls and families managed to mark the occasion together. Not that this should be considered the definitive or official gathering by any means. However, we hope that, following our effort, the rest of the bunch in Durban will make an effort and hopefully do something likewise later this year and maybe also manage to find a few missing AWOLers into the bargain!

Those who attended were as follows: Stuart Bradford #2431, Gavin Durell #2438, Tim McClure #2444, Ian Merriman #2447, Peter Potgieter #2452, Hans Tissink #2459, Rob Whitehead #2463.

Guests of honour were Hub Stohr and Brett and Lynette Theunissen. Brett is the eldest son of Phil Theunissen #2460, who is living in Vancouver, so it was nice to have another generation representing him in absentia. He's a chip off the old block for sure, Phil!! There were two Capetonians who were out of town and were unable to attend viz. Franci Nunes #2450 and Graham Clack #2433. We very much appreciated the presence of Stuart & Carol Bradford and Tim McClure who traveled from Port Elizabeth and Durban respectively to join us. We kicked off with an unofficial lunch at the Portuguese Embassy on Friday. The place still going strong, having been in business since 1972 and has been a favourite haunt of many a mariner since then. Little has changed in 30 years. Probably the only major change in three decades has been allowing the fairer sex entry to the hallowed establishment. Saturday afternoon saw us out on the yacht "Spirit of Victoria" for a champagne sail in the bay in a brisk south-easter. Great sailing and a pleasant start to the evening's proceedings which was in the form of a braai held at the Oceana Power Boat Club in Granger Bay. The club now occupies the site where the old cricket nets used to stand and about as close to what was once our "home" at various stages, as you can get. We observed a few moments silence in memory of our 3 classmates who had passed over the side in the intervening years viz: Peter Moon #2448, Gerry de Villiers #2436 and John van Zyl #2461. The roll was then called and we went through the whereabouts of all those we have managed to locate thus far. From a class of 36, as mentioned, 3 are deceased and we have accounted for all but 6 to 8 souls who are still being logged as AWOL. Will the following "missing" members, PLEASE lay aft with your latest whereabouts: Jacques Adam #2429, Michael (Monty) Demont #2435, Andre Du Preez #2437, Barry Holmes #2441, Dave Melvin #2446, Stuart Procter #2453, Fernando Santana #2456, Paul Wheeler #2462. Let's not wait another 30 years before we do it again!! So, come on Durban, how about it??

The class website is at: <http://members.tripod.com/murbur2>. Alternatively you can e-mail either: Chuck Clayton, caius@attcanada.ca or Gavin Durell sextant@netactive.co.za. Class dismissed! From Gavin Durell.

OLD SALTS YARNS (Charles Kingon).

Many Old Boys have been asking when the next edition of Old Salts Yarns will be produced. The answer is that the production date is still a moving one. I have received a number of articles but still not sufficient to justify publication of a 2nd edition. So, please put pen to paper or finger to keyboard. For those who have no idea what we are talking about. Old Salt's Yarns is a compilation of stories of, and generally by, Bothie Boys. The story can relate to events on the ship or on one of the shore establishments, or else out in the wide world. They can be true or else you can stretch credulity, as most Obies are wont to do anyway. Please send your contributions to me at kingon@icon.co.za, or PO Box 198, Edgemean, 7407. Tks, Charles Kingon. (It is significant that the majority of those who have asked me when publication is due have not made any contribution themselves....).

THE TREASURER GIVES THANKS (Ted Jupp).

The following made donations to the Association January – March 2003: -

J Binos, P J Birch, J Damarell, G H de Kock, D de Wet, G M Dickin, B J Downing, J Doyle, G Durrell, K Ellam, Ted Fisher, A Fotheringham, B Greenwood, I Harvey, W Harris, D Henwood, M A Hoffman, H S James, J Johnston, E W Jupp, F Kies, J R Langridge, W C Lawson, P Leaver, D Le Roux, J Lewer, I C Little, I Manning, K Mc Nish, I Merriman, K Meyer, N Mouton, Mrs Iris Plintou, T Purdon, F Redgement, M Riddell, W W L Scott, N Sloane, G Syndercombe, R Terry, L Tiedt, A Turner, W van Rijswyck, R Whitehead.

Thank you for the support.

A woman walked into the kitchen to find her husband stalking around with a fly swatter. "What are you doing?" She asked. "Hunting Flies" He responded. "Oh. Killing any?" She asked. "Yep, 3 males, 2 females," he replied. Intrigued, she asked. "How can you tell?" He responded, "3 were on a beer can, 2 were on the phone."

I am sorry not to have included all contributions. There are some interesting ones that I have to carry over to the next issue, but thanks for them. See you all then!

Scribe – dhenwood@iafrica.com.