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**GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION**  
[www.generalbotha.co.za](http://www.generalbotha.co.za)  
**MAY 2004.**  
**JOINT NEWSLETTER**

Should your address details change, please send your updated details to:  
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\*

**CONVICTION.**

The recent weekend of commemorating the commissioning of the "Ship" in Cape Town saw a gathering of Bothie Boys at the Cenotaph for the traditional memorial service conducted by the Rev. Ralph Thornley (Naval Chaplain Retired). In his address, entitled "Conviction" there was an important message for all Obies, and with his permission a shortened version is included. The readings are from Psalm 53 and Mathew 6: 5-13. The following are extracts from his address:

.... It is with pride that one remembers the many other names of men who served at sea, on land and in the air and who lived up to "---sub article (d) of Resolution 3, Board of Minute No 1 1921" which reads; "---that great care be taken in all other respects in the selection of boys in order that the ship shall earn a good name among the seafaring men of the world and a high reputation be attached to a Botha Boy wherever he may present himself."

.... Well the stories go on. But in the midst of all the noise and drama of war comes the quiet moment. In the book ("A name among seafaring men" by Wilhelm Grutter) there is a photo by H. Costick of an altar with candles and a crucifix with the caption "On Sundays, chapel was rigged in the ship." Later on we see a photo of the chapel at Gordon's Bay, which incidentally is still in use today. The altar is in memory of John Edward Joseph Lewis 348, who was lost in HMSAS Southern Floe on 11/02/1941. These chapels remind me of the words of Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson spoken to the Society for the Propagation of

Christian Knowledge in 1801, "Kings have been shown that our seamen are religious." I have often said that you won't find an atheist in a badly rolling ship. It is interesting to note however that such people find it easy to boldly declare there is no God when all is right with the world. Psalm 14:1 & Psalm 53:1 both say: "The fool has said in his heart there is no God." But there is a difference between being religious and having a deep conviction of God. Being religious can simply mean treating God with respect or attending church from time to time and perhaps putting something in the plate. A conviction of God moves beyond the realm of whether God exists or not. It moves beyond the tradition of mere church attendance but opens within a person's heart and mind the reality of God's presence in any situation.

The story is told of the famous American world war two pilot, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, who was flying on a special mission to the Pacific Islands. The plane crashed and Rickenbacker and his crew were lost at sea for 21 days. In his journal he wrote: "In the beginning many of the men were atheists or agnostics but at the end of the terrible ordeal each in his own way discovered God. Each man found God in the vast empty loneliness of the ocean. Each man found salvation and strength in prayer and a community of feeling developed which created a liveliness of human fellowship and worship and a sense of gentle peace."

Note there were no church bells or church buildings with ministers, priests, pastors or rabbis attending to formal worship. It was simply man with his God, one on one. And that is the beginning of conviction. This annual remembrance service, which in itself is a noble thing, falls into the realm of the religious. It is an annual event in which we go through certain rituals and then it is over. The question is has it affected our hearts and minds in any way? Are we any closer to God than before we came? I close with this true story.

In 1854 a sailing ship was becalmed in the vicinity of New Guinea. A young Englishman noted the concern on the captain's face and asked what was wrong. The captain said, "A 4 knot current is carrying us to some sunken reefs over there and it seems our fate is sealed." On the shore cannibals could be seen lighting fires with great glee. The captain continued, "We have done everything that can be done." The young Englishman replied, "No, there is one thing we have not done. Four of us are Christians, let us go to our cabins and there in agreed prayer ask the Lord for a breeze." The captain agreed. A few minutes later the young man came up on deck fully expecting that the prayers had been answered. He asked the 1st Officer to let down a corner of the mainsail because a breeze was coming. The officer was a crude man who did not need all this God stuff. He laughed and said that can't pray for wind. But very soon the topsails began to tremble in the breeze. The mainsail was dropped and they were soon sailing away from the reefs and cannibals. They were safe. The young Englishman was Hudson Taylor who went on to found the China Inland Mission. When he died in 1905 he left behind 205 mission stations and 800 missionaries. In his journal he wrote; "Thus God encouraged me ----- to bring every variety of need to Him in prayer and to expect that He would honour the name of the Lord Jesus and give the help each emergency required." The point of the story is Taylor's conviction of the God who is there. It was more than religious ritual, it was heart conviction.

As we remember the General Botha and those who paid the supreme sacrifice, I am reminded of these words; "O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer." More important than mere religion is a heart conviction of the God who is there.

Ralph Thornley(Rev).

## SLOP CHEST

These slop chest items all proudly display our association insignia. Place your orders without delay with:

**Kathy Nicholas Phone: 021-7885957 fax: 021-4213194 Email:**

**cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za** Note: Some items in the slop chest are available from the Durban Branch as well. **PRICE PLUS PACKAGING AND POSTAGE!**

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<b>A NAME AMONG SEAFARING MEN</b> History of the training ship.	<b>DONASIE</b>
<b>FIRST DAY COVER</b> 60th anniversary of our Old Boys' Association	<b>DONASIE</b>

### FROM THE BRIDGE OF ss CAPE TOWN

Tony Nicholas (Chairman).

Another successful March events calendar has been concluded giving me some time to rest and recuperate from all the drinks and dinners. No less than three class reunions were held over subject period and by all accounts each one was highly successful. The 1953/54 class did something unique in taking up residence on board their actual "Ship" and bunked in the same dormitories that they had 50 years ago. Much space is taken up in this edition covering the reunions and thus I leave the detail to them. Well done lads, and my sincere thanks for bringing in all those AWOL.

Our Commissioning Day Dinner was held this year at Kelvin Grove Club in Rondebosch. By all accounts received the event and the catering were highly successful. Once again this year the branch subsidized the cost of the dinner per member, and the wine was sponsored by Island View Shipping [Gavin Durell 1973] and the Mission to Seafarers [Keith Meyer 1952/53]. Thanks lads, much appreciated by all who attended. Exactly 60 members booked for the evening but a lesser number was piped to the tables. The branch has to pay the club for the numbers booked and thus the evening was a drain on the branch's finances, which we can ill afford. Only one apology was received. For the rest who went AWOL that evening, you will hear from our treasurer. We are all aware that the cost of living is ever increasing and unfortunately the branch cannot continue to subsidise the Dinner in future. However, the branch is in a position to offer individual assistance to members who may find it difficult to attend the Dinner. For further details contact any of our Cape Town branch committee members or your chairman direct. Following on the success of the 2004 March events the same venue has been booked for March 2005. Enter the dates in your diary immediately and finalize your travel arrangements as follows;

- Friday 4th March 2005 @ 1800 - Annual General Meeting.
- Friday 4th March 2005 @ 2000 - Commissioning Day Dinner.
- Saturday 5th March 2005 - Annual quadrangular yacht.
- Sunday 6th March 2005 @ 1000 - War Memorial Service followed by a "bring & braai".
- Tuesday 8th March 2005 1230 for 1300 - monthly pub lunch.

A forthcoming branch event is another joint lunch meeting with the Master Mariners'. Take very special note of the change of time the event commences. As usual we should give the club an indication of numbers attending and therefore we await your booking. However, should you not have booked but find yourself clear on the day, do attend as we will arrange for the club to cater for a few extras. Thus we keep the menu simple and the price low.

- Event: Presentation of the salvage of the Sealand Express.
- Venue: Royal Cape Yacht Club, Table Bay Harbour.
- Date: Tuesday 8th June 1130 for 1200.
- Guests, wives and/or partners are welcome to attend.
- RSVP: Kathy Nicholas
- Phone: 021-7885957, Fax: 021-4213194, Email: [cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za](mailto:cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za)

Being an associate member of the S.A. Legion enables members to benefit from their various activities and infrastructure. Recently the S.A. Legion has negotiated reduced rates for funeral services with Peninsula Funeral and Goodall & Bourne. Together they have various offices around the Western Cape and Port Elizabeth. Contact us should you require further details.

**SOS** Sadly our prestigious publications continue to be returned in some numbers. Some I am able to trace and some not. Thus I require your assistance in tracing those who remain AWOL. Arthur Frost 1942/43, last known to reside in Eendekuil somewhere in the Western Cape, nothing more is known of him. Paul Clarke 1981, last known to be with Novartis Pharma in Switzerland. A couple of phone calls to Switzerland revealed that he is believed to have joined a pharmaceutical company in South Africa. I have emailed the parent company enquiring but no reply received. Surely one of you out there has some contacts that could assist in tracing Paul? Andre Kruize 1980, is reported to be in Australia somewhere. I have been given an address in Umhlanga Rocks which is reportedly his mother's but have had no reply from there.

### **General Botha belt Buckles**

There is a plan afoot to have belt buckles, like we wore at the Bothie, cast, for sale. Cost probably about R100. In order to gauge the feasibility of producing these, please let Keith Meyer (home 021 7825425 or email to [keith.meyer@eject.co.za](mailto:keith.meyer@eject.co.za)) if you are interested or not.

#### **Peter Cook 1948/49.**

"With great sadness I report the sudden passing of my Father, P.W. Cook (No. 1546 - 1948/49) on the 10th March 2004. After the Bothie my Father had a short sea career, as apprentice with Elder Dempster Lines on the West African Service, the tales of which lasted his lifetime. He retired from Civil service in 1993. A God-fearing man, who brought humour and compassion to all whose lives he touched, will be lovingly remembered by his family and friends. Wife of 42 years, Adelaide. Sons and Daughters, Margaret, David, Maureen and Peter. (In law) Mark, Joanne, Edward and Alijda. Grand children, Claire, Graham, Kelvin and Kylie. My Dad was immensely proud of having been on the Bothie, claiming highest mark on his entrance exam for his year and undefeated boxing

champion in his weight division. The Bothie Old Boys lunches were the highlight of his month and most certainly enriched his last few years. One of my most cherished memories will be of attending one of these lunches with my Dad. Many thanks to the Old Boys, Wives and Friends of the KZN Midlands branch whose efforts made those lunches happen.

**Des Kingham 1931/32.**

Passed over the side on the 8th March 2004. After Bothie Des joined British India Line, sailed on several of their vessels before joining the S.A. Harbour service.

**Robbie Roberts 1949/50.**

Passed away on the 22nd March 2004. Little is known of Robbie's early career but spent twenty years at the Robertson Wine Cellar as a Cellar Master. Then in 1995 he became a consultant cellar master / wine maker at the Klawer Co-Operative in the Oliphantsriver wine region, Western Cape.

**Derrick van der Merwe 1937/38 #959.**

Derrick served his time with Ellerman City line and on his first voyage to sea in the City of Exeter, encountered the famous German raider - Atlantis - on its way from Europe to the Cape, disguised as the Japanese ship Kassi Maru. They were not attacked as the raider did not want to give away her presence before laying mines off Cape Agulhas. Later, Derrick joined The Blue Star Line where he rose to the rank of Master and was liked and respected by all who sailed with him. He married and settled on Merseyside where he retired. Regrettably, he suffered a stroke in 1991 and lost the use of his right side. He continued to live at home until some 12 months ago when he moved to the appropriately named Safe Harbour Nursing Home in Bromborough. Sadly, a chest infection turned to pneumonia and in spite of intensive care, he lost the battle on the 28th February 2004. He had visits from a number of Bothie Obies including a close contemporary - Bob Lambert (1933/34 # 696) who now lives in Nantwich. He is survived by his wife Sybil, daughter Collette and family including two grandsons.

**Mark Baumgarten 1976.**

Mark sadly passed away on the 6th February 2004. He served at sea with Safmarine until 1987 when he started his own business in the furniture industry. After a few months he bought into a timber supply franchise. In 1997 Mark and family moved to New Zealand and joined International Paper, an American based company, as their logistics analyst in sales and procurement.

**Ralph Kuhnert 1955/56.** Passed over the side on the 22nd April 2004. Any further information of Ralph would be appreciated.

**Jimmy Barrett 1940/41.**

Jimmy sailed for a while on the s.v. Lawhill as third officer and then shipped out on the Commodore, a five mast schooner, which sailed between South Africa and South America. After marrying he came ashore and went steeple jacking on the Reef. Passed over the side on 28 March 2004.

Our condolences to the families of all of the above.

**SCRANBAG**

**T. Grapow 1987 #2906.**

Toralf was recently awarded the Society of Master Mariners' annual prize for achieving the highest results in his Master's examination at a function hosted by Smit Marine. Toralf is in command with Smit Marine. Well done Toralf, Honour & Duty.

R.A. Salmon 1956/57 #2022.

With some assistance from Obies in the USA Richard has been found. He has recently returned from the USA and now owns a luxury Bed & Breakfast in Fouriesburg, Free State. Richard, watch out for some Scranbags passing your way.

**M.D. Wemyss 1959/60 #2164.**

After spending a few years as a harbour pilot in the port of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Mike has retired to Mossel Bay. Guess you are now a teetotaler.

**F.H. Wheeldon 1941/42 #1208.**

After Bothie Frank joined the mv Seelandia and later the ss Dalia until the end of WWII. He then joined Burroughs Machines in Johannesburg and from there, Goldfields Mining House. In 1963 he set up his own business manufacturing laboratory apparatus called Rutland Industries. Retired end of 2000.

**D.S. LOVELL 1981 #2724.**

Dennis Lovell left Safmarine in July 1985 to join a clearing and forwarding company in Johannesburg. In 1986 he joined a commodity trader company as their Shipping Manager and in 1992 he formed his own company trading in metal powders, refractory metals, non-ferrous alloys and specialty alloys. 1996 he commenced production of a range of welding consumables which he took to Australia and New Zealand in 2003 where he is developing a branch network, Specialty Metals. Dennis lives in Australia at present but commutes regularly back to Johannesburg to keep a Managing Director's eye over his operations there.

**John Shewell 1953/54 #1849.**

John served his apprenticeship with Union Castle and then did his Second Mate's FG at Nellist's, the famous nautical school in Newcastle. He then joined Common Brothers and was appointed to their "Laristan" as third officer. She was a 14 000 ton tanker and in her they carried oil to Mobile, Alabama and then, after a moderately successful attempt at cleaning the tanks, loaded grain for China. The decision was made to do the passage via the Med and not Panama and west of Madeira the "Laristan" ran in to a serious storm. Her tank lids burst, oil polluted the grain and the voyage was abandoned, the "Laristan" proceeding instead to Rotterdam. There her crew paid off and John decided to leave the sea once and for all. He then took up photography and photojournalism, which included a stint in Ethiopia covering the famine relief campaign. With the beginning of the development of North Sea oil, John moved to Aberdeen to seek his fortune there. In this he was successful and two years ago, having reached the age of 65, he decided to return to his first interest of photography. He sold his audiovisual and design services company and retired. He is currently chairman of the Aberdeen fund raising division of the RNLI and is also involved in the restoration of steam engines, being the club's PRO as well as a helper and brass polisher. Examples of his photographic work can be found on <http://www.shewellfamily.co.uk> and of his club's steam activities on the web site <http://www.bonaccordsteamclub.co.uk> which John manages.

**D.N.A. Henwood 1972 #2416.**

Following a long career with Safmarine Dennis joined FFS Refiners in Cape Town at the end of 1999 as their administration and operations manager. During that time he was responsible for the building of a tank farm in Table Bay Harbour as well as the building and successful commissioning of a bunker barge. A year ago Dennis decided that a change was the order of the day and became Independent Marine Consultant, training, assessment and certification. So, anyone requiring marine consulting, his contact details are contained in this publication.

**B.H. Lawrence 1944/45 #1362.** After a number of years of being AWOL Brian has contacted us via our website. "Just came across our site by chance and was able to catch up with all the news. Particularly interested in the photo of the 43-44 60th reunion. "Looking good guys" and with sorrow reading about the passing of a few very good

friends and shipmates. I am presently semi retired and living in Kaohsiung, Taiwan." Brian, we would appreciate some details of your career since leaving the Ship. Such details form a valuable part in the preservation of the history of our Ship.

**I.A. Morrall 1954/55 #1900.**

"I, along with chum Stuart Edwards [1954/55] - his parents ran Thelma's Guest House in Gordon's Bay - joined his father at the Surveyor-General's Office in CPT. He left to join the BSAP in Rhodesia, while I obtained the National Diploma in Land Surveying and thereafter joined Transnet. Liz and I were married in 1961 at (you guessed it!) The Strand and had two daughters, in 1963 and 1964. We left for PE in 1969 and later for JHB in 1983. I retired from Transnet in 1994. We have two granddaughters and two grandsons, the whole clan living in JHB. My maritime involvement, I joined SAS UNITIE in CPT in 1957 (CDR Micky Thomas was OC then) as a volunteer Citizen Force (CF) Able Seaman. When we left CPT for PE in 1969 I was a Lt, having attended 3-week courses or served at sea annually. At the CF Base SAS DONKIN, one of the courses I attended was a 15-month long Staff Course, which included two full-time 3-week periods in 75/76 at Naval College (the "Bothie" - nostalgia, nostalgia...). I later became OC SAS OOSTERLAND and OC Naval Base PE and SAS DONKIN. Since 1994, I have been working on a part-time basis as a Captain at Defense HQ, writing policy for the Reserve Force. I drive to DHQ about twice a week, but work mainly from home." Ian, please DO NOT close down SAS Unitie.

**SANC General Botha movie**

As part of plans for the recent 53/54 Reunion, Barry Cullen transferred a fifty year old 8mm movie of his to digital video; this features life at the Bothie in Gordon's Bay during 1954. The SA Navy Band made a wonderful gesture in recording bugle and full band pieces for several of the scenes - "General Salute," "Sunday Divisions" and an old Bothie march. The quality of the digital transfer and music is superb. The movie was presented at the April lunch and Keith Meyer wrote "Come Hell or High Water" he wanted a copy!

For further details and to order please contact **Barry Cullen, PO Box 445, Betty's Bay, 7141. Tel: 028 272 9637. E-mail cull@xsinet.co.za**. The cost is R110 per copy, plus R17.70 for registered postage and packing.

**L.H. Tiedt 1987 #2916.**

L.H. Tiedt 1987 #2916. Lance is presently with Smit Terminals Europe, based in Poti, Georgia. I think that is somewhere in the old USSR. "How do I come to be in Poti? Well, I was looking to move on from Tidewater, so passed my details around, and got a phone call from Graham Clack [1973], was I interested in working here for Smit Terminals Europe Ltd. (The office is in Dubai.) Six weeks on - six off, though traveling time comes out of your off time but hey it's paid travel days. My predecessor decided not to return after been robbed onboard at gunpoint! Hopefully a one off occurrence. Two days ago I was planning an evacuation plan from the port as a State of Emergency had been declared in the area to the south of us! But the situation seems calm and we are in no real danger. We are a small tug of 36m though with a 4600 bhp! Doing the servicing of the SPM, spending two days a week hanging on the stern of a tanker while loading, the rest of the week alongside with the occasional trip to the SPM for maintenance or oil spill boom deployment training, quite civilized. My opposite number here is Bryan Van Oordt [1981]." Sounds like oodles of fun out there in the wild east.

**D.I. Loubser 1981 #2742.**

Another Obie that has found us via our very valuable tool, the website. "After leaving

Bothie I remained with Safmarine until 1984, leaving to attend the Universities of the Witwatersrand and Cape Town. I now live in New Zealand where I am a senior Policy and Spatial Information Analyst with the Ministry of Forestry. I am also a reserve officer in the Royal New Zealand Navy."

**L.R. Purchase 1981 #2746.**

Richard has recently left Cape Town where he was in the shipping agency business and settled in England. Pray tell us, what are you doing there, Richard?

**M.A. Rowe 1977 #2572.**

Last year Mike moved to Australia and is working for ASP Ship Management on bulk ore carriers in the Great Barrier Reef area.

**R.J.T. Greensmith 1973 #2439.**

Three years ago Richard embarked on his round the world cruise, reports in. "I am in Antigua in the West Indies, been here since November 2002, working on the Mega Yachts in the winter and then I went down the Leewards to Granada for the Hurricane season, my younger son is here on his boat as well and working for the same firm so its a family business. Plan to leave here after the Classic Yacht regatta in April and head back to Europe for the festival of wooden boats in Brest in July, then its back to London for a major refit before heading for the Pacific via Magellan straits in about 2007. I entered the Classic Yacht regatta last year and if you are interested there are some great photos of the my boat in the website [www.photoaction.com](http://www.photoaction.com) click on regattas and then on the Antigua Classic yacht regatta 2003 then click on my boat Usquaebach, it was a real gas and we won the Comfort Zone Trophy (which really meant we came last) and also the Best Dressed Crew, but it was great competing with some of the classic yachts of all time including a few J Boats. My son cleaned up on his boat "Crystal" a Herreshoff 28, which he also built in Knysna. He won 4 trophies including the best Gaffer in the regatta. There is a cute father and son article in this year's program, but enough of the brag." Bon voyage mate.

**John Judd 57/58:**

Malcolm Clark 56/57 writes - In response to your enquiry regarding the whereabouts of John Judd 57/58 you can advise whoever was interested in knowing that after leaving the Bothy he started a very successful transportation company in Devon outside Johannesburg. After leaving the Bothy we met again in 1963 while I was working in the area and became very close friends, and can certainly relate to some memorable times together. Unfortunately he passed away in 1973 leaving a wife and two daughters. Anyone interested in knowing more information can contact me.

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### **WYLO**

Alan Ford 1971 residing in Gauteng, still has an interest in matters nautical it seems. "Please can you put in a request for me in the next newsletter, I'm sure someone in CT knows. What became of Frank Wightmans yacht WYLO after his death? He was one of SA's earliest sailors who set out for the West Indies after the war. He made two trips, one to WI and the second, years later to the USA. He lived a hermit's life on his yacht in Saldanha and eventually died in the seventies in Cape Town after spending his last years cared for by Brian Lello on his farm. He wrote two books, The Wind is Free and Wylo Sails Again. I saw his boat at Royal Cape in 1972." Have you tried the RCYC, Alan?

### **ESPERANZA**

**M.J.I. Fincken 1987 #2904.** Mike is home for a while from his very interesting travels with Greenpeace. "Hello to all my best friends in the world, I have just returned from the most wonderful sea trip of my life. I joined the Esperanza while in dry dock as second mate in the port of Piraeus, Greece. This was a great beginning which gave me two weeks to really explore the boat and acquaint myself with the general arrangement and safety equipment. An old friend of mine had re-assured me that going back to sea was like riding a bicycle, he was right. No sooner had I stepped on board, I found myself in my element and flooded with the relief of returning home to my natural environment. By chance I started to read a book called Sophie's World, and one day I took it ashore and read from it under a Greek Mediterranean sun. I learned about Aristotle whilst walking amidst the ruins of the Acropolis, what a beautifully gentle way for me to begin my voyage. On board I rigged up a stage and painted the rainbows on the ships funnels. New Year was spent in Siracusa, Sicily and then the voyage through the Med in beautiful picture postcard weather. The Bay of Biscay proved the stability of the Espy with a following force 11 wind and swells of twelve meters. We where blown to London, my first trip up the Thames. Canary Wharf was where we docked in amongst hugely beautiful skyscrapers of glass that at night lit up like crystal palaces. I was lucky to be able to spend some time with both my Godfather and Goddaughter and to show them my world on a ship. The Esperanza is 72m long and 2076 tonnes, so is closer to a boat than a ship. She is a lovely vessel to sail upon. London we launched the beginning of a three year Oceans campaign, with press conferences and open boats to the public. On one day I spoke to 1300 people as I presented the bridge and a little of what life is like at sea to all the tours that came past. Great for my public speaking practice. The next seven weeks was spent off the south coast of England, following pair trawlers. These are pelagic, mid water nets the size at mouth equivalent to two football fields. They are drawn between two very small fishing boats and scoop up anything in their paths. We were out there to document the industry with attention to the issue of by-catch, especially cetacean by-catch. We never witnessed dolphins in any nets, but sadly we did pick up a number of dead common dolphins, which had clearly been damaged by nets; broken beaks and torn fins. The weather was that of winter north Atlantic, it brought its storms. The most fantastic of which was a gusting hurricane of 78 knots that tossed the Esperanza around without relent for two weeks. The sea was wildly streaked and the rigging screamed, green water kept the decks awash. This most terrible storm was off Ireland, where we sought shelter in Dingle Bay and dragged anchor all the time. Throughout the Oceans campaign, as second mate, I kept up the midnight to four bridge watch as we searched for or followed trawlers. Towards the end of the campaign we had seven sets of Pair Trawlers all fishing together, they kept us very busy. We also conducted a cetacean survey with the WDCS scientists on board. The ship was full of people, 38 in total; there was a knitting club and Spanish lessons in the evenings. Twelve different nationalities complimented the contingent, truly a floating U. N. For my last two weeks on board I was promoted to Chief Mate again, much prefer this position, if only to get off the dog watch.

We went into a Forests campaign and carried out very dramatic action on a ship called the Greveno, carrying illegal timber from the rain forest of Indonesia. We tried many times to board her with hooks and caving ladders. Each time getting hosed down by the Greveno crew, but eventually through persistence we succeeded in boarding and then occupying the foremast. I was boat driver for the cameraman and videographer so was right up close for it all. I have had a wonderful trip, hard work, long hours but the reward immeasurable. I also did quite a bit of writing whilst on board, a few contributions to the website, where you can find on the Greenpeace web page; The Philosophers Watch, Keeping a Weather eye open and The Night Watch. Now I am beginning a period of three months shore leave, returning to Esperanza in the middle of July. I have a lot of plans for this leave and am busy at present trying to work them into a do-able time frame. It all starts with buying a car, then dive course, fast rescue craft course, climbing course, Electronic Navigation System refresher course and I hope a few camping trips. I will also be helping Greenpeace out in whatever way I can through a local networking support group." Pretty exciting stuff Mike. We look forward to the next edition. Obies will find some interesting photographs on our Obie website of Mike's voyage and adventures.

#### **WHERE ARE THEY NOW? -**

##### **Andrew Dunlop 1946/47 #1464 - A Wartime Yarn**

During 2002 a certain Andrew Dunlop (widely known as Dunny) of Constantia passed away at the age of 73, not long after the death of one of his "partners-in-crime", Peter Rigney. They left behind an interesting tale of World War II, which can now be told without fear of prosecution by those with nothing better to do. The story is as related by Andrew's sons, now living in Hout Bay, who believe that their father and his mates left a peculiar mark on Cape Town. Back in those dark days Andrew and his teenage pals were very poor, Andrew having lost his father long before the war. To put food on the table the lads regularly indulged in crayfish poaching as the sea was crawling with kreef right on their doorstep. What penniless youths did for boats is the interesting point! They simply laid hands on a large sheet of corrugated iron and some timber, bent the sheet along its length, nailed each end closed over a wooden lath, and used timber struts/planks to hold open the sheet, in a boat shape, and to provide seats. The holes in the bow and stern were then caulked and liberally sealed. These cockleshells were known as canoes, presumably because they were paddled rather than rowed. But crayfish provided only meager pickings, as it was long before the days of it becoming a luxury item. Andrew then spotted the allied troopships, anchored not far offshore in Table Bay, as a potential source of serious income. Of particular interest were the ships en route from Australia, it being well known that Cape Town had to be protected from the rowdy and randy Ozzies who were officially barred from going ashore. The lads regularly paddled out to the ships, to offer a clandestine lift ashore for any soldiers desperate to avail themselves of Sea Point hospitality. Of course, there were many takers for this service, which the lads provided at no charge. That was until the soldiers, in various stages of inebriation, came to return to their ship. They would find Dunlop & Co waiting for them and charging big bucks (£sd in those days) for the return trip: it is not known what the charge was although it provided the lads with more than pocket money. Whether they collected commission from the bars and brothels one can only guess, but Dunny did become an entrepreneur of note after the war! "So what?" one is tempted to ask. Just another bunch of Cape Town opportunists ripping off wartime tourists! The point of interest, to those fascinated by Cape Town's history, is how the enterprise gained easy access to the sea at a very dangerous point of the coastline. At that time the authorities were busy improving the sea wall in Sea Point and hardly noticed that some explosive went missing and drilling equipment was borrowed for a while (Little has changed over 60 years! Ed). With time on their hands, Dunlop & Co chose their route to the sea through the rocks, drilled the appropriate rocks, filled the holes with dynamite at low tide, and blew the rocks away to create a channel for their canoes. And nobody knew who set the explosives as the master blaster set the detonator fuses such that the lads were all tucked up in bed when the dynamite went up! The blasted rock probably disappeared into the new sea wall while the sides of the channel were then drilled to retain stanchions for a guide rope along

which the canoes could be hand-hauled to the shore, alternatively to support drunken clientele walking over slippery rocks to their transport. Irrespective of how the story might have been embroidered by the passage of time, the basic facts are still visible. The canoe channel created by Dunlop & Co is still there and, while the stanchions have disappeared, the holes in which they were placed can be seen in the rock. Recent photos prove the story's veracity, which is confirmed by the only survivor of Andrew's confederates, apart from there being no reason for the Dunlop sons to fabricate yet another Cape Town legend during a casual chat in the pub.

#### **GBOA 2004 Quadrangular Race**

Following the usual request to RCYC yacht owners to make a craft available for the race, Tom Connel, owner of the Muira "Phantom" very kindly threw his hat into the ring. However, as "Phantom" was in Mykonos, after a RCYC pursuit race, this involved bringing the yacht back to RCYC in order to be positioned for the race scheduled for the 6th March. Tom Connel asked for volunteers to assist in bringing the yacht back from Mykonos - this request was circulated to all GBOB's who had offered to crew for the race. As matters transpired, only I was able to make the Mykonos to Cape Town voyage, which turned out to be not so much a sail, as an exercise in feeling one's way through a 'pea soup' fog all the way from Dassen Island to RCYC.

The race duly took place on the 6th March against the Muira "Apricot" from the RCYC and the two L26's from Unitie & Yselstein. The GBOA crew of "Phantom" comprised - Patrick Knight [1971], Patrick Doyle [1986] & Ian Lindsay. [1963]. The first race started in a dying NW'ly, however, the South Easter began showing itself along the Milnerton shore, so suddenly the race was on to get into the South Easter from our start position, which was now in the Table Mountain wind shadow. As matters turned out, "Apricot" 'pipped' us to the wind and held their lead until the finish. "Phantom" was second over the line ahead of the two L 26's. As the start had been slow, the race was shortened to coincide with the arranged 'refreshments' at Grainger Bay. Following a most convivial snack lunch, a few 'refreshments' and several good yarns, the second race started at 14:30. Patrick Doyle gallantly withdrew (to baby-sit his young sons) in order to allow his wife Janice [1986] to take part in the second race. The South Easter had piped up nicely for the second race, which revealed that our scratch crew had possibly slightly more enthusiasm than skill when it came to spinnaker handling around the cans. This unfortunately told on us and "Apricot" was able to maintain a lead for the entire race with "Phantom" finishing second, followed by the two L26's.

The conclusion of events was the usual refreshments and prize giving at SAS Unitie. After the appropriate handicapping was taken into account, GBOBA took 2 of the trophies - the Barrel Trophy and the Old Salts' Trophy.

A very enjoyable day in good company - hopefully, with better preparation next year's race will result in a greater haul of the spoils.

#### **GBOBA - United Kingdom Branch**

Greetings from UK - Ted Fisher.

Have had contact with Donald Neaves, John Shone, Doug Wrathmall, Peter Heydenryck, Chris Nash, Stewart Collins, Hugh Scheffer, Ivan Bole plus first time in South Africa met Dennis & Myra Jones from the Wirral UK and Tim Cowley. The Master Mariner's Sea Pie Supper in Southampton Guildhall on 6 February was another excellent evening once again attended by 8 Old Boys - needless to say a lively section of the table!

Caroline and I were lucky enough to be out in SA during March where I had the opportunity of attending the AGM & Commissioning Dinner in Cape Town, also joined by Doug Wrathmall and John Shone from UK. I joined in the Tuesday Pub Lunch at the Royal Cape Yacht meeting a large contingent of Old Boys and finally, we attended the Sunday Remembrance & Wreath Laying Ceremony at the General Botha Memorial

followed by a braai at Cape Technikon - thanks as ever to Tony Nicholas. Again, we were fortunate in being able to join in the 53/54 Reunion Weekend (my Old Salts) over 19/22 March - this at the end of our holiday. The reunion took the form of a 'nostalgic' weekend for Old Boys and wives at the former SANC General Botha in Gordons Bay now SA Naval College. It was a time of fun & enjoyment seeing not only our Old Salts but seven of my 54/55 intake were present.

How do you all feel about a get-together in the summer? I am suggesting a London River Boat trip with lunch or dinner on board or somewhere? However, before proceeding please contact me so as we can gauge interest which will have a bearing on cost? This coming weekend 2 May is The Rising Sun lunch at Warsash, all welcome, next one 6 June. I look forward to hearing from UK residents & visitors alike. Ted Fisher 01903 744400 e-mail [tedfisher@aol.com](mailto:tedfisher@aol.com).

### **GAUTENG BRANCH COMMISSIONING DAY FUNCTION**

The Gauteng Branch held its annual Commissioning Day function on Sunday, 25 April, instead of the more usual 15 March. The reason for this was the high number of ex-cadets who were "otherwise engaged" in March and would thus have not been able to attend.

This year's function took the form of a buffet lunch at the Boston BBQ at Gold Reef City Casino. Thanks to the good offices of Iain Turner, son of ex-cadet Tony Turner, we were able to sample the 100 dishes at the buffet for a greatly reduced price and we were also given complimentary parking and gambling vouchers. The Boston BBQ provided us with a private dining room, where we were able to meet congenially and enjoy a bit of good fellowship.

The Gauteng "Branch", which is comprised of exiled members of the Cape Town and Durban branches, is steadily growing in numbers and the functions are becoming extremely well attended, resulting in us having to search continually for ever larger venues.

This month's function was attended by a total of 60 people - ex-cadets, wives and friends - with apologies from a further 16 ex-cadets. This was an extremely good reaction but is becoming typical as the word gets around that our functions are not only good fun but also value for money.

This luncheon was conducted with the minimum of formality. There was the usual grace, after which Ivor Little gave the apologies for those absent and proposed the toast to "The Ship". It was then back to trying to sample as many as possible of the 100 dishes on offer!

After we dispersed, a guest of one of our members promptly won R500 with her complimentary gambling voucher - this caused a general onslaught on the tables but, at this stage, history does not record any other wins.

Those ex-cadets attending were: Frank Redgment and James Robinson (39/40), Ron McClintock (42/43), Tony Turner (43/44), Bill Leader and Eddie Page (44/45), Laurie Barnes and Rex Chambers (46/47), Alex Hunter and René Poerner (48/49), Drummond Terry (50/51), Vic Albert, Mike Crewe and Jac van Leeuwen (52/53), Tony Hunter, Ivor Little, Eric Moir, Haig Mitchell and Keith Quayle (53/54), Ian Morrall and John Orrock (54/55), Archie Campbell (55/56), Alastair Douglas (58/59), Frank Pascoe and Alex Vowles (59/60), Brian Preiss and Trevor Kilburn (1964), John Muller (1966), and Chris Salmon (1969). We were particularly pleased to welcome PTI Jimmy Smith, back with us after his recent severe illness.

Our next function will be on 24 September 2004 (Heritage Day) at a venue to be

announced. It is a long weekend but, even so, we look forward to yet another turnout!

Ivor Little, ivorandanne@mweb.co.za.

#### **Donations Received with Thanks.**

The following made donations to the Association during the period 1 Nov. 2003 to 31 March 2004: -

Australia Branch R.W. Deane D.G. Jupp H.R. Milne I. Appleton G. K. Douglas G. B. Kewley P. O'Hare J. Barrett G. Fenn P. King B. Preiss D. Bell J.C. Ferris C. R. F. Kingon	T. Cowley P. C. Prest J. Binos E. Fisher C. A. Kroon G. Stalling P. Bitzker R. Fulton R. Kros P. Staples A. Campbell W. Goldsmith J. R. Langridge P. Stowe M. Clark	O. Grapow W. D. Leppan B. Swart L. Cole B. Greenwood D. Le Roux D. Tooms J. Cooke I. Harvey D. S. Lovell J. Tully M.Coppinger(Mrs) E. Hodes (Mrs) C. R. McLeod A. R. Turner	M. Hoffman J. Matthew D. C. van Onselen W. J. Damerell R. Hogg J. McLoughlin A. Viljoen C. M. Davies H. James R. Meaker G. V. Winch S. Day J. Mellows R. Wrede.
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#### **Web Site News**

For technically minded web surfers, the menu navigation system of the General Botha web site has recently been changed from Java to HTML. We thought this was necessary, as Windows XL does not automatically come with Java installed. One has to download the program from the Java web site. So Windows XL users will not have to worry about this download from now on. For non-technical web surfers, you should not see any difference at all!

The 60th reunion of years 1943-1944 (all hands) is recorded in photo slide shows and can now be viewed at [Gallery > Activities > Reunions > 60th Reunion Photo Album](#) (Under the group photograph at the "Cable Restorer").

Photo slide shows of the unique 1953-54 50th Reunion at Gordon's Bay can be viewed on the [Gallery > Activities > Reunions > 50th Reunion Photo Album](#) (Under the Gordon's Bay Parade Photograph). Ivor Little's report on the 1953-54 Reunion is published on the Notice board page under the Reunion heading. Report on the Gauteng Commissioning Day Dinner which was held in April this year is reported in the Notice board page under the Gauteng heading.

We have recently received photographs copied from the photo album of Rob Walker # 781 1934-35 through Patricia Frykberg in Australia, taken on the ship during those years, they are an interesting historical record of important visitors and daily routine aboard. These should be on site by the time the newsletter is published, go to the notice board > web site news to see where they can be found." Bill Scott.

### **53/54 Reunion**

The class of 1953/54 held its 50th reunion over the weekend of 19 to 22 March 2004. The reunion took the form of a "nostalgia" weekend for shipmates and their wives/partners at the former SANC "General Botha", now the SA Naval College in Gordon's Bay.

The weekend was a resounding success. The SA Navy went out of its way to accommodate these ex-cadets and to make them feel welcome. Old shipmates who had not met for 50 years were able to get together for a time of fun, reminiscing and enjoyment. They slept in the same dormitories, used the same bathrooms, reacted to the same bugle calls, paraded for "colours" and "sunset", drank the pub dry on the first night and had a wonderful seven course reunion meal in the old dining room.

Sunday church was held in the old wooden rec. hall/chapel and the service was led by Les Green who had musical assistance from Don Oliver on the piano, Eric Moir on the keyboard and Leading Seaman Marius Pheiffer on the trumpet.

The reunion outing took the form of a bus trip to "Oude Nektaar" wine farm for a fabulous lunch hosted by the owner Hans Schroder, followed by a scenic drive to "tea" at Raoul Beaumont's wine farm at Bot River, before returning via the coast road to Gordon's Bay.

The Navy then put on a farewell barbecue on the beach outside Gus' old house and the group dispersed the next morning after breakfast. The Bothie house flag was flown at the yardarm for the duration of the reunion.

The following 1953/54 ex-cadets and their wives attended: John Andrews, Frikkie Bester, David Bell, Bill Cope, Chris Copeland, Keith Croome, Barry Cullen, Bill Du Sautoy, Okkie Grapow, Les Green, Ernest Hinterleitner, Tony Hunter, Dennis Jones, Bryan Lawrence, Ivor Little, Haig Mitchell, Eric Moir, Don Oliver, Keith Quayle, Gerry Stalling, Doug Wales and Godfrey White. Representing their "old salt's" (1952/53) were Peter Bitzker, Pat Browne, Brian Greenwood, Graham Jooste, Danny Le Roux and Jamie Matthew. Representing the "chums" (1954/55) were Mike Cullen, Ted Fisher, Dave Howard, Colin Knowler, Len Luyt, Ian Morrall, and Hans Schroder. Alistair Mackay (1944/45) attended to represent the staff at the time and Tony Nicholas (1971) was there in his capacity of Chairman of the OBA to represent that body. Apologies were received from a further 18 ex cadets of the time.

The ladies were bunked in the naval midshipmaids accommodation from where they enjoyed the reunion every bit as much as did their menfolk and the considered opinion is that the whole reunion was an unqualified success.

### **43/44 Reunion**

Dave Powell says "thanks to all who attended our 60th Re Union for their support."

#### **Ian Manning Writes...**

Can you help by putting something like the following into a forthcoming Newsletter, please? If anyone needs to contact me they can use e-mail [imanning@iafrica.com](mailto:imanning@iafrica.com) or telephone me on 021-782-1559.

**[1] NUMBERS:** I have been doing research into the serial numbers of GENERAL BOTHA Cadets and have managed to correlate Cadets names to numbers in all cases but the following:

**1529 in the 1947-1948 terms:** To my knowledge this is the only number that was never officially allocated. I have checked all relevant record books and the page or space for that number is blank in all of them. Reliable sources say that there never was a Cadet No: 1529. I am convinced that this is correct.

**2090 in the 1958-1959 terms:** No. 2089 was H. C. Baartman and 2091 was D. S. W. Blacklaws but 2090 has no name against it in any documents I have consulted. The record books for the relevant period have unfortunately gone adrift. Can anyone shed any light on who 2090 is or was - or was 2090 possibly another "unallocated" number?

**[2] MUSEUM EXHIBIT:** Work is currently progressing in the GENERAL BOTHA exhibit at the SA Naval Museum on a display case to contain badges, buttons and insignia worn by Cadets. We have already received several items but the collection has a long way to go before it is complete. Any donations will be welcome.

**Badges:** We are looking for GENERAL BOTHA cap badges [Officer's, Instructor's and Cadet's and also the badge without a wreath worn by the night watchman, drivers and some other junior staff]. The Museum has two Cadet's cap badges with a dark blue background to the words GENERAL BOTHA at the base [1950s] but needs badges with green backing [1940s and possibly earlier] and pale blue backing [1960s]. We have one specimen of the "monogram" badge but could use more of them.

**Cadet Captains' Insignia:** Research has shown some interesting variations in Cadet Captains' insignia over the years and several crowns, anchors and stars are required if they are all to be represented.

**Crockery** Cups, saucers and plates with gold [Captain's] or blue [Wardroom and Instructors' Mess] ships badges and blue G-ANCHOR-B crests [Cadets] are needed for the exhibit. So are "silverware" [sugar bowls, milk jugs] with engraved crests. These are all very rare but there must still be some around. If anyone has any or knows where there are some, please let us know. We badly need them for a display.

**Buttons:** I have a black plastic GENERAL BOTHA button. It is identical to gilt GENERAL BOTHA buttons in design and about midway between the large and small gilt buttons - the same size as the gilt buttons worn at SAMNA GENERAL BOTHA on mess jackets. Does anyone know where and by whom black plastic buttons were worn? Does anyone have any to donate to the museum?

Although I have made mention above of specific items, any GENERAL BOTHA artifacts will be welcome. Please bear in mind however that we are looking for GENERAL BOTHA related items only. We cannot accept shipping company uniforms and merchant service artifacts that have no connection with GENERAL BOTHA.

#### **That "Special" Pet.**

**Keith Willard 42/43 #1275:** writes from New Zealand with the following story: -

A single guy decides life would be more fun if he had a pet. So he went to the pet store and told the owner that he wanted to buy an unusual pet. After some discussion, he finally bought a centipede, (100-legged bug), which came in a little white box to use for his house. He took the box back home, found a good location for the box, and decided he would start off by taking his new pet to church with him. So he asked the centipede in the box, "Would you like to go to church with me today, we will have a good time." But there was no answer from his new pet. This bothered him a bit, but he waited a few minutes and then asked him again, "How about going to church with me and receive blessings?" But again, there was no answer from his new friend and pet. So he waited a few minutes more, thinking about the situation. He decided to ask him one more time; this time putting his face up against the centipede's house and shouting, "Hey in there! Would you like to go to church with me and learn about The Lord?"

A little voice came out of the box: . . . "I heard you the first time! I'm putting on my shoes."

#### **THE TOMATO COMPANY**

An unemployed man is desperate to support his family of a wife and three kids. He applies for a janitor's job at Microsoft and easily passes an aptitude test. The human resources manager tells him, "You will be hired at minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour. Let me have your e-mail address so that we can get you in the loop. Our system will automatically e-mail you all the forms and advise you when to start and where to report on your first day."

Taken aback, the man protests that he is poor and has neither a computer nor an e-mail address. To this the manager replies, "You must understand that to a company like ours that means that you virtually do not exist. Without an e-mail address you can hardly expect to be employed by a high-tech firm. Good day."

Stunned, the man leaves. Not knowing where to turn and having \$10 in his wallet, he walks past a farmers' market and sees a stand selling 25lb crates of beautiful red tomatoes. He buys a crate, carries it to a busy corner and displays the tomatoes. In less than 2 hours he sells all the tomatoes and makes 100% profit. Repeating the process several times more that day, he ends up with almost \$100 and arrives home that night with several bags of groceries for his family.

He decides to repeat the tomato business the next day. By the end of the week he is getting up early every day and working well into the night. He multiplies his profits quickly. Early in the second week he acquires a cart to transport several boxes of tomatoes at a time, but before a month is up he sells the cart to buy a broken-down pickup truck. At the end of a year he owns three old trucks. His two sons have left their neighborhood gangs to help him with the tomato business, his wife is buying the tomatoes, and his daughter is taking night courses at the community college so she can keep books for him. By the end of the second year he has a dozen very nice used trucks and employs fifteen previously unemployed people, all selling tomatoes. He continues to work hard.

Time passes and at the end of the fifth year he owns a fleet of nice trucks and a warehouse that his wife supervises, plus two tomato farms that the boys manage. The tomato company's payroll has put hundreds of homeless and jobless people to work. His daughter reports that the business grossed a million dollars. Planning for the future, he decides to buy some life insurance. Consulting with an insurance adviser, he picks an insurance plan to fit his new circumstances. Then the adviser asks him for his e-mail address in order to send the final documents electronically. When the man replies that he doesn't have time to mess with a computer and has no e-mail address, the insurance man is stunned, "What, you don't have e-mail? No computer? No Internet? Just think where you would be today if you'd had all of that five years ago!"

"Ha!" snorts the man. "If I'd had e-mail five years ago I would be sweeping floors at Microsoft and making \$5.15 an hour." Which brings us to the moral: Since most of you got this story by e-mail, you're probably closer to being janitors than millionaires. Sadly, I received it also by e-mail, but those who use the snail mail are surely better off!!

I look forward to some news from Durban and Australia for the next letter in August, come on Guys!!

Scribe (dhenwood@iafrica.com).