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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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

NOVEMBER 2004

JOINT NEWSLETTER

Should your address details change, please send your updated details to:
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OUR FUTURE LEADERS.

(Dennis Henwood, Scribe)

What is in a name? Well when it comes to the General Botha, there is a great deal in the name "Bothie Boy." When you read through the Muster List, or just read through the names mentioned in this newsletter, and realise the successful careers of those many famous, and not so famous but never the less successful, you begin to understand the vision and foresight of its founders and benefactor. The Bothie prepared those men and equipped them for their future as leaders, motivators, thinkers and custodians of the traditions of the General Botha and of the sea.

Well, the Bothie may not be there any longer, but, thanks to the foresight of some of those Bothie Boys and some educators, we now have (since 1999) included in the curriculum of the Matric examinations, Maritime Studies A & B. There are four schools in Simon's Town, Durban and Richards Bay that cater for this course which spans the last three years of Grades 10, 11 & 12.

I had the privilege of attending recently the end of year prize giving ceremony at the Simon's Town High School, Maritime Department, which is very ably run by Brian Ingpen. Now, if the Devil could cast his net, there was an opportunity if he cast his eye down that guest list. We were gathered to congratulate, praise and award these youngsters for their achievements. In turn several of the present and past students

(learners is the new term) spoke of their time at the school with enthusiasm. There was a wonderful spirit about them. They spoke with pride of their experiences in the class room, the hostel (appropriately named "Lawhill") many of them stay in, and the excursions they have been on. There was appreciation for the opportunity given them. They spoke with particular affection about the enthusiasm of their teacher, Mr. Schlemmer.

What occurred to me that evening was that is another General Botha. There did not seem to be much difference between this event and what I recall of my passing out of the Bothie, nor of what we read about in the history of the Bothie. The spirit, the camaraderie, it all seemed the same. So what was the difference? It was only the name, and the fact that they are not Cadets, but otherwise this is a continuation of what began in 1922. We may not see the name General Botha but the legend lives on.

Of the many prizes and certificates awarded, there was one which is an annual award from the GBOBA. This was presented by our Chairman Tony Nicholas. The previous prize, coincidentally, was presented by Dave Maine on behalf of Smit Marine. Dave had won the equivalent award in his year on the Bothie. Tony presented the prize, a pair of binoculars, to Tom Murray, Head Boy of the school. The following is the criteria for this prize:

CRITERIA FOR S.A.T.S. GENERAL BOTHA PRIZE TO A STUDENT OF THE
MARITIME STUDIES B COURSE AT SIMON'S TOWN SCHOOL

The criteria used to award this prize are modeled on similar criteria used to award a Gold Medal to a cadet on the original South African training ship from 1922 to 1987. The prize is awarded to a student who:

- o Shows an interest in following a career within the spectrum of the South African maritime family;
- o Has demonstrated perseverance in academic work;
- o Has demonstrated complete integrity;
- o Has been an enthusiastic participant in the practical components of the Maritime Studies course;
- o Has an excellent rapport with his/her seniors, peers and juniors;
- o Has impeccable manners and bearing, and
- o Has passed the Maritime Studies B Course.

As I mentioned, there are many Bothie Boys who have been involved and shown interest in the school as founders, benefactors and general support. One of them is Sean Day who has seen to it that through his company in the USA two scholarships are awarded to students each year. Read about him further on in this newsletter.

The Cadets entering the maritime industry from these establishments will continue the legacy, of that I am convinced. In years to come we can expect to see leaders such as Admirals, Directors, Teachers, Mayors, as well as Master Mariners and Chief Engineers coming out of these young men and women. Oh yes! Of course there are another two subtle differences – girls and engineers! This is of course the new South Africa, and it is working well.

CAPE TOWN BRANCH – CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Jointly with the Society of Master Mariners, Cape Town Branch

- Date: Tuesday 14th December. 12:30 for 13:00
- Cost R71.00 per person excluding staff gratuity
- Guests: Wives, partners, girlfriends, secretaries, welcome.
- RSVP: by 1200 Monday 13th December
- Phone: Kathy Nicholas, phone 021-788 5957
- E-mail: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

These meetings have become very popular and thus bookings are ESSENTIAL. Should you not have booked, but find yourself free on the day, every effort will be made to accommodate you [after all, we are an Old Boys' Association] but no guarantee can be given. We look forward to seeing you all there. **PLEASE BOOK!**

DURBAN BRANCH NEWS
(Ernest Nellmapius writes....)

The Christmas lunch is scheduled for 15 December at the Durban Club, cost +-R90. The menu will include Soup, Fish, Turkey and Gammon rounded off with Christmas pudding. Ray is planning to get wine at a good price.

The Trafalgar Dinner was held at DLI and was a great success. There were quite a few Obies in attendance, four being committee members. Warrant Officer Ken Gillings presented a very interesting talk on the build up to the battle and he proposed a toast to the immortal memory of Lord Nelson.

Allen Pembroke enjoyed a very interesting trip to Italy and the UK. He managed to meet up with Dough Wrathmall at Heathrow for a few toots. Doug plans to visit SA during December in order to watch some cricket. Dough is co-coordinating his year's 50th anniversary early next year and so far about 35 Obies have indicated they will attend. Congratulations to Tony da Silva (Captain) who successfully completed his Masters (coastal) exams and has command of Kuswag 4 in Cape Town. Good luck Tony and drop in for a pint when you next pass through Durban.

Ted Fisher from the UK will be out during March and April next year and enquired if any Obie has a B&B somewhere along the KZN coast as he plans to stay over for a while. If any Obies have accommodation to please let the Durban secretary know.

Regards, Ernest.

FROM THE BRIDGE OF S.S. CAPE TOWN.
(Tony Nicholas writes....)

The introduction of the new security measures in Table Bay Harbour is continuing with the expected official closure of Duncan Road to the public. That would make access to the Royal Cape Yacht Club for our monthly lunches problematic to say the least.

Therefore, we have provided the RCYC, who in turn will provide the port security office, a complete international membership list of our association. Thus, should you be stopped by the port security officers at the entrance to Duncan Road, identifying yourself as a member of the association and a guest of RCYC should gain you immediate access. We shall endeavour to update the membership list with the RCYC and the port security on a monthly basis.

The Galley Restaurant at the RCYC has new management and staff who have welcomed us to continue our monthly lunch meetings there. All members please note in your diaries the second Tuesday of every month our popular lunch meetings, 1230 for 1300 unless otherwise advertised in the quarterly newsletters.

SOS

Again, an abundance of mail returned. Barry Wilson, 1987, last known address Northway, Gauteng. Wayne Jones, 1983, last known address New Germany, Kwa-Zulu Natal. His envelope was marked; "left many years ago". Henry Barnard, 1982, last known to be the proprietor of an Inn in Richard's Bay. Doug Dreyer, 1971, last known to be with the SPCA in Keri Keri, New Zealand. Dennis de Witte 1979, last known to be residing in a town called Ridderkerk somewhere in Holland. Somebody out there should have some leads on these AWOL members. Get out there and use the Old Boy network. Please!

DAVY MACDONALD

Davy was a highly respected staff member on the Bothie for 26 years, having served on the Ship, Red Hill and Gordon's Bay. Following his death the Bothie's motor launch was named after him and a memorial pulpit was dedicated to him in the Gordon's Bay Bothie Chapel. Family members in Scotland have contacted us requesting photographs of the motor launch as well as the pulpit. Unfortunately our records do not include clear photographs of these and therefore we appeal to the membership out there to dredge out your old photographs and send us suitable copies for on-pass to the family. In addition it is believed that Davy's son, Donald, lives in the Port Elizabeth area. Would our PE members please peruse their local telephone directories, make a few calls, and locate Donald as the Scottish family would dearly like to make contact with him. NOW! Please do not let us down. Send information and suitable photographs to Tony Nicholas at the contact details in the header of this publication. Cheers.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

R.G. BELL 1952/53. Ron passed away following an illness on the 13th August 2004. After the Bothie Ron joined T&J Harrisons of Liverpool and after obtaining his chief officer's ticket, joined Safmarine where he sailed as Master. Six years later, he joined G.A. Chettle, Marine and Classification Surveyors. Eight years later, he returned to Safmarine to assist with the preparations for the introduction of containerisation in South Africa. Later years he was transferred from operations to the commercial office of Safmarine Durban until retirement in 1999.

M.B. GORDON 1941/42. Mike passed away 24th March 2004. After Bothie Mike signed on as an Ordinary Seaman in the Langleebrook, a Geordie tramp out of South Shields. Thereafter he became a cadet with Union Castle where he served most of WWII on the troop ship, Arundel Castle. A few years after WWII Mike swallowed the anchor and set off on a varied series of activities. These included the U.K. and Malay Police, NAAFI Area Controller in Egypt and the Persian Gulf and desert locust control officer in various countries of the Middle East. Finally he joined the Distillers Company for 30 years.

D.G. POULTON 1934/35. Derrick passed away on the 30th September 2004. Derrick joined Elder Dempster Line as a cadet in 1936. Served in several of their vessels until 1948 when he joined the S.A. harbour service in 1948. Promotion to Pilot followed until his appointment as Port Captain in East London in 1977. Retired to Cape Town in 1979 where he served as chairman of the Plumstead Toc H Branch as well as on the committee of the Seaman's Institute.

V.S. READ 1948/49. Vic passed away on the 28th September 2004. Passing out Badge Cadet in 1949, he carried off numerous prizes including the prestigious Howard Medal for Navigation and Seamanship. He joined Anglo Saxon Petroleum Company in 1950 as an apprentice. In 1953, he traveled to Southern Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe] and joined the Government Service as a trainee meteorologist. In 1965, he resigned from the Met. Service and became a Work Study Officer with Rhodesian Cables. In 1978, he joined the management team of Siemen's Cables in Pretoria where he stayed until his retirement to Knysna in 1996. He became well known in Knysna for his unstinting work for the Methodist Church and as an active committee member of Leisure Island Bowling Club as well as the local branch of the Association of Retired People and Pensioners.

M.J.E. FOULIS 1952/53. Micky passed away on the 21st September 2004. After Bothie Mike joined Standard Bank in Johannesburg and the S.A. Naval Reserve until 1956 when he went to Northern Rhodesia [now Zambia], mining. There he obtained a diploma in Metalliferous Mining and a government-blasting license. 1959 Mike decided to join the British South Africa Police in Southern Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe] where he rose to section officer. Various other positions followed until joining the management of a major tyre manufacturer in Durban. Finally, in 1987 he moved to Cape Town where he became a partner in a stevedoring business and later warehouse manager for Trisa,

involved in the transport and international removal business. "Dear Tony, many thanks to all the General Botha Old Boys for their support during Mike's illness and at his Memorial Service. He requested that his ashes be scattered at sea, my son, Alistair Downing and a group of divers will be diving the wreck of the old training ship on Sunday (weather permitting) Alistair will take Mike's ashes down. This is certainly a fitting place for Mike as he can "sail his ship" all the days of his life. Please pass on my thanks to all the Bothie Boys. Regards, Pat Downing."

M.C. DE KONING 1969. Meindert passed away on 22nd September 2004. For many years, Meindert served on rig supply vessels and tugs in the North Sea and South America. He also enjoyed his yacht in South Africa.

L.D. DUDLEY 1939/41. Doug passed away on the 8th October 2004. Writer has no information on Doug's early career but at some time he joined S.A. Stevedores in Durban. Doug soon took over command of their Durban branch. There he became highly respected not only among his peers and customers but more importantly to his work force. A wonderful character of the Waterfront.

W. SPENCER 1930/31. Bill passed away in Australia on the 13th August 2004.

Unfortunately, we have no career details of Bill and invite members to provide details.

A.C. THOMAS 1939/40. Aubrey passed away earlier this year. After Bothie Aubrey served at sea during WWII and at various stages in his career he served on Ellerman & Bucknall's City of Perth and City of Lincoln. He later sailed as Master in Safmarine before coming ashore in the marine surveying industry in Cape Town.

Our sincere condolences to their families, shipmates and friends.

We previously reported the sad passing of Bob Anderson 1936/38. Member Bill Damerall who describes Bob as follows; "Well done Bob, has kindly provided details of his career! When I was a very junior and inexperienced tug master, Bob was my mentor." After serving his apprenticeship and obtaining second officers certificate Bob joined the Royal Fleet Auxiliary where he was eventually promoted to Master on their tankers. After WWII, he returned to S.A. and worked for Union Castle Line in a shore position. Later he joined the harbour service in Cape Town from where he retired as Assistant Port Captain in 1985.

TOM FREDERICK BYWATER - 22 October 1915 – 26 September 1980.

Tom attended Jeppe Boys High School in Johannesburg and afterwards went to the GENERAL BOTHA in 1932/33. Whilst in the GENERAL BOTHA his nickname was "Pidgeon" and Admiral H. H. Biermann, still called him by this name until the day he died. After his years in GENERAL BOTHA he returned to Johannesburg and worked for the Johannesburg Municipality where he qualified as a Motor Mechanic. He married Gwendoline Hanekom on 30 June 1937. They had two children - Denise born on 30 January 1939 and Allan born on 15 March 1960. Allan served in the South African for his military service. Tom Bywater joined the South African Naval Forces [SANF] at the beginning of World War II and attended an officers' training course in Port Elizabeth in 1942. Thereafter he captained an "M.L." [Harbour Defence Motor Launch] patrol ship which patrolled the South African coast line for German submarines. He was stationed at various times in Cape Town, Durban and East London. In 1944 he was part of the South Atlantic Escort Force. After the end of the War he served a further two years in the Navy in charge of demobilization at Hector Norris Park in Johannesburg. After being "demobbed" in 1947 he joined his father and brother in the family second hand car business where he remained until just before his death from lung cancer in 1980.

SCRANBAG

Chief Harbour Master Neil Brink, 1957/58 #2036, recently retired from the National Port Authority. Eddie Bremner, 1959/60 # 2140, has succeeded Neil. Congratulations to both and may we see more of you at the Bothie functions.

D.P. LEIGH 1983 #2807. With the effective use of modern communications, Dave reported his present position in Australia. David left the sea in 1989 and became operations manager for a stevedoring company in Richard's Bay for about one year. Then he joined Island View Shipping in Durban '90 to '95. Joined MUR Shipping in '95 as their operations manager and has been with them ever since. MUR has grown from strength to strength, and last year took over Scottish Ship Owners and Managers in Sydney. That is when I was offered a position over there.

A.J. FOTHERINGHAM 1976 #2525. Andy has also reported in. "Have been working in Mackay and living out of a suitcase for the last month, hence my lack of communication. I got a job as a marine surveyor with a company called CCI Marine. They do the draft surveys for the coal exports out of Hay Point, Dalrymple Bay and the two terminals in Gladstone. I'm presently in Gladstone until, I think December." Sounds like fun, Andy.

F.M. VERHEIJ 1977 #2577. Frank is one of the very few that provide us with a window of life in the Middle East. "Still in Jebel Ali, UAE working on my heat rash - won't tell you where as that's personal. Roger Ebelthite and I still flying the flag out here - although it would seem that Qatar is attracting many of our pilots. Jebel Ali (according to company stats - also referred to as propaganda by those who know better) is now no. 11 in the world for the number of containers handled - although still only four pilots on duty at any one time! At present undergoing a massive dredging operation with the bulk of the port being dredged down to 17.0m. By 2006, a new terminal will be reclaimed to seaward of the existing breakwater and then we will only but "kak off" to coin a phrase. The Palm Islands projects are well underway with the "Jebel Ali Palm" due for completion in 2007. This will be as close as 1 nautical mile to the entrance channel and with some powerful binoculars (fitted with night vision lenses) should make the channel transit a whole lot more interesting!" I dare say young man. Do share some of those visions with us.

G.J. MILLAR 1983 #2810. A few years ago, Gary was known to be running his own business, The Cheese Farm, somewhere in Kwa-Zulu Natal, but went AWOL in 1998. We have tracked him to the U.K. but know not what he is doing there. Perhaps milking cows? We look forward to your update Gary.

R.B. MYBURGH 1969 #2377. Another Obie that went AWOL from Kwa-Zulu Natal in 1996 has been traced to the U.K. At least we know that he is teaching mathematics at a college in the U.K. but we know not which one. I never realized that Obies were so intelligent.

D.D. THOMAS 1941/42 #1201. Many Safmariners will remember Des with fondness. Des sailed for many years with Andrew Weir [Bank Line] and later worked for the Shipping Federation based in the U.K., a job which took him all over Europe. 1966 Des returned to South Africa and joined Safmarine in their marine personnel department before retiring in 1986.

J.G. MATTHEW 1952/53 #1777. James has recently returned to Canada after spending a few years in Cape Town and reports in; "After careful thought decided that after over thirty years in Canada that I was more Canadian than ever before, and having come to that conclusion, have returned to Canada permanently. Presently have rented a small apartment in a kind of back water community near to Duncan B.C., called "COWICHAN BAY B.C.". This small community has a laid back attitude and with a marina, where older interesting boats of all shapes and sizes lazily move against their moorings, with the swell from the sea beyond the bay in which Cowichan Bay village nestles. A small convenience store, a couple souvenir stores, more than a few fish restaurants and a hotel that never seems to ever to succeed, but at the moment is holding its own. The three storey apartment block is one of 'two' concrete apartment blocks within the Cowichan Valley, in which five towns are located over a distance of some 80 kilometers, it is located with a view of the marina/harbour and a mountain rising from the sea just a

short half mile across the bay. Looking forward to hearing from old friends soon and hope that everybody is well and enjoying life to the full." Sounds almost as good as Cape Town.

G.A. DAVIES 1980 #2712. Following his move to Dublin in 2002, Guy has now taken up a post in Dublin harbour. "I have moved back into the periphery of shipping by taking up a post in Dublin Harbour. I am fortunate enough to be part of the management team and involved in various aspects of the day to day running of the port - don't be fooled by the 'Head of Security' title, my portfolio tends to head off in various directions."

S.G.J. PARNABY 1981 #2728. Following many years in the U.K., Stephen has found new challenges. "I migrated to Perth a few months ago with my family, and am working as a freelance hydrographic surveyor in the offshore oil and gas industry, continuing what I've been doing since graduating with a BSc in Maritime Studies in 1990 from Liverpool Polytechnic." Always a wonder to me what Bothie Boys get up to. Rather varied.

R.H. LOVELL 1975 #2497. Reading this, I wonder whether Robert ever takes time out to sleep. "I feel somewhat remiss about not communicating with the Bothie, while receiving newsletters from Tony Nicholas. In brief, after leaving the Bothie in 1977, I did my mates ticket in Durban in 1978. In '81, after being strikebound in Perth, I met a young woman who after 14 trips across the Indian Ocean, finally married. I attended the Australian Maritime College in 84 and obtained my masters. Met up with Robin Gratjios and visited him in Gisborne some years later. In 86 I was mate, and then later, master on the AMC's training ship the "Wyuna" 88-91 I worked in Madang, PNG, and then went to Nauru as Harbour Master, Pilot, surveyor, stevedore foreman etc. 91 I went to Brisbane as Assistant Harbour Master. Bored with the desk-jockey job, I went to Hobart as pilot from 93-94. 94-99, I was a pilot in Townsville, North Queensland, and in 1999, I returned as pilot to work in Brisbane Marine Pilots - a privatized pilotage company, where I am today. On the way, when I was board, I studied for a degree in education and a grad dip in business. In 2001 I popped in to Durban and caught up with Joe MacL, Eric Fenech, Eddie Nielsen, and Peter Snyman at the Point Sailing club. Had a few cold Castles. Good company, good food. We popped around to see Gordon "Bubbles" Schoeman, but he wasn't home. I see that he is trying to contact old friends, well, if he isn't home when we call, what does he expect? Will be back in SA for a visit in July next year. If there are any lost OBs in Brisbane, or just passing through, give me a call and I will point you in the direction of a good supply of Boere wors, biltong and Castle Lager.

THE LEGEND LIVES ON

Our August 2004 edition featured Johan Tuytens 1954/55 presently living in Belgium. Johan recently decided to pay us a visit and he was ably hosted by John Mellows 1955/56. I was pleasantly surprised to see that both Old Salt and Chum could be very cordial to each other. John mellows also went to a lot of trouble to contact class mates of Johan's for a mini reunion and also arranged with the OC of S.A.N.C. Gordon's Bay for Johan to visit his old Bothie. Johan's comments; "After 50 years, 5 strangers come together in a pub in Cape Town. They don't recognize each other because the years have of course taken their normal toll, but because these men have been to the General Botha together a bond was created. The five men are John Mellows, Brian Smith, Roy Linnow, Hans-Peter Schröder & Johan Tuytens, who came all the way from Belgium for this reunion. It took only a few minutes to get acquainted. After a few beers memories about the "old ship" started flying around & the atmosphere was filled with conviviality & laughter. When later in the afternoon we left each other we thanked John Mellows for having been the instigator for this reunion & for the success it had been. We of course all hope to see each other in the near future. This is in a nutshell what I can tell you

about that afternoon; John would be the right man for any anecdotes that were told that afternoon because mine are not suitable for your Newsletter. Furthermore my impressions of Cape Town, after half a century being nearly unrecognizable, but that when John Mellows & I visited the Naval College in Gordon's Bay, where we had a guided tour by Midshipman Sitolé we felt as if time had stood still. The boatshed and most of the buildings were still the same as 50 years ago. Even the old dormitories were unchanged & one had the impression that at any moment we would have to react to bugle calls & run down to take a shower." Well, the anecdotes that I have gleaned from John of that reunion are not considered suitable for this esteemed publication. But, you can imagine.

SLOP CHEST

These slop chest items all proudly display our association insignia, and are available from Cape Town branch. Place your orders without delay with Kathy Nicholas:
Phone: 021-7885957 fax: 021-4213194 Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

BADGE	R100
FLAG	R100
TIE [STRIPED]	R60
PLAQUE	R100
PEAK CAP [BASEBALL TYPE]	R60
BELT BUCKLES - Exact replica of the belt buckles worn by officers and cadets featuring the Ship's badge	R100
'n NAAM WAT SEEVAARDERS EER Gesiedenis 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

PLUS PACKAGING AND POSTAGE!

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

GAUTENG BRANCH NEWS.
(Ivor Little writes.....)

GAUTENG BRANCH SPRING FUNCTION.

The Gauteng branch held its annual Spring Function at the Randfontein Golf and Country Club on 19 September. Although usually held on Heritage Day the date was advanced this year to avoid spoiling the long weekend for the perennial travellers amongst us.

The function was organised by Frank Pascoe and took the form of a four course hot buffet in one of the Country Club's many function rooms. This was followed by the showing of three videos of the Botha in 1947, 1954 and 1959, which were well received. Thirty-three ex-cadets, two Worcester ex-cadets, their wives or partners and, in many cases their families, attended, a total of 72 people. This popular and up market venue with its pleasant décor lends itself to good fellowship and judging by the noise level a very good time was had by all! Certainly the grub was good value for money! Dale Allen said Grace, Ivor Little proposed the toast to "The Ship", Rex Chambers introduced the videos and Frank Pascoe's son competently handled the electronic side

of things. In his toast Ivor mentioned that the Gauteng "branch" has now grown to 124 members. It recently lost David Leigh (1983), who has moved to Australia to work for Scottish Ship Management, but has gained Tony Jacquet (53/54), Jan Koudtstaal (56/57), Brian Carver (60/61) and Paul Clarke (1981).

The following ex-cadets attended: James Robinson and Frank Redgment (39/40), Pat Birch (40/41), Frank Wheeldon (41/42), Tony Turner (43/44), Bill Leader and Eddie Page (44/45), Gordon Bennett and Rex Chambers (46/47), Gordon Cross (47/48), Rene Poerner (48/49), Drummond Terry (50/51), David Jones (HMS "Worcester" 51/53), Bob Slatter (51/52), Graham Jooste, Mike Crewe, Jamie Matthew, Ken van der Walt, Jac van Leeuwen and Vic Albert (52/53), Ivor Little, Eric Moir and Keith Quayle (53/54), Ian Morall and John Orrock (54/55), Archie Campbell (55/56), Brian Watt (56/57), Dale Allen and Bobby Dow (57/58), Alistair Douglas (58/59), Frank Pascoe (59/60), Ian Thurston (HMS "Worcester" 1959), Brian Preiss (1964), Henri Fouche (1968), and Tom Fraser (1979).

It was particularly pleasing to welcome the two representatives of HMS "Worcester" and Jamie Matthew of the Cape Town branch to our get together but a cause for concern that so few of our members of post 1960 vintage attended, although a number of them were amongst the further twelve ex-cadets who tendered their apologies.

Thanks to the good offices of Tony Turner our next meeting will, with a bit of luck, be held in the *salon privee* dining room of the Gold Reef City Casino. This recently completed addition to the casino has been designed for the exclusive use of high rolling gambling clients of the casino and entry to the dining area is by membership or invitation only. If we can negotiate our usual bargain basement price for the meal then that is where we will see you all again in March, otherwise our request made at the function for ideas for dining venues has already brought in a number of offers which we have accepted with thanks and "banked" for future use. If we do not get the casino we will use one of those and advise you accordingly before our Annual Commissioning Day Function, which we will hold in March 2005.

GBOPA – UNITED KINGDOM NEWS

(Ted Fisher writes)

Greetings from a very autumnal Storrington!

News via Tony Nicholas that a couple more Obies who have located to UK shores:

Garry Millar (1983) – Harrow on the Hill, Middlesex

Rob Myburgh (1969) – High Wycombe, Bucks

Perhaps the above could get in contact with me through e-mail to advise their addresses, hopefully, they will be able to attend a Rising Sun Pub Lunch at Warsash on either 7 November or 5 December failing which the proposed December gathering in Port Solent (details below).

News of Chris Nash (61/62) (in his words) travelling a lot from ME to USA and working in Italy as Business Strategy Director – still resident in the UK.

Had the pleasure of meeting Ivan Bole (51/52) with wife Anne at Southampton Boat Show last month – his business Arun/Rockall Sails were exhibiting over the 10 day period. On the day, yours truly managed 3 hours on the former 'France 3' the French contender for the 1997 America's Cup Challenge. A fantastic experience sailing the Solent/Southampton Water in a gusting Force 5 and an opportunity to helm!

December Pre-Christmas Function - for the past two years several southern based Obies with wives and friends have enjoyed a pre-Christmas lunch at Olivo's Italian Restaurant, Port Solent. A repeat is envisaged this year, therefore, I have provisionally reserved the same venue for Saturday 11 December 1215 hours. If anyone together with wives, partners or guest would like to join in please contact me ASAP – estimated

cost circa £20 per head. I shall e-mail to those in the area, however, early replies would be appreciated.

That's it for now - it seems early to offer Christmas Greetings but I shall to all from Caroline and myself.

Ted Fisher, e-mail tedefisher@aol.com Tel: 01903 744400, Mobile: 07702 635017

REUNION 1966.

(Andy Cross writes)

1966 - 2006, 40 Years and Counting.

In January 1966 20 pimply faced teenagers gathered together at Gordon's Bay to start a years pre sea training at General Botha, three months later there was a move to the 'new' GB at Granger Bay and 9 months after that, if memory serves me correctly, we all joined Safmarine.

A lot of water has gone under the bridge (wing) since then and as some of you will know I am keen to have a 40 year reunion in 2006. Sadly two of our number have 'gone over the side' but there is no reason why the rest of us (that's 18 before you reach for your calculators!) can not meet up in say Cape Town (an obvious choice) sometime in 2006. To those 1966 GB old boys who have not responded to my letter of the 1st July, there is every likelihood you never received it, your comments and thoughts would be greatly appreciated. I am sure many have not seen each other since we started our marine careers and I think that after 40 years it is time we did.

Please contact me by email at andrew.cross@lloyds.com.

FAREWELL LUNCH FOR JAMIE MATTHEW (52 /53).

(Keith Meyer writes)

It was with sadness that we were advised by our mate, Jamie Matthew, that he intended returning to live in Canada. For the little while that he was living here in Cape Town, he did much to entertain and liven up the lives of all who knew him. We could not let Jamie disappear over the horizon without some sort of a party. This is where Brian Greenwood and a friend of our late mate Foxy Foulis and equally important friend of Jamie, Mrs Merita Krige, came to the party. A lunch at the home of Merita was arranged and held on Sunday 03 October. Those who were fortunate enough to attend the lunch included Brian Greenwood, Pat Browne, Keith and Anne Meyer, Danny Le Roux, Ian and Iris Harvey, Keith and Vi Croome, Barry Cullen and of course Jamie and Merita. After pre drinks we were all comfortably seated around Merita's long and beautifully decorated dining table.

To say that it was "a day to remember," is bald understatement. It was a jewel of a day! Merita produced a menu fit for a Master Mariner! All, around the table produced the wines (and what a selection there was). The meal was enjoyed with much Bothie reminiscences, salty tales of the sea, songs last heard many years ago, numerous toasts, jokes galore and Barry sang the 12 Gifts of Christmas with other gifts never intended by the composer! How he remembered all of those gifts after the amount of toasts he'd already drunk, I'll never know. Danny le Roux also did and said much to liven the party. After sweats, Marita produced an ice cold bottle of Hanepoort as a liqueur. Man! It went down well. Much later in the day we thanked Marita profusely and said our sad farewells to Jamie. He's our loss and Canada's gain!! We all wish him happiness over there.

HARBOUR MASTER – DUBLIN PORT COMPANY.

(Guy Davies informs us

The post of Harbour Master in the Port of Dublin has been advertised. "This post offers an opportunity for a suitably qualified professional to contribute to one of Europe's fastest growing ports ... There will be a competitive remuneration package reflecting the high level of management and technical skills and experience required for the role." For

further information call Ellen Roche, at (00 353 1) 662 6703. Enquiries and CV can be sent to ellen.roche@ie.pwc.com.

S A SHIP SOCIETY.

(Gavin Durell writes with the following request ...)

Today I bumped into Pauline Brueton. You may remember her as secretary to Tony Farr, Blewie and Okkie if I remember correctly. She is now retired of course, but still serves various institutions, one of which is the SA Ship Society of which she is secretary.

They are presently located in the old "Bond" store building near 'F' shed but, live from month to month as Portnet, with all the prospective developments being mooted for the future, cannot give them any security of tenure. So they are in danger of being given short notice to vacate at any time in the future and are looking for a place to house themselves on a longer term basis.

Does anyone know of a spare bit of space that they could use to house their many exhibits, ship models, memorabilia, etc., and have their monthly meetings? They'd preferably like somewhere near the harbour/waterfront area, or even somewhere near the sea would also be fine.

If anyone has any bright ideas, they can give Pauline a call on (021) 434 5528 or, alternatively, give Gavin a call on 083 388 2610.

(So come on Capetonians, are there any bright ideas out there?).

DONATIONS.

Ted Jupp (Hon. Treasurer) acknowledges receipt of the following donations during the period 1st April to 30th September 2004:

J Bekker P E Bitzker B Bridgeman L Cole
R C Cousens K Croome P Goustra R Gratjios
B Greenwood A J Harvey A Havenga D N A Henwood
R Hogg B J Horn G Jooste J Koudstaal
P Morris C Phillips J A Rayner F Redgement
R J Rowe N Sloane N Stone A E Struthers
F Verheij J Wanliss Naval Heritage Trust.

These donations are gratefully received, and go a long way to covering the expenses of, among other activities, this news letter every quarter as well as the website.

SEAN DAY #2297 1967.

(Reporting in from the Big Apple)

I have just returned to New York from Qatar. I went there to sign charter parties for three LNG ships that we are building for long term charter to RasGas. While there, I travelled up to Ras Laffan to see the LNG trains and the port at which our ships will be loading the LNG. While standing up in the port control tower, I heard the pilot on a VLCC which was sailing, speaking on the VHF in an unmistakable South African accent. I asked my guide, a local marine superintendent, who it was. "That's Tissink", he said. The pilots here are all South Africans. They are all physically huge and they are all highly competent!! We are lucky to have them here." He then showed me the pilots' roster which included names that I recognized from the OB newsletter - De Konig, Blackett, Tissink and a couple of others.

Its a small world. I vaguely knew that there were a number of OBs in the Middle East, but I was surprised to find so many pilots in one port. I am glad to know that our ships will be in such good hands when they start calling regularly at Ras Laffan.

LNG is new for us. We now have seven of these very expensive vessels. We also operate 167 tankers, of which we own just over 100, and we carry 11% of the world's seaborne oil. The last 5 years have been very good to us in the tanker industry and it

has been an exciting time! With the help of my old shipmate Simon Pearson, we started recruiting cadets in Cape Town a few years ago, and they are generally doing well in our fleet. We are also sponsoring a couple of students at the Maritime Studies program in Simon's Town (run by Brian Ingpen) through the TK Foundation, starting next year. (Well, I had heard what this Obie is doing for the youth in SA, and so I asked him to tell us more...)

I am involved in education in SA in a number of areas. The TK Foundation (which is entirely separate from our shipping company) is a charitable foundation and we support a number of good causes around the world. From next year we have undertaken to provide scholarships for two boarders (or six day students) in the Maritime Program at Simon's Town High School.

Separately from that, I set up a fund here in New York eight years ago to support bright but poor kids at the best South African public schools. We give them full support (school fees, uniforms, books, extra mural activities etc) for the last five years of high school (grades 8 to 12). We also put some in the boarding house if their home circumstances are particularly difficult. We currently support 30 children at schools in CT, PE, East London and Gauteng - they go to schools like SACS, Wynberg, Collegiate, Selborne, Clarendon Girls etc. We look for the "best and the brightest" who would otherwise not have the opportunity of a good education. We are very proud of the achievements of "our" children to date. A few examples - Loyiso Mbece was the first black head student of Selborne College and is now at UPE, Kolosa Qali was runner up in the national schools debating championships and is now at Rhodes, Asanga Mehane won an award in a global art competition, is an academic stand out and is trying out for the SA national schools team in both water polo and netball! I could give you many other examples.

The fund is called the Friends of South African Schools Fund - our web site is www.saschools.org.

I am also helping a school up in the North Western Cape - Tiger Kloof with fund raising and development.

(And his philosophy?) I have always been grateful for the world class education I received in South Africa, and so this is my way of "paying back" in a modest fashion.

A PAGE FROM A NAVAL RECORD OF BETWEEN WARS.

(Frank Redgment #1057. 39/40 sent the following ...)

1. Extract from Admiralty letter addressed to H.M.S. Apollo, Vernon etc.

"I am to inform you as follows ref trials of Apollo viz: Para 4.a. There is no necessity for scuppers in the torpedo parting space. On such occasions as the torpedo heads need draining, water could be run off by horses. Scuppers are not fitted in other ships and their Lordships have decided not to fit them in Apollo. By command of their Lordships V.W.S.

2. Letter from Whitehead Office, H.M.S. Vernon to Torpedo Officer H.M.S. Apollo.

"The High Priest of Apollo. With reference to Admiralty letteryou are requested to forward a report in quintuplicate stating:-

- a. The breed of horse it is proposed to use in draining water off from the torpedo heads.
- b. The stabling accommodation available.
- c. Whether it is considered that a veterinary course should be included in the syllabi of torpedo courses.

It is hoped that this operation will be carried out during Apollo's discharge trials, as Vernon would like to witness a demonstration."

P.W.B. for Whitehead Commander.

3. Reply from Torpedo Officer H.M.S. Apollo to Whitehead Office.

Learned but Loathesome Sir,

With reference to your communication of the 26th. ult. I forward the following observations:

"It is presumed that the water from the torpedo heads is to be run off into a bath or suitable receptacle and for the horse to drink same, and to evacuate it by natural methods from its after end, the assumption being that the quadruped is of sufficient length to span the distance from the centre of the parting to the door to the deck outside.

As regards the breed of the horse, the main qualification appears to be an abnormal chassis length. I would therefore suggest that a Clydesdale be crossed with an alligator and accurate approximation of the requirements might be arrived at.

I remain, Ever yours, Samson Gubb for Torpede Officer.

4. Admiralty Reference Sheet addressed to Apollo. Vernon etc.

ERRATUM. Please amend Admiralty letter as follows:

Para. 4(a) line 3. For "horses" read "hoses."

Editors note: The above is stated to be genuine.

THE END OF AN ERA.

Decommissioning of SAS Port Rex, East London – Peter Thomas writes ...
Friday 15th October, 2004. Cocktail party at Cambridge Town Hall for the decommissioning of SAS Port Rex Naval Base, East London, hosted by His Worship the Mayor of East London. Two strike craft from Simon's Town, SAS Galishewe and SAS Adam Kock were sent to East London for the occasion. SA Navy represented by R/ADM (JG) Penzhorn (Director Naval Reserves) and Skippers of Strike Craft Cdr Wessels and Cdr Van Der Westhuizen. A very well presented function by the Buffalo City Municipality and the catering superb.

Saturday 16th October, 2004. Decommissioning Dinner/Dance held at Naval Base organized and hosted by Officer Commanding and Ship's Company, SAS Port Rex, East London. SA Navy represented by ADM. E. Green, (Flag Officer Fleet) and Strike Craft Skippers as mentioned above. The function was attended by 177 invited guests, dignitaries, Officers Commanding SANDF Units in Eastern Cape Area and past members of SAS Port Rex. Outside caterers were contracted to provide a 4 course dinner, a 6 Piece band provided the music and the hall was decked out with a giant parachute spanning approximately 20 meters, bunting and camo netting suspended from the high steel roofing girders. This function was a massive project as can be imagined and the planning commenced in June, with numerous planning meetings to cover all aspects and problem areas. The evening went off without any major hitches and was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who attended. The speeches consisted of a Welcome by the OC SAS Port Rex, Reply by R/ADM E. Green and the final handing over of the telescope to signify the handing back of command of the Unit by OC SAS Port Rex, to the SA Navy.

The speech given by Flag Officer Fleet pointed out the basic reasons for the closure of the Reserve Units in Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Rand. This was a very bitter pill to swallow, especially by those of us who have given over 30 years of loyal service to SAS Port Rex, the Unit and the SA Navy as a whole.

Sunday 17th October 2004. Church service held at SAS Port Rex by Ship's Chaplain CPLN D. Plint. This was the saddest part of the whole weekend and really brought home the unbelievable reality of the fact that the Unit was finally being decommissioned. After the touching Church Service, the Naval Ensign was lowered from the jack stay, carefully folded and handed to the OC. The only representatives of the SA Navy at this function was the Skippers of the Strike Craft, one of which was ceremonially handed the Ensign for safekeeping.

That is how it all ended. SAS Port Rex is the first unit to be decommissioned in this fashion and within two months there will be no naval reserve as we knew it. The decision to decommission the bases seems to be a bit short sighted and the new system of controlling personnel remotely from Simon's Town seems to be the death knoll of the naval reserve in the not too far distant future. The plan is to employ prospective naval recruits on a 2 year contract, train them at Saldahna and on the new ships and then send them home with a retainer payment of R18000.00 in their pockets. The qualified seamen would then be called up when required to fill the post for which they were trained. However, as this seems to be aimed at historically disadvantaged individuals, it is highly unlikely that they would be at a contactable address or be prepared to give up their job, if they have one, to fill the post when and if it becomes available for a short term period.

There is a saying going round at the moment. "If you can not change it, then break it down and build it up again as you want it." That heralds the End of an Era. Peter Thomas. GB No 2129 1958/1959.

Apologies to those whose contributions have not been included, thanks for your effort and watch this space next time.

Wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas, and best wishes for 2005 – Scribe dhenwood@iafrica.com.