

S.A.T.S.

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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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

NOVEMBER 2018

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 EVENT – YEAR END LUNCH

- Venue: Royal Cape Yacht Club, Duncan Road, Table Bay Harbour.
- Date & time: Tuesday 11th December, 1230 for 1300.
- Lunch cost: R220-00 p.p– Partners welcome
- RSVP: Kathy, Louise or Jacky – phone 021 788 5957
- or email cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za
- **RSVP by Monday 1700 3rd December.**
- Superb menu and even better company. We look forward to your strong support.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Booking to attend is very important, no booking & payment in advance no seat. The Chef at the club requires firm numbers about a week in advance to ensure we are well catered for. Your cooperation in this regard highly appreciated.

- Bank: Standard Bank
- Branch: Thibault Square, Cape Town
- Branch code: 02 09 09
- Account name: General Botha Old Boys' Association
- Account number: 070835128
- SWIFT: SBZA ZA JJ
- **Reference: Surname and initials**

Please ensure your surname and name is used as reference for your EFT payment.

DURBAN BRANCH YEAR END LUNCH

Date: **Wednesday 21 November 2018**

Venue: Royal Natal Yacht Club

Cost: R150-00 p.p.

RSVP: Howard Jackson-Moss, jacksonmoss@telkomsa.net +27 (0)83 300 9891

Q4-2018, and the months and years march on at a pace. That time of year when we pay our respects to those who made the ultimate sacrifice, and Armistice day. Not that we can be allowed to forget, when every time you turn on BBC or Sky News every presenter and guest has a poppy firmly pasted on their lapels as early as mid-October. Spare a moment to remember the 83 ex-Cadets listed on our Cenotaph, as well as other former Cadets in other theatres of war subsequently. If you have not already read it, in the August 2018 newsletter we included an article “Commemorating the Centenary of the Two-Minute Silence”, which is worth another read, and very relevant to S.A. and our history.

Isn't it incredible how the Christmas fever is starting earlier each year. Before the end of October, and the shops are decorating. We asked one super market manager why they were playing carols so early, and what was with the fancy decorations, and his reply was that “we are just practicing”! So, in good early time ahead of the rush, I hope that you all enjoy this newsletter and I wish you all a blessed Christmas and a safe holiday season. *Scribe, dhenwood@iafrica.com.*

FROM THE BRIDGE OF CAPE TOWN

Much beer has flowed under our keel since our last publication, including posts on our Face Book Group, all with relevant photographs. Inter alia:

- 6th June 1944 - anniversary of WWII D Day. Included a later interview with Bryan Powell GB 1939/40 who added the human touch to the historic event; he remarked that their destroyer's gun barrels grew red hot enabling the crew to heat this tins of Bully Beef on the barrels.
- 18th August 1966 - at their 22nd congress the Society of Master Mariners passed a resolution that formed the basis of the NSRI. Of course many Bothie Boys were members of the SOMMSA and were actively involved in the formation of the NSRI.
- 28th August 1931 - formation of our S.A.T.S. *General Botha* Old Boys Association.
- 5th October 2018 - your bursary fund reached a milestone. First two bursaries awarded in 2012 and one of them, Tsoso Hanong, achieved his OOW certificate after successfully passing his Oral Exam with SAMSA.
- 11th October 1953 - our War Memorial was unveiled, first a service at SANC *General Botha* (Gordon's Bay) and then a ceremony at the cenotaph outside parliament.
- 11th October 2018 - Lawhill Maritime Centre awards ceremony. Grade 12 student Helena Seebran won your *General Botha* prize, binoculars.
- 16th October 2018 - our GBOBA Southern Lunch hosted quarterly at the Seven Seas Club in Simon's Town, met for the 50th occasion. I have no idea how many anniversaries we have had of our Cape Town monthly lunch.
- 20th October 1938 - HMS (submarine) *Thames*, visiting South Africa including Simon's Town. Her Commanding Officer inspected the *General Botha* cadets.
- 23rd October 2018 - SOMMSA presents Nic Sloane their Gold Medal Award. Reported elsewhere in this publication.



Lieut.-Commander Gould of the submarine HMS Thames takes the salute on SATS General Botha, ex-HMS Thames.

Lieut. Commander Gould of the submarine HMS Thames takes the salute on SATS General Botha, ex-HMS Thames.

In addition to the above your bursary fund has also been very active, keeping many of us busy as well, as you shall have noted in the fund's newsletter circulated earlier to members on email.

Your bursary fund's annual golf day fund raiser is due 22nd November. All four balls are fully booked which is encouraging. However we still have a dearth of hole sponsors. The fund needs your support in preparing the next generation of seafarers, salvors and associated shore maritime industry legends. Sponsorship of holes and greens are still available.

Durban Branch Chairman, Derek McManus, recently sent me the second edition of S.A.T.S Magazine, the journal of the *General Botha* covering the years 1925-29. Does anyone have the first edition for us?

Not only are these of interest but of historical value as well. I shall in due course lodge such documents with the Western Cape Archive and Records Service.

Our year end lunch is looming on the horizon at which I look forward to your overwhelming support. Good food, fantastic venue and entertaining fellowship. You shall have noticed, I hope, in the advert the firm requirement to book and pay in advance. Unfortunately numerous last minute changes have made it nigh impossible for us and the club, to manage. Your cooperation in this regard appreciated.

SCRANBAG

T.A.S. O'BRIEN 1954/55 #1901. Appears we have to wait for Old Salts to retire before we capture their biographies. "TAS" covers decades and makes exciting reading.

"1967 Master with Unicorn. Travelled to France to take delivery of the Ovambo.

1947 East London, a boarder at De La Salle College & when the school established a Sea Cadet unit. Relocated to Pretoria, Joined the 'Pretoria Boys Naval Brigade'. 1954 -1955 'General Botha' on a Shell Tankers Bursary- Badge Cadet, Band, Good Fellowship award. 1956 Five of us leaving on a Shell Tanker from Cape Town - Roy Linnow, Jock De Beer, 'Punchy' Bob Brindle, Ian Toddun. Mates and Masters exams in London and Second Mates in Durban. After completing my contract with Shell Tankers, returned to SA on holiday. Was called by African Coasters to assist as they were shorthanded. Stayed with them, Mostly as Master on the SS 'Ridge' ten passengers, cargo on the Mauritius, Reunion run and subsequently on the 'Sezela' a new build in Durban on which I was Master at the time of her launch by Mrs. Alan Chettle in March 1970. Sezela also replaced the 'Ridge' on the Mauritius run and extended the service to Lobito, Luanda, Tamatave, Boma, Matadi & Abidjan. Also largest vessel to enter St. Helena bay without tugs or pilot in force 4 wind & hampered by fishing vessels. Delivered some second hand vessels from European ports to Durban when the fleet was being upgraded. From there to a period at Dorbyl Shipyard as fitting out superintendent and on to marine surveying with the company 'Capt. G.A. Chettle'. First to conduct surveys at the Bluff after dark and also one of the first to attend to surveys in Richards Bay when the port was opened. Eventually Ian Fishley (GB 1960/61) took over. Was an independent surveyor for a while before taking over 'The Tyneside' UK Hydrographic Agency in Durban and subsequently in Cape Town as, 'The Tyneside Nautical Charts & Publications' in Durban and 'Charts International' in Cape Town.

Following are some additional memories.

After 'Bothy' first trip was to 'Haifa' in Israel then on to Singapore, where we were split up. Subsequently met up with Jock De Beer in London and some years later again in Durban. He was then a journalist for a well-known magazine, sadly killed in a motor car accident on 13th Feb. 1962 on the Durban/Pietermaritzburg road. I felt terribly sorry for his parents, they were all very close.

I sailed with Bothy Boy Chief Officer John Shone (GB 1943/44). John was a brilliant 'Extra Master' when I was an apprentice and subsequently when fourth officer on the new build Shell Tanker 'Opalia', then brand new. Subsequently visited him in and his family in 1964 at their home just outside London. I was saddened to learn some years later that he was killed in a car accident whilst on holiday in South Africa. His achievements are listed in the Bothy records.

1964 Bob Brindle wife Thelma spoke to her on the phone, Bob worked in a bank, was off to Saudi Arabia to join a Mobil Tanker. Corresponded with him a few times by email in 2018. Very annoyed about reaching retirement age said it is a pity as he will have to spend more time in the pub. He was our best boxer at the GB.

Met up with 'Goldsmith' of our year in London about when up for my Masters and spent an afternoon with his family in their home outside London. I remember Goldsmith for the pranks he played. On one occasion filling the Afrikaans Lecturer's glass with salt water from the harbour another when he had 'Granny' assuring the lad trapped in an underground drain that help was on its way and urging him to hang on - only to look up and spot Goldsmith talking from the second floor in an open drain pipe. It ended in smiles.

Subsequently left Unicorn. Spent some time as fitting out superintendent at Dorbyl Shipyard and conducted the trials on the vessels up to delivery. Subsequently joined Capt. Chettle Marine Surveyors with Colin Bolt (GB 1952/53). This consisted of 24 hours on call. I was the first surveyor in Durban to

conduct surveys at the Bluff after dark. Travelling to Richards Bay to conduct surveys on the large bulk carriers from the time the port was opened until an additional surveyor; Ian Fishley joined us and was placed at Richards Bay. Offshore surveys being delivered and retrieved by helicopter.

Old family friends Mr. & Mrs Wilkes owned 'The Tyneside' drawing office and were also Agents for the UK Hydrographic Office. When Mr. Wilkes passed away the firm was left to me and continuation of the UKHO Agency influenced by my Master Mariners Certificate. From that time on, together with my wife and staff, have managed and operated The Tyneside Nautical Charts & Publications cc in Durban and Charts International in Cape Town. Have since attended a number of UKHO Conferences in Taunton and London. With recent developments meetings can be reduced due to the ability to communicate on the internet. The staff also are trained and updated by UKHO online programs. It is a requirement to have the latest version ISO accreditation. Website <http://www.tynside.co.za>

Ivan Bole (GB 1951/52), Shell Tankers. DOT - Captain Caseley (GB 1941/42) DOT Durban.

Some random notes - The North Sea particularly in winter time. Searching for fishing vessels in distress in heavy weather off Norway. Children going home from school skating past the ship on ice formed only a short time after berthing. Careful navigation in busy traffic zones, fog and bad weather. Elsewhere, Singapore and a period on a small tanker serving the Island's and river ports and depots in Borneo and Sumatra. Padju, anchoring in the river at night due to lack of any navigation lights. Keeping a lookout for unwelcome visitors who drifted down stream in their small boats amongst the 'flotsam', branches and weed, and creep aboard to steal anything they could lay their hands on including mooring ropes etc. Blackout on board and watch for the driftwood that 'stopped' alongside, then action with high pressure hoses. A walk to a monument on the Equator in Borneo with ships dog 'Jambie', named after one of the rivers. - Vietnam during the unrest years, Thailand and Japan. Darwin, Sydney and Melbourne. The Barrier Reef Pilot was interested in offering me a job. Apparently he had a second occupation which was a service to the Barrier Reef Islands by small Sailing Vessels. Very tempting. To the other side for a period operating out of Curacao in the West Indies. New York and other east coast ports down to Houston. After discharge in New York, went upriver past Sing Sing to load fresh water from the river for Curacao where the refinery was located.

Lake Maracaibo Venezuela to load crude from offshore moorings. Anchored in the lake awaiting berth a long way off the land. Playing polo in the water alongside the ship until an Alligator/Cayman decided to join us resulting in a fast exit. As second officer I had to collect the lifejackets we had in the water to rest on.

Travelling by air from the UK to Singapore, stopover at Karachi. After landing the intercom came on and my name and seat number was mentioned. I was requested to remain in my seat. Other passengers would be taken to a local hotel. I was 'arrested' as I was a South African citizen. An army vehicle arrived and I was taken to a military base in the airport and given a neatly furnished 'Hut'. I was given supper and had a comfortable night. In the morning I was taken back to the aircraft and comfortably seated before the others arrived. They were not so cheerful after their experience.

London; funny but true - London, 4.7.1964, (exam) Doctor asked me two questions, 1) What is a simple fracture and 2) and do you have five bob please!

Escape; Alexandria Harbour, Egypt, at the time when Egypt and England went to war over the Suez Canal. Late on the afternoon before hostilities were due to start. Advised by the authorities that we would be arrested at 0600 the following morning and taken off the vessel. The Master made a plan to make a run for it at first light. The plan was to have everything ready and the remaining moorings would be cut. We were lucky; at first light we saw two American Navy vessels close to the entrance to the port. They were there to ensure the safe departure of two American merchant vessels which were moored in the inner part of the harbour. As they came up to where we were berthed, the remaining moorings were cut and we went off the berth up close alongside the American vessels and there was nothing much that the Egyptians could do. After leaving the harbour we went at full speed to clear the Egyptian territorial waters and that night were able to stop and drift in blackout condition awaiting orders from head office. It was already dark when we heard a loud whistling sound coming down on us which we thought was a bomb but turned out to be a very bright flare which burst just above the vessel - obviously someone's (friendly) air force identifying us.

Abnormal Wave experience; Sailing from Durban to Cape Town on the 'Sezela' our course set close to the 100 fathom line whilst Henry Walker (GB 1950/51), a good friend on the 'Pongola', on a similar course but was about a mile behind & further out to sea. About 2300 hrs, I was asleep and suddenly awakened by the vessel being in a climbing attitude of about 20 to 30 degrees. There was some centrifugal force as I could hardly move. Besides trying to think what was happening my fear was what was going to happen next. We got to the top leveled and then went into a downhill attitude. After dipping the forward end of the vessel into the sea she rose and settled down as if nothing had happened. I went on to the bridge and the shocked second office explained that everything was in order and he was looking forward when he saw what appeared to be a 'black wall'. He could not figure it out as everything was in order and our position confirmed. Then we hit the 'Abnormal Wave'. The only damage to the vessel was the loss of our jack staff located at the stem and some crockery. We called the Pongola to warn them but they did not experience anything abnormal. I subsequently found that the 'Abnormal Wave' had been studied by J. K. Mallory and in 1993 the Department of Transport (DOT) with Captain Shillington and E.H. Schoeman producing a technical article on the subject. Institute of Oceanography, University of Cape Town. This entry also reminds me that I had a short spell at the Durban Marine Division of the DOT whilst Capt. Tony Shillington was the Principal Officer."

S.G.J. PARNABY 1981 #2728. Steve has reported his move from Perth to somewhere in England, but fails to tell us what he is doing there. Look forward to hearing from your Steve.

Left Unicorn in 1987 and completed a BSc (Hons) degree in Maritime Studies at Liverpool Polytechnic, and since 1990 worked as a freelance hydrographic surveyor on various projects all over the world, based in Spain.

2004 migrated to Perth and worked as a freelance hydrographic surveyor in the offshore oil and gas industry. 2018 moved to England.

G.T. RAPSON 1973 #2454. Galley wireless reports that Glen is/was planning a move to the U.K., we wait patiently whilst we still have him anchored in Richards Bay "I was with Unicorn Shipping Lines from January 1972 until July 1985. The last 5 years as CNO. Joined TNPA in August 1985. Stationed in Walvis Bay, transferred to Richards Bay at the end of 1989. 1995 - Harbour Pilot, Port of Richards Bay. 2017 retired."

AWOL

Paul le Sueur 1972. We have been attempting to contact Paul for a long while now with no success, last known address Amanzimtoti, Kwa-Zulu Natal. Galley wireless has it that Paul is now with Columbia Ship Management in Rijeka, Croatia. Anyone have contact with him?

ANCHORS AWEIGH

D.E. PITCHER 1943/44. Denys, the last Captain-Superintendent of the Bothie, specifically SAMNA *General Botha* Granger Bay, slipped his cable 12th September 2018. A legend in his own time who personified the Bothie and moulded many young cadets into career officers.

Denys joined Union Castle Line in January 1945 and served as cadet on the hospital ship *Gerusalemme*, the *Rustenburg Castle* and the *Dunnottar Castle*. Obtained 2nd Mates Certificate in August 1946 and joined *Safmarine*. Served as 4th Officer on the *Constantia* and the *Morgenster* until May 1948. Sailed as 2nd Mate with *Smith's Coasters* until August 1948.

Was with the *Pietermaritzburg Corporation* as a draughtsman from September 1948 until December 1949.

Joined the *Anglo Saxon Petroleum Company* in January 1950 serving as 3rd Officer on the *Northia* the *Pellicula* and the *Acavus* until December 1951. Obtained Chief Mates Certificate in March 1952. Appointed 2nd Mate on the *Crista* the *Hemidonax* and the *Neocardia* until March 1955. Obtained Master's Foreign Going Certificate in September 1955 and joined *SANC General Botha* Gordon's Bay. Served as 3rd Officer from November 1955 until December 1957.

Joined the SAR and H Service in January 1958 and served as Mate until July 1958. Appointed Lecturer-in-Charge, Nautical Academy, Durban, by the Natal Technical College in August 1958. Co-

opted to serve on the Nautical Training Advisory Board and attended several meetings in Cape Town during 1959 and 1960.

These meetings culminated in a recommendation to the Government that nautical training be centralized in Cape Town. This recommendation was accepted by the Government. However, Dr Aston Williams Principal of the Natal Technical College disputed this decision, maintaining that his College was an autonomous institution and could offer courses considered desirable.

In these uncertain times he elected to transfer to the Nautical Academy Cape Town. In fulfilling its decision to centralize nautical training in Cape Town the Government authorized the building of an establishment at Granger Bay, called the South African Merchant Navy Academy *General Botha* which offered a one year cadet course, courses for students preparing for their certificates of competence and courses for the various fishing grades. Staff from the Nautical Academy, Cape Town were given Academy posts. From January 1966 until July 1990 he was Training Officer, Chief Officer, Acting Captain Superintendent (on three occasions) and Captain Superintendent (from 1985).

COMMITTEES and SOCIETIES - Was active in the affairs of the GB OBA and was Chairman of the OBA Executive Committee and Chairman of the SATS *General Botha* War Memorial Fund. Played an active role in the Society of Master Mariners (SA) serving in the capacities of Hon Gen Treasurer and Hon Gen Secretary and was President in 1975

MISCELLANEOUS - During a period of extended leave he was appointed as Master of the mv Ovambo and made several trips calling at Luderitz and Walvis Bay.

Obtained a National Higher Diploma in Post School Education in 1985.

Was invited to address the OBA Qua Vadis meeting in September 1988 to explain the background and reasons for the integration of the Academy into the Cape Technikon.

During a meeting of the Board of Control (SAMNA GB) in August 1989 he asked Capt de Wet (member of the Board of Control) how the GB memorabilia can be preserved. He suggested the establishment of a trust similar to the Unities Trust which had been drafted by Jonathan Mort of Fairbridges. Mr Mort was requested to make a similar draft for a *General Botha* trust. This he did, details of these negotiations were discussed and accepted at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Control in October 1989. A display of memorabilia was arranged in the Maritime Museum Cape Town. When this museum closed the display was transferred to the Naval Museum Simon's Town where, with contributions from OB's and the dedication of Ian Manning [1955/56] a magnificent display is now on view. Before the original cadet files dating from 1922 to 1987 were transferred to the Western Cape Archive and Records Service Denys and his wife Bobbie, compiled a list of all the cadets from the very beginning. This valuable document forms the basis of our Muster List.

Appointed a Trustee of the *General Botha* Trust in May 1990. Resigned due to ill health in January 2013.

"The 1956 -57 Old Boys had a special relationship with Denys because he and his young family joined the staff at Gordon's Bay at the same time that we joined as first year cadets. From the outset we valued his ability to teach and the interest he had in the cadets. For those of us who were fortunate enough to work with Denys in later years at Granger Bay, he always set an example. His many years of work on various Old Boy's committees have ensured that the proud name of our association will endure.

We offer our sincere condolences to his family and thank them all for the time Denys devoted to the GB cadets." Robin Gratjios GB 1956/57.

J.B. CULLEN 1953/54. Barry slipped his cable peacefully 11th October. Originally a 'Vaalie' from King Edward VII School in Johannesburg, excelled at the *General Botha* being promoted Chief Cadet Captain in his second year and at Prize Day 1954 being awarded the Queen's Gold Medal. He also collared the prize for throwing a heaving line the furthest distance! However, his proudest memory of the *General Botha* is of pulling amidships oar in the 'A' whaler crew. On leaving the Botha Barry joined Ellerman and Bucknall Steamship Company, obtaining his masters in Southampton in 1962, then continuing with 'City Ships' on their worldwide routes for a further five satisfying years.

All that was due to change however when, as second officer in the City of Durban berthed in Durban, his younger brother Patrick (GB 1955/56) boarded in a state of great excitement. He had purchased, for a song, the 49 foot ex-Norwegian rescue ketch, Sandefjord, then 53 years old and with a distinguished

history but considered by many in Durban to be 'a vessel beyond the point of no return'. On keen inspection the following day, Barry agreed with Patrick – the ketch's frames and planking were in excellent condition. She would require a major refit however, new mast, sails and rigging but the Cullen brothers felt they could successfully complete the work and give the proud old vessel a new lease of life.

It took almost two years hard work but finally, in February 1965, Sandefjord was ready for sea. She was provisioned for 400 days and with her complement of five young men and a girl, sailed from Durban on what proved to be her greatest adventure yet.

Through the West Indies, the Panama Canal and out into the broad Pacific, Sandefjord made her landfalls in the South Seas in much the same way as Cook and other early navigators had done. Without exception she was well met at all her ports of call. She made friends easily, for herself and her crew.

Moments of great satisfaction? Yes! Anchoring off Bermuda at dawn, the Atlantic crossing completed. Transiting the Panama Canal and then, instead of just sailing past the Galapagos Islands as in 'City Ships' being able to stand in close and drop anchor in some stunningly beautiful bays.

The South Sea Islands of course, Tahiti, Moorea, Bora-Bora.

On to Australia. After a lengthy passage from Bora-Bora of 50 days, a particularly fine 'moment of satisfaction' saw Sande, a cold mid-winter morning chilling her excited crew, beating inwards between North Head and South Head to enter beautiful Sydney Harbour and receive the warmest of welcomes.

Finally, having sailed 30,279 nautical miles in 21 months, a thrilling homecoming to Durban on 8th November 1966.

The Cullen brothers produced a documentary feature of the voyage and it did very well in South Africa and USA. Following a Grand American Premiere in Boston, CBS News bought the television rights for North America and aired the movie nationwide as part of their Great Adventure Series. Soon after, Sandefjord sailed across the North Atlantic to Norway - in the hands of a group of Norwegians with but one objective - a major rebuild to bring her back to original condition, as built in 1913. They succeeded to such good effect that Sandefjord, in pristine condition, recently celebrated her 100-year birthday at Risør in Norway. In the meantime, Barry had returned to the sea as mate with Safmarine.

In 1978 Gold Star Line of Hong Kong (a subsidiary of Zim Israel Navigation Co.) needed 'a master in a hurry' and while on leave Barry was offered command of the Gold Pilot for a voyage to the Far East and back. This gave him his first visit to Hong Kong and Japan and led to a permanent position with another little known Zim offshoot, Haverton Shipping of London.

Eleven satisfying and fulfilling years followed, sailing these British-flagged, Israeli-owned container ships in a highly competitive trade on wide ranging ocean voyages between the Far East and West Africa, calling always at Durban, demanding dedicated team effort from the crew and where the master was expected (and very often obliged to anyway because of poor communications in West Africa) to take full responsibility for trade decisions and day-to-day running of the ship – as was customary in the old days! Just what Barry enjoyed. High standards and excellent camaraderie prevailed in the four Haverton ships.

Barry married Wendy in Cape Town, during these years, acquiring an 'instant family of four teenagers, Anton, Ross, Lisa and Astrid (9) - plus the Labrador and the cat. "Best decision of my life!" he asserted.

With Zim's fine policy towards officer's wives and families sailing in their ships, Barry wasted no time taking his new family off on a fabulous voyage to Japan. "They got to know me and I them" he laughs. Adventure and laughter aplenty! Barry was able to take them off on exciting shore trips; a fast ride in the Shinkansen bullet train to the magnificent Buddhist temples in the ancient Japanese capital city of Kyoto, yes, fine but what the kids really enjoyed was visiting Tokyo Disney World!

A son, Simon, was added to the family in 1984. As far as the four older kids were concerned he was their brother, end of story. And vice-versa. In due course Simon made many trips to the Far East with Mom and Dad.

Approaching retirement, Barry landed a job with Safmarine Ship Management at 'E' berth in Duncan Dock; providing him with five challenging and active years.

The Cullens lived for a while in Betty's Bay, 'between Mountains and Roaring Forties' but returned to Cape Town, where Wendy is able to give wholehearted support to their five children and thirteen grandchildren. Barry kept himself busy and for relaxation, found there is nothing to beat a mountain hike at dawn with his dog in the pristine beauty of the Cape Peninsula National Park.

During his Old Salt year (1954) on the Bothie Barry, together with Chris Copeland, filmed the daily life and activities of the cadets on board. In Barry's own words; "a straightforward view of cadet's lives at that remarkable nautical institution."

A staunch Bothie Old Boy, an officer and a gentleman, Barry personified the ship's motto; "Honour and Duty".

"Barry will be remembered as one of nature's true gentlemen – in every sense. We are poorer for his passing but richer for having known him. Deepest sympathies to Wendy and family.

RIP Barry." Chris Copeland GB 1953/54.

"I cannot imagine a life without Chief Cadet Captain Barry Cullen. In our many years on this Earth, we meet many worthwhile men and women who by their presence make our lives a little fuller and meaningful. From our days at the Bothie, up to now and very much in a future, without his presence, Barry Cullen will be the finest example of a human being.

This was brought home to both Julia and I at the 2004 reunion and our correspondences since that wonderful occasion.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Wendy and his family and we will have a quiet moment when the time of his funeral arrangements are known.

RIP dear Barry." David Bell GB 1953/54.

S.R. PRYOR 1939/40. Stephen passed away peacefully on 11 August 2018. In 1940 he won the Howard Prize of the Royal Meteorological Society and 19th February 1941 was appointed to the staff of the Bothie as cadet-instructor, until he left in July to take up the Sonnenberg bursary and the Royal Navy cadetship he had been awarded.

He continued to serve through WWII on a number of ships including the HMS *Norfolk*, Arctic patrols and Russian convoys.

After the war he remained in the Royal Navy until 1952, following which he returned to South Africa and became a surveyor.

D.A. WALES 1953/54. Deceased 7th August 2018. Doug 'Sharkey' Wales was a genuine Banana Boy, having been schooled at the Government Secondary School in Warner beach. On finishing at the *General Botha* he was appointed to Shell Tankers. However, his parents had insisted that before going away to sea, he should complete his matric, so Doug ended up in Damelin College for a year. During this period the idea of going to sea palled and he took up a position with MAN. Working for them for five years he ended up as workshop manager. Doug then returned to Swaziland to join his father running the family farm in Kabuta.

In 1966 Douglas married Hester Claasen and a son, a daughter and 'laat lammetjie' identical twin girls were born from the marriage. Doug's son, continuing the family tradition, took over the farm from Dad. Doug's eldest daughter is in Deililiquin, Australia and the twins are in Cape Town. One is a policewoman and the other a teacher.

A few years ago Doug took a break from farming and sailed two fishing boats out of Mossel Bay. He still had the sea in his blood.

GAUTENG BRANCH NEWSLETTER - Alan Ford

Spring is sprung, the grass is rizz, I wonder where my energy is.

It's that time of year again where, for us deckies in the Southern Hemisphere, the dreary mind numbing morning four to eight appeared to be much shorter. We could get star sights over and done with early, and for those who reached the dizzy heights of Chief Officer, could put the cadets to work somewhere on the foredeck where a watchful eye could be kept on them until breakfast. An early morning good salt water hose down of the decks to remove unknown powders spilled from torn paper bags, remnants of plastic pallet wrapping and splintered dunnage was the order of the first day on ocean passage.... all churned up in a clear blue wake and forgotten about until now. In this day and age such behavior will

result in the Old Man and Mate visiting the government fashion outfitters to make a selection from a limited range of badly cut jacket and trouser outfits, which have an assortment of north pointing arrows or horizontal stripes lending variety to their ensemble's looks.

Environmentally poor practices are however not all a thing of the past at sea. Many tons of food waste is surreptitiously discarded at sea from cruise liners. I read somewhere a while back estimates of something like thirty tons per day from a large cruise liner. When one considers the number of floating hotels commuting around the Caribbean every day it becomes a huge food source for marine life. One wonders if it could be a reason for the increase in Sargasso weed which in recent years has been landing on Caribbean island beaches and causing a huge rotting stinking mass, which upsets the same tourists who filled their plates onboard with piles of gorgeous food, ate half of it and handed the plate back to the waiter. What goes around comes around as the old saying goes.

Getting rid of unwanted by products of modern society into the marine environment has been an avenue recently exploited by the oil refining industry. Marine fuels were cut with fractions containing some unwanted chemicals which turned out to be incompatible with the combustion processes in marine engines. Seizures and clogging of pumps caused engines and generators to stop, or have to be stopped to avoid serious damage. These bunker contaminants did not show up in normal testing, so bunker parcels were accepted and signed for according to standard checks and practices, only to start causing havoc after insurance clauses on fuel quality expired. The shipping industry soon got wise to the problem and far more extensive tests are now carried out to look for the nasty stuff which until then had been "mingling with the crowd". Further information on the type of problems Chief Engineers face not only from the unscrupulous, but the regulators as well, can be found in the following article.

https://gcaptain.com/shipping-fears-engine-failures-as-industry-switches-to-low-sulphur-fuel/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Gcaptain+%28gCaptain.com%29&goal=0_f50174ef03-8376d5d857-165257469&mc_cid=8376d5d857&mc_eid=dd3de536a9

As we fondly remember, Head Office was usually seen to be an impediment to our wondrous life on the ocean wave. As Cadets we were considered part of the family, and could imagine illustrious careers on the company ships until we swallowed the pick and moved over to the dark side to become superintendents. It seems that in today's cut throat maritime environment, company love for its cadets is a thing of the past in many of the massive conglomerates. It seems from the following article that cadets appear to be a pain in the butt and a waste of time and money. Perhaps a sentiment which has always prevailed in the minds of miserable old Mates, perhaps with some justification but for different reasons, when remembering some contemporary characters we shared Articles with.

The modern Head Office accountants as we shall politely call them have probably never been on the bridge of a ship. They have never spent a few 8-12 watches with intrepid but youthfully confident young Third Officers to get an understanding on the responsibility they carry even at the tender age of twenty something. If they did they would understand that investment is part of money management.

http://www.seatrade-maritime.com/news/europe/metrics-for-morale.html?utm_content=Where%20are%20the%20metrics%20for%20morale%20in%20shipping%3F&utm_source=Email&utm_medium=Seatrade%20Maritime%20News&utm_contact=17818789&utm_term=Newsletter_Seatrade%20Maritime%20Daily%20News&utm_campaign=97448

Gauteng Branch HR Department fortunately has nothing to report of major significance, so no Tippex-ing out and rewriting of crew headcount this time around. How blessed we are for the time being.

Christmas is on the radar and the AIS info associated with its fast approaching constant bearing blip tells us that the jolly man at the helm in a red and white suite will, like a red sea pirate, shortly be raiding our pockets for hopefully a good cause. Let us not deploy the fire hoses and barbed wire and lock ourselves in the citadel... who knows he may bring along a few bottles of the Pursers bond stock and a new Almanac for 2019. - Alan Ford alanford@global.co.za.

Scribe - Interesting this bunker issue. Nothing really new as there were problems with contaminants and mixing of fuels back in the 90's when I was buying bunkers for the fleet. The big issue now is the low sulphur challenge foe 2020. The question I ask is what happens to the excess sulphur that has been

removed from the fuel at source. Speak to any oil refinery and they will tell you of the challenges in disposing of this excess. Like the used tyres, there are landfill sites dug in the desert to dump sulphur!

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher

Obituary – Very saddened to have learnt of the passing of Barry Cullen GB 1953/54. He was the Chief Cadet Captain and Queens Gold Medallist during my ‘Chum’ year 1954. I shall remember him as a true gentleman in every sense and grateful for having his friendship over the years.

Muster List – UK Membership – according to my current List there are 105 GBOBA-UK scattered throughout England, Scotland and Wales. With a view to updating home, business, telephone and email information I have again in recent weeks contacted certain members by phone, however, this can be a costly exercise. I have now resorted to emailing members to their address on file. I would therefore appreciate the courtesy of a reply and if a member has not heard from me would they kindly respond, as it may well be the case their email address is incorrect!

The purpose of this exercise will enable my records to be correct and I am able to advise our hardworking Chairman Tony Nicholas that we have not lost membership of which we might possibly be unaware, Newsletters may then be sent electronically rather than the high cost of Air Mail.....Many thanks in anticipation of your co-operation.

Nostalgia – For those of us at sea in the 50’s/60’s I recall our Navigating Bridge consisted of open Bridge Wings, Chartroom behind a bulkhead, a steering wheel, Gyro and Magnetic Compass, Autopilot, Echo Sounder, Radar and Elders & Fyffes vessels had a Decca Navigator. My last ship a banana carrier *ss Turrialba* had air conditioning, whoopie!!

Navigating in that era was through the tried and tested star sights morning and evening, all weather permitting. The morning longitude and run up for the noon position gave me as 2nd Mate much satisfaction as the kindly Master left the 3rd Mate and I to get on with the job. It was a voyage, three weeks across the Pacific from Ecuador to Kobe, wonderful calm 12-4 am watch. I still have my Sight Book for my final year at sea.



The August 2018 Ships Monthly Magazine provided an interesting article on the new mega-cruise liner ‘*Norwegian Bliss*’ which through kind permission of the Editor I am including within my contribution for our readers. Amazing statistics, however, look at the very impressive Navigating Bridge** – reclining armchair, no open bridge wings as in yesteryear. It was a pleasure embarking on *ss ‘Shieldhall’* last June a Solent trip which

rekindled memories! The changing world we live in!

On behalf of Barbara and myself may we wish you all well for the Festive Season.

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

** Scribe – Unfortunately the file copy of the ‘*Norwegian Bliss*’ was too big for production here. However, a similar photo of another bridge typical of the modern ‘space age’ design is reproduced here. For those interested, details of the vessel are: - Staterooms – 2,043 (15 types, 42 categories) situated on Decks 5 and 9 through to Deck 15 (total of 20 decks); Accommodation for 4,004 guests; there are 29 separate restaurant dining options, and 14 different bars and lounges; Recreation includes a casino, kids aqua park, ocean loops water slide, three swimming pools, a theatre and to top it all a two deck go-cart race track.

AUSTRALIA BRANCH – Peter O’Hare

We had an informal lunch in Sydney in August which was very poorly attended. Both Grenville Stevens and Peter O’Hare were overseas just prior, so follow up was not as usual. Our **Christmas Lunch** will be held on **Saturday 1st December** and we have asked for RSVP and will follow up prior. This will be held at the RSL club at Chatswood, Sydney at 12.00 for 13.00.

On 30th October we were invited to attend the combined Training Ships lunch in Sydney which is hosted by Conway and Worcester. Total for lunch was over 40 including wives and partners. A great venue overlooking Sydney Harbour. We were represented by Peter and Jenny O'Hare and Greg Rohrs. Regards from Down Under - *Grenville Stevens, Andy Fotheringham, Peter O'Hare.*

GBOBA BURSARY FUND NEWS – extracts “From the Bridge” October 2018

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.” The Bursary Fund champions real life experiences alongside theoretical training. It is this mission that makes the Bursary



Buren is photographed here with his peers on the Breede River, practising the art of the throw bag

Fund unique to the Maritime Industry. After months of preparation and many meetings with the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI) and the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI), 16 participants or Trainee Crew, gathered at “Around the Bend” in Swellendam, for an intense practical education and training camp. Grade 10 and 11 Bursary Fund students were joined by 5 Lawhill Maritime Centre Students as well as 4 Sea Cadets of *T.S. Woltemade* in Lakeside. Mr Mark Beneke and Mr Rico Menezies of the NSRI, guided the participants on and off the water. It was, undoubtedly, a camp that will never be forgotten, as lessons of team unity and resilience supported the practical training and education program. The team of

NSRI trainers, Bursary Fund mentors and the river lodge crew dedicated the time spent together to the sharing of skills. After the resounding success of this camp, the administration team has already begun work on the practical training program for 2019.

The late Old Boy, Barry Wallis, GB 1983, donated a sailing trophy in 2000 for the quadrangular yacht race. The trophy was named Barry’s Board and was competed for between the Royal Cape Yacht Club (RCYC) & GBOBA, among others. Since the regatta was discontinued after the 2004 event, Barry’s Board has been in storage. We dusted it off, added a suitable inscription on it and presented it at the NSRI camp to a Lawhill Maritime Centre Bursary student for “Determination and Overall Attitude”. The winner voted was grade 10 bursar Buren van Wyk who is also, incidentally, a Sea Cadet of the *T.S. Woltemade* unit.

A holistic approach to the mentoring program includes technology and maritime education. The students were required to complete the NSRI Trainee Crew e-learning program prior to the practical camp on the Breede River this October. In the spirit of competition, the prize for the first four bursary students to complete the e-learning program was a tablet.

In addition to their skill, the students proved that success lies in one’s attitude. The Bursary Fund is proud to share the opportunities that are planned and provided for our own students, with other disadvantaged communities also Nurturing Sea Fever.

It is with great honour that we announce Tsoso Hanong as the first Bursary Fund Officer of the Watch. Tsoso and his peer, Zusiphe were the first two students to be mentored and sponsored by the *General Botha* Old Boys’ Association Bursary Fund in 2011. The late Jerry Hookins, GB Old Boy and ex-Master mentored the pair during the school holidays in their home town of Durban. At the end of the 2013 academic year, the students matriculated with several distinctions and university entrance passes.



Tsoso Hanong, with Mr. Brian Ingpen of Lawhill Maritime Centre.

In 2014, both Tsoso and Zusiphe commenced study at Cape Peninsula University of Technology and, as they say, the rest is history. We are proud of Tsoso’s achievements and of

Zusiphe's journey so far, but mostly, we are proud of the growth of the Fund and the generosity of the maritime industry. We wait in anticipation for Zusiphe's qualification and look forward to sharing the news with you.

For the full BF Newsletter or further information contact administrator@generalbotha.co.za.

SOMMSA GOLD MEDAL - NICHOLAS SLOANE GB 1981



Following Nic's remarkable achievement in the salvage industry, our S.A. government failed to recognize the honour and prestige he brought to the South African maritime industry; this despite the GBOBA, the Society of Master Mariners of S.A. (SOMMSA) and other industry institutions submitting nominations to the S.A. government. As a result the SOMMSA initiated a project to award a gold medal when appropriate, Nic Sloane being the first recipient of this decoration. The opportunity was taken during the International Salvage Union's 64th General Meeting in Cape Town, Nic being among his peers on the evening. President of SOMMSA awarded the medal and Nic's citation reads:

**THE SOCIETY OF MASTER MARINERS
SOUTH AFRICA**

hereby recognizes the significant contribution made to the international reputation and prestige of the South African marine profession by
Captain Nicholas Sloane
 as Salvage Master during the successful salvage of the passenger ship
 "Costa Concordia" off the coast of Italy during 2012 & 2013
 and hereby awards him "The Society of Master Mariners SA Medal".



The Society of Master Mariners South Africa makes this award to individuals meeting the following criteria:

"Certificated Master Mariner or Deck Officer who, by an exceptional action, has brought the highest honour to our profession by him or her exercising the pinnacle of marine skills acquired as a result of their qualifications and experience"

An extract from S.A.T.S. Magazine No.2 1925-1929:

IT COULDN'T BE DONE.
 Somebody said it couldn't be done,
 But he, with a chuckle, replied
 That 'Maybe it couldn't,' but he would be one
 Who wouldn't say so till he tried.
 So he buckled right in, with a trace of a grin on his face.
 If he worried, he hid it.
 He started to sing as he tackled the thing
 That couldn't be done - and he did it.

Bravo Zulu Nic!

SOME MORE STORIES FROM THE VICTORY SHIP DAYS – Reg Walters, No. 2085, 1957/58



I really enjoy the newsletters and decided to forward some info you might find interesting with ref to "Ivor Littles" article "Feb 2018" NEWSLETTER. I recall that voyage very well as I was a cadet on the "Vergelegen." He describes the Voyage so clearly. Captain "Smith", "Jock Parks", the swimming pool on the foredeck,

offloading in “Corpus Christie” under the bridge, etc. My pay sheets show that the following Voyage 25/12/59 - 23/3/60 “STEVENS” was Captain.

I see some of my “Bothie” mates names cropping up “Middelmost”, “Dave de Wet”, “Zeeliger”. Now I wonder if they recall the trip on the SAS “Vrystaat” and recognise the others (yours truly in the centre) (*Scribe: Unfortunately we could not include this and other photos due to the file size*). The very First “General Electric” Diesel Locomotives we loaded in “Baltimore”, one of these is doing duty in the railway museum at “George”.

The story of the Diesel Electric Locomotives follows:

Acting on an advert in the “George Herald” placed by a church group in “Sedgefield” endeavouring to raise funds for the church, a fabulous steam train trip was offered. From George over the Outeniqua pass

with its tunnels via Oudshoorn along the Stompdrift Dam through the Swartberg Mountains via Toorwaters Poort turning around at “The siding Vondeling” and back to George. For this trip they used two Vintage General Electric Diesel Units, as the steam engine was out of commission. During the changeover at “Vondeling” siding I did an inspection tour and got chatting to the driver and as the conversation went on he related, “Oom dis die enigste twee werkende diesel’s wat ons het, hulle is oud maar wragrig hulle doen hulle ding.” (Six litres diesel per kilometer). I put two and two together and when I got home started scratching among my photos and there she was, one of the units happen to be one of those we loaded in “Baltimore”. I donated the photos to the Railway Museum in George. Now who would or thought that in 1959 while loading these units I would 52 years later be hauled through Toorwaters Poort by one of them. It was a wonderful experience, picnic Baskets, good wine, good company and the scenery excellent especially Toorwaters Poort.

You also mention the Tugboat the “Alwyn Vincent” which is now in “Villiersdorp” due to be restored by the Western Cape Vintage Tractor and Engine Club. Now with lots of time on my hands I built a model of the “Alwyn Vincent” which is going to the Alwyn Vincent Museum in Villiersdorp. I have also built a model of the “Namib II”, a sea fisheries research and patrol vessel Built in “Luderitz” by the “Nieswand” Boatyard for the then S.W.A. administration. Also, a typical lobster trawler used on the S.W.A. Coast. Each and every bit used on these models are scraps sourced here and there.

Regards to you all from, Reg Walters No. 2085 1957 – 58. I now reside in Stilbaai, Cell: 067 033 5544, Unfortunately I do not have E-mail (Still communicate by semaphore). *Reg, can we send your NL via WhattsApp in future?*

What am I Reading off the Bookshelf? Dennis Henwood

I have been delving into “*The Navy at War 1939-1945*” by Captain S W Roskill RN. In his Preface, he writes “*Though I readily admit that I feel proud of the tale of endurance in the face of disaster, of patience in adversity, and of persistence in the pursuit of victory here recounted I have none the less tried to present it with honesty towards our own mistakes and with fairness towards our late enemies.*”

An interesting history, and it explained a lot to me of the post-WWII generation, about the significance of what our parents fought for. The planning, build up and action in stories of, for example the pursuit of the *Bismark*, or the Battle of Sirte, make for some exciting reading in the book. I never really appreciated, before reading the book, that it was mainly the German U-boat fleet that spearheaded its Navy, once the capital ships had been either sunk or restricted to the Norwegian fjords or the French West coast ports. The Allied navies had to try and keep ahead of Germany continuously building and developing the submarines, radar and torpedoes, and such evasive technology. It was a different war for the navy out East and in the Pacific, but the submarines also presented a challenge there.

In between I have done a trip to England to explore and walk the cliff-top coastal path of SW Cornwall (Penzance to The Lizard and then Newquay to St Agnes). With fine sunny weather in the last week of September we were very fortunate to enjoy this magnificent coast. In the mix was a visit to Portsmouth Dockyard under the expert guide of Obie Dick Hellyer (No.2002, 1956/57). His passion and pride in the museum craft and Boathouse 4 is evident, and if you ever find yourself there, call on a Bothie Boy – you will never be disappointed. I also visited the Maritime Museum, Falmouth, equally interesting. So, there was of course a lot to read up on in all of that.

‘Hurricat’ Hero

Peter Dickens in his Blog, “The Observation Post” (www.samilhistory.com) writes: “There are pilots, and there are ‘Hurricat’ pilots – they are truly a breed apart, and as usual in a mustering of elite pilots we find a South African” (and a Bothie Obie, *Scribe*). In his blog you can find the story of one of our heroes listed on the General Botha Roll of Honour, one **Alistair James Hay DFC No.928 1937-38**. He was such an elite pilot recognised for his bravery. “So why so special?” Dickens asks. Simply put this concept of protecting ships with a single fighter aircraft came about when there was an urgent need for convoy protection. However, once catapulted off its base ship, and having to face a lone dog fight in the air, the pilot had little or no safe options to land. The Hurricane pilot found himself alone in a suicidal situation. That is unless he was resourceful enough to find a way to reach safety, and in this story enter one other brave resourceful Obie, **Lt. Commander Arthur Shubrook Pomeroy DSC No.373 1927-29** who rescued him.

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.*

SLOP CHEST

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

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

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