

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

FEBRUARY 2021

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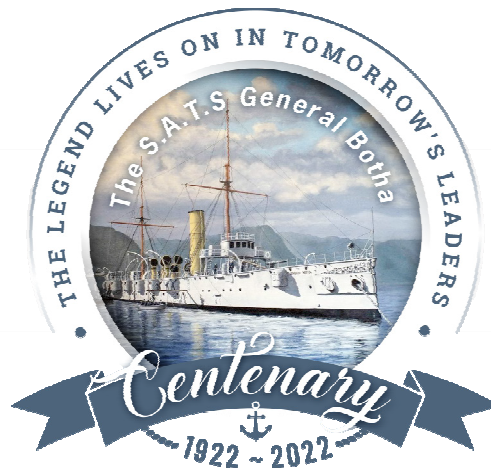
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JOINTNEWSLETTER

CENTENARYCELEBRATION

SAVE THE
DATES!



4-6 MARCH 2022
CAPE TOWN

MISSIONSTATEMENT

The Centenary Committee Undertakes to Convene a Gathering of S.A.T.S. *General Botha*
Old Salts and Partners in the Maritime Industry in March 2022 to:

Celebrate the Arrival and Commissioning of the South African Training Ship *General Botha* and to
honour her benefactors, together with all those who trained in her as Ship, College and Academy and who fulfilled their legacy
of honourable duty during a century of service.

Enjoy the Collegial Fellowship of Old Friends and Shipmates.

Continue and Sustain the Heritage of S.A.T.S. *General Botha* through the *General Botha* Old Boys' Association
and Bursary Fund and, with our Partners in the Maritime Industry, to actively develop a future generation of competent young
South African mariners imbued with a shared ethos of Honour and Duty.

Raise Funds for the S.A.T.S. *General Botha* Old Boys' Association Bursary Fund.

→ MISSION ←

Remember the Past
~
Celebrate the Present
~
Secure the Future

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S.A. TRAINING SHIP *GENERAL BOTHA* CENTENARY CELEBRATION CAPE TOWN 2022

COVID ALERT: Possible postponement

Your planning committee is carefully monitoring the situation and we understand the concern of a number of you; whether the pandemic will have been brought under control and travel reinstated by early 2022. It is possible that the celebration will need to be postponed, so please do not book your airline tickets just yet. The safety of Old Boys and their families is a top priority. Nevertheless, we continue to plan for the celebration to take place in 2022 and will keep you posted.

UPDATED PROGRAMME for 2022

Note that the AGM on Friday has been moved from the morning to the afternoon starting at 15:30 with a concurrent programme for our wives and partners at the same time and same venue.

This will be followed by a 'Meet and Greet' cocktail party for all at 17:00.

Friday 4th March 2022: 15:30 Annual General Meeting.

17:00 'Meet and Greet' cocktail party.

Saturday 5th March: Morning: Excursion to Simon's Town to the S.A.T.S. *General Botha* display at the SA Naval Museum, NSRI Station 10 and the Lawhill Maritime Centre.

Evening: Our major event! Commissioning Day Dinner including the launch of our Centenary Book.

Sunday 6th March 10:00 Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony at the S.A.T.S. *General Botha* War Memorial.

Opportunities for Sponsorship

The planning committee's goal is to make the Centenary Celebration as self-funding as possible as well as being a fund raiser for your Bursary Fund.

Should you or your organisation be interested in helping to sponsor the celebration, please contact Tony Nicholas or Hugh James: Contact details are on the Newsletter masthead.

Secure the Future - Sale of tables for the Bursary Fund

Our major fund raiser will be the sale of tables - seating 8 guests each - at the Commissioning Day Dinner with the profit going to the Bursary Fund. If you are interested, please contact Tony Nicholas.

INDICATION OF INTEREST

We have had a good response to our requests for 'indication of interest'.

If you have not yet sent us a reply slip, please do so soon. **REPLY SLIP WITH YOUR PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER.**

If you received the Newsletter by post, the postal address was included, but even better, ask a friend to send us an email with the details to centenary@generalbotha.co.za

Accommodation in Cape Town

We are in discussion with a local hotel very close to the venue, Kelvin Grove as well as a local B&B for favourable rates. So if you require accommodation ensure to complete this on your reply form.

FORTHCOMING CAPE TOWN EVENTS

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS APPLY

- Tuesday 9th March 2021, 1230 for 1300 – Pub lunch, Royal Cape Yacht Club, R60 p.p., partners welcome.
- Saturday 20th March 2021 @ 1100 – Annual General Meeting. This shall be a virtual meeting hosted on Zoom.
 - To join the meeting email the Chairman for the Zoom link details.
- Commissioning Day Lunch **cancelled** due to COVID-19 precautions.
- Sunday 21st March 2021 @ 1000 – War Memorial Service, at our cenotaph, corner of Heerengracht and Hertzog Boulevard, Cape Town.
 - Due to the COVID-19 risk **attendance by invitation only**.
 - Refreshments at the Mission to Seafarers shall **NOT** be served following the service.
 - In case of inclement weather the service shall be held at a venue to be advised.
 - The service shall be streamed live on You Tube; the link for this shall be advised in advance by email.
- Should you wish to physically attend any of the above contact:
 - Tony Nicholas: phone 082 555 2844
 - Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

FROM THE BRIDGE OF CAPE TOWN.

The year 2020 is best forgotten but it shall dwell in our memories for all the wrong reasons. We were indeed fortunate that our 2020 *Bothie March Weekend* was in our wake before the full extent of the COVID-19 danger manifested itself and the resultant disruption caused by rigid lockdown. Our 2020 newsletter editions have reported on how we managed the different scenarios and challenges including the support provided to your bursary fund learners and their families.

But the risks remain in 2021, certainly the first quarter before any vaccine becomes available. Therefore we consider it prudent and good governance to present our 2021 *Bothie March Weekend* differently this year with the view to safety of our members and in accordance with the COVID-19 protocols. Numbers physically attending any of the events shall be curtailed and strictly controlled. However we intend to live stream the events on Zoom and/or You Tube for all to join and participate in the events. Well, not the Commissioning Day Luncheon which we have cancelled for 2021. We shall conduct the traditional toasts during the AGM. Joining us on Zoom and/or You Tube is not difficult; Old Salts need only to ask their grandchildren to set it up for you. I will advise on email the Zoom link to attend the AGM, the link for the War Memorial Service shall be circulated on email shortly before the event. This procedure is a first for the GBOBA, thus if there are any challenges please be patient with us whilst we resolve them at the time.

On a positive note COVID-19 vaccine is on the horizon, landfall ETA first quarter of this year. As a result planning for Centenary 2022 moves ahead at maximum RPM, now is the time to review your travel plans to attend this great celebration. We look forward to your full support here March 2022. However, there is always a caveat, your committee is mindful of possible challenges in receiving and administering the vaccine. Therefore should it become necessary to re-evaluate the dates for the Centenary Events this shall be communicated well in advance.

For the Chinese 2021 is the Year of the Ox. But for us 2021 is a 50th anniversary celebration of two marked events.

Firstly the **Term (Class) 1971** joins the Bothie, **50th anniversary** of this Term attending the Bothie. I do not wish to repeat the disruption caused by COVID-19 (we are all COVIDed out) but as a result the planned 50th anniversary celebrations for Term 1971 have been postponed to 2022. However to mark the 50th anniversary this year the Term mates are donating towards your bursary fund with the intention to have a named bursary learner this year 2021. Term 1971 thus challenges all other Terms to continue this tradition. Sir Walter Raleigh laid down his cloak for Queen Elizabeth. Term 1971 throws down the gauntlet to other Terms to support a named bursary.

Secondly it is the **Cape to Rio 50th anniversary** of the inaugural race. More importantly it is the 50th anniversary of the Bothie's training yacht *Howard Davis* competing in the race. The crew was predominantly Bothie Boys and included Reverend Bernie Wrankmore of the Mission to Seafarers.

Skipped by our very own Bothie Captain-Superintendent Phil Nankin 1941/42 (Phil had a sailing ticket having served on the Lawhill and Passat). His crew included; Bill Damerall 1941/42, Brian Georgeson 1957/58, Sean Day 1967, Andy Cross 1966, John Abercrombie 1969 and Hans Baumgartner 1969.

Sean Day writes; "The first Cape to Rio race was 50 years ago in 1971 and the *Howard Davis* participated in the race. The race started on January 18th and we were at sea for 27 and 1/2 days before we finally saw Rio! I think that this was the first time that the Bothie had participated in an intercontinental race? So I think it was a significant event.

"It was certainly a great experience for me and I still think about it quite often. The *Howard Davis* of course was not designed for ocean racing and so we had very little prospect of achieving an outstanding result but nevertheless I think it was significant that the Bothie participated and I think we did well enough." I am sure you did Sean. Legend has it that Phil Nankin would not allow beer on board for the race although the crew argued it was necessary ballast. The 27½ days drought was immediately broken by Bill Damerell and Brian Georgeson on arrival Rio. I am confident Andy Cross brought up their rearguard.



Due to COVID-19 (pew, is there anything else to write about?) Lawhill Maritime Centre of Simon's Town School hosted a restricted awards ceremony for their grade 12s last year. Ms Kaveshnie Nair (*on the left in picture*) won our Old Boys' prize which is a pair of binoculars. She writes that she has applied to CPUT and DUT for Bachelor of Nautical Science and Marine Engineering and her dream is to work on a containership and hopefully for Maersk as a cadet and work her way up to becoming a captain.

Nettleton Trophy for Management of Boats - Unfortunately this trophy went AWOL from the S.A. Maritime Museum V&A Waterfront some years ago. **Tim Cowley 1960/61**, who was awarded this trophy in 1961

offered to sponsor a replica of the trophy. Thus I sent out a Notice to Mariners requesting a photograph of the original and also to fill in the missing names of winners. A number of replies were received which has helped to fill the missing information but unfortunately the record remains incomplete. In addition we have been unable to source a photograph of the original; the telegraph has been rung to "standby" as a result. However some interesting replies have been received which includes **Derrick Kemp 1957/58** who was not only awarded this trophy but also an inscribed telescope for Chartwork. Judging from the photographs Derrick sent it appears he has his own maritime museum at home.



Another honour for a Bothie Boy, **Derrick Kemp 1957/58**

writes: "On the 12th November I received news that I had been presented with the Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service 2020. A complete surprise, I feel greatly honoured and humbled to receive this award.

"I know I was at sea for 52 years but that is what I wanted, I enjoyed every day of my career. When I retired I joined various Merchant Navy organisations, the Honourable Company of Master Mariners and have been Chairman of the North West Outport for 6 years, I took Livery in 2018. The Merseyside master Mariners, Liverpool Anchorage Club, Chairman of the Liverpool Merchant Navy Day Committee., Chairman of the Friends of HMS *Conway* and became attached to two Sea Cadet Units in Liverpool, TS *Starling* and TS *Conway*, I am also a volunteer at the Liverpool Seafarers Centre. You need something to do when retired.

"The award came out of the blue, most unexpected but a fantastic award for a Bothie Boy."

Not to be out done by Old Salt Derrick, **Jonathan Warren 1980**: 2020 Captain Jonathan Warren, an L3 Assessor and senior tutor maritime at the Liverpool John Moores University School of Maritime and Mechanical Engineering was recognised for his services to maritime education. Awarded the Merchant Navy Medal. Bravo Zulu Derrick and Jonathan.

Another Old Boy who is flying our flag high is **Alan Smith 1960/61**. Alan facilitated the donation of two laptop computers to two deserving grade 12 learners of Lawhill Maritime Centre. Read the details in your Bursary Fund newsletter. Bravo Zulu Alan.

Mike Briant 1953/54 sent us a copy, all the way from Canada by the traditional route of surface mail, of his book titled "A Boat of China". This is a fascinating account of, together with **Colin Ogg 1951/52**, building a traditional Chinese Junk in a Hong Kong traditional boat yard not for fishing, but for cruising. It is an interesting and often humorous read embellished with few photographs but mostly by Mike's pencil caricatures. We look forward to the sequel, your voyage adventures.

From these reports it is evident that our ship's motto is embodied in our lives: Honour and Duty - Eer en Plig.

SCRANBAG

R.A. TIGLER-WYNBRANDI 1979 #2660. Via the Bothie galley wireless we find Rodderick in Vancouver where he works in the film industry. Hopefully he shall reply to my emails and give us more news.

P. van GYSEN 1976 #2558. Peter had previously sent us interesting reports of his interesting work related adventures. We now find him retired from LOC in the Middle East and living in the Philippines. I await your postal address and phone numbers Peter.

R.C. FARREN-HANDFORD 1968 #2330. Slop chest orders often puts us in contact with Old Boys who have been sailing under the radar for a while, one such being Rob.

Rob sailed in Safmarine until 1979 and then came ashore in Richards Bay to join Hean & Robinson as surveyor. Left Richards Bay in 1981 to go to Durban as Stevedore Superintendent. 1983 went to Trident Marine as Operations Manager. Retrenched and started own building business, contracting in Durban until 1992. Went to Richards Bay to join Captain Chettle & Associates as surveyor before starting his own surveying company in 1994. In the meantime built Marrob Lodge, an eight bedroom guesthouse in Kwambonambi.

T.J. RICHARDS 1974 #2484. Trevor, who quietly led me to slaughter on the squash court years ago, writes: "I am getting ready to retire from the marina business, after 32 enjoyable years, heading up to the mountains of western Maryland for hiking in the summer, skiing in the winter and some sailing on *Wandering Star*, our Knysna Endurance 37 (40 years old) in between times."

2006 we found Trevor President, Spring Cove Marina, Solomons, MD, USA.

"After Bothie in '74, my last trip with Safmarine was in 1982, as I recall. Headed off around the world in *Wandering Star*, my Knysna built Endurance 37, from '82 - '86 and in Australia I met my future wife, Liz, who is from the States. That, of course, put an end to my single handing days. Sailed back to the States in '87 and in '88 got the manager's job at Spring Cove Marina in Solomons MD. It is a full service "resort" style marina with 250 slips and boatyard which has kept us busy and out of trouble. After 10 years, became the managing partner, and after another 16 years, here we are! Our son and daughter are both working at the marina, (as well as Liz and my brother Alan - a real family affair), *Wandering Star* is nearing the end of a facelift - (adding all the mod-cons like chart plotter and radar!) and we plan on some East Coast/Bermuda cruising in the next few years as our kids (or more accurately, "we") become more comfortable (with them) running the marina. We enjoy skiing in the winter and I still race my Laser in the warmer months, although now I am called a "Grand Master" and seem to be getting slower and slower!"

G. ROHRS 1990. Greg is on the move again. "Have decided to give Marine Risk Assessing and Surveying a go. Joining the McLarens Team as NSW State Manager from mid November 2020. Slightly different line of work but most exciting too and keeps me within the industry. I will be joining fellow GBOBA shipmate, Captain Sundras Govender 1987 who currently oversees these responsibilities for the State of Victoria.

HUGH TRAVERS McLEOD 1928/29, 1929 winner of the Welter Weight boxing medal. Family members seeking details of the ancestry frequently contact the association.

Correspondence from his son:

"My grandfather came from Berriedale in the Highlands of Scotland in the late 1800's and settled in Alice in the Eastern Cape. He started a General Dealer store selling everything from groceries, food supplies to haberdashery and men's and ladies clothes, blankets and yarn and fabric. My father Hugh finished school at a young age and was sent to *General Botha* to train. After my father finished at *General Botha* he was sent to a department store in Port Elizabeth, Croft Magill and Watson, to learn the trade. He spent two years there and returned to work for his father. After my grandfathers passing

my father, Hugh, bought out his siblings and took ownership and running the business. After my father passed on, (16 Nov 1975), my mother sold the business and building to the then Ciskei Government."

ANCHORS AWEIGH

REVEREND ASHLEY PETERSEN of the Mission to Seafarers Cape Town Station passed away from COVID-19 6th December last. A wonderful man who had taken great strides in revitalising the Cape Town Station, as well as a valuable member of the Cape Town Sailors Home. Whilst managing the Mission he also had a parish in Sea Point. A man of many talents, he shall be missed.

A.B.G. JOUBERT 1956/57. Bruce sadly passed away 6th December last. After Bothie Bruce was apprenticed with T&J Harrison Line and after obtaining second mates certificate after completion of apprenticeship joined Ellerman & Bucknall Line. 1963 obtained first mates certificate and immediately joined the RRS John Biscoe a research ship operating in the Antarctic supplying the research bases. 1967 obtained Masters Certificate and returned to S.A. joining the CSIR research vessel Meiring Naude. 1969 went to University of Natal to study for a BSc in Agricultural Engineering. After graduating in 1974 joined the Department of Agricultural Technical Service in Pretoria. In 1979 registered as a Professional Engineer and moved to the University of Fort Hare as a senior lecturer in Agricultural Engineering. In 1993 with funding from the Anglo American foundation started the "Animal Traction Centre" at the University of Fort Hare and was instrumental in forming the "South African Network of Animal Traction SANAT". In 2005 retired as lecturer from the University of Fort Hare and was re-employed on contract by the University to manage the "Animal Traction Centre" and to act as Secretary/Treasurer of SANAT. In 2017 went on full time retirement. *See Durban news for further details.*

B. WALLACE-BRADLEY 1951/52. Sadly Brad passed away 29th December last following an illness. Brad had an eventful life and satisfying career which is the envy of many. He writes; "February 1953: I joined my first ship *Kenilworth Castle* and served in her for 18 months on the round-Africa trade. I then made voyages in *Tantallon Castle* and several fruit ships on the "Cape Run". I became known as "Brad" from then on.

1956: I studied for and obtained my Second Mate's Certificate in Durban then spent 14 months in the mail ships *Carnarvon Castle*, *Athlone Castle* and *Durban Castle*. I was then appointed as Third Officer in *Riebeeck Castle*.

Aside: Company rules stipulated that I had to take all my leaves in the United Kingdom. During my leaves I took two rock-climbing courses in North Wales and the Lake District and then enjoyed the first of six skiing holidays in Austria. On summer leaves I sailed with a good friend on his engineless ketch around the North Sea and along the English East Coast.

January 1959: I obtained my First Mate's Certificate in Southampton. I then joined Furness, Withy & Co. Ltd., initially as Third then later as Second Officer on the North Atlantic iron ore trade. I then went to the Mediterranean in the Prince Line [part of Furness Withy & Co. Ltd.] and then around the world in general cargo ships to the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand [out by way of Panama and home by way of Suez - or the reverse] on five-month voyages in *Medic*, *Mystic* and *Bardic*.

February 1961: It was five years since my last leave at home in South Africa so I took unpaid leave from "Furness" to do a delivery voyage to Cape Town as First Mate in the new trawler *Linaria* built in Hull,

March 1963: I Passed for Master [Foreign Going] in London. Now a decision! The law required that the Master of a British registered ship be a British subject. South Africa, now a Republic, had left the Commonwealth. If I wanted to stay in British companies and progress through the ranks to Master, I would have to exercise my right to adopt British nationality because of my having had more than ten years service in British ships - inheritance aside!

Unwilling to relinquish South African citizenship and finally start paying British income tax, [reclaiming British tax had paid for my skiing holidays] an opportunity presented to finally fulfil a long-time ambition to do an ocean crossing under sail. In late 1963, I joined the American-owned, Bahamian-flagged 56-foot ketch *Skywave*, newly built in Germany, as crew/navigator. We sailed from Southampton, England to the Mediterranean then to the Canaries, West Indies and the Bahamas. I was then given command to charter her around the Bahamas. My sister Jennifer joined me as cook/stewardess for some months before taking up a nursing contract in Canada. Then I went up to the

Cape Cod and Maine area to charter. In late 1964 I left *Skywave* to go on a 99-day \$99 Greyhound bus tour right round the United States of America.

March 1965: I came home to South Africa bringing my cabin trunks, suitcases, skis etc., on another delivery voyage as First Mate in the trawler *Lupine* from Aberdeen to Cape Town. After that I sailed as Chief Officer in the "up and down" steam coaster Reef belonging to African Coasters.

1966: My next sailing voyage was as navigator/crew aboard the American-flagged, 36-foot yawl *Aldebaran* from Durban to Cape Town and then on to St. Helena, Ascension and Natal in Brazil, so sailing from Natal to Natal. We called at several small ports on the Brazilian North-West coast. I left *Aldebaran* in Surinam.

March 1966 to December 1966: I sailed as First Mate in Rennie's *Induna*.

December 1966 to December 1967: I was Master of *Jolanda*, of Rennie's Angola Line out of Durban to all ports to Pointe Noire.

1968: I took a one year sabbatical, touring South Africa's five old ports: Shepstone, St. John's, Alfred, Beaufort and Knysna; then "berging" in the Drakensberg [My longest walk was 13 days along the top from the Royal Natal National Park to Giant's Castle (Bushman's Pass)]. I also surfed but not at all well and had the first of many skiing weekends on Matroosberg.

December 1968: I was appointed Second Officer in Safmarine's *Marland* for six months. I then took flying lessons at Virginia Airport, Durban.

October 1969 to June 1970: I was Second Officer in SA *Weltevreden* then took my next sailing voyage.

January 1971: I sailed as skipper/navigator on Eshowe in the first Cape to Rio Race. We came in on handicap and were commended by the South African Meteorological Service for the quality of our weather reports.

April 1971 to April 1973: I was Second Officer in *Vergelegen*, *Letaba*, and *Morgenster*, then for 17 months I was Second Officer of *RSA* the South African Antarctic research ship. I made two voyages to the South African SANAE Base in Antarctica and several voyages to Marion, Gough and Tristan da Cunha Islands.

Late 1975: I embarked on my fourth sailing voyage as skipper/navigator of *Phayet* from New York to Cape Town with stops at Bermuda and Recife. In all it was 60 days sailing. We used the engine [needlessly] for only 2 1/2 hours in the Doldrums.

February 1976 to March 1978: I was Master in several of the *Kuswag* pollution patrol ships then went back to deep-sea as Chief Officer in the fruit ship *Hexrivier*. I made passages from Seattle on the West coast of the United States to South America, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

July 1979: For one month I was appointed as relieving Chief Officer of the cable ship *SS Cable Restorer*, managed by Safmarine. This was my second "up and down" steamship.

I was Chief Officer in Safmarine fruit ships, general cargo, bulk carriers and container ships. I finally became "established" with Safmarine after entering into an employment contract with them.

1980 29 February. Vera and Brad married. She had two grown-up daughters with children of their own so he became an instant grandfather [with none of the hassles of bringing up children]. After that she did several voyages with me to Europe, the Mississippi, Japan, the West coast of the United States of America and places in between.

1988 to 1993: I sailed as Master with Safmarine, commanding bulk carriers and general cargo ships

October 1991: I was appointed Relieving Master for a month of *SS Cable Restorer* - she was at buoys and still in commission.

October 1993: Retired on pension [16/40] from Safmarine.

Post 1993 Up-dating the Mostert's Mill saga: from 1968 when the poll-end rotted through, dropping the mill's sails to the ground, I became seriously involved with the revitalization of Mostert's Mill. It is the only working windmill in South Africa and possibly in the whole of Africa. [There are thousands of wind-pumps, in South Africa.] In 1996 two other volunteers and I [one, another "Bothie Boy"] were trained by Dutch milling experts to run the renovated Mostert's Mill and have since gone from strength to strength.

In the meantime I became a Life Member of the False Bay Yacht Club and served on their "Safety and Training Committee" for six years.

2014 Elected as Chairman of the Friends of Mostert's Mill Committee but I no longer took part in active milling.

Now (2019) as an eighty year old, I have become interested in the 9-inch Rifled Muzzle Loader [RML] at Middle North Battery on Red Hill, Simon's Town. Among other tasks, I sweep out the gun emplacement preparatory to each firing. These take place probably ten times a year. I often say the gun gives a very satisfying ROAR! I am also involved in keeping the Glencairn wetlands clean and undertake tasks concerned with the development and beautification of the Wetlands.

I have had a life-long interest in cetaceans [whales and dolphins] and having been a supporter of the Dolphin Action and Protection Group [DAPG] for many years, I was recently elected chairman of the DAPG Committee for all the fact that as Chief Officer of Waterberg, I found a hump-back whale wrapped around the stem on berthing in Cape Town."

Truly a man of many talents. Term mate Colin Ogg writes: "I remember him as a real fun loving Gentleman when he and I, together with Ivan Bole, Ernie Bolton, John McTavish and Bill Ayles spent a few months together in Durban studying for 2nd Mates. Good "old days" when we were young!!"

H.J.R. STEVENS 1957/58. Russell passed away mid 2020. We do not know of his earlier career but 1999 we found him as Chairman of the Three Cities Group. 2011 he wrote:

"I am not retired at seventy-one being active in a few businesses but also enjoying a bit of farming wine and horses near Plettenberg Bay. After leaving The Bothie I worked at odd things in Johannesburg to fill in until I left for the UK to study and then work. On returning to SA I worked for Barlows in various marketing positions and left after a final assignment as PA to Punch Barlow the son of the founder. I then started my own company which led on to other things and I have enjoyed being my own master most of my life although as a Corporate Chairman and director of a few public companies I was shackled a bit, I am retired from most now (2011), I work for myself in a few areas and will do so while I feel up to it. And then just stick to farming."

G.B. KEWLEY 1944/45. Brian had been in poor health for a while and slipped his cable 24th December last. 1946 Brian joined Alfred Holt & Co. colloquially known as Blue Funnel Line. 1949 promoted 4th Officer un-certificated and achieved 2nd Officer's Certificate in 1949.

June 1951 left the sea and went farming and playing cricket in Scotland. 1961 returned to sea with Lyle Shipping Co. of Glasgow, sailed on their *Cape Nelson* as 3rd & 2nd Officer.

1966 joined Safmarine as Chief Officer on the S.A. *Statesman*. Early 1971 joined Unicorn as Chief Officer and in August promoted Master on the car carrier *Swartkops*, subsequently serving on various Unicorn vessels as Master.

1976 joined S.A.R. & H. Harbour service in Walvis Bay before retiring 1990 after serving in various ports. Then did ship deliveries, trawlers from Europe to South Africa and Australia.

1992 finally retired from the sea and went into compass adjusting.

Brian recorded his career for our archive orally a few years ago, the only such oral record we have from our Old Salts. *See Gauteng Branch news below.*

V.E. KELLER 1965. Vernon passed away 9th June 2020. Joined Safmarine's S.A *Victory* in 1966 after her near loss off the States Coast. Sailed on various Safmarine steam ships, Victory & Global Class, the Tanker *Thorland* and the fruit ships. Left Safmarine in 1970 and joined Durban Lines as Second Officer. Durban Lines amalgamated into Unicorn Lines. 1979 joined the Harbour Service, 1995 Tug Master in East London. Whilst stationed in Walvis Bay was Relief Master on the S.W.A. Patrol Vessels m.v. *Oryx*. Also an ex Naval Cadet from Wemmerpan in Johannesburg and established bases in Walvis Bay and Mossel Bay. Attached to the CF Naval Base SAS *Port Rex* in East London, holding the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

Our condolences to family and ship mates of all of the above.

REMEMBER YOUR FRIENDS

This piece penned by Michael Grey and published in The Maritime Advocate online December 2020 issue 766 whom both have kindly allowed us to publish in this newsletter edition.

By Michael Grey

Listening to some wrathful retailer raging on the radio about delays at Felixstowe which was going to seriously discommode the pre-Christmas shopping programme, I'm afraid my reaction was less than sympathetic. What with the pandemic, overstocking in anticipation of lockdowns and probable post Brexit chaos, there was a reasonable explanation for the problems. But the fact that they had anything to sell at all was due to the seafarers who have kept on going regardless and stopped the world starving, with its lights going out. But their contribution, naturally enough, wasn't mentioned in the broadcast.

There was an excellent piece in the Guardian on “Black Friday”, which regrettably seems to have become lodged in our calendars, pointing out the crucial connection between this retail experience and the seafarers who have delivered all the stuff. Written by former UK shipping minister Nusrat Ghani and the ICS’ Guy Platten (a former seafarer), this was a stark reminder of the plight of the forgotten 400,000 seafarers who make civilised life possible, but who still struggle to leave and join their ships. If it hadn’t been for them, quite simply, there would have been nothing to buy. As the old song goes, “when this blooming war is over...” and life returns to normal, one would hope that there will be some sort of reckoning in which the maritime heroes of this pandemic can be properly discriminated from the villains. An enormous debt has been owed to the former, who kept the ships running regardless, but let us not forget the armies of jobsworths and box-tickers who have made their lives infinitely worse. The latter will tell us that they were merely following regulations, which they were unauthorised to implement in a more pragmatic or flexible fashion, and that is probably true. The regulations, made in the heat of the moment or extrapolated from earlier and different sorts of crises, deal with the treatment of whole populations who must be locked down or forbidden things. A half dozen crew members who require repatriation or an individual who needs to join a ship – they just fall through the regulatory cracks and don’t make sufficient waves to persuade officialdom to flex. There are heroes, of course, represented by those companies and managers, agents and ports which went that extra mile to look after their people and they should be honoured. It’s the litany of miserable individual cases that will live on in the memory, as the shipping industry and those who work in it remember this awful period. The ports where it was impossible to land a seriously sick seafarer will be recalled, as will the implacable quarantine services that just refused to budge on crew changes, even where was a functioning airport in the vicinity. The rotten case of seafarers flown in from the other side of the world to join a ship, but who were not permitted to move from the airport to the docks without a fortnight in stupid quarantine, only to see the ship leave without them, was a not unusual experience. The charterers who would not move an inch from the small print in the charter party, to make a crew change on “humanitarian grounds” possible, ought to be on somebody’s list. We might wish to remember the miserable case reported in the Nautilus Telegraph of a woman cadet from Panama who spent an inordinate length of time on her lightening tanker off the US coast, unable get home through a US port because of inflexible visa conditions. Eventually, after twelve months aboard and all this official intransigence, she managed to get another ship to Canada, from where she was able to fly home. And we ought also to remember those managers and operators who seized the opportunity presented by the difficulties of repatriation to quietly trade on regardless, and pressurise the crew to accept their lot. Said the ITF inspector Tommy Molloy, who has in his career seen plenty of examples of man’s inhumanity to seafarers, “those placing unnecessary hurdles in the way of overdue repatriations need to be identified and called out”. Seafarers should remember their friends, but as memories of the pandemic fade, they shouldn’t forget these blighters.

Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd’s List.

Leave Your Mark, Leave A Legacy Gift!

Much has been written since 2011 both in this quarterly newsletter as well as in your Bursary Fund newsletter of your bursary fund’s achievements over the years. Your bursary fund continues to build on the foundations of the S.A.T.S. *General Botha* Old Boys’ Association War Memorial Bursary Fund that the Association established in 1945. A number of Old Boys continue to devote countless hours, all pro bono of course, to the fund’s activities and the learner beneficiaries of your bursary fund. Many Old Boys continue to support your fund and the learners by monetary donations including estate bequeaths. For full bursary sponsorship or a bequest a learner is allocated to said donor or company which enables the donor to closely follow the learner through their educational and career path to becoming a captain of industry. Thus; **Leave Your Mark, Leave A Legacy Gift!** We view your Bursary Fund as the vehicle to perpetuate the legend of our training ship and those that trained in her. Leave a codicil in your will in favour of your Bursary Fund.

AWOL

Eric Moir 1953/54. Eric went AWOL some years ago, I recently found him on Facebook but sadly he fails to respond. Does anyone have contact with him? We think he is in the Onrust area, Western Cape.

CAPE TO RIO 1971 - Andy Cross 1966

Late in 1970 I wandered into the Royal Cape Yacht Club to share a pint or two with some friends and who should be there but Phil Nankin who was planning to enter the *Howard Davis* into the new forthcoming Cape to Rio yacht race. What an opportunity this was and without any hesitation I agreed to join this adventure. It was not long after that I found myself back at *General Botha* working on HD to make her race ready. Over the coming weeks the standing and running rigging was renewed stem to stern, mast head to keel. We fitted winches, serviced the machinery and built in a fridge/freezer.

It was not all work and no play with plenty of pre-race parties to distract us but by Christmas 1970 HD was all but ready. I returned to my family in Durban Christmas Eve and was back in Cape Town in the New Year.

We moved HD to the RCYC to join the other 58 yachts (Originally the organisers only expected about 15 entries) who were to take part including *Ocean Spirit* (Sir Robin Knox Johnson, who was first to cross the line in Rio) *Pen Duick* (Eric Tabarly who dived over the side to take the propeller off at the start). HD was loaded with fresh stores, provisions, and I must admit a fair amount of wine (donated, would have been rude to refuse it).

Race day 4th Jan 1971 and the whole of Cape Town (dare I say South Africa) lined the shore, signal hill and any vantage point they could find, not forgetting the large fleet of spectator boats. *Howard Davis* was ready as were the twelve of us onboard Phil Nankin, Billy Damerall, Brian Georgeson, Andy Cross, Sean Day, Craig Middleton, Bernie Wrangmore, Dave Pryce, Jan Coetzee, John Abercrombie, John Baumgartner, F. Smith. Rio here we come.

It was a lovely sunny day, with a fresh southeaster which made for an exhilarating start. *Albertros* managed to bend her mast and had to call into Robin Island to effect repairs, they went onto win on adjusted time. HD suffered some small damage to the Stb'd side rail which we fixed with 'magic' glue and screws. If I remember correctly the spectator boats managed to get in the way of many of those racing. All very exciting if not nerve racking. HD was off and running with 57 other yachts on our way to Rio some 4000 miles to the West. It would be 4 weeks before Sugar Loaf appeared on the horizon and during that time we would experience highs and lows, weather wise, but we kept the new spinnaker up much of the time with Brian Georgeson doing the navigation with his trusted sextant (now who uses one of those these days?) and Bernie Wrangmore keeping us all well fed whilst Phil and Billy kept us entertained with their stories of their time before the mast.

I got into a heap of trouble for going for a swim whilst we were becalmed mid Atlantic. Phil was not amused but I don't think I was thrown in the brig nor put on iron rations!!

We arrived in Rio 15th over the line, 5th South African yacht, not bad for a yacht not designed for racing. Our arrival coincided with the Rio carnival so plenty of chances to let our hair down and the Clube de Rio de Janeiro welcomed us with open arms.

Over the next couple of weeks many of the crew left and a few of us and some guests from the South African Embassy sailed down to the Islands to the South of Rio for a bit of R&R. We were fortunate as Rio was hit by severe storms at this time.

All good things must come to end and eventually I flew back to SA (after first being detained by the Brazilian authorities, but that's another story) and HD was shipped back to Cape Town, suffering some hull damage along the way. It's a pity she was not sailed back and I never found out why.

Sailing has always been in my blood and I took part in the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race in 2013/14 and once again found myself swimming mid Atlantic whilst we waited for the wind (but this time with the skipper's approval). Please remember all this took place 50 years ago so I could well have some facts and figures completely wrong.

Durban Branch News

It is with regret that we learn of the passing of Bruce Joubert (1956/57). Bruce was one of the most likeable people with a genial nature. He was smart to say the least and was always in demand at exam time helping others. Bruce was a product of Swaziland and his greatest love was a few days in the bush on the trail. His father was known as the flying doctor, a crazy one at that and the rumour goes that after a long session at the local a call came through that an emergency rescue required for him to land, and he put the plane down where there was no landing strip - even in his condition he successfully carried out the mission.

It seems as if it was only the other day that we held our AGM (just before the first lockdown) and here we are again approaching our 89th AGM this year. Cape Town is celebrating their 90th year of the OBA so congrats to them.

It has been decided that we will hold our meeting virtually (hopefully on Saturday evening 13th of March) and we are in the process of finalizing the logistics. This is an ideal opportunity to see the mugshots of those who have been AWOL.

I had a phone call from Tony Da Silva (1972) the other day and he seems hale and hearty. He sends regards to all.

Towards the end of February I will send out the minutes of the AGM, financials etc with the final update on the matter.

Our Vice Chairman, Allen Pembroke (1969), has immigrated to the UK and Roy Martin (1972) has agreed to stand in that position. We wish Alan Pembroke Happy Landings and I am sure he has hooked up with OBs there.

The big event coming up is the 100th anniversary of the Ship next year and our branch will make whatever contributions are required to make this a howling success.

We can't see into the future but hope that Covid will be a thing of the past - what would such an event be without splicing the main brace and with a pending zero limit hope that Tony Nicholas can negotiate a fair rate with uber.

Kindest regards, D. McManus, Chairman Durban Branch.

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher

The impact of the dreaded Covid-19 continues to be felt here in the UK and naturally in so many countries throughout the world. We are currently in a National Lockdown which has been extended to at least early March. However, we like everyone else are just getting on with this strange life and making the best of it.

FALMOUTH 4 ORDERS – Three Day Function 2022

Plans for this event being held on the 14/16 June 2022, has moved forward since the initial suggestion and committee meeting in June 2020. It will probably be the final re-union of this nature and scale of friends and colleagues from Worcester, Conway, Pangbourne and General Botha. The event is being organised by the Old Worcester Association for all. Hopefully, some sort of special occasion to celebrate our General Botha Centenary may well be included during the weekend.

However, response from GBOBA – UK members has been most satisfying, details as follows:

1. Deposit held, form completed, hotel booked.

Douglas Wrathmall (56/57), Derek Kemp (57/58), Ted Fisher (54/55) and Barbara, Harold Lincoln (59/60) and Lorraine, Donald Neaves (71) and Kathleen, Christopher Nash (61/62) and Ann.

2. Deposit held, form completed, hotel not required.

Stuart Hay (76) and Yolande, Tim Cowley (60/61) and Tiki, Neville Gibb-Jones (74) and Anne, John Piggott (76) and Yvette, Cerwyn Phillips (78) and Carole, Owen Joubert (74) and Heather Moorman.

For interest the total number of attendees to date is 301 which include of 22 GBOBA, 43 Conway, 13 Pangbourne, and the remainder being Old Worcesters together with a number of local dignitaries who are providing facilities for the weekend.

Planned functions 14 June Meet & Greet, 15 June Day trip River and Harbour or St Ives or Truro Museum and Cathedral, 15 June evening a Grand Dinner in the grounds of Pendennis Castle, 16 June a morning Church Service or a Trip to the Eden Project. 16 June evening Open Air Theatre or a Penzance trip. Time being allowed for guests to explore on their own. Transport between hotels and venues is included as part of the cost package.

As you appreciate this will be quite a historic occasion, therefore perhaps our Old Boys who have indicated their interest would now like to reconsider and make contact with me.

I would like to wish All a Happy, Healthy and Safe 2021,

Ted Fisher

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Australia Branch News

From GBOBA Sydney; Grenville Stevens 2189 60/61 - A casual "outdoor" lunch was proposed for the 7th of January on the outskirts of Sydney; however a sudden surge of COVID-19 Virus flared up in some of Sydney's suburbs so we thought it prudent to batten down the hatches and cancel the event. There was not much enthusiasm from the GBOBA with only 2 responses.

From Joyce Jones widow of Gordon Jones 1181 41/42 and her son Graham (living in Adelaide) sent the following regarding vale Gordon Jones -

Joyce writes - "Gordon finished his 2 years on the Botha and immediately joined the South African Government Merchant Service and served there until he was discharged after the War's end."

From Graham - "To add to my Mum's email about my Dad's war-time service in the South African Railways Merchant Navy, the ships that my Dad served on were the Dahlia, the Erica and the Salandiah. The Salandiah was commandeered in Cape Town harbour. It was commissioned in 1938. It sailed under the Danish flag and the crew were all placed in confinement except for the captain who was allowed to continue in command. Captain Jock Stewart was the skipper of the Erika. I remember that my Dad took Captain Stewart to lunch every month until he died. They always ate at the Tropical Restaurant. Until he died, my Dad only ever addressed him as 'Captain Stewart'. Dad sailed on the SAR ships for four years, from the beginning of 1943 until late in 1946, when he came ashore to prepare for his marriage to my Mum in April 1947." Graham R Jones.

From Honorary Member Gerry Hallock Sydney - "I began attending the General Botha Old Boys Association meetings after I met Charles Parsons at a Naval Historical Society of Australia meeting; I was attending with a work colleague on HMAS Stalwart in about 1984. While talking, I revealed that I had attended the Naval Gymnasium at Saldanha Bay in 1965 and had been interested in ships and nautical affairs since my early childhood. That was good enough for Charles and he invited me to

attend the next meeting of the General Botha Old Boys Association and I have attended many meetings as an honorary members since then. Living in Cape Town, I had been introduced to shipping by my father Reg who had also been interested since he was a child. He had started his collections as a young person, and I inherited many of them on his passing in 1983. Many weekends from the early 1950s onwards were spent at the harbour waiting for something to happen, which usually did. We would usually be up early to see interesting ships berth, often on maiden voyages. The two Suez crises were absolute bonuses. When I was a schoolboy I used to ride to the docks on my bike and spend the day there taking pictures. Often, I was able to go out on the tugs, bike and all! They later stopped that as it became too popular and people started abusing it. My Dad collected postcards, many from the early 1900's, cap ribbons of later well-known warships, books and he created many scrapbooks and albums. Many of the postcards have messages and are stamped but most are unused. He joined the World Ship Society in Cape Town in the 1950s, which later broke away to become the Ships Society Of South Africa. He was editor of its quarterly magazine Flotsam and Jetsam from 1963 until the late 1970s. I have the bound issues.

At the age of 10 in 1923 he wrote to the



Commander-In-Chief, Africa Station in Simonstown to see if he would send him some cap ribbons. Previously he had been asking visiting sailors if they would give him one of theirs. He replied enclosing a number of ribbons and mentioned in the letter, that I still have, that he was including ribbons of the first three South African ships, HMSAS Sonneblom, HMSAS Immortelle and HMSAS Protea. Cap ribbons of other well-known ships include HMS Hood, HMS Hermes, HMS Repulse, HMS Dorsetshire etc. There are just over two dozen. In WW2, after previously serving in the RNVR, South African Division before the war, he joined up to serve. After spending time in Simonstown on HMS Hermes while she was being repaired from a collision with the Armed Merchant Cruiser Corfu, he was drafted with a number of South Africans to HMS Neptune, a Leander Class Cruiser. On his first mission on her into the Southern Ocean to look for German raiders possibly refitting in the remote islands down south, my father was chronically seasick and he was put ashore on the ship's return to port. It saved his life. HMS Neptune, with the same crew, was then sent up to help counter the German invasion of Crete but on the way, in foul weather, she ran into a minefield off Tripoli on 19 December 1941 and ultimately sank with only one survivor! He served the rest of the war as a writer in Simonstown. His collections include many different aspects of shipping and some I believe are rare. I am fortunate that I still have and can enjoy them. I came across the newspaper report and photos' showing the sequence of the sinking of the General Botha on 13 May 1947. One of the photos appears on p 88 of the book 'A name among seafaring men'."

The cutting dated 28/12/63 is also part of the above collections. I passed on the news from Gerry Hallock to Brian Ingpen who regularly writes in the Cape Times of his "Kortbroekdae" on his bicycle in the Cape Town Docks. Note from the Scribe.

Gauteng Branch News – Alan Ford

The only item on the Branch's management review is reporting the loss of our "newest" Old Boy, Captain Brian Kewley, who a year or three back moved up from the Cape. I sailed with him as Chief Officer sometime after '72, and remember him as an Officer and Gentleman. We had something in common to talk about in those days as he lived with his mother a street away from my then new girlfriend and wife to be, in Parkview Johannesburg. So he didn't give me a hard time as the local grape vine in the suburb would have heard about it. But then he didn't need to... as I was probably a model cadet!

Writing a newsletter which amounts to public comment is a somewhat onerous task for many reasons. What one sometimes forgets is who the audience is reading it. It can safely be assumed that it would be, in general a very broad spectrum of well educated, experienced people who have mostly had the sharp edges rubbed of them by life and varying degrees of sea going experience. Within that set of readers, one will find a representative sample of personalities from the general population. So in a forum such as this it is prudent to be very circumspect in ones opinions on the broad spectrum of subjects which have anything to do with a nautical theme, past present and future. I am probably guilty of drifting off station in this regard in the past, and I appreciate the discretion exercised by those who I may have rubbed up the wrong way. Realizing that people afford one tolerance is highlighted and brought home to one in these times, given the current onslaught against free speech.

These are sombre times... as I write this my family is saddened by the loss yesterday afternoon of a lifelong friend, SAAF pilot, Officer and Gentleman of the highest calibre, scientist, lateral thinker, respected business man and someone who stood by us in times of urgent need. He valiantly fought the dreaded Lurgi for 6 weeks. When in this frame of mind and feeling a bit sensitive, it becomes a little more difficult not to lash out with the written word at authors who perhaps are not aware of their sometimes unintended audience and their feelings and opinions. Yes we know their views on current topics which are regularly repeated, and they have every right to voice them, but I sometimes wonder where their sense of discretion and tolerance lies.

I hope that by the time the next newsletter rolls around there may be something of unusual, substantial maritime interest to report on. The last few months have just been more of the same old, same old depressing news. A breeze will eventually come through to carry us out of these Doldrums and carry us with a fair wind and white horses to a more positive future over the visible horizon.

FALMOUTH for ORDERS – by F. D. Liggett

(Extract from “BOTH WATCHES” 1968)

In the year 1913 we lay in Tocapilla Bay which was an open harbour on Chile’s West Coast.

Our ship was the four mast barque “*Inverness-Shire*” of Glasgow in which I was then serving my third and last voyage in sail. We, the crew, had already discharged our cargo of 4,000 tons of coal which we had loaded in Newcastle, Australia, and now we had finished loading 3,800 tons of Nitrates (Saltpetre) after nearly three months stay in Tocapilla. Believe it or not every bag weighing 200 lbs was stowed by one man, a hefty “Chilano” stevedore, who never seemed to tire. When all but one bag, (the last bag to be loaded) had been hoisted in we prepared for a ritual as conducted by every British square rigger sailing from Chilean ports and bound home around Cape Horn.

A single “whip” was rove off through a block at the main yard arm, and lowered the last lowered the last bag of Nitrate in the lighter. Junior Apprentice Bobby Cruikshank sat astride the bag with the ship’s ref ensign. The bag (with the Apprentice astride) was hoisted aboard by hand, with all hands singing the sea shanty “*Sally Brown*”, and after two or three hoisting and lowering, it was then lowered into the main hatch, with Bobby Cruikshank still astride and waving the flag with enthusiasm.

When night fell, five hurricane lamps lighted and attached to a wooden frame in the form of the Southern Cross, were hoisted to the fore yard arm as we sang the shanty “*Goodbye, fare thee well*”. The ship’s bell was rung for every ship in the harbour, accompanied by cheers for each ship. They in response rang their bells and each cheered us, the Homewood bounder. “Splice the main brace” was granted by the “Old Man” and a tot of rum was issued.

At the crack of dawn next day we commenced heaving up on one anchor. We were moored on two anchors with 90 fathoms of chain on each, so, with capstan bars shipped into the forecabin capstan and connected to the windlass below, with hearty heaving and rousing sea shanties we were eventually “hove short” after hours of hard going.

During the previous week all sails had been “bent” and stowed on each yard. A light off shore wind was favourable for our sailing, so the boats from the other ships in the harbour were soon alongside with the apprentices helping us. Their Captains, making a courtesy visit, were conspicuous on our poop and were keenly watching the activities. Soon the anchors were aweigh and our stern was being hauled to windward by a small tug. Then we scrambled aloft to loosen the fore top mast staysail and the fore, main and mizzen lower topsails which were then sheeted home. The tug was let go and we moved slowly ahead and seawards with a light fair wind, making about four knots. The boats with the visiting Captains and apprentices cast off and were given parting cheers by those of us aloft and on deck as they pulled away back to their ships.

The wind freshened a little and soon we had every sail sheeted home, as we headed westward into the setting sun, while the masts of the ships in Tocapilla Bay slowly sank from our view astern.

The tropical night soon descended on us and we realised that once again we were “alone” at sea.

All hands were mustered and watches set. The familiar order “Relieve the wheel and lookout” was music in our ears, for from now on we were homeward bound, on our “third leg” of a round the world voyage which started nearly a year and a half ago:- U.K. – Australia, Australia – Chile and now Chile – U.K. We were soon to pick up the S.E. Trades to take us southwards, and then the prevailing Westerly gales around Cape Horn after which “North-Easters” would start to blow us ever eastwards towards the first sight of the Lizard and Falmouth, for orders.

“New Golf Shoes!”

Bert, at 85 years old, always wanted a pair of soft spike golf shoes like Freddie Couples, so, seeing some on sale after his round, he bought them.

He was so delighted with his purchase; he decided to wear them home to show the Mrs. Walking proudly into the house, he sauntered into the kitchen and said to his wife, “Notice anything different about me?”

Margaret at age 83 looked him over and replied, “Nope.”

Frustrated as all get out, Bert stormed off into the bathroom, undressed and walked back into the kitchen completely naked except for the new golf shoes. Again he asked Margaret, a little louder this time, “Notice anything different NOW?”

Margaret looked up and said in her best deadpan response, “Bert, what’s different? It’s hanging down today, it was hanging down yesterday, and it’ll be hanging down again tomorrow”

Furious, Bert yells out, “AND DO YOU KNOW WHY IT’S HANGING DOWN, MARGARET?”

"Nope. Not a clue", she replied.

"IT'S HANGING DOWN, BECAUSE IT'S LOOKING AT MY NEW GOLF SHOES!

Without missing a beat old Margaret replies, "You should've bought a new hat instead".

"A cloudy day is no match for a sunny disposition." (William Arthur Ward)

"Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, and snow is exhilarating;

There is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather". -John Ruskin