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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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

November 2012

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.

FORTHCOMING CAPE TOWN EVENTS

- Venue: Royal Cape Yacht Club, Duncan Road, Table Bay Harbour.
- Date & time: Tuesday 11th December, 1230 for 1300.
- Lunch cost: R165 p.p - Partners welcome
- RSVP: Kathy or Jacky – phone 021 788 5957
- or email cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za
- by Sunday 1700, 9th December.

The KZN **Christmas lunch 2012** is booked for
**Thursday 6th December in the Trafalgar Room, Royal Natal
Yacht Club – not Point Yacht Club**

Cost R120

TIME: 1200 for 1230.

The GBOBA KZN will provide wine

Please BOOK if you would like to attend the lunch. For catering purposes please book by the **latest on Friday 30th November.**

There is limited parking on the club premises.

Contact either the secretary at ernestn@saol.com or call Derek McManus at home on 031 7673719 or email - 0318110895@neomail.co.za

AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

We are holding a pre-Christmas GBOBA lunch in Sydney on Saturday 8th December. Venue will be the Great Northern Hotel, cnr. Mowbray Road West & Pacific Highway, Chatswood, Sydney.

FROM THE BRIDGE OF s.s. CAPE TOWN

It is with some regret that I report the change of command in two areas. Firstly **Ivor Little 1953/54** has handed over command of our Gauteng Branch. Ivor has been at the helm of this branch for many years and has had a splendid service record, Honour and Duty. With the unwavering support of his wife Anne, Ivor has managed to plan and host regular successful reunions in the province. In between he found the time to write and publish his memoirs, a most fascinating book, and most recently has been compiling the career details of his entire class for us. Usually there is some form of ceremony in handing over command and I am sure his successor shall initiate something appropriate. This being the very able **Alan Ford 1971** who together with Jenny has accepted the Captain's Chair. Most sincere thanks to Ivor and Anne for the years of loyal service to the association and its members as well as a warm welcome to the giddy height of command to Alan and Jenny.

Next it is also with some regret that I report that **Keith Meyer 1952/53** has in fact handed over two high profile chairs. Keith has been an executive member of the Cape Town Sailors Home, latterly as the chairman. In addition Keith also served as chairman of the Mission to Seafarers managing committing. During his tenure Keith has had many notable achievements in both capacities. His steady hand on the helm he steered the MTS through many storms, hurricane weather in fact, with the able support of his wife Anne whom I am sure is pleased to have Keith spend more time at home. Keith handed over command of the CTSH to Bothie Boy **Hugh James 1967** who together with his wife Heather, is continuing the tradition of Honour and Duty.

Alan Ford, mentioned above, is also very involved with the Sea Cadets Gauteng which organization recently sent some youngsters to California USA to compete in a regatta there. Doing some research Alan indentified the nautical establishment there hosting the event, the California Maritime Academy. Further sleuth work found their California Maritime Academy Alumni Association, much like our GBOBA, and correspondence has ensured with Cal Maritime [as it is known] President. Subsequently our book, A Name Among Seafaring Men, has been mailed over and by the time you read this our webmaster, Terry Purdon 1971, shall have placed a link between our respective websites. Thus the legend of our Ship continues to live on in all parts of the world.

Class reunions continue unabated and through these the Legend Lives On. Much work has already gone into the 55th reunion of class 1957/58, which shall be hosted mid March 2013 initially in Mossel Bay before all class mates travel to Cape Town for our *Bothie Weekend*. For further information class members should contact Laurentius [Van] van Rouendal. Next up are the classes of 1964 and 1953/54, planned for March 2014 and principal organizers are Geoff Collins and Barry Cullen respectively. In fact **Gordon Bain 1964** has established a class 1964 website www.generalbotha-64.com Again, by the time you read this our webmaster will have [or should have] placed a link on our GBOBA website. If not I hope he is reading this. Philip Theunissen enquired of his 1973 class reunion March 2013 as he plans to travel over from Canada. Although I attempted to motivate his class mate Rob Whitehead to initiate his class reunion, appears little has been achieved yet. But there is still time, I look forward to seeing all of class 1973 here in March 2013. On this subject the respective dates of our annual *Bothie Weekends* are:

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| DATES OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS: 2012 |
| 15 th November 2012: Smit Amandla Marine Bursary Golf Day. |
| 11 th December 2012: End of year luncheon. |
| DATES OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS: 2013 |
| 16 March 2013: AGM and Commissioning Day luncheon (Kelvin Grove confirmed, grill room) |
| 17 March 2013: Annual Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony |
| DATES OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS: 2014 |
| 01 March 2014: AGM and Commissioning Day luncheon (Kelvin Grove confirmed) |
| 02 March 2014: Annual Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony |

All for today as the rugby Currie Cup semi final is about to kick off. I shudder to think that Niel Brown is not supporting my home team Western Province. Must be something to do with living in the USA, they have no idea how to play the game over there.

KZN BRANCH NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2012

We continue to enjoy excellent monthly lunches at the RNYC.

There will NOT be a monthly lunch in December as our Christmas lunch is on the 6th December. The **first lunch in 2013** will be on **Wednesday 6th February**, 1230 for 1300 at Royal Natal Yacht Club. The **AGM** and Commissioning Day dinner, **in KZN 2013, will be on Friday 22nd March.**

Ernest Nellmapius, KZN

SPRING DAY IN GAUTENG

The first real day of spring in Gauteng arrived on Sunday, 30 September. Following on to the usual late September cold snap, it was a glorious day during which a horde of picnickers and day visitors took the opportunity of a visit to the Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens in Roodepoort.

Amongst them were thirty-two members and partners attending the annual Spring Luncheon of the *General Botha* OBA which, in a spontaneous gesture of maritime solidarity, was being subsidised by the Gauteng Branch of the Maritime Lawyers Association. This took the form of a generous sponsorship which covered most of what would have been an expensive day out, the total price including a full buffet meal, a 10% service charge, wines at table and admission to the gardens being only R70 per person

A most appreciative group thus arrived at the gardens to find a state of minor chaos as people battled to find parking and queued at the entrance gate to get in. Once in to the idyllic setting it was a pleasant stroll to the restaurant and an excellent buffet lunch in a beautiful setting. The standard of catering was excellent, as was the service. Grace was said by Kellan Campbell and care was taken when Ian Thurston proposed the toast to "Our Ships" to also thank the MLA, a gesture which brought a round of applause.

A most enjoyable time was had by all and even well into the afternoon there was a distinct reluctance to get up and leave such a sociable occasion. When members finally started leaving many of them then took the opportunity for a stroll through the Garden as the perfect end to a lovely spring function.

Those attending with their wives or partners were Frank Wheeldon (1941/42) who received a bottle of wine for being the senior cadet present, Vic Albert, Mike Crewe, and Ken van der Walt (1952/53), Tony Hunter, Ivor Little, and Keith Quayle (1953/4), Martin Harvey and Tony Jacquet (1954/55), Archie Campbell (1955/56), Brian Watt (1956/57), Ian Thurston (OW 1958/59), Tony Proudfoot (1961/62), Henri Fouche (1968), Alan Ford (1971), Dave Sharrock (1974), and Tom Fraser (1979), who received a "gwog box" of biscuits as the most junior cadet present.

Apologies were received from Rene Poerner (1948/49), Drummond Terry (1950/51), Bob Slatter (1951/52), Trevor Bond (1952/53), Doug Wales (1953/54), Ian Morrel and John Orrock (1954/55), Clive Bromfield, Lindsay Sargeant and Gert Smit (1957/58), Peter Syndercombe (1958/59), Kito Holz and Nigel Treacher (1961/62), John Muller (1966), Richard Morgan (1968) and Philip Hawkins (1982).

The Gauteng Branch's membership now stands at 103 members, as we unfortunately lost Gordon Cross (1947/48) earlier this year from a lengthy illness and Haig Mitchell (1953/54) who has recently moved to Bethlehem on retirement.

Ivor Little, Gauteng Branch.

Southern Lunch at Simon's Town

The next **General Botha Southern Lunch** will be held at the Seven Seas Club, Simon's Town on Tuesday 15 January 2013 at 1200 for 1300. Those wishing to attend are requested to telephone **Brad Wallace-Bradley on 021-786-1957** or **Ian Manning on 021-7821559** before 1700 on Friday 11 January.

Australia Branch News

Charles Parsons, 1079 39/40, passed away peacefully on 11th September. He was privately cremated and we believe his ashes will be scattered in Algoa Bay, Port Elizabeth. For many years Charles had been an organizer of Old Boys events in Port Elizabeth and then in Sydney. He was our Chairman for a number of years.

Your Hon Secretary attended a Worcester Lunch at the Gold Coast last month and gave a short talk on the connection we had with Worcester from the original gift of HMS Thames, the Cutter Race in 1935 and of course the training of Captain Leggasick on Worcester.

In May next year there will be a weekend of celebrations at Brisbane which will include invitations to all Australian and New Zealand old Boys from Worcester, Conway, Pangbourne, General Botha and Warsash.

We are holding a pre-Christmas GBOBA lunch in Sydney on Saturday 8th December. Venue will be the Great Northern Hotel, cnr. Mowbray Road West & Pacific Highway, Chatswood, Sydney.

The Queensland Group has agreed to host the AGM and Commissioning Day Lunch in Brisbane on Saturday 16th March, 2013.

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 0417 028809

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher

Social: Harold and Lorraine Lincoln (GB 59/60) over from the US of A were able to attend the Conway Solent Sunday Lunch on 7 October...please note the joint GBOBA/CONWAY SOLENT lunch is held on the **first** Sunday of the month at **The Silver Fern pub Warsash**. It would assist arrangements if any who wish to attend make advance contact with Chris Nelson (Hon Sec Old Conway Solent) Tel: 02380 293270 or email chris.nelson543@gmail.com . Doug Wrathmall (GB 56/57) took time out from following rugby/cricket to make his regular visit as a Hon. Conway Solent member. Good on you Doug!

In company with Harold and Lorraine, Barbara and I were pleased to meet Ian and Angela Manning (GB 55/56) the latter over from Cape Town.

Finally, at short notice I was able to meet locally Charles Hellyer (GB 58/59) & Yvonne with Peter & Norma Heydenryck (GB 52/53). Keeping the Legend Alive!

The National Memorial Arboretum: Whilst staying with family, I paid a visit to The National Memorial Arboretum near Alrewas, Staffordshire. The five College plaques have now been refurbished and placed on one plinth (see pics) The setting is wonderful and the forest is now well developed. Obies will recall the initial rather sparse area when the plaques were originally installed on individual stands way back in 2000/01. Site worth a view www.nationalmemorialarboretum.co.uk

Costa Concordia: A very interesting article appeared in The Sunday Telegraph October 28 2012. Raise the Concordia with British expert help! A vessel twice as heavy as the Titanic lies impaled on two giant outcrops of undersea granite with a 160ft gash in its hull. Not only British help but, a **South African Capt. Nick Sloane** is the senior salvage master in overall charge of the operation. Our



GBOBA Muster List indicates Nicholas Sloane GB 1981 July-Dec No 2505. Congratulations on securing the contract Nick and the best of luck!

GBOBA/CONWAY SOLENT Christmas Lunch..a reminder of the venue **The Silver Fern pub Warsash Sunday 2 December 2012** timing after 1200 for 1300 lunch. Cost per person (2 & 3 courses £10.49 and £12.49 respectively) plus to finish mince pies & coffee add £1.75. Chris Nelson is now handling arrangements so please contact him for menu/payment details. Seems very early, however, a Happy Christmas & Prosperous New Year to all.

Please make contact when in transit

Ted Fisher Tel: 44(0)1903 744400 Mob: 44(0)7702 635017 email: tedfisher@aol.com

GAUTENG BRANCH: CHANGE OF COMMAND

After almost two decades of service as chairman of the Gauteng branch Ivor Little (53/54) decided that it was time to step aside and make way for younger blood and fresher ideas. With a little bit of coercion from Tony Nicholas Alan Ford (1971) was prevailed upon to take the reins of this large branch (105 members). The hand over took place on the 4th of November. We wish Alan well for his term of office and look forward to giving him our full support. *The legend continues*. Many thanks for your support and interest during my term of office, Yours Aye, Ivor.

SCRANBAG

Our galley wireless reports that **Jan Banach 1972** and **Dave Teague 1975** are both somewhere in Australia. That is a huge area to search for them, thus I await them reporting in. A recent visitor joined our Cape Town monthly lunch meeting; **Kevin Obermeyer 1979**. He has the dizzy title of President and Chief Executive Officer of Pacific Pilotage Authority Canada. Suppose that means he is still gainfully employed.

D.I.R. KEMP 1957/58 #2058. Derrick recently retired as Master of cruise vessels. "Unfortunately all good things must come to an end, went on *long leave* from May 2011 after a career of 52 years. Bothy to Formby, enjoyed every minute, fabulous memories. Still trying to get used to being ashore. Since then I have joined the HCMM and am Chairman of the NW Out Port. HCMM stands for the Honorary Company of Master Mariners based aboard HMS Wellington, The Embankment London. Out Ports, are the various branches of HCMM. The North West is the founder branch. Also chairman of the Friends of Conway, after being accepted as member of the Conway Club." Have fun out there.

A CROSS 1966 #2277. Andy writes in from the UK. "Well it is that time of the year again, Summer is over (did we ever have one) and winter in UK is fast approaching so like the swallows I am about to head South to I hope a warmer climate. There was little opportunity this year to do any extended cruising on Sextant as it was a case of either too little water at the start of the year which then turned to too much water, the sun came out intermittently and frankly the rain came down almost continuously. What I did do was get some sailing in, a week on a clipper 60 (force 6 to 9 cold wet and miserable but great sailing) in April then 8 days sailing on a Clipper 68 in Oct. Also cold wet and miserable but again great sailing loved every min. of it though it did cross my mind just WHAT have I taken on, sailing round the world for twelve months. Anyway I survived in spite of numerous bumps and bruises and now look forward to the next steps of my journey. On the 11th May skippers, boats and crew will be announced after which there will be intensive sail training on the new Clipper 70's before the start sometime end July. As soon as I know the start date, the start port and the route etc., I will let you know. Oh yes because of and as a result of the sailing I have managed to shed loads of weight and am now lighter than I have been for +/- 25 years and I am told lots more will go during the race. So right now I am in London getting ready to fly to Cape Town on Thursday 18th Oct. where I hope to get in some camping and maybe even some sailing in Table Bay. I return to UK mid March. Sextant has been 'winterized' up in the Fens and is unlikely to be used much in the next two years but I have great plans for 2015." Andy, our

2013 *Bothie Weekend* is scheduled for 16th & 17 March, trust these dates are firm in your plans.

D.T. BRECKON 1946/47 #1457. “I went to sea as a cadet indentured to BI, British India Steam Navigation Company. My first ship was Tairea, built in 1924, three funnels, twelve boilers and capable of 16 kts, no doubt a greyhound of the seas in those days. The reason for three funnels was that she was built for the China coast where, in Chinese thinking there was a correlation between the number of stacks and a vessel's seaworthiness. Next was the Talma, built before Tairea and awaiting scrapping. She had two funnels. Thereafter sailed on single stacked ships only.

On completion of sea time in BI, wrote Second Mates in London after studying at Edward V11 college. Then signed on the Bullard King ship Umzinto, under Roy Harbor. Put in time for First Mates there and signed off in Durban. Studied at the MN Officers club in Gardiner street where Denny Underwood taught two nights a week. Managed to pass the written portion but failed the oral portion and had to put in extra sea time. Fortunately Sarships Aloe needed a third mate, and I signed on under Scotty Edwards. Sat for orals again in Adelaide, Australia, and was successful there. Remained on Aloe for a further year as second mate, until she was sold to Greek interests. I then signed off and Safmarine, whose entire fleet consisted of three Victory ships, needed a Fourth Officer, and I signed on Vergelegen.

When I had accumulated enough sea time for Masters, I signed on the Warwick Castle as a Quartermaster to work a passage to the UK. Attended school at Warsash, and became a paid up member of the Rising Sun, as well as the Bugle in Hamble. In spite of that managed to pass Masters and worked a passage back to Cape Town as ordinary seaman on the Athlone Castle.

Shortly thereafter, Safmarine acquired four more ships. This opened up tremendous promotion possibilities, and I received command of Constantia in January of 1959. Safmarine had also opened their own offices in the States, and I was sent over as Port Captain, Houston to oversee operations in the US Gulf and South Atlantic. Held this position for three years, and then moved to New York as Marine Superintendent. Then to Cape Town as Marine Manager for a further three years. Went back to the States as Vice President, and served in various positions there until finished up as President. Retired to Huntington Beach California, known as Surf City.”

H.L. STROEBEL 1981 #2732. I am sure there sufficient Bothie Boys in Singapore to justify a gathering there, Hilton reports; “I have relinquished my post here as Operation Manager at Unicorn Shipping, and taken over as Marine Manager at Grindrod Shipping. This sees the IVS dry fleet and the Unicorn wet fleets brought in under a single management entity. I remain based in the Singapore office.”

B.R. WATT 1956/57 #2025. 1958 – 1964: Union Castle Line/British & Commonwealth Shipping; Cadet and Third Officer. 1964 – 1969: C G Smith's Coasters/Unicorn Shipping Lines; Second Officer, Chief Officer and Master. 1969 – 1979: Department of Transport – Surveyor in Durban and First Principal Officer in Mossel Bay. 1979 – 1983: Rennie Murray & Co – Marine Surveyor. 1983 – 1998: Department of Transport – Durban and Pretoria – Surveyor to Chief Director Shipping. Obtained Masters Certificate in 1966 and Master Special Grade in 1985. Also obtained Post Graduate Diploma in Maritime Law at University of Natal and Graduate Diploma in Company Direction at Graduate Institute of Management and Technology. 1998 – 2002: Took part in the establishment of SAMSA [South African Maritime Safety Authority] as the first CEO. 2002 – 2011: Independent Maritime Consultant working extensively in Africa for the International Maritime Organization however also undertook assignments in China, Philippines, North Korea, Bangladesh, Pakistan and United Arab Emirates. 2011 Decided to finally retire and now living in a Retirement Estate in the East of Pretoria. Enjoy.

G. ROHRS 1989. Greg has recently joined our shipping industry here in Cape Town, appeared on the horizon as client of mine in fact, so I must be respectful. Previously at sea

with Safmarine followed by a commercial position with Safmarine Cape Town in 2002. 2003 transferred to Safmarine Sydney office as General Manager, Australia. 2006 returned to South Africa and appointed Safmarine Regional Manager for Kwa-Zulu Natal and Swaziland and later to Safmarine H.O. as National Reefer and Dry exports executive. 2009 Sales Director for CEVA Logistics. 2011 established own business based in Cape Town, Good Hope Logistics.

C.H. SHEARD 1976 #2557. “Just thought I would like to report in as requested. As you know I was transferred to Perth (for GL Noble Denton) after 17 years in Dubai. During that time I had 8 years in Dubai Drydocks, 8 years with Matthews Daniel (Marine Surveying job) then 1 year with GLND. In 2001 my family and I applied for and received Oz permanent residence visas. In May 2012 GLND then had a post going in Perth so I thought I would give it a go...and here I am.

My children (one boy and a girl) both graduated at the University of Queensland. They attended their “uni” years there while we were living in Dubai. So it’s a new beginning. GLND is a good company and Perth is a very nice place. I am involved in a lot of off-shore project work but I don’t have to travel off-shore too much now. Had enough of that!” I await your postal address and phone numbers Clive.

R.J. PATERSON 1972 #2422. Gerry Stalling valiantly and patiently tracked an AWOL Rod down. “Thank you for making the effort to contact me. I have just received a bundle of mail from Cranbrook. I have put a friend in my house there. I have closed the biltong business down and am in the process of re-settling in Virginia USA where I am joining an old friend in a development project. That’s pretty much all I can say at the moment.” So no more Canadian biltong, pity.

SOS

John Barry Willoughby 1955/56 1981, any news is being sought of John, please. Has not been sighted for many years.

(Please also see the Stop Press on Page 13).

JO’BURG WALK OF FAME – Vic Albert 1952/53 reports

Johannesburg now hosts a Walk of Fame, which is a tribute to past jazz icons, and prominent amongst them is our own OBIE **Chris Mc Gregor 1952/53**.

The son of OBIE Andrew Murray Mc Gregor 1924/25 #146, Chris was born in Somerset West and raised in the Transkei at Blythswood where his father was headmaster of a mission institution. This was the beginning of his musical appreciation, hearing and being exposed to the complicated Xhosa music environment.

Chris’s talent and ability slowly improved until he arrived at the GB, yet he survived developing the ability to play a multitude of instruments and excelling on the piano for both years, often adding glitz to what could have been drab occasions.

Leaving the Bothie he had to get a matric before he could consider further studies, therefore he went to Paarl Boys High to qualify; he then enrolled in the College of Music where he studied for four years. During the day he had the accepted classical influences and at night he visited the local jazz clubs in District Six joining in and playing with our local musicians.

It was during this time that he became musical arranger, band leader and pianist in the theater band for the musical “Mr Paljas” which was released by Gallotone records.

His friends and he developed a mixture of South African black traditional music and black American jazz and formed a group to perform at the Soweto Jazz festival in 1962. They took 2nd prize which led to the birth of the Blue Notes.

It was at this time that Chris arranged six tracks of compositions by yet unknown musicians who would become internationally known in jazz circles.

Now shortage of money forced the group to try raising funds by touring the country in an old Combi to gigs arranged by Maxine who had initially joined the group to arrange gigs and

became road manager. Chris and Maxine eventually married and she became a part of his life.

Money, money, money became a problem for the sextet, and they toured S.A. playing anywhere they were accepted, remembering the deep dark days when mixed groups, and mixed audiences were taboo. They toured mainly to raise money to go to Europe where they believed they would be accepted. Also they had to wait for exit permits for the five black members of the band.

At last in 1964 they received the necessary paperwork and left for a musical festival in Antibes where they had been invited to play.

Hoping for a really good blast they were only given 20 minutes, but this was sufficient to get them on the road to becoming a giant in the jazz world, being responsible for integrating African rhythm with American jazz.

Forming the Brotherhood of Breath they played all over Europe and England including Ronnie Scotts review with very high praise from the jazz fraternity.

As always money raised it's ugly head and the group eventually disbanded after leaving England to live on a small farm in France. He remained a major force in the music world releasing a number of solo piano albums, and contributing in a number of musical releases over the next few years.

Known as a South African jazz pioneer he continued until 26th May 1990 when he passed away.

There are numerous mentions on the Internet under Chris McGregor and Maxine also wrote the book "Chris McGregor and the Brotherhood of Breath: my life with a South African jazz pioneer", published by Bamberger Books. If we had lived in different times, he would have become a world renowned musician.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

W.S. RUSHBY 1952/53. "It's with sadness that I'm letting you know that Bill passed away on Sat.13 Oct. at home in Norwich England, he died peacefully in his sleep from a massive heart attack. I found your newsletter on Bill's computer, most probably I will come out sometime in the new year and we will have a memorial service in Cape Town and scatter his ashes. Regards. Lynda Rushby."

Bill sailed with Bank Line and later joined the S.A. Navy which included many years in their Hydrographic department. He gained command of the naval survey vessel, SAS Protea. On retiring from the navy returned to sea in command of offshore supply vessels off the West African coast.

C.A. PARSONS 1939/40. Charles Parsons 1939/40 passed away peacefully on Tuesday evening 11th September in William Cape Gardens Retirement home in Kanwal -Central Coast north of Sydney. It is planned to scatter his ashes in Algoa Bay Port Elizabeth. Charles served many years as chairman of GBOBA Australia Branch.

1939 Charles reported to the Seaward Defense Headquarters at Port Elizabeth and went to sea in the Minesweepers. Continued to go to sea with S.A. Naval ships till long after the war. 1942 to 1946 apprentice with Port Elizabeth Municipality Electrical Dept. Then worked for Hubert Davies & Co. Nov 1946 to Dec 1955 employed by S.A. Railways & Harbours on Harbour maintenance, electrical, cranes, winches, capstans, pre-cooling plant, lighthouses and harbour craft. Dec 1955 to Dec 1959 sailed with Ellerman Lines as Electrical Engineer Officer. Then a short spell with RN Thomson as Technical Representative. June 1959 to Sept 1976 self employed operating an electrical wholesale business. 1977 moved to Papua New Guinea and worked for TDE Electrical. Later moved to Australia working for Cockatoo Dockyard, Electrician, Engraver & Purchasing.

C.J. ELS 1971. Chris sadly passed away 17th August. Not much is known of his career after Bothie except that he was a Unicorn cadet. At the time of his weighing anchor Chris was the very popular manager of the Seven Seas Club in Simon's Town. Class mate Roger Pawley writes; I was saddened to have heard the news of the passing of Christopher Els - GB 1971.

Although I have not seen him for many years, I do remember him as a man with a quiet nature, pleasant disposition, diligent in duty and always keen to participate in various GB events - especially the boating activities of our cadets.

R.M. WHITTAKER 1946/47. On leaving Bothie Richard did five years at sea before joining Land & Marine in Durban. Deceased 14th July 2012.

Our sincere condolences to family and class mates.

Transformation at the Naval College, Gordon's Bay - Barry Cullen 1953/54 writes:

During a recent chat with Peter Coetzee (the man who has been "running" with the "GB /Anchor Plaques project) he mentioned an upcoming trip to Gordon's Bay; needed to check that the GB brass replacement plaque had been correctly fitted - would I care to join him? "I'll introduce you to Captain Packer and Warrant Officer Thierhoff as well!" said Peter. Contacts and intro's important. Our reunion coming up in 2014! I leapt at the invitation.

A lovely sunny day, not a breath of wind as we parked just off the Quarterdeck. To go back a few years, previous reunion parties had inevitably noticed some deterioration at the establishment, blistering paintwork etc. but nothing too serious. The "ship" however, maintained clean and tidy, starboard roadway swept, our bunks prepared in the accommodation block; we were guests of the Navy - we could not, nor would we have, complained!

But on this day in September 2012, improvement! The Quarterdeck area smart indeed. Walking up the starboard roadway, absolute amazement! The establishment, the "ship", the "Bothie" had received a comprehensive "make-over"! All was immaculate, painted overall in Bothie blue and white. No "quick paint job" this, rather a full and thorough rehabilitation, exterior and interior, not a square foot missed. The "Bridge" and "Rec Hall" (now Chapel) looking splendid. Not only the paintwork: Rotting wooden window frames? Out they went new aluminum ones fitted. Clock on the accommodation block tower not working? Fix it! etc. etc.

Warrant Officer Manfred Thierhoff, Navy man to the core, first rate decent chap, one of the driving forces at the college, walked round with us. We enjoyed the balmy day and of course, were especially thrilled seeing the establishment resplendent! Peter examined the new replacement plaque and stepped back with a smile - excellent - should last fifty years!

So how did all this come about? Apparently, a high up decision; it had to be! No alternative, beyond closing the place down. Rear Admiral Koos Louw, Acting Flag Officer Fleet, Simon's Town, long time friend of the GBOBA, was one of those who put in a great deal of motivational work, urging action! The government finally footed the multi-million rand bill. The job took a year to complete. Captain Packer and his right hand man W/O Manfred Thierhoff liaising with and supervising the contractors. Manfred extremely proud of the transformation. His posting to the Naval College is described by him as being the very best one in his naval career.

General Botha old boys can rest content and be proud that the old "Bothie" is once again looking smart and ship-shape! And, with a new sense of pride pervading the Naval College, there is every reason to be confident that the high standard now set will be maintained for many years.

1961/62 Obies Reunion, March 2012 – Chris Nash 1961/62 #66

On Friday the 23 March 2012 thirteen Old Boys from the General Botha 1961/62 intake with wives gathered at Gordon's Bay for a visit to the old South African Nautical College "General Botha". This was the start of the 50th Reunion weekend. We gathered on the Quarter Deck and exchanged pleasantries easily recognising each other, however when later comparing the "now and then" photographs time had brought about changes. With us on the Quarter Deck was a group of Old Boys from the 1951/52 intake.

Prior to our visit rumours had circulated that the Navy was not too keen in hosting such a visit from ex Bothie Cadets. As with most rumours they were totally false and we were well looked after and the visit started with a briefing in the main hall (Butters Hall named after the GB Trust Chairman). The hall seemed much smaller than in the past but easily recognisable. It was overlaid with trappings associated with the current Naval College. Nevertheless it was not too difficult to look at the stage and remember PTI Smith doing his one man comedy act or the Friday evening cinema shows.

The two groups went their separate ways around the ship. Major maintenance work was in hand and there was a lot of scaffolding in place but we were given absolute freedom and 4 permanent staff to answer questions and take photographs. There is always a first time and this was the first time that most of us had been in the grounds of the Captain's house. The Legassick tradition of having cadets to dinner did not happen in 61/62. The accommodation block was much the same but the heads had changed and there was some debate regarding the replacement of the half doors on the cubicles with full doors. A quick check showed that if required it would still be possible to wash a senior cadet's underwear in the toilet using a string vest some washing powder and a continuous flow of flushing water – it was always the little things that brought sweet revenge.

After a couple of hours and having gone into almost every nook and cranny we departed for Chris Kortum's house which is conveniently situated in Gordon's Bay on the mountain side. We were joined by Tony Nicholas and his wife. The Cape Town "group" laid on a superb Braaivleis with Rose Kortum and a neighbour overseeing the actual cooking and serving. Sitting in the sun overlooking the bay with an ample supply of beer and the superb lunch enabled all to "catch up". Day One was highly successful.

Saturday and the AGM at Kelvin Grove followed by lunch- a traditional part of reunions. The wives had coffee while the Old Boys did the necessary at the AGM. As a group we more than recognised that without the Committee there would be no Old Boys Association and probably no reunion and our thanks to the Committee is heartfelt. Lunch and an opportunity for the wives to join us and for people to meet other Old Boys. The invitation to make ad hoc speeches was taken up by a number present and the toasts were made. To commemorate the uniqueness of the 1961/62 intake – the last of the 2 year intakes - a painting was presented to the Trust on behalf of the 61/62 cadets by Christopher Nash.

The Annual Remembrance service was well attended and it was good to see that other organizations such as the Sea Cadets attended. Their presence is pertinent because the SATS General Botha was intended as an enhancement to sea cadet training. Wreaths were laid by the Old Boys Association, City Dignitaries, other related associations and relatives of General Botha and Howard Davis. Tony Proudfoot (Cadet Captain) laid a wreath in memory of the Cadets who have passed on. The SAN Band provided the music and the vicar's voice lasted his sermon - just. As a group we do hope that by 2022 (our 60th) the sound system is improved. After the service it was off to the Mission to Seamen. The spread that was laid on could have fed the US 7th Fleet. It was awesome. It is hoped that the Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) sees sense regarding the rates for the Mission because it is an organization for good that should be supported. That ended the official part of the day and we withdrew to Grainger Bay where there was more food and more beer and more talking and more tales from the past. It was a very agreeable and relaxing afternoon talking with old friends.

Monday and the last day of the reunion: Simon's Town and the SAN Museum with the Bothie Section then to SAMTRA which was a very worthwhile trip. The SAMTRA facilities are first-rate and the demonstrations they gave were impressive. A short drive to Kalk Bay for lunch - shades of the GB Mess Deck. Two long tables and a staff who were somewhat indifferent but who cares when because of their inefficiency and a break half way through the meal the 2 hour lunch was extended and this gave us a lot more time for talking. However time waits for no man and planes had to be caught and life got back on track and all good things come to an end.

From the perspective of all of the 1961/62 intake who attended it was a very worthwhile and pleasurable event. Some unknowns became known and a number of skeletons were taken out of cupboards and thrown away. As a group, and thanks to a couple of interested members, we have maintained our contacts and cohesion over the years and this reunion confirmed our solidarity. We would like to thank all who helped to make our Reunion a memorable experience.

PS. There is a Post Script to our Reunion. The Navy went out of their way to be helpful at Gordon's Bay and they supported the Remembrance Service with the Naval Band. In recognition of the hospitality afforded us at Gordon's Bay we arranged for a copy of the picture presented to the Trust to be presented to the South African Naval College. By prior arrangement Chris Kortum and Christopher Nash went with their wives to the College. Again hospitality was excellent. The Commanding Officer arranged for the presentation to take place in the Mess Deck with all the permanent staff present. Christopher Nash made a short speech outlining the history of the establishment and the fact that it has been training people for careers at sea for 60 years. Today's students and staff are part of what has historically been a very successful establishment and suggested that perhaps the ethos and pride in the College could be enhanced by having more about its history on display. Captain Packer responded positively to this suggestion and thanked us on behalf of the college for the picture which he said would be displayed prominently. Morning refreshments (lavish) were provided and the permanent staff (mainly the divisional officers) were interested in the General Botha time at Gordon's Bay. Perhaps the time has come for thinking how the Trust can promote the General Botha as part of the genetic makeup of the SAN and the College at Gordon's Bay!



A list of those attending:

Jan Bekker , John Bullock, Johan Carse, James Cooke, Rod Hall, Kito Holz, Chris Kortum, Peter Pieser, Pierre du Preez, Tony Proudfoot, Fred Marais, Christopher Nash, Nick Stone (This was 50 % of those who were in the 61/62 intake and 86% of those left in the group).

LAWHILL MARITIME CENTER

During the week of compiling this Newsletter, there are two significant events for the Lawhill Maritime Center. The first is the end of the seventeenth academic year 'Awards Evening' held at the Center on Monday the 12th November. This is a prestigious event for the young learners who have completed their academic year in Grades 9, 10 and 11 (Matric). For those of us who attended, and there were many Bothie Boys, it is a highlight of the year as we hear of the achievements of the school and the learners. There is great enthusiasm and a vibe of excitement and pride. We not only hear of their achievements, but also listen to the talent of the choir, as well as testaments from past students who have moved on into careers and are an inspiration to the youngsters. One of those attending the function this year was introduced as the first former student to have achieved his Master's certificate. Another impressive announcement was the award to the Lawhill Center this year by the newspaper SEATRADE in recognition of "investment in people" presented in person to the head of Lawhill, Mr. Brian Ingpen.

The second event is a joint 'Smit Amandla Marine Bursary Golf Day' held at the Rondebosch Golf Course on Thursday 15th November (*Stop Press P.13*). This is a combined event hosted by the GBOBA and the Society of Master Mariners to raise funds for the bursaries of youngsters attending both the Simon's Town High School Lawhill Center, and those going on

to their tertiary education to further their careers at sea. This has been a well supported event with all bookings taken and good sponsorship from many different companies and individuals.

GBOBA BURSARY FUND MENTORING PROGRAM TSOSO HANONG & ZUSIPHE MZOTHO - Durban July 2012

Those of the committee involved with the selection of our two learners for bursaries are to be congratulated on their selections. During the busy week spent on mentoring activities 30th June to 7th July, all with whom we came in contact commented very positively that they were intelligent, articulate and enthusiastic.



Working from a plan which had been approved by Brian Ingpen of Lawhill, we and staff of Mitchell Cotts Maritime introduced them to many activities, including attendance in Mitchell Cotts Operations office, participation at a TPT Daily Port Meeting, visits to the drydock and a Container Depot, and two separate ship visits to a container vessel NYK SILVIA, and a car carrier SPICA LEADER, all of which were intensely participated in by both Tsoso and Zusiphe. With the security and permits of the ports being so tight nowadays, a full “port tour” is quite difficult in the normal sense. So we engaged a boat, and spent an afternoon, starting at the harbour entrance, and proceeding through the entire port, all the way up to the repair quays above Maydon Wharf, highlighting the various terminals and their uses on the way.

One of the highlights was the Durban Bothie Monthly Lunch at the Royal Natal Yacht Club, to which they were invited as guests. Happily, there was a good turnout of members, and both learners made presentations on Lawhill and their life there, which were appreciated by the attending members. Chairman Derek McManus presented them with a copy of “A Name Among Seafaring Men”, which was hugely appreciated by both.

On the last day at Durban, we all participated in an “outreach” to the “Clouds of Hope” Christian Care Centre, an AIDS related orphanage in Underberg, where staff and children warmly welcomed both the learners alike. They made presentations to 15 or so senior children and the Directors of Clouds, once again warmly received by all. We all stayed over at Clouds in Underberg and returned them to their homes at Durban on the Saturday morning.

All concerned at Durban are looking forward to the December holidays, when the next step of the program will be continued. **Jerry Hookins 1960-61**

As the year draws to an end, we wish you all the best for the Christmas holidays and festive season, and best wishes for 2013.

Remember – “The Pessimist complains about the wind, the Optimist expects it to change and the Realist adjusts his sails.” (William Arthur Ward)

Dennis Henwood, Scribe. dhenwood@iafrica.com

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

| | |
|---|---|
| BADGE | R100 |
| TIE [STRIPED] | R60 |
| PLAQUE | R150 |
| PEAK CAP [BASEBALL TYPE] | R100 |
| ‘n NAAM WAT SEEVAARDERS EER Geskiedenis van die opleiding skip. | DONASIE |
| A NAME AMONG SEAFARING MEN History of the training ship. | DONATION |
| FIRST DAY COVER 60 th anniversary of our Old Boys' Association | DONATION |
| BELT BUCKLE | R170 |
| DVD “THE SHIP” Filmed on board during the thirties. | R40 |
| DVD “RED HILL 1946/47” Collection of Rex Chamber's photographs with titles and accompanying music. | R45 |
| DVD “SOUTH AFRICAN NAUTICAL COLLEGE GENERAL BOTHA 1954”. Filmed by Barry Cullen and Chris Copeland. | R40 |
| NO REWARD FOR DUTY A Biographical Note on the life and career of Captain G.V. Legassick DSC RD RNR | R129 incl. packaging & postage R227 overseas airmail |

PLUS PACKAGING AND POSTAGE! Some items in the slop chest are available from Durban branch as well. **BANKING:**

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

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

STOP PRESS

- Just back from a very successful day at the golf course where the maritime fund raiser for bursaries was enjoyed by many in the cape town shipping fraternity. Four youngsters from Simon's Town High School and the Lawhill Center were there to support the day and expressed their appreciation for the money raised. It was unanimously agreed that the event will be held again in November 2013, and the floating trophy has been 'floated'.
- Fredrik Grashof - Safmarine engineering marine cadet 1969-1971- served on the 'Burland' - would like to make contact with old ship mates. fredg@tshwane.gov.za
- The SHIP SOCIETY of South Africa is advertising their 2013 calendar at R25 plus p&p. For orders please apply to Pauline Brueton at brupa@telkomsa.net. The picture is a print of the RMS Windsor Castle departure circa 1933 painted by Jeremy Day.

A Poem for Poppy Day

Donald J Crawford died in Perth on Saturday October 7th 2000

“ Please wear a Poppy “, the lady said
And held one forth, but I shook my head
Then I stopped and watched as she offered
them there,
And her face was old and lined with care;

Bur beneath the scars the years had made
There remained a smile that refused to fade.
A boy came whistling down the street,
Bouncing along on carefree feet.

His smile was full of joy and fun,
“Lady” said he “may I have one? ”
When she pinned it on, he turned to say
“Why do we wear a poppy today “

“ The lady smiled in her wistful way
And answered: This is Remembrance Day,
“And the poppy there is a symbol for
The gallant men who died in the war.

“ And because they did, you and I are free
That’s why we wear a poppy you see.
I had a boy about your size
With golden hair and big blue eyes.

“He lived to play and jump and shout
Free as a bird, he would race about
As the years went by, he learned and grew
And became a man – as you will too “

“ He was fine and strong, with a boyish smile
But he’d seemed with us such a little while
When war broke out and he went away
I still remember his face that day.

“When he smiled at me and said good-bye
I’ll be back soon, Mum , so please don’t cry”
But the war went on and he had to stay
And all I could do was wait and pray

“His letters told of the awful fight
[I can see it in my dreams at night]
With the tanks and guns and cruel barbed
wire
And the mines and the bullets
The bombs and the fire.”

“ That sure did sound like an awful fight
But your son – did he come back alright? “
A tear rolled down each faded cheek
She shook her head but didn’t speak

I slunk away in a sort of shame,
And if you were with me you’d have done
the same
For our thanks, in giving, is oft delayed
Though our freedom was bought – and
thousands paid!

“ And so, when we see a poppy worn
Let us reflect on the burden borne
By those who gave there very all
When asked to answer their country’s call
That we at home in peace might live.
Then wear a poppy – and give.