

S.A.T.S.

**PO Box 22015,
Glenashley, 4022**

Chairman: Derek McManus
Tel. (O): +27 (0)31 3039563
Tel. (H): +27 (0)31 7673719

Secretary: Ernest Nellmapius
ernestn@saol.com
Cell: +27 (0) 835328198
Tel (O): +27 (0)31 5620005



**PO BOX 4515
CAPE TOWN
8000**

Chairman: Tony Nicholas

cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za
Tel. (O): +27 (0)21 421 4144
Fax: +27 (0)86 604 0811
Cell: +27 (0)82 555 2877
Tel. (H): +27 (0)21 788 5957

GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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

November 2009

JOINT NEWSLETTER

Has your address changed? Please send your updated details to Tony Nicholas Chairman Cape Town (details above).

Do you have an interesting article for this newsletter? Please send your contributions to Dennis Henwood, dhenwood@iafrica.com Phone: +27 (0)21 6716373. Fax: +27 (0)86 6706710.

Can you read this Newsletter? If not please let us know. We can send you larger print if it is necessary.

CAPE TOWN END OF YEAR LUNCH

- Date: Tuesday 8th December, 1230 for 1300 [or earlier if you wish]
- Venue: Royal Cape Yacht Club, Duncan Road, Table Bay Harbour.
- Lunch: Four course if you can manage.
- Price: R150 p.p.
- RSVP: Before Friday 5th December
although I shall do my best to accommodate late bookings with the caterer
 - Kathy or Louise or Jacky: phone 021-788 5957
 - Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za
 - Facsimile: 086 604 0811

PLEASE BOOK!

The KZN Christmas lunch is booked for
Tuesday 15th December 12:30 for 13:00 at the **Westville Club**.

This is a day before the public holiday so Obies can really relax and have an extended get together.

This is the same venue as last year where we enjoyed a very good lunch. All agreed that the access and parking are very convenient.

We have secured a bigger room so should be more comfortable.

The GBOBA KZN will provide wine and there will be a lucky draw.

Please BOOK if you would like to attend the lunch.

Contact either the secretary at 031-5620005, or 0835328198
ernestn@saol.com or call Derick McManus at work on 031 303 9563

KZN BRANCH NEWSLETTER DURBAN - NOVEMBER 2009

We continue to enjoy excellent monthly lunches at the RNYC.

We enjoyed a visit from some Obies from afar: namely Ian Fishley and Gordon Oxley from Richards Bay, Keith Meiklejohn from Pietermaritzburg, Tony da Silva from the Cape, Michel Lagesse from Freemantle, Rob Farren-Handford from Kwambonambi, William Du Sautoy from Ballito, Conroy Van Der Merwe who last attended a very long time ago and Dave De Wet on his visit back from the Philippines. Thanks to the Obies who make such a good effort. The late Dave Freeman kindly left a bequest to the KZN Obies. His daughter, Vega, asked us to have a wake in his memory and the lunch and drinks were duly paid from the bequest. Many thanks to Vega and Dave.

George Foulis is recovering from some serious surgery and we wish him a quick and full recovery and hope to soon see him at our lunches and other functions.

The old post box will be cancelled as it is no longer viable.

In future please use **PO Box 22015, Glenashley, 4022**

FROM THE BRIDGE OF ss CAPE TOWN

Having just returned from a wonderful trip [by land] to the Kgalagadi in the company of class mate Terry Purdon, I felt well rested. But one day back in the office and But up there among the lion, cheetah, Cape cobras, we came across another Bothie Boy, none other than Justin Barrett 1976, good to know that I was in good company up there in the wilds. A brief Bothie meeting was held there in a camp site, The Legend Lives Everywhere.

As mentioned in our August edition I am amazed of the enthusiasm of members arranging their class reunions. I know of 1959/60 being planned for March 2010 and the classes of 1960/61, 1971 & 1981 for March 2011 and now there is interest from class 1950/51 as well. The Legend truly Lives On; what other association such as ours can boast such comradeship and support. I commend those taking the initiative and trust all your class mates shall actively support these events.

The monthly lunch meetings continue in Durban and Cape Town, **Cape Town** on the **second Tuesday** of each month at the **Royal Cape Yacht Club**, and in **Durban** on the **first Wednesday** of each month at the **Royal Natal Yacht Club**, 1230 for 1300, unless otherwise advertised in this newsletter. The year end approaches, thus please check the respective branch functions advertised advised in this publication, we look forward to your enthusiastic support. For those of you that I shall not meet at our Cape Town year end function, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a most Prosperous New Year. Now for the rugby; having won the World Cup, Super 14 and the Tri-Nations what else is left to conquer. Today the Currie Cup final; recently my two year old grandson sat down next to me to watch a game on TV and immediately asked, "where are the peanuts dada?" He then immediately wandered off to the kitchen cupboard and brought back a packet of crisps for us. Pity he can not reach my beer on the fridge top shelf, YET.

SOS

NAME	CLASS	LAST KNOWN LOCATION
Robert Mc Dougall	1958/59	Levubu [somewhere up north east of SA]
Noel Winship	1944/45	Durban North
Greg Atherton	1980	Suffolk, England
Richard Mackie	1977	Auckland, New Zealand
Dieter Philipp	1977	Singapore.

Noel Winship's envelope was returned marked "no such street" which leaves me wondering where all the years of previous newsletters were delivered to. I have tried telephoning all the above to no avail. All readers please assist in locating these AWOLs.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

G.N. LA GRANGE 1942/43. Kenny previously sailed with Lloyd Tristino before coming ashore and joining Oceanic Stevedores. Passed away 01/08/2009. Any further information welcome.

D.E. ATKINSON 1951/52. After leaving G.B. Don joined Vacuum Oil Company (which later became Mobil and then Engen). He served as Area Operations Manager in Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Bloemfontein and Durban. Transferred back to Cape Town in 1983 as Distribution Manager at Head Office and retired as Special Projects Manager in June 1993. Deceased 31/08/2009. Don's service was held in the chapel at the S.A. Naval College in Gordon's Bay, previously our GB and attended by many Old Boys. There are a number of GB memorabilia there and under the GB anchor on the mountain, a most fitting location for his final farewell.

K.D. FORD 1961/62. After failing the eye sight test Keith joined the public service and worked for the Department of Customs & Excise. Then spent 30 years working for the Kimberly City Council where he was appointed Manager of Parks & Recreation in 1984 and retired January 2005. Deceased 18/08/2009. Keith was only recently located by the efforts of his class mates in the course of planning a reunion. Sadly he shall miss the reunion. Keith's widow Esther wrote: "General Botha days were much in his thoughts during the past few years and making contact with you meant a lot to him. Thank you for that."

R.E. RILEY 1956/57. Rob joined Safmarine in January 1958 as a Cadet Officer. After passing all certificates in rapid time he was appointed Master of the m.v. Tzaneen, a Safmarine reefer vessel. Shortly after promotion to Master he was appointed Assistant Marine Superintendent in New York and thereafter Marine Superintendent (Atlantic) based in Baltimore. Nine years later it was back to New York as Senior Marine Superintendent and in 1968 he was appointed Vice President Marine. In 1991 he was appointed to President of Safmarine (U.S.A) and owner's representative, Safbank Line Ltd. Retired December 1999 to his farm in Virginia, U.S.A. Deceased 29/08/2009.

W.B. LEADER 1944/45. Bill joined Anglo Saxon Petroleum Co and first ship in Durban in January 1946. Sailed as Cadet for two and a half years and un-certificated Third Officer for nine months. Wrote Second Mates in Durban in 1949 and First Mates in London 1951. Left the sea in 1951 with Chief Officers Certificate and went into a Business Machine Company working on Accounting Machines and later computers. Worked there for 41 years. Deceased July 2009.

Doc O'Shea. Doc [I never did learn his real name] was previously OC of SAS Unitie. As such he was a good friend and supporter of the GBOBA. Sadly passed away 31st August. Many members, particularly past committee members, shall remember him with fondness and the respect he so justly deserved.

J.P.L.F. HARMER 1948/49. John sadly passed away 23rd August. Any further information will be welcome.

R.C.S. WHIPP 1953/54. Richard went to sea in Shell and came ashore in the late 1950's. Deceased 31/07/2009. Any further information will be welcome.

Our sincere condolences to family and shipmates, we shall miss them.

WHAT IS THE SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION

The South African Legion is a member of a world-wide family of organisations serving military veterans and their dependants; the GBOBA being a member organisation. Through the British Commonwealth Ex Services League (BCEL), it is linked with 54 member organisations in 49 countries. Eighteen of the member states are in Africa. The Legion has been serving South Africa's veterans' community for the past eighty years. Our policy is national, non-sectarian and apolitical. Among the Legion's objectives are:-

- To strive for the rehabilitation in civil life of all ex-servicemen and women and to safeguard their interests and those of their dependants.

- To assist military veterans and their dependants financially or otherwise where assistance is required.

Those who have served in the forces of the Union and Republic of South Africa, Umkhonto we Sizwe, APLA, AZANLA or those of the former TBVC states, veterans of the Royal Navy British Army and Royal Air Force, veterans of all Commonwealth countries as well as persons sympathetic to the cause of the Legion are all welcomed in the Legion's ranks. In addition to its' members, who belong to Branches, a number of other organisations are affiliated to the Legion. This ensures input by the corps and regimental organisations in the affairs of the Legion at both local and national levels.

What the Legion does.

The Legion is best known as the service organisation which has been speaking out on behalf of the veterans since 1921. At a time when there were more military veterans in South Africa than ever before, those in need of food, clothing, financial assistance, advice, assistance with pensions and accommodation turn to the legion for help. It is one of the few organisations which will assist military veterans on their first visit to a Branch.

Welfare

The Casual Relief Scheme, which has been in operation since 1948, assists veterans of the two World Wars and their spouses with short term emergency relief. The money is provided by the National War Fund. The Legion also acts as an agent for the National War Fund to provide continuous grants to certain disabled veterans or their widows.

The Post War Fund looks after those who have served since the Second World War. The monies were raised some years ago by the Sunday Times Border Fund of which the administration has been entrusted to the Legion. There is a heavy call on its resources to provide for the needs of a younger generation which includes many unemployed veterans and their families. Some of them are moving from place to place in search of work. Many families are in great distress. Most veterans' organisations do not assist those who served with MK, APLA or AZANLA. The Legion does, using funds specially obtained for the purpose.

On behalf of the BCEL, the Legion cares for military veterans from other Commonwealth countries who now live in South Africa. Assistance is obtained from national, corps and regimental funds in Britain.

There are other schemes which care for specific needs. These include the South African soldiers Graves Organisation, which assists in the upkeep of military cemeteries, a fund which provides for former prisoners-of-war and a project to visit veterans in psychiatric institutions. It is estimated that the Legion granted more than R750,000 in aid during the 2000-2001 financial year.

Accommodation

The Legion provides limited subsidised accommodation to veterans of all communities in a number of projects undertaken since 1945.

Pensions

The Legion is well known for its' very long, and at times difficult, struggle on behalf of military pensioners and their families. It took decades to get some benefits such as equal pensions for all, but the struggle continues to get the war veterans, old age pensioners and the disabled a better deal. Daily the aged and the disabled turn to the Legion in all nine provinces with a large variety of problems encountered in collecting their meagre grants.

There were frequent clashes between the Legion and the government over discrimination against Black and Coloured veterans. 1970 saw the introduction of sales tax and a strong objection from the Legion on the miserly pension increases granted but there were some gains.

In 1973 the Legion said the government should hang its head in shame and a campaign was launched to find veterans who were said to be starving. A year later a delegation tackled the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and as a result, Black ex-servicemen were recognised as military veterans as from 1st December 1974.

But there was a great shortfall to be made up and years of struggle still lay ahead. Despite the use of contact officers by the Legion, only 731 out of 80,000 Black volunteers were receiving War Veterans Pensions by 1979. The veterans did not know they were entitled to benefits and the Homeland officials did not know how to administrate the grants.

Then 1984 saw the granting of an increase and bonuses as well as improved Means Test conditions. This was followed by parity of pensions for all, which abolished the different rates of pensions granted to veterans belonging to the various communities. Disabled veterans received the same pension as from October 1986 and the new War Veterans Pension was phased in with Coloureds and Indians receiving the same as Whites as from October 1986 and Blacks from October 1987. It was something the Legion had advocated for decades. One of our biggest success stories is Operation Contact. This is a service provided by the Secretariat to those who were physically, mentally and socially disabled. Also assisted are the dependants and widows. Operation Contact keeps in touch with them to establish what their needs and problems are. Although it is not possible to calculate the cash benefits obtained over the past decade, one expert estimates it at between fifteen and twenty million rand. The total arrears payments obtained through the scheme now exceed six million rand.

The Helping Hand.

The Legion's experience and expertise has long been available to other organisations in the veterans' community.

Over the years associations which were no longer able to carry on their work turned to the Legion to assume responsibility for the task. The oldest of the bodies amalgamated with the Legion in this way celebrated its' 101st anniversary and is still going strong!

In the present difficult times, other organisations are being assisted with the administrative services only. In the process both the Legion and the customer retain their independence.

Foot note: "You will note that we have accommodation for military veterans, but in actual fact the 'supply' of WW2 military veterans has dried up and even the 600 000 national servicemen don't seem to be coming forward for flats and cottages at Rosebank Cape Town. Some months ago we began accepting non-military persons and even this has not brought us many new residents. So would you mind mentioning at your next luncheon that we have single and double flats available at present at minimum rentals of R1 800 for single flats and R2 400 for doubles although rentals are based on earnings and one could be charged to a maximum of R3 000 for single and R3 800 for doubles. Lunch is included in these amounts."

A most worthy organisation of which we are proud to be affiliated.

SCRANBAG

K.J. SHIRLEY 1967 #2315. In our August edition I erroneously identified Ken as H.J. and class of 1976. my apology Ken, at least I got your cadet number correct.

P.M. SEMARK 1960/61 #E55. Paul was recently found through their class reunion work group. Paul has numerous engineering titles on his business card and thus we look forward to his career summary soon.

F.A. KOP 1971 #2394. Freddi has been AWOL for a while but the call of a class reunion brought him steaming over the horizon. Initially sailed with Unicorn Lines before coming ashore in 1973 in the IT industry. 1996 entered the hospitality industry until moving to England in 2005 where he is a Property Manager.

D.E. COWLEY 1940/41 #1093. "Four years after promising to do so at the lunch with you and John Mellows in Cape Town, here at last are a few lines for the Muster List: Served my time with Bank Line (Andrew Weir). Third Mate with Weirs, Elder Dempster, Mollers and Safmarine. Second Mate with African Coasters and later with Smiths Coasters based in Durban. Assistant Superintendent (1965-67) and Superintendent (1967-80) of the Durban Corporation Shark Meshing Operation off Durban and Brighton Beach. Retired 1980." Swimming with the sharks must have been interesting.

J.F. SAMPSON 1950/51 #1674. "I sent off an exploratory email about a 60th reunion in 2011. So far I have received 2 negative responses but 3 positive so I shall persevere. Would you kindly put this in the news letter with my normal email address: pajos1@bigpond.com.

It is about time I gave you my potted history.

1952 Joined Shell Tankers Lotorium in Cape Town with Bill 'Flossie' Codrington. 1961 Master's in Liverpool then studying for Extra's. 1964 Immigrated to Australia joining Australian National Line as 3rd Mate (a union requirement). Completed Extra Master in Melbourne. 1965 Seconded to Sydney School of Navigation to run ANL's first apprentice pre-sea program. 1967 Marine Surveyor in Port Adelaide. 1969 Joined EZ Industries, a major mining corporation, as Transport Manager. Built "Zincmaster" a 18,000tonne dwt roro/concentrate/sulphuric acid/container carrier. President for 11 years of the The Metals & Minerals Shippers Association of Australia. 1979 Promoted to Marketing Manager. Chairman Australian Lead and Zinc Market Development Association. Adviser to the Australian IMO delegate. 1989 International Marketing Manager Pasmenco Metals, set up the metals hedging desk. 1991 Retired. Living in outer Melbourne. 6 grand children. Nuff said."

Planning your 60th reunion is a fantastic initiative and I trust you shall persevere. There are three other class reunions being planned for the same period, i.e. a 50th, 40th and a 30th. Hopefully you can interest the four Cape Town resident class mates of yours to take over the reins.

J.B. CULLEN 1953/54. Barry is never far from the news, this interesting email received via our web site recently. "Sir, on a whim I thought of Barry Cullen and wondered if his navigation lights still glowed. The Barry I'm talking about studied for his 2nd Mates Ticket at the old Southampton College of Navigation in the '60s, ultimately abandoned merchant ships to sail an old Norwegian sailing lifeboat, the 'Sanjefjord' I seem to recall, around the world. It was a great adventure and I believe they carried equipment and expertise to make a film of it all. I found reference to one such B.C. in your journal, and it mentions him in connection with film making. Anyway, as classmates of this Barry at Southampton, we poor Brits had to put up with his disciplined approach to studies. We worked for an hour and a half in the evening, then jogged (to keep us all fit, y'know) to the pub ('The Rising Sun') at Warsash, for a pint, then jogged back for another hours work, would you believe! He even challenged the College cadets to a rowing race which, as Barry's galley slaves, we won with hands bleeding. But if your Barry is the one I'm rambling on about, pass this to him will you, with my regards. If not, what a b---- timewaster I am! Retired (early, sunk by pretty girl). Master, P&O GCD (that was) David Field, Granddad and Chair of my local BOF Society (Boring Old Fehrts)."

Indeed, it is our Barry Cullen and a happy reunion of 2nd Mates class study mates.

R.H. LOVELL 1975 #2497. Ten years ago we reported Rob piloting for Brisbane Marine Pilots. He is now reported to be piloting in Esperance, suppose that is somewhere in Australia.

H.L. STROEBEL 1981 #2732. "I have moved from Durban to Cape Town temporarily (until year end), but will be taking up residence in London in the near future. I remain with Unicorn Shipping; my new designation will be Commercial Manager at Unicorn Tankers International." Now don't forget to return for your class reunion in 2011, Hilton.

S.P. LISIECKI 1971 #2395. 1974: Resigned from Safmarine and joined Rennies Coasters. In 1997 joined Kuwait Oil Tankers (KOYC). 1979 obtained Master's Certificate and promoted to Chief Officer with KOTC. In 1982 Promoted to Master and resigned from KOTC in 1986 to emigrate to the USA, where he became a Marine Surveyor/Consultant. In 1989 joined BP Oil Shipping as Superintendent in Los Angles then transferred to Valdez Alaska as Port Manager in 1990. In 1994 transferred to Anchorage as Manager Maritime Affairs, then from 1998 to 2000 transferred to London to work in Business Development. Returned to Alaska for the acquisition ARCO Marine and later promoted to President of BP Oil Shipping. Transferred to London in 2003 as Vice President of Government Affairs and Director of Europe, Africa &

Middle East for BP Shipping. Retired at the end of 2008 and returned home to Alaska. Currently attending the North West School of Wooden Boatbuilding, north of Seattle.

D.G. SMITH 1960/61 #2187. Alex "Os" Smith '60-'61 a brief update: After working since 1996 as a Consultant/Pilot to the offshore oil and gas industry in Oz and Asia, I had an enforced retirement last year as a result of a triple bypass and am at present about to undergo a double hip replacement which has cramped my style somewhat but am still working my Pro fishing boat albeit a bit carefully. Have had contact with JEC Hewitt (same year 60-61) who spent a weekend with me. Funny how 40 years can slide by and find him pretty well unchanged since the days we sailed together as cadets in Shell UK.

Cheers fro the land of Oz.

D. DREYER 1971 #2388. After being AWOL for a few years Doug has been found in Auckland where he is a vet, a "BVSc Pretoria 1981" after his name, or is it before?

G.R. HANSEN 1977 #2565. Garth is with P&I and reports: "for my sins I have been taken out of semi-retirement and transferred back to Cape Town. My area of employment has been increased from Saldanha Bay and surrounding area to Lamberts Bay to everything south from Walvis Bay around the Cape to Port Elizabeth. Since assuming this position I have had 8 casualties and winter's not over yet....."

P.K. van RENSBURG 1972 #2427. We have not heard from Paul for a while but his wife Barbara wrote in: "Paul is still with Smit Amandla Marine, more time at sea than at home, and yes, loving it!" Indeed, we look forward to seeing you at a Bothie function soon Paul.

THE LEGEND LIVES ON – GARDEN ROUTE GBOBs

Laurentius van Rouendal 1957/58

A Bothie Old Boys luncheon group was started for this area (resulting from Guy Barker's initiative and Dennis Henwood's encouragement one day when we had lunch together at the Kingfisher in Mossel Bay). Tony Nicholas then supplied the contact details of all OBs from Hermanus to Plett. The so-called "Overberg-Group" soon felt that Cape Town is so much nearer and that they could not easily meet with us who live from Still Bay to Plettenberg Bay. Today (10 Oct) we had our 6th get-together. In a previous newsletter you said that you were aware of a group meeting in this area, but that you did not yet know what this lot call themselves. At that stage we didn't either. It was proposed last month and finalised today that we be known as the Garden Route GBOBs. For the last 24 months or so Reg & Isabel Walters and the two of us meet almost weekly as a "Mini-OB"-get-together at The Kingfisher, and we found that these very informal meetings are thoroughly enjoyed, even though we unfortunately remain only four people so far. Clive Bromfield joined us once or twice, but some months ago they moved back to Gauteng. Our regional meetings on a (say) two monthly basis further strengthen the "Legend Living On" amongst OBs who would otherwise hardly ever be able to meet in Cape Town (most of us being too old or still working - even offshore). The OBs who have been meeting on a regular basis are: John [1380] & Sylvia Taylor (Plett) / Basil [1342] & Patty Bridgman (Knysna) / Trevor [1947] & Adelaide Holmes (Knysna) / Gordon [1621] & Mary Stockley (Knysna) / Bernard [1600] Horn & Ann Dodds (George) / Clyde [1660] Louw & Niki Gerber (George) / Guy [2636] & Kate Barker (Mossel Bay) / Geoff [9034] Sturges (Hon.Member Ex-Worcester)(Great Brak River) / Laurentius (Van) [2082] & Rita van Rouendal (Little Brak River) / Reg [2085] & Isabel Walters (Still Bay). Those that have been present only once are: Alan [2684] Brown (Mossel Bay) / Bob [2564] Greig (Mossel Bay) / Errol [2318] & Helen van Rensburg (Mossel Bay) / Mike [2164] & Marian Wemyss (Mossel Bay). The following we hope will join in when they can, are: Peter [2059] & Anita King (Joubertina) / M.G. Nelson [2246] (Knysna) / Tony [2118] & Sally Millin (Wildernis). We include a picture [*now on our web site*] of our last luncheon held at the home of Clyde Louw, when Niki Gerber proved to be an excellent hostess - so much so that they made their home available again today when it was Bernard Horn's turn to arrange the luncheon. The first get-together last year was at the Diaz Hotel, Mossel Bay, the second at our home [when

Peter & Liz Evans from Oman were there as well], the third took place at the home of Trevor and Adelaide Holmes (which was a very well organized affair - very difficult to equal, ever. Then followed the two very good luncheon meetings at Clyde's place. The next get-together (the 7th) is being planned around the middle of November and The Kingfisher at the Point in Mossel Bay will probably be the venue. [*Well done and keep the flag flyin, we look forward to regular reports.*]

CLASS OF 1971 REUNION

Class mates have been in correspondence and much interest has been expressed in attending our 40th reunion in 2011, Thursday 3rd March to Tuesday 8th March 2011. Now I look forward to the news that your flights are booked. We are still looking for AWOLs Gerald Broadbent, Mario Viljoen and Martin Weilbach. So all please apply some grey matter and find these class mates. Alastair Tiddy found Doug Dreyer for us and I had to have a friend of mine living in Auckland phone his work place to encourage him to respond to my email. He duly did but no further word from him. Don Neaves is ambitious proposing a boat race; "Good morning Tony and port and starboard watch, Kathleen and I are seriously considering attending (start saving in the piggy bank). I suppose a pulling/sailing contest between port and starboard watch is possible. I suppose we'll have to let West be cox!. Doug Dreyer and Martin Weilbach are awol so we'll need some replacements. A 50M sprint is about all I could dream of. Are there any Admiralty dinghies left? Martin Weilbach went on a trip on the RSA or Agulhas down South as part of a team from Pretoria doing research. Spoke to my sister somewhere in Pretoria, I'll have to contact her and see if she can still remember where and who he was working with." Alan Ford recently visited Norman Eaglestone over in USA and sailed Norm's yacht somewhere; "On the last day out, after not seeing a single ship or boat, at 0430 in the morning we were passing the Charleston pilot station (which is a long way offshore because the effing sea is so shallow round those parts) we saw a ship come up and pick up a pilot and turn in towards the fairway buoys. The pilot station called the ship on channel 16, Safmarine something or other; I missed the name... and told them they were going to be number one on the berth when tying up. One of the mates answered in his good old South African accent, and it was like deja-vu... took me back 35 years to the same old shit that we put up with on the states coast, work all day, pilotage most of the night, and work all next day. I wanted to tell them not to worry about the little yacht a mile away on their starboard beam, because it has two old Bothie boys on board and they were quite safe on the Saf ship...we weren't going to ram them, but Flinty was too much of an old fart to do it." Look forward to seeing you all in 2011 and keep in contact on the email.

DECORATIONS

Old Boy David Pike 1945/46 has an interesting hobby collecting medals. Among his recent acquisitions he has found close connection the Bothie.

- An unusual two star group to a South African; Africa Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal, Africa Service Medal. Johannes Kruger served on the SATS General Botha when he was 15 years old [1930/31] and then in the Special Service Battalion during 1932/33. He attested for full time WWII service at the end of November 1940.
- A scarce four star group to a South African casualty of the Merchant Navy: 1939-45 Star, Atlantic Star, Africa Star, Pacific Star. William Lewis Thornton 1936/37 was apprenticed to Ellerman and Bucknall Lines where he remained until the fateful day of 3rd March 1943 when the City of Pretoria, on which he was serving as third officer, was lost with all hands as the result of enemy action.
- 1914-15 Star, BWM, AVM, Royal Naval Reserve Decoration (Geo.V) [*I may not have this entirely correct*]. These were awarded to Lieut. W.S. Finlayson who had a varied and interesting career included appointment to the staff of the GB in 1935.

CAPE TOWN FORTHCOMING CAPE TOWN EVENTS

END OF YEAR LUNCH	Tuesday 8 th December, 1230 for 1300
AGM & COMMISSIONING DAY LUNCH	WAR MEMORIAL SERVICE
2010 SATURDAY 6 TH MARCH	2010 SUNDAY 7 TH MARCH
2011 SATURDAY 5 TH MARCH	2011 SUNDAY 6 TH MARCH

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher

The next combined GBOBA/CONWAY SOLENT joint social is to be the Christmas Lunch Sunday 6 December at The Crown Hotel Lyndhurst, The Garden Room 1200 for 1300. Cost to be £22.00 per person a mini- increase on last year!

This function was reported in the August Newsletter, I've received apologies already, indeed, Barbara and I had a difficult decision to make, the Christmas lunch or a short cruise along the River Danube so, my apologies! Cape Town should, according to my information be ready to host at least four UK members during December – our loss, your gain!

For those wishing to attend, Chris Nelson of Conway Solent can be contacted via e-mail Chris105@btinternet.com - Chris is co-ordinator in Chief of all arrangements.

Looking ahead Southampton Master Mariners Club will be holding their annual Sea Pie Supper in the Guildhall on Friday 5th February. Cost TBA later through Donald Neaves e-mail Dkp.Neaves@btinternet.com

That's it for this issue, may we wish Obies and their families worldwide a Happy Christmas & Very Happy 2010.

Best Wishes, Ted Fisher [Tel:+44\(0\)1903 744400](tel:+44(0)1903744400) e-mail : tedefisher@aol.com

Australia Branch News

Our next Lunch this year will be held in Sydney on Saturday 28th November at the Great Northern Hotel in Chatswood, Sydney. Meet at 1200 for lunch at 1300. A separate notification will be sent to Australian members in the next few days.

Our annual Commissioning Day Lunch will be held in Sydney this year at a venue to be advised but expected to be either central Sydney or Epping (close to the train station). Date will be Saturday March 20th.

Andy Fotheringham adds - Queensland had a gathering at Kawana Waters on the 1st November. There were 7 people there, Brian and Jill Hoatson, Fred and Maureen More, John and Ian De Villiers and Simon Reynolds. Ian has just had a cataract operation and your attendance was very much appreciated. Thanks also to John for ferrying your Dad over 100 km to the function.

Regards to all and please get in touch if you are going to be "Down Under".

Grenville Stevens	(2189 60/61)	Chairman
Andy Fotheringham	(2525 '76)	Vice Chairman
Peter O'Hare	(2247 '64)	Hon Secretary, Australia Branch.

Email peteroh@bigpond.com, telephone 0417028809, 3 San Giorgio Circuit, Castle Hill, NSW 2154

Southern Lunch

Once again a most enjoyable lunch. The Club Manager, Chris Els (1971) has, in addition to his regular duties, adequately taken over the catering role. The Mess President has persuaded three more of s.v."Lawhill" Bothie boys to attend - that made four of which two had obtained Square Rig (what's that grandpa?) Endorsements. The four shellbacks, in Bothie chronological order, Port of 2nd Mates exam, and examined and passed SQ. RIG END were - Joe Brownless (1090, 1940/41), Hull, SQ. RND End; Paul Staples (1137, 1940/41), London, SQ. RIG END; Bill Damerell (1165, 1941/42), Durban; "Dutchy" van Dyl (1271, 1942/43), Durban.

Our invited guest was Brian Ingpen, Master of "Lawhill Maritime Centre" Simon's Town School, and journalist, who was able to give us an update on the soon to be completed new building and who was an avid listener, as we all, to the tales of proper sea-faring by the four old shell backs.

Next lunch Tuesday January 19th 2010. Please phone your intention to attend by 1700, Friday 15th. B.W.Bradley 021-7861957 or Ian Manning 012-7821559. Seven Seas dress code requires shirts to have collars (i.e. no T-shirts or sweaters) and shoes to be worn with socks.

GAUTENG BRANCH SPRING FUNCTION

The Gauteng branch welcomed spring by having a luncheon at the Edenvale Community Center on Sunday, 13 September. The luncheon was hosted by Karen and Rene Poerner (1948/49) and Karen did the catering herself, serving a full three-course meal for the 42 people present. In addition to this, she also managed to talk Sun International into providing the table wine and subsidising the bar and the Fego Cafe into providing the rolls and butter. Some more sweet talking also provided us with the crockery, glasses and cutlery at a discounted rate from The Hiring Collection. Thus the Poerners were able to provide us with a first class three-course meal at only R80 per head, and all drinks at a standard price of R8, with wines free! It remains to be seen if other branches can offer a better deal!

Because of the postal workers strike in the run-up to the function, some of the members without e-mail did not receive their notices in time to attend and an attempt at 'phoning those Luddites ended in farce as our telephone number list seemed to bear little relation to reality. We also seem to have an inordinately large number of members who go away on holiday in September, which resulted in 24 apologies.

However, we did manage to round up 42 members and guests for a most enjoyable lunch. Those ex-cadets attending were: Ted Page (1944/45) who received the prize for being the senior Old Salt present; Rene Poerner (1948/49); Drummond Terry (1950/51); Vic Albert and Mike Crewe (1952/53); Tony Hunter, Ivor Little and Keith Quayle (1953/54); Brian Watt (1956/7); Wim Keirsgietter (1958/59); Ian Thurston (Worcester 1958/59); Keith Burchell and John Driver (1960/61); Brian Preiss (1964); Henri Fouche (1968); Alan Ford (1971); Dave Sharrock (1974) and Tom Fraser (1979). Once again Tom collected the prize for the most junior Chum present.

All-in-all it was a very pleasant and sociable luncheon and we look forward to the next one in March 2010. Ivor Little.

Phil Wade writes -

hi - I like your quotes at the end of the bothie news letter so thought you would be interested in this one. Don't know where it came from originally but I have adjusted it a bit to suit our lifestyles. "We are all born to die. The trouble is that most people are so scared to die that they never start living." Another one I tell my crew - "it is hard to climb the ladder of success with your hands in your pockets" or " you only get one chance to make a first impression" - I am in the yachting business. see www.timoneer.org <<http://www.timoneer.org>> if interested. cheers - Phil Wade, Bothie 60/61.

FRV AFRICANA : ELEGANCE AT SEA

By: Ivor Little – 1953/54

(This is the second and last episode of an interesting reflection of his career at sea)

Sailing day on 4th January 1999 had to be seen to be believed. We had twenty scientists of both sexes aboard as passengers and these included men and women from as far afield as Lapland, California and Holland. There were dozens of people milling about in the alleyways and on the quayside, with last minute farewells and deliveries of equipment taking place. On the bridge this time I had a new Chief Officer – a well-known and popular ex-Cape Town pilot named Eddie d'Argent. My Second Officer was a retired Simon's Town pilot, Commander Bob

Hind. The Third Officer was still the Patrol Boat Skipper and the Fourth Officer – yes, believe it not we carried a Fourth Mate - was the former Radio Officer, a company's man made obsolete by the GMDSS and being retrained as a deck officer. I still had the same engineers but also had on board two Trawling Masters. One was understudying the other, who was doing a last voyage before retiring, and both had years of experience as Skippers in deep-sea trawlers on the South African coast.

Even with all these eminent seamen on the ship, I still had to take a pilot, as we were over 75 metres in length and so subject to compulsory pilotage. With his arrival on board, there commenced a ritual that old-timers will recognize but which must otherwise be extinct at sea, except for on cruise liners. It went like this:

Three announcements on the Tannoy system for "All visitors to go ashore as this vessel is about to sail". The pilot in my dayroom having a cup of coffee.

A knock on the door and an announcement by the Fourth Mate – "All crew present and correct – all visitors ashore, gangway in and all bridge gear tested and in working order".

I escort the pilot to the bridge. The "H" flag is up and a uniformed bridge team is closed up. One of the Trawling Masters is at the wheel, the Third Officer is on the bridge engine-room controls and the Fourth Officer is on the Bell book and phones. The Chief Officer is forrard and the Second Officer aft.

We single up, make a tug fast, and let go fore and aft. "All gone fore and aft!" The stem jack forrard and the Blue Peter on the yard come rattling down, the ensign disappears from the ensign staff aft and another one climbs rapidly to the gaff on the mainmast.

The whole affair was like stepping back into a world I had last seen as a cadet or in the Navy and a far cry from the Master, Mate and ship's cat on the bridge situation which I had become accustomed to more recently. As we steamed out through the entrance to the Victoria Basin the pilot disembarked and, after three long blasts on the ship's whistle, I gave the order "half ahead" to clear the breakwater. In response I got a sudden and complete blackout from the engine room!

It was a magnificent Cape summer day with not a breath of wind and, after a stunned moment or two, I realized that the ship's way was carrying her along the length of the breakwater remaining and out into the fairway beyond. In fact, this is what happened and after a few minutes power was restored and we limped off at a stately four knots along the Cape Riviera to off Green Point light. It was my intention to anchor there and calibrate the acoustic instruments and so, after showing young Richard Dodgeson, the Third Officer, exactly where I wanted to anchor, we entered the anchorage zone. I did the conning and he counted off the range and bearing to the anchor position using the radar. Some one blundered, we know not who, but after the anchor was down I checked the first set of anchor bearings and found we were anchored directly over the City of Cape Town's main sewer outlet! This did not seem to affect the acoustical results but left me in a state of trepidation until the anchor was finally weighed again. It was a great relief to hear the rapid ringing of the bell forrard, to signify that the anchor was aweigh and to know that it was not either jammed under the pipe or lifting the pipe with it!

We then steamed smartly down to Cape Agulhas to commence our scientific dips, trawls, measurements and dissections. It was by now almost dinnertime and there was much primping and bathing going on. The plumbing system, which had stood idle for a year, now suddenly came back into action with a vengeance and the stench, which started to pervade the ship until all the rotten water and debris in the pipes was washed away, had to be smelled to be believed! However, this did not seem to affect attendance in the saloon. Dinner, served by our white-jacketed stewards and attended by our officers in uniform and the passengers in their finery, was going great guns when I was called out and informed that our engines had once again started "sparking" and there was no alternative but a return to Cape Town. Luckily this involved only a few hours alongside before we returned to pick up where we had left off at Cape Agulhas.

We then settled into a routine as we worked our way up the West Coast of South Africa. Each day started with a CTD (calibration, temperature and depth) dip at first light, followed by shooting the trawl. This was only down for an hour and then there would be a feverish scramble by the scientific staff, each of whom had his/her own field of study, for specimens. The leftovers would be sorted, weighed, gutted, packaged and stored in the freezer compartments. At the end of the voyage various learned papers would be written and fishing quotas allocated, depending on the results found by our scientists, while the frozen fish brought back would be distributed among all on board and the office staff ashore. This was known as their “fry”.

Being a research trawler, we also went boldly where no other trawler was likely to follow and in the course of this tore several of our nets on coral and rock outcrops and, on one unfortunate occasion, lost all our gear in a rocky channel north of Cape Columbine. This gave us our only port call, Saldanha Bay, to replace our trawl gear.

Eventually we arrived off the mouth of the Orange River and the start of the Namibian coastline. This was marked by a traditional “Braaivleis” on the after deck. Unfortunately, the weather clamped down with an equally traditional west coast fog, which turned the function into a freezing cold one until the venue was shifted to the warmth of the saloon.

The end of the voyage, after six weeks away, was marked by an uproarious end of voyage party – the typical sort of party held when a group has bonded well and is now breaking up to go their separate ways. We had a week in Cape Town after their departure to get ready for our next cruise, this time with twenty university students. Once again this was a mixed group of international students under the auspices and guidance of the University of Cape Town. The difference in character (and of course age) between the two groups was most marked and there was a sudden swing in the bar profits from wine and whisky to draft beer. The lounge reverberated to the loud music of offbeat CDs. Every effort was made to eat everything appearing on every menu and we never did find out whether or not the original cabin allocations were adhered to!

This cruise was a short one – two days from Cape Town slowly around Cape Columbine and into St Helena Bay, where we put the group ashore at Sandy Point by means of the ship’s boats. There they changed with another group. It would appear that at this changeover the conversation went some thing like - “Like wow, man, it’s awesome out there!” - for the next group came aboard bubbling with enthusiasm.

As this group included my wife, Murphy’s Law was bound to apply. For the whole of the trip back to Cape Town we had dense fog, necessitating my presence on the bridge. This fog was blown away by a southeast gale that closed down Cape Town harbour and left us straining at our anchor cable in Table Bay until it reopened. Of course, this was much to the delight of our students as it extended their cruise by a few hours.

After that the owners arranged a farewell party in my honour and presented me with a new uniform jacket – not because my old one was disreputable, I hasten to add! I was very touched by the gesture and it was with great regret that I stepped down a few days later at the end of my contract to go on leave and await assignment to another ship. My relief was the extremely capable Captain Jack Dobson, an ex-Brocklebank man, and he took the *Africana* away a few days later on her next voyage – a charter to the Namibian government out of Walvis Bay. She was a fine ship and a command of which to be proud. (*end*)

With greetings and best wishes for a happy festive season to you and your family – Scribe dhenwood@iafrica.com

Mermaids live in the ocean. I like mermaids. They are beautiful and I like their shiny tails, but how on earth do mermaids get pregnant? Like, really? (Helen, age 6)

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

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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
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