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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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

August 2006

JOINT NEWSLETTER

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

Tony Nicholas, cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za, Cellphone: 082 555 2877, Phone (H): 021 788 5957.

Please send any articles you may wish to be included in the Newsletter to:

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Visit our website <http://www.generalbotha.co.za>

CAPE TOWN BRANCH

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSOCIATION

This year we celebrate a notable milestone, the 75th anniversary of the establishment of our Association. Over the past 75 years much hard work has been put in by dedicated individuals in order to achieve the goals of the association and thus it is fitting that we mark the occasion. Unfortunately the visionaries are no longer with us. The form of the celebration will be a "late lunch" on board the Cable Restorer in Simon's Town' S.A. Navy dockyard, known as the Roaring Forties Restaurant. This is indeed a unique venue and as close to the original ship as we can get. It is intended to precede the function with a visit to our GB display in the S.A. Naval Museum, Main Road, Simon's Town. There we shall be hosted by Old Boy Ian Manning who has been intimately involved with the museum exhibit for many years. Date: Saturday 9th September.

- Museum: Meet at the Museum @ 1215, Main Road, Simon's Town.
- Lunch: Meet on board 1345 for 1400.
- Menu: Three course meal including tea/coffee. Cash bar available.
- Cost: R90.00 per person. Cash bar available.
- Dress: Club blazer and tie preferred but not compulsory.
The emphasis is on enjoyment. Wives, partners, lovers and secretaries are all welcome.
- RSVP: Kathy Nicholas phone 021-788 5957 fax 021-086 604 0811
 - Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za
 - Bookings must be in by Wednesday 6th. Space is limited, so book early.
- Directions: Drive through Simon's Town, past Jubilee Square. Turn left into Cole Point Road [between Sheriff & Magistrate's Court]. Go round the circle and proceed through Naval security gate. Take first left, then left again. Park on the grass area on the left. Do not park on the quay. CS Cable Restorer is the first white ship on the left of the quay.

Please note that payment prior to the day will be preferable so that as little cash as possible is handled and our Treasurer may also enjoy the gathering. Cheque or postal orders should be made out to "General Botha Old Boys' Association".

Alternatively, the payment can be made by electronic fund transfer directly into our bank account.

Details as follows:

- Bank: Standard Bank
- Branch: Thibault Square, Cape Town
- Branch code: 020909
- Account name: General Botha Old Boys' Association
- Account number: 070835128

DURBAN BRANCH

GENERAL BOTHA

75TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER INVITATION

1931 – 2006

S.A.T.S General Botha Old Boys' Association

**The Chairman "Durban Branch" Derek Mc Manus, requests the pleasure of your company to the General Botha Old Boys' Association, 75th Anniversary Dinner to be held at Point Yacht Club Islander restaurant on 25th August 2006
19h00 for 19h30**

Cadet old salt no. 2420 - Capt. Roy Martin welcomes "Chantell Ilbury" our Guest Speaker

Roy - Chantell is one of South Africa's leading strategists and facilitators, working both locally and internationally. She specialises in guiding companies and other organisations through their strategic conversations on the future, and she believes passionately in the power of scenario thinking to unlock the best ideas on strategy.

FROM THE BRIDGE OF s.s. CAPE TOWN (Tony Nicholas)

SOS

Mail returned from **Dave Reid 1966** last known to be in Saldanha Bay with the S.A. Navy and latterly reported to have joined a fishing company. **Simon Brebner 1979** last known with P&ONLL based in London. **Ron Herman 1966** last known as MD of Dart Line in the UK. All of you out there explore every avenue to locate them and report back to me in Cape Town.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

C.P. MILES 1959/60. After Bothie Chris joined Safmarine. Left Safmarine as Master in 1976 and subsequently held various positions in the shore based shipping industry, surveying, stevedoring and ships agency. In 1993 he was appointed General Manager of SGS South Africa Pty Ltd, 1995 Manager of Bureau Veritas, Port of Richards Bay. Followed in 2002 Standards Specialist with S.A. Maritime Safety Authority. Deceased 13/05/2006.

E.T. RIDGE 1944/45. Trevor passed away 21/04/2006. After Bothie Trevor sailed with Ellerman's until 1955 when he became assistant to marine superintendent with Thesens Steamship company in Cape Town. In 1967 he joined Unicorn Lines where he eventually became their Marine Manager. 1985 Trevor joined Cape Diving & Salvage until his retirement in 1989.

R.G. RICH 1941/42. Ron sailed with Thesen's as Cadet and then Andrew Weir's as 3rd Officer. He failed eyesight test, remained on the vessel as Purser and DEMS gunnery officer. In 1946 he joined

Ellerman & Bucknall as Purser. 1949 settled in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) as a manufacturer's agent. 1963 purchased Impala Arms Hotel and The White House Inn in the Vumba Eastern District. Ron was also an active B.S.A.P. member in field operations during the Rhodesian war which ended 1981. He then returned to S.A. as Chief Buyer for Ncora Irrigation Scheme in the Transkei. 2000 owned Gonubie Furnishers in East London. Deceased 15/05/2006. *See below for a message from his son Guy.*

R.H. RICEMAN 1954/55. Ron passed away in May this year. Unfortunately we have no details of his career. Any information would be appreciated.

A.W. BLUETT 1946/47 [by Brian Ingpen]. When 14-year-old Arthur Bluett arrived at Cape Town's railway station from his native Port Elizabeth in January 1946, he had no idea where to find the training ship General Botha that he was joining. For directions, he approached a naval officer who took him to the "Bothie's" office in St George's Street. Those kind souls pointed him to the train that would take him to Simon's Town, and off the youngster went. Towards the end of his two-year stint on the training ship - then a stone frigate atop the mountain at Simon's Town - he and a shipmate were piped aft to the Captain's office where they were instructed to appear at Safmarine's office the following day in their best uniforms. Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris, Safmarine's first managing director, interviewed them personally, waxing eloquently about the future of the one-year-old company and about the careers they could carve for themselves as Safmarine grew. Both lads must have impressed the former Bomber Command man and both received letters appointing them to Morgenster, Safmarine's second ship, but as his shipmate contracted scarlet fever, which precluded him from joining the vessel, Bluett became the company's first cadet. Morgenster sailed shortly before Christmas - his discharge sheet shows that he joined on December 21, 1947 - a fact he would recall 20 years later when he met first-tripper Cadet Sean Day [class of 1967], who was due to join SA Nederburg off port limits at Cape Town, also a few days before Christmas. (Day is chairman of the board of Teekay Tankers, the largest operator of Aframax tankers.) Accommodated in an austere cabin with three seamen, Bluett's home-from-home aboard Morgenster would have enticed few to embark on a sea-going career. Yet many youngsters did just that and not only survived the long voyages to Europe or the US, but also enjoyed their experience aboard those Victory ships and, in the process, learnt much to equip them for their later careers within the maritime sector. While still a cadet, Bluett received an unexpected fillip to his meager pay; he was promoted to acting fourth mate when the incumbent was flung off his feet during a typical North Atlantic blow, and damaged his shoulder. One night, shortly after Bluett had taken over the watch, the startled master rushed up to the bridge, believing the temporarily promoted cadet had caused a collision. However, he quickly discovered that the radar mast had broken, crashing down on to the monkey island. Bluett completed the required sea time for his second mate's ticket during a continuous period of nearly 29 months at sea, and soon after he had passed his master's ticket a few years later, Safmarine promoted the bright-eyed and bushy-bearded officer to his first command aboard South African Pioneer, one of the so-called Global quartet that Safmarine had acquired. I am told that this appointment made him the youngest master to command a Safmarine ship.

In the mid-1960s, Bluett came ashore to oversee Safmarine's new-building program, and continued to move up the ladder to become a director in 1985, the first to rise from cadet to the company's boardroom. One rainy day, around 1967, I recall a beaming Bluett rounding us up to go to Thibault Square - then a car park, plagued by the newly appointed meter maids - to show us his new car, a Datsun Bluebird that he had shipped from Japan aboard a Safmarine vessel. Two aspects of that incident are relevant. I might be wrong, but I think his fancy car was the first of its kind in South Africa, showing the impact Japanese vehicle manufacturers have had on the local car market since then. The second aspect told me much about the owner of that car: he included me - a mere handlinger at Safmarine at the time - with more important folks in that informal car inspection, and that was one of the qualities of the man. He had time for people of all stations in life, and encouraged youngsters in every way he could. Besides his involvement as a founder member of the National Sea Rescue Institute, he helped lads belonging to his church to build small yachts; he was proud to be associated with the Naval Cadet movement (now Sea Cadets); he ploughed his experience back into matters relating to maritime training, especially the General Botha Old Boys' Association, and the establishment of the Maritime Studies Department at Simon's Town School, projects close to his heart.

He simply wanted to expose others to the career that had given him so much pleasure, a quest so tragically curtailed by ill-health. The passing of this devoted family man, devout Christian and role model for so many raises an important issue. Here was one of the highly respected leaders of the South African shipping industry whose voice was heard at high levels in the land. Captain Arthur Bluett was also decorated by the president for his efforts to promote the industry.

The following email we received from Rob Riley (#2019, 1956/7):

“Bluey was a special person in my life and in many others. I first met him when he was promoted to Chief Officer of the Constantia, I was a very new cadet at the time. Sailing with him was a rewarding experience and I learnt a tremendous amount from his strict but friendly leadership. Through his years as Marine Supt., Marine Manager and eventually Marine Director I continued to admire him. Even though I was in the USA we kept in contact and it was with great pleasure that I was able to accompany him on his visits to our area, they were fun times. During a recent visit to South Africa I was able to visit Bluey. It was very sad to see him incapacitated by Parkinsons Disease, yet he still had a spirit about him that showed what great strength this man had. He truly was, and always will be, a Name Amongst Seafaring Men. The Bothy Old Boys and the Maritime Industry has lost a true friend. May he rest in peace. Sincerely, Rob.”

SCRANBAG

S.H. EDWARDS 1954/55 #1871. After Bothie Stewart joined the Surveyor-General's Office in Cape Town and later left to join the British South African Police in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) where he served for 20 years. Relocated to the UK and got a position with a leisure company as their security manager. Eight years later joined News International Newspapers as their security director. Again eight years later became security manager of Sky Television followed by a short period with News Digital Systems. In 1993 joined Ingram Micro, an American Company, as security manager and four years later retired. We look forward to meeting you at the Cape Town lunches soon.

A.H. SHARP 1961/62 #2214. Alex has spent three and a half years with Rohlig in China and has now joined another company there, Younger Niche Logistics, based in Shanghai, China, specializing in project cargo in the freight industry. Don't get lost among the billions of locals there mate.

S.G. MILLAR 1982 #2765. Following a few years with Gearbulk in London, Scott returned to Durban and established his own cargo broking business, Millar Maritime.

A.R. WYATT 1986 #2895. Andy has recently joined the London harbour pilots' wardroom.

S.P. HAY 1976 #2529. Stuart is now a "through" class 1 pilot meaning he can take any size vessel as far as Crayfordness.

M.S. BRIANT 1953/54 #1811. “My wife and I have settled in Nanaimo, on Vancouver Island and are building a home for ourselves. After 10 years living and traveling on our boat, it's good to be settled once again.” Mike, we shall miss your and Paddy's entertaining newsletters of your experiences at sea.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

An interesting note from **Graham Spires 1975 #2508.**

I am now with Sakhalin Energy, working as a Mooring Master on an SALM/FSO tandem mooring setup at an offshore terminal about 53 degrees North off the east coast of Sakhalin island. (to find Sakhalin: Put your finger on a map of Russia; move east about 9721 km, still in Russia, until you get to the Pacific Ocean; and somewhere near Vladivostok you will see Sakhalin Island). Pretty wild country, full of rivers, lakes and black and brown bears - one local woman recently killed by a hungry bear only 10 km from the capital, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. The bears have just come out of hibernation and they are mean and hungry with very little food available until later in summer. Definitely sub-arctic, and for six months of the year the terminal hibernates with the SALM on the seabed due to pack ice. Towards the end of the summer season we keep exporting for as long as possible, by using two icebreakers to break up the ice and keep the SALM and FSO protected. Very challenging. Its mid summer now, and the air temperature is about 5 degrees - tolerable on a 28/28 rotation. **Mike Fleming (# 2670 - 1979)**, who worked with me for three years near Novorossiysk, on the Black Sea, also turned up here about the

same time as me as the Smit Operations Manager based in the principal city of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. At the time Mike left Novo to go on leave in February this year, neither of us had any idea we would end up here. It's a very small world. We have recently chartered a brand new Swires icebreaker, which arrived in the field yesterday. I arranged to go across for an inspection, to look at towing arrangements etc. As I stepped out of the Frog onto her aft deck, who should meet me; none other than **Malcolm Russell (# 2749 - 1981)**! He is one of the four expatriates on board. He is expecting to be here about two years on rotation. We were shipmates about 1988 and he last saw me in 1996 winching off the Rampart into the Richards Bay Pilots chopper. **Americo Barata (1979 # 2666)** arrived on the Island recently to spend a two week familiarization with Mike Fleming. He will take over from Mike towards the end of July. So for a spell there will be four Obies on the Island - out of half a million people on this sparsely populated, isolated, wind-swept and frozen suburb of Siberia. So I guess we have enough Obies on this small sub-arctic island to start a branch of the GBOBA. The GBOBA flag flies in some strange places.

[A SALM is a Single Anchor Leg Mooring. Basically a 'tower' hinged at the seabed. When ballasted, it lies horizontally on the bottom, returning to vertical operational use when deballasted. A FSO is a Floating Storage ?? (Can't remember the 'O'). Basically a specially modified vessel that acts as a storage tanker. The market tanker ties up astern, piloted by Graham Spires, and loads from the FSO].

THE LEGEND LIVES ON.

Ian Manning writes; "A few weeks ago you sent me a copy of a page from a Lloyd's Register concerning a dry cargo ship, *circa* 1921, called GENERAL BOTHA. We also discussed a trawler GENERAL BOTHA, the existence of which prevented Captain Renouf from registering our SATS GENERAL BOTHA as such and forced him to register her initially as "TS GENERAL BOTHA". While looking for something else, entirely unconnected, I came across the trawler GENERAL BOTHA listed in *Warships of World War 2*.

GENERAL BOTHA had a gross tonnage of 245 and was built in 1916. In July 1940 she was requisitioned [with literally hundreds of other commercial trawlers] by the British Royal Navy. They employed her as a Minesweeper, still named GENERAL BOTHA, with a pennant number FY599. She was returned to her owners in November 1945. Unfortunately no details of ownership or port of registry are given. Maybe they would be in an old Lloyd's?

The above information leads me to assume that she was the "trawler GENERAL BOTHA" that Captain Renouf referred to in his report of the delivery voyage of what later became SATS GENERAL BOTHA. The trawler was certainly around in 1921 when Captain Renouf attempted registration." Another interesting fact is that a ship's bell, engraved General Botha was recently offered for sale from America on the internet auction site, eBay. The size of the bell indicated that it may have been from the trawler mentioned by Ian.

AN ADVENTURE STORY – G. REINDERS 1958/59 #E18

"By a sheer fluke I came upon the GB website when I typed my name into the internet Yahoo search engine. The crest and a statement that I was a commercial pilot at Axex Air in 1958 appeared on the screen. That was damn near 50 years ago. I am now 64. I have led a full life since then. I flew Boeings for SAA 1968 -1973. I sailed out of Cape Town on the first Cape to Rio race January 1976 on a yacht I built. I sailed into Argentina for Mrs. Peron's revolution, and spent a year there during their "Dirty War" I once nearly disappeared but the officer on duty the night they grabbed me was in my karate class and sent me safely home. The Admiral of the fleet was my friend's brother so he kept me out of trouble. I immigrated into Canada on 26 March 1977. The next 26 years in Canada I spent as a Pilot, a Flying Instructor, a Carpenter, a small businessman, an Infrared Thermographic Technician and a hydroponics specialist. I wrote two books on Hydroponics which still bring me some royalties. In 2000 I sailed out of Vancouver single handed headed for French Polynesia and onward, on the second yacht I built. I had a fellow cadet, Richard Johnson 58/59 and we had a blood-pact to sail around the world together -- I wonder if he remembers that, or managed to achieve it as I did. He lived for sailing then and I hated it. I sailed into Fiji in 2000 in time for George Speight's Coup De Etat. A few months later

in 2000 I lost my yacht on a reef at Futuna Island (800 Km NE of Fiji) I ended up in the Philippines 2001. Here I am now. I have arrived in Paradise and have been given a new lease on life. I am reliving my teenage years. I go to Tai Kwon Do every night. Everybody in the gym is 15-25 years old. At 64 I am better than about half of them." We do not have any details of Richard Johnson on our GB database. Any news of him would be appreciated. Please let Tony Nicholas know.

"Southern" Lunch – Simon's Town (Ian Manning reports)

A very successful second "Southern" lunch was held at the Seven Seas Club on 181200 Jul 06. Twenty-two people sat down to lunch comprising - 20 GENERAL BOTHAs, 01 WORCESTER, 01 Trinity College, Hull. Thirteen of these GENERAL BOTHAs never attend the RCYC lunches. There were six GENERAL BOTHAs this time who did not attend the previous lunch. We had several apologies. To sum up: GENERAL BOTHA attendance at the 18 Jul 06 lunch 20, at the 18 Apr 06 lunch 19.

The Seven Seas Club caterer offered four dishes this time. There was plenty of food. "Seconds" and even "thirds" were available. A large helping of apple crumble and cream was available at an additional R10. About half the attendees had the dessert. We have arranged that in future coffee will be included in the price of the basic lunch.

The Club is very happy to host the GENERAL BOTHA lunches and Brad and I are certainly happy with the support received from people who would not normally attend the GENERAL BOTHA lunch. The influence of the OBA is being extended. Hopefully numbers will increase further as the word is passed. All comments received were positive. Ian Manning.

Gauteng Branch (Ivor Little).

GAUTENG SPRING FUNCTION

The next Gauteng Commissioning Day luncheon will be held at the Bryanston Sports Club on Sunday, 17 September. The luncheon will take the form of a full three course buffet at R65 per person and will commence at 12h00 for 12h30. Our hosts will be Graham and Colleen Jooste and full sporting facilities, including swimming, are available.

Gauteng members will receive a more detailed invitation, including directions, closer to the time. Ivor.

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH NEWS – Ted Fisher reports

The heat wave that has gripped the country for the past month has finally ended with thunderstorms across much of the country – temperatures up to 38C have beaten those of the drought stricken July of 1976. Having just returned from holiday in Holland I can confirm much of Europe has been in the same position! No doubt this is the norm for many of you!

I'm afraid, not a great deal to report on this session. Following my comment in the last Newsletter on Graham Petrie (# 1000 38/39) as being probably, our most senior UK member brought a quick response from Alan Bole (49/50) up in Wirral Cheshire to the effect that sadly, he is not the most senior OBIE in the UK. That honour falls to Bob Lambert (#696 33/34) who resides in Nantwich Cheshire. He was a Crash Boat Commander based in Gordons Bay during WW2 long before Bothie ever moved there. Alan and Bob lunch together every couple of months and during my phone conversation with Bob he confirmed he is planning a mini-cruise and sends greetings to all UK Obies.

Naturally, my apologies went to Bob for incorrect reporting!!

Alan also reported Keith Lindsay (#2180 60/61) and himself had been on a trip to Dortmund where they visited the largest Model Building Exhibition in the world.

As an ex-construction industry member I would be very interested in hearing more so, perhaps Alan could do a note on the visit which I'm sure would be of interest to all Obies in the next Newsletter!

Reunions – through the 'network' I'd been in contact with Stewart Edwards (54/55 whose parents owned Thelma's Guest House in Gordons Bay) - at the end of July, Caroline and I met with him and wife Pam for a most enjoyable lunch near Petersfield. We were both 54/55 (he being a member of the Band (bugler) plus sporting interests) and I believe it was instant recognition after a gap of 50 years!! Stewart and Pam live near Newbury Berkshire. Following Bothy, Stewart joined British SouthAfrica

Police in Rhodesia then moved to the UK in the mid-seventies. He is now beginning to enjoy retirement – perhaps Stewart would also give a resume of his time since leaving the college!! Caroline and I had the pleasure of entertaining Ricky Flint (Ex-Conway) here in Storrington for a weekend in early July – Ricky was on his bi-annual visit to these shores and naturally meeting with other friends and family. Ricky and I sailed as cadets in Union Castle all those years ago! From Ricky, greetings to all past shipmates through Union Castle and Safmarine.

Again another pleasant outing - Caroline and I joined Peter and Norma Heydenryck for Peter's pre-three score years and ten birthday lunch at their temporary 'pad' in Aldingbourne near Chichester. Amazing how the years fly by!!

Finally, details on Michael Wijnberg RNR (40/41) were passed to me through Johnny Johnston (#985 38/39) Michael is of course the brother of Paul Wijnberg ex-CCC and Gold Medal Winner. Michael appears to spend a part of the year in the UK residing in Woodbridge Suffolk and in Zambia – he also sends greetings to all Obies wherever they are travelling!

Future event – still under consideration with comment and suggestions awaited??

My best wishes to all readers and as always I welcome comments from anybody! Ted Fisher +44(0)1903 744400 and e-mail: tedfisher@aol.com.

Australia Branch News (Peter O'Hare).

The gremlins attacked our May report. This is a full update for both May and August.

The Commissioning day Lunch was held at the Hero of Waterloo pub in Sydney on 18th March. It was not very well attended as people were ill or overseas. The most disappointing aspect was the poor response from Old Boys to the invitation. So that we know you are out there it would be good to at least receive a reply!

The lunch was however very good and we all had a good time. A last minute surprise was the attendance of Rudolf Auer (59/60) who has moved to the NSW Central Coast from NZ. He had a lot to tell us of his past particularly his career in the SAN. Jinny Parsons discharged herself from hospital for the afternoon – a great effort.

The following weekend our SE Queensland contingent also met and I know they have reported in to Cape Town.

Stan Damp has retired as Vice Chairman and we decided to invite Andy Fotheringham to accept the position which he has done. Thanks Andy, please work on those Granger Bay Old Boys for the 2007 get together.

On Saturday 15th July we got together for Lunch at the Great Northern Hotel in Chatswood, Sydney. All had a good time. John Fisher flew in from Adelaide, a great effort.

It was decided that the 2007 AGM and Commissioning Day Lunch will be held in SE Queensland with the Sydney contingent doing the traveling. The date will be Saturday 17th March with the venue to be decided by the locals with Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast and Brisbane being considered. All have airports with discount flights available and we will do everything possible to get as many Old Boys and Wives/Partners along.

Our Year End function for Sydney in 2006 will be:

Informal Lunch 25th November. Great Northern Hotel Chatswood..

Regards to all old Boys everywhere. If you are passing through Australia please contact us and we will arrange a get together at short notice. Peter O'Hare (#2247, 1964) Hon Secretary, Australia Branch. Email peteroh@bigpond.com, telephone 0417 028809.

UNDER THE WHITE ENSIGN – BY #920 R.B. DICKIN 1937/39.

Members will recall the excellent review written by Barry Cullen in our May newsletter edition. If not go back and read again. This excellent tale of a Bothie Boy's experiences is available by order from the association. It is a recommended read and a valuable part of the Legend. Copies are available by order from Cape Town Branch at a cost of R60.00 Place your order now with:

Kathy Nicholas: Phone: 021-7885957 fax: 021-086 604 0811 Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

THANK YOU TO THE “GENERAL BOTHA” FOR THE LIFE LESSONS

By Guy Rich, son of the late Ronald Rich (1941/42)

I am the man I am today because of my Father - he taught me all I know. My Father was the man he was because of the General Botha – the values, discipline and respect it taught him as a sailor in the late 30’s/early 40’s (exact dates unknown).

My Father loved the sea. He spoke fondly of the memories he had of his training in the General Botha and his time at sea with the Merchant Navy during World War II. He instilled in me a sense of pride, dignity, discipline and respect – values that he was taught as a sailor.

Many of my Father’s friends have told me that sailors are a different breed. This I know - I followed in his footsteps by joining the South African Navy after I left school in the late 80’s. I am still actively involved as a lieutenant in the SAN Reserves – something my Father was very proud of.

The most important lessons he taught me in life was to keep your integrity and credibility intact, be honest with yourself and with others, hold your head high in times of doubt, face challenges head on, maintain your dignity, respect others and take pride in all that you do.

These life lessons he had learnt from his training in the General Botha and his time at sea – and these were the lessons he had handed down to me. My success can be directly attributed to these simple life lessons.

There are no words to describe what the General Botha meant to my Father or the profound influence, be it indirectly, it has had on my life. All I can say is THANK YOU to those who went before, those who served with and those who came after my Father.

The General Botha has touched and influenced many lives – many of them beyond the realm of those who served on her directly. The legacy of the General Botha will live on in the hearts and minds of those whose lives were changed by having the honour to serve on the “Bothie”.

On behalf of my Father, Ron Rich, I salute you for keeping the legacy alive and maintaining the true and steadfast ways associated with “Old Salts” of the sea.

SLOP CHEST

These slop chest items all proudly display our association insignia and is available from Cape Town branch. Place your orders without delay with Kathy Nicholas:

Phone: 021-7885957 fax: 021-086 604 0811 Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

BADGE	R100
FLAG	R100
TIE [STRIPED]	R60
PLAQUE	R100
PEAK CAP [BASEBALL TYPE]	R70
‘n NAAM WAT SEEVAARDERS EER Geskiedenis van die opleiding skip.	DONASIE
A NAME AMONG SEAFARING MEN History of the training ship.	DONATION
FIRST DAY COVER 60 th anniversary of our Old Boys’ Association	DONATION
BELT BUCKLE	R100

PLUS PACKAGING AND POSTAGE!

Note: some items in the slop chest are available from Durban branch as well.

Cheque or postal order should be made out to “General Botha Old Boys’ Association”. Post to: P.O. Box 4515, Cape Town, 8000. Alternatively, the payment can be made by electronic fund transfer directly into our bank account. Details as follows:

- Bank: Standard Bank
- Branch: Thibault Square, Cape Town
- Branch code: 02 09 09
- Account name: General Botha Old Boys' Association
- Account number: 070835128

"Tired & Knackered"

From the Master & Chief Engineer onboard the "P&O Nedlloyd Taranaki"
Will Stoker & Dave Bulbeck
Blue Star Ship Management PO Box 436 3000 AK Rotterdam
The Netherlands
14th October 2005

Sir, We have just read that Hyundai Heavy Industries are awaiting orders for the first 13,400 TEU container ships, a veritable giant if ever there was one. The problem we now see is that these behemoths will be in port for such a long time, which kind of defeats the idea behind the container ship, so we thought that it was about time the container itself was modified to reduce the number of moves. Relatively, the container is getting smaller and smaller, so why not look for something a little bigger to place onboard?

Having given this some thought, we decided that if the new container was big enough, we could then give it a sharp end and a blunt end, put an engine in it, and call it.....a general cargo ship!

What an innovative idea!

m.v. "Tired & Knackered"

News from Trevor Richards (#2484, 1974)

We received an update from Trevor as follows:

I have enjoyed the Bothie OB newsletters and need to put in a change of address, which has prompted me to send you a quick update on my life and I will also be sending a check under separate cover as a donation to help cover the postage over the years!

On leaving Safmarine in '82 (approx), spent 4 years sailing around the world, met an American girl in Australia, (which ended my single handing days), got married in Knysna in '86, sailed back to the States and settled in Maryland in '88, where we got a job managing a full service marina. 18 years and 2 kids later we are still here and are part owners! My brother Alan has been working for me for the past 8 years or so as the boatyard manager. We still have our Knysna build Endurance 37 "Wandering Star" - who knows, my wife has not seen the Pacific yet! Kind regards, Trevor Richards, President, Spring Cove Marina, Solomons MD. springcove@earthlink.net. *I recommend for those yachtsmen and others interested to go to the website www.springcovemarina.com, and see what Trevor has to offer the local and visiting yachts in the Chesapeake. He has also written an interesting Autumn newsletter that you will find on the site.*

Extract from Cape Times – 16 August 06, Brian Ingpen

When the containership CP Valour sought refuge in the lee of the Azores in December last year to effect engine repairs, she grounded on a particularly inhospitable part of the Faial Island and suffered considerable bottom damage. The wreck is exposed to the full brunt of the Atlantic swell, magnified by the shape of the bay. Yet, using heavy a heavy-lift barge and pontoons, Captain Nick Sloane (#2750, 1981) and his team from Svitzer-Wijismuller's Cape Town office have salvaged nearly 400 cubic meters of fuel, as well as more than 500 containers and are currently removing about 1,000 tons of machinery from the engine room, a task that Sloane expects to finish before the first week of September, when he hopes to refloat the vessel. The Svitzer-Wijismuller team were also involved in the salvage of huge logs from the Kiperousa, wrecked south of East London last year.

THE RUGBY SCORE!

Contributed by George Foulis cadet #1594, 1949/50

The latest rugby scores reminded me of a very amusing occasion while in the U.K. Safmarine's ss. Vergelegen was strike bound in Liverpool mid 1951. It was great to have the extra time, to get to know the lovely ladies there. Somehow word got to Liverpool University that there was a crowd of South

Africans in the port and that they would have a great game against a crowd of "Springboks", even though they did not actually represent their country. I have a feeling that Potty [Pierre Potgieter 1945/46] might have been responsible for the rumour, as he had also recently had an extended holiday at that port. We managed to borrow some togs, and duly arrived at the university rugby ground. Our girl friends came to cheer us on. How so many could have known so little about the game of rugby I will never know. Len, one of the Junior Engineers, was a soccer player. As he chased one of the opposition he heard one of the supporters shout, "trip him Len", and he duly complied. Their wing took a nose dive into the muddy grass. Then our full back, Morman, received the ball a second before the Liverpool pack dived onto him, grabbed the ball, and scored another try. "You should have fallen on it, you fool", we said. The next time he received the ball, with the opposition a quarter of the field away, he fell on it. The score was 44-nil at half time, and the opposition decided that the only way they would get a game at all would be to change forwards with the Springboks. The second half was a much more even contest and we all had a lot of fun. I was placed on the right wing. My opponent played for his country, so I was flattened every couple of minutes, in the second, as well as in the first half. The party afterwards was a great affair even though our girl friends had left in embarrassment before half time. We made several good friends through our contact with the university team.

THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR (TWO HUNDRED YEARS ON)

Contributed by Gerry Stalling (#1854, 1953/54)

Nelson: "Order the signal, Hardy."

Hardy: "Aye, Aye, sir."

Nelson: "Hold on, that's not what I dictated to the Signals Officer. What's the meaning of this?"

Hardy: "Sorry sir?"

Nelson: (reading aloud): "England expects every person to do his duty, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion or disability. What gobbledygook is this?"

Hardy: "Admiralty policy, I'm afraid, sir. We're an equal opportunities employer now. We had the devil's own job getting 'England' past the censors, lest it be considered racist."

Nelson: "Gadzooks, Hardy. Hand me my pipe and tobacco."

Hardy: "Sorry sir. All naval vessels have been designated smoke-free working environments."

Nelson: "In that case, break open the rum ration. Let us splice the mainbrace to steel the men before battle."

Hardy: "The rum ration has been abolished, Admiral. It's part of the Government's policy on binge drinking."

Nelson: "Good heavens, Hardy. I suppose we'd better get on with it...full speed ahead."

Hardy: "I think you'll find there's a 4 knot speed limit in this stretch of water."

Nelson: "Damn it man! We are on the eve of the greatest sea battle in history. We must advance with all dispatch. Report from the crow's nest please."

Hardy: "That won't be possible, sir."

Nelson: "What?"

Hardy: "Health and safety have closed the crow's nest, sir. No harness, and they said that rope ladder doesn't meet regulations. They won't let anyone up there until a proper scaffolding can be erected."

Nelson: "Then get the ship's carpenter without delay, Hardy."

Hardy: "He's busy knocking up a wheelchair access to the fo'c'sle, Admiral."

Nelson: "Wheelchair access? I've never heard anything so absurd."

Hardy: "Health and safety again, sir. We have to provide a barrier-free environment for the differently abled."

Nelson: "Differently abled? I've only one arm and one eye and I refuse even to hear mention of the word. I didn't get to the rank of admiral by playing the disability card."

Hardy: "Actually, sir, you did. The Royal Navy is under-represented in the areas of visual impairment and limb deficiency."

Nelson: "Whatever next? Give me full sail. The salt spray beckons."

Hardy: "A couple of problems there too, sir. Health and safety won't let the crew up the rigging without hard hats. And they don't want anyone breathing in too much salt – haven't you seen the adverts?"

Nelson: "I've never heard such infamy. Break out the cannon and tell the men to stand by to engage the enemy."

Hardy: "The men are a bit worried about shooting at anyone, Admiral."

Nelson: "What? This is mutiny."

Hardy: "It's not that, sir. It's just that they're afraid of being charged with murder if they actually kill anyone. There's a couple of legal-aid lawyers on board, watching everyone like hawks."

Nelson: "Then how are we to sink the Frenchies and the Spanish?"

Hardy: "Actually, sir, we're not."

Nelson: "We're not?"

Hardy: "No, sir. The Frenchies and the Spanish are our European partners now. According to the Common Fisheries Policy, we shouldn't even be in this stretch of water. We could get hit with a claim for compensation."

Nelson: "But you must hate a Frenchman as you hate the devil."

Hardy: "I wouldn't let the ship's Diversity Coordinator hear you saying that sir. You'll be up on a disciplinary."

Nelson: "You must consider every man an enemy, who speaks ill of your King."

Hardy: "Not anymore, sir. We must be inclusive in this multicultural age. Now put on your Kevlar vest; it's the rules. I could save your life."

Nelson: "Don't tell me – health and safety. Whatever happened to rum, sodomy and the lash?"

Hardy: "As I explained, sir, rum is off the menu! And there's a ban on corporal punishment."

Nelson: "What about sodomy?"

Hardy: "I believe that is now legal, sir."

Nelson: "In that case....kiss me, Hardy".!!!!

KNOW YOUR WAY.....

I wanted to leave a message for a colleague in Cape Town.
Please ask him to phone me in Polokwane", I said
"Where?" his secretary asked sounding as if she had bitten into a lemon; "Polokwane, where's that?"
"Between Mokopane and Makhado in Limpopo " I explained.
"Where is this?" she asked patiently.
I could hear she thought she had a joker on the line.
"Well," I explained, "you drive from Tshwane past Bela-Bela and Modimolle through the tollgate. Continue past Mokopane but watch your speed as speed traps make lots of money from those traveling too fast. Polokwane is just after Mokopane, but if you reach Makhado you have gone too far. I am not quite sure how we ended on the road route when all I wanted was a telephone call....."
"Just hold it right there sir?" she interrupts, "where is Makhado?"
"Between Polokwane and Musina" I said trying to be helpful.
"Excuse me sir but where in hell is Musina?" she asked getting slightly hysterical.
"Musina is between Makhado and Harare," I said gently.
"Do you live in Harare?" she asks as if she had suddenly seen the light.
"No " I said " I am trying to explain where Polokwane is."
"In Zimbabwe?" she asks hopefully.
"No, in Limpopo." I corrected her.
She gave a helpless sigh and said "please can we start again."
I think, at this stage, she thought she was live on air with Leon Schuster and became a bit wary. "Where is Tshwane?"
"That's easy," I said, "between Bela-Bela and Egoli."

"No sir, I mean the town."

"So do I," said I. I could hear she was now into soapies while I was still on the road so to speak.

"Egoli is on the other side of Tshwane when coming from the direction of Bela-Bela" I said.

"Excuse me sir, have you perhaps had too much to drink?"

"No", I said "I am not drunk - they changed the name "

"Do you mean someone has changed your name? ".

"No not *my* name, the town's name," I corrected her

"What town's name?"

"Pietersburg".

"You live in Pietersburg!" she cries and I could hear the dawn of understanding.

"No" I said I "I live in Polokwane formerly known as Pietersburg."

"No s**t?" she asked.

"No s**t" I confirmed.

"So you are phoning from Polokwane previously know as Pietersburg?"

"Exactly," I confirmed.

"What were all the other names you mentioned?" she asked.

I realised this lass needed a lesson in the geography of our country pretty damn quick so I explained:

"Egoli was Johannesburg, Tshwane is Pretoria. If you travel North you pass Bela-Bela, formerly Warmbaths, after that Modimolle that was Nylstroom and Potgietersrust that is Mokopane now.

After Mokopane you get Polokwane that was Pietersburg then Louis Trichardt that became Makhado. After you have passed Makhado you get Musina that was originally Messina."

"And Musina is by the Limpopo !" she said triumphantly.

"Yes" I said, "but the Limpopo I was speaking of is the province".

"What do you call the river then?"

"Limpopo...ooooo!" I said.

"Bloody hell!"

Happy Birthday HH!

Admiral Hugo Hendrick Biermann, former Chief of the South African Defence Force and Cadet No.610 [1932-1933 term] will celebrate his 90th birthday on 06 August 2006. He is South Africa' only "full" Admiral and was the first former Cadet of the GENERAL BOTHA to achieve flag rank in any Navy. He achieved a great deal in his life and ranks high among the most successful and famous of our former Cadets. In the past he was an enthusiastic member of the Association and was a guest speaker at several Commissioning Day dinners. The Naval Heritage Society published his biography in their *Naval Digest* [No 9: October 2003].

The Last Word.

The Pessimist complains about the wind, the Optimist expects it to change and the Realist adjusts his sails.

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