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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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MAY 2017

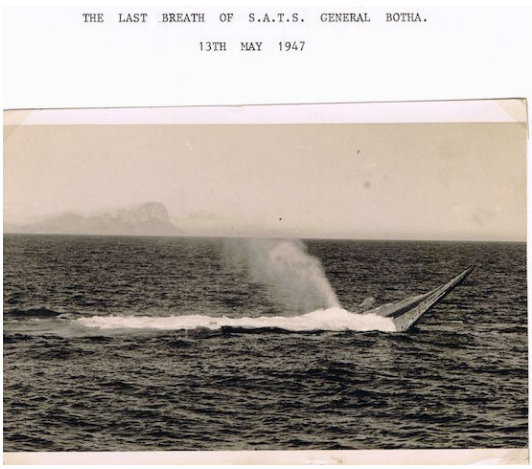
JOINT NEWSLETTER

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.

FROM THE BRIDGE OF ss CAPE TOWN (Chairman Tony Nicholas)

Another interesting quarter has passed with a number of highlights. One of these notable was the centenary anniversary of the loss of the ss Mendi. Besides all the various official commemorations, both around South Africa and at the wreck site in the English Channel, Richard Hellyer GB 1956/57 arranged to lay a wreath on our behalf at sea from a restored RAF crash boat. Bravo Zulu Richard.



Another notable day in our event diary was the sinking of our ship by gunfire 13th May 1947, report elsewhere in this publication. Regular (dangerous) dives are undertaken to her in False Bay and the plaque the divers placed for us ten years ago is cleaned on each dive. The dive team leader is making media footage available for us to screen soon, watch this space.

Our bursary fund is reaching new heights that we never dreamed of when we established it. The Fund hosted two seminars jointly with TETA recently in Cape Town and Durban which were well received by industry, more of this elsewhere in this publication.

Southern African branch of the Nautical Institute, chairman Rob Whitehead GB 1973, recently hosted a Command Seminar in Cape Town. Delegates came from all over including Bothie Boy Ken Ellam GB 1985. Our Bothie Boys who presented during the seminar included Gary Walsh GB 1984, Simon Pearson GB 1967 and honorary Old Boy Stuart McAllister. The Legend Lives On through them.

SOMMSA MEDAL

Lost & NOT found - Years gone by the Society of Master Mariners of South Africa awarded a society medal to deserving recipients. Unfortunately the die for casting the medal has been mislaid somewhere in the country. Extensive search in Cape Town has not located it but it is suspected (records are not as they should be) that its last location was with the society's EXCO in Durban. We request all members, both GBOBA & SOMMSA, in all centers to search their memories and the dark hidden recesses of their desk drawers for this die. The society wishes to revive this prestigious award.

GRAHAM MARTIN DOUGLAS 2626 TERM 1968 BRAVERY AWARD

1977 to 1985 Graham was at sea with Unicorn, thereafter with Land & Marine, Safmarine, Pentow and Smit, at sea and as salvage master. 1997 - Tug Master with Portnet, Richard's Bay where he received a bravery award. 1998 - joined Pentow Marine, Durban. 1999 - Master on a Dive Support Vessel operating out of the Bonny River, Nigeria, for an American Company, Stolt Comex Seawan. 2005 Sub LT in S.A. Navy, completed FTO 1 Officer's course and served on a missile strike craft. 2006 to 2007 lecturer at Durban University of Technology before joining Svitzer. Thereafter with various tug and salvage companies before joining Alan Brink & Associates Durban in 2012.

Graham Martin Douglass writes:

"I was working for Portnet in Richards Bay as Tug Master on the Marshall Clark, one of the older Voith tugs. We were on night shift and Port Control requested we sail a new Korean wood chip vessel which had just completed loading. While on route to the berth, the attending Pilot (also a Bothie boy - Dave Teague GB Cadet 2510 Term 1975) requested me to contact Port Control and request the urgent dispatch of the pilot helicopter, then a bell 212 Huey, for medical evacuation.

I was then asked by the pilot if we had an operative CABA (compressed air breathing apparatus) set available immediately, and that there was a situation on board which required a CABA extraction from the hold which had gas in...!!!! I responded with the affirmative and was told the ships CABA sets where still in their new plastic wrapping, no masks fitted and so they were not able to do the extraction. Port Paramedics were on their way to assist.

Once alongside the vessel the pilot instructed me to assist and report on board the vessel at number 2 hatch with my CABA set. Port Paramedics had arrived but seemed reluctant to do the extraction.

Once on board it was evident that no one was keen to enter the hatch because of the gas threat and a ferocious Alsatian dog guarding the hatch access way. The dog belonged to a security officer who was conducting a stowaway search and he had entered the hatch and did not return, so crew working with him sounded the alarm.

I donned the CABA set and shouted to the crew to distract the dog so I could get access. At the same time a Port Paramedic decided to follow and assist me. We had only 4 minutes to rescue the security officer before he would be brain dead from oxygen starvation, we were well beyond that but had to proceed with the extraction.

The hold was 3/4 full with green wood chip. Stepping onto it, you got sucked down like quick sand, so lying on my stomach I conducted several investigatory sweeps with my hands in the blackened hold. On the second sweep I detected a 9 mm pistol and handed it to the paramedic behind me who would not leave the access ladder. The dog was attacking anyone near the access hatch.

On my third sweep I felt a boot then the rest of the body which was limp. I was able to pull the body slowly towards the access ladder and by sheer luck got him upright and close to the ladder. A rope was slung under his arms and we finally hoisted him out the hold going backwards up the ladder. He was bleeding from severe head wounds. Once upright and pumping his chest while ascending the ladder he started to breath. Paramedics took over once he was on deck and the helicopter evacuated him to hospital, he was alive but still unconscious. I returned to my tug and continued with Port duties.

The situation was as follows: (1) The security officer was in fact a police man in the SAPS dog unit and he was moonlighting with the security company to earn extra money; (2) He had limited knowledge of ships and the dangers associated with cargoes; (3) His father was the Regional Provincial Commander; (4) The Filipino crew had warned him not to go into the hatch but language was a barrier; (5) The ships CABA sets had never been used or even tested and they could not get the masks to screw into the

oxygen bottles, a safety violation for sure; (6) Brain death occurs at about 4 minutes due to oxygen starvation; (7) Green wood chip was declared a hazardous cargo after this accident. Green wood chip continues to LIVE in the chip form, the osmosis action continues and it sucks the oxygen out the air in the hatch then releases it back as carbon dioxide gas, making the hatch atmosphere lethal, once the hatch covers are closed; (8)The young 21 year old policeman was declared brain dead on arrival at hospital and after 4 days, his parents, pulled the plug as he would never recover. Severe head injuries were also a mitigating factor.
There were many lessons learned and Captain D.W. Brink (GB Cadet 2036 Term 1957/58) then Port Captain awarded me for bravery."
BRAVO ZULU Graham, The Legend Lives On!

ANCHORS AWEIGH

M.A. HOFFMAN 1942/44. Mike has sadly passed away end of 2015. Cadet on SAR&H Ships, m.v. Selandia & s.s. Dalia and Able Seaman m.v. Aelo 1948. SA Lines Third Mate m.v. Aelo renamed "Kaapland" 1948 - 1950. 2nd Mate s.s. Damaraland, S.A. Lines, 1950 - 1951. 2nd Mate m.v. Inchanga Bank Line 1952. Mate Thesens Coasters 1953 - 1954. February 1955 obtained masters F.G. at Cape Town. Promoted Master Thesens Coasters. November 1955 joined Harbour Service. Luderitz and Port Elizabeth, Tug Mate. 1963 - 1967 - East London, Master bucket dredger Sir Thomas Pricey, Tug F. Schermbrucker and Acting Pilot. 1967 - 1977 - Cape Town Harbour Pilot. 1977 - 1987 - Assistant Port Captain. Then retired.
K.J. WELLS 1965. Ken weighed his anchor 6th April. Little is known of his career although sailed with Safmarine, was 3rd Officer on the S.A. Morgenster in 1970. Any further details appreciated.
D. FRYLINCK 1960/61 E44. After Bothie Des qualified as a Millwright with S.A.R. & H. and remained with them since (later in Portnet division) except for a year of living in Europe. Had a promotion to an examiner in artisan's special duties. 2004 retired. Deceased 21st February 2017.
B.M. JOHNSON 1960/61 E46. 1965 Fitter & Turner with the Port Elizabeth Municipality followed by two years as a draughtsman with Ford Motor Company and then two years with Safmarine. Relocated to Johannesburg, worked as sales engineer to the general sales manager in industry.
1983 to 2001 Established own business, sold out in 2001 and retired to Gansbaai. Returned to formal employment as branch manager [engineering sales] in Cape Town for a short time. Subsequently owned a small sea front restaurant in Gansbaai. Deceased 18th February 2017.
R.J. RIDLER 1960/61 E52. Another sad loss to term 1960/61. Bob was Band Drum Major 1961. After Bothie completed his engineering training and entered the aircraft industry specialising in cabin equipment. Worked at Boeing and Airbus Industries, later joining an Italian company near Rome, manufacturing aircraft equipment. The company later set up a factory in Cape Town producing components for SAA and was tasked with setting up the factory and staff training. Spent 15 years with the company reaching the post of Group Engineering Director working on military and related contracts. Left the company in 1984 to form his own engineering company manufacturing naval radar antennas for export to German Shipyards. 2010 Retired. Deceased 22nd April 2017.
"Danny, I am thankful that you have kept contact with Robert in his illness. Please convey my condolence to his family.
Robert was a talented drum major and a good leader. Once, when the band was short of numbers for a civic parade in Strand, I was seconded to hold a bugle and march in formation. Rob told me to watch his mace, listen to the bass drum and for goodness sake - don't blow the bugle!
Please greet on my behalf all the classmates who are able to attend the memorial service.
Ever as aye, Keith Lindsay."
Trevor Kilburn (1956/57 No.2008). Passed away on 16 April 2017. 1958-59 Sailed in Clan Line. 1960-63 Costing Clerk with Boart & Hardmetal, and then with 3M as coated abrasive products salesman. In 1968 he started his own company specialising in abrasive industrial supplies to local and international markets. Became CEO of Pfered SA in 2000 & retired in 2008. He was Honorourary President of Motorsport SA.
Our condolences to family and shipmates.

SCRANBAG

R.P. PAWLEY 1971. Our redoubtable Roger has finally, after much persuasion from us already there, retired from formal employment. Well, at least for the time being although he still attends the office a couple of times a week.

1970 - Cadet Safmarine before attending Bothie in 1971 where he was promoted our Chief Cadet Captain.

1972 & 1973 - Cadet Safmarine (Union Castle) - SA Vaal. Sailed with Unicorn briefly before being appointed 3/O on the S.A. Vaal. 1975 returned to the general Safmarine fleet as 2/O and C/O. 1980 spent two years as tug mate & master with Portnet in Port Elizabeth before joining the Bothie as staff lecturer in 1983 which latterly became the Cape Peninsular University of Technology, Maritime Studies.

Hundreds of cadets have passed through his classroom over the years who all speak highly of Roger. Roger was presented with a memory book on his retirement and it is worth repeating one submission from his Bothie Term classmates.

From Norman Eaglestone (Flinty) cadet 2389:

I would like to share a long lived memory bout CAPT Pawley, one that has stuck with and driven me for many years. This memory was brought to light recently when I watched the movie "Chariots of Fire" that took me back a long time to the *General Botha*, Roger Pawley and my watch mates. To start, it was apparent to me very quickly that Roger and I were on different levels, both intellectually and physically. He was always so far ahead of me the competing was futile. Now getting back to Chariots of Fire, you will all recall the runners on the beach in that movie, as well as the end of year running competition, between our watches. That was a tough run along Bloubergstrand and I as usual was battling to keep going. I was so tired that I pretty much gave up and began not to even care about finishing. That was until I heard a voice next to me saying "You OK Flinty?" It was Roger Pawley of the opposite team. I said "No". He said "Flinty you can do it". That little inspiration gave me just enough will and energy to just barely keep going. Roger and I kept pace slowly heading for the finish line, quite a way behind the leaders. Several times during that run Roger kept saying. "keep going Flinty". We were both too tired to get out more than a few words at best. Well then we got close to the finish line and a new inspiration began to kick in. My watch team mates began screaming for me to finish. Both watches began shouting for Roger and I to get to that finish line first. I passed first and beat Roger that day, by about two inches. However that win turned out to be a very small part of the prize. What I learned from Roger that day was the importance of how leadership can drive individuals to go over and beyond and achieve what they never could on their own. This is even harder to imagine doing when it is for a competitor. So as I sat watching Chariots of Fire, the memories of the inspiration and leadership Roger provided came flooding back to me. In my roles as a Commander of a warship in the SA Navy, to leading large organizations in the USA, that lesson on leadership and the importance of supporting and driving individuals to achieve more than they believe they could ever achieve, all came from a run on the beach and a lesson from CAPT Pawley. I would be surprised if Roger even remembers that brief encounter and the profound lesson he gave me that day that would drive my career and direction for the next 30 years. I will always remember and cherish my days at Botha, and often think of the lesson I learned from Roger Pawley. Not only did Roger give me that inspiration but I know he has been an inspiration for so many of his students. I wish him well, health, happiness and fond memories of Botha BTW. If he would like a re-compete, I am ready. We could see goes fastest down Blouberg Strand with walking sticks.

W.J. DAMERELL 1941/42. Another redoubtable character in our ranks is our Bill. Here seen charming the ladies resplendent in his Bothie Old Boys regalia.

J.H. SHERWIN 1968. 1996 Port Captain of a Red Sea Port, Saudi Arabia. Has been piloting SBM and CBM's for the last 20 years; 10 in Angola and 10 in Ghana, with no intention of quitting as long as the body holds out!

G.B. KEWLEY 1944/45. Brian sent me a verbal recording of his career which I recommend for those with gout in their fingers. Much appreciated Brian.

1946 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. He then did ship deliveries, trawlers from Europe to South Africa and Australia.
1992 finally retired from the sea and went into compass adjusting which still does today.

A.C. HAVENGA 1985. Adrian is still in Ghana, presently doing avgas ship to ship transfer.

P.F. BLACKETT 1974. Peter deems drinking Bob Terry's beer and wine a reputable retirement job.
"Sailed with Safmarine from 1973 to 1983. After obtaining my Masters certificate I joined the Harbour Service in Durban where I worked for 15 years in various positions, starting on the tugs as a Deck Officer and then later tug master and finally as a Pilot. In 1998 I joined Pentow Marine where I worked as a Discharge Advisor at the Durban SBM, with a brief secondment to the Marsha Bashayer Terminal in Sudan as a Load Master/Mooring Master.
In 2000 I joined Qatar Petroleum as Senior Port Supervisor/Pilot in the Port of Ras Laffan. In August 2005 I was promoted to the position of Harbour Master in Ras Laffan, the world's biggest LNG export terminal. In October 2012 I left Qatar and commenced working for Svitzer in Angola as their Country Manager. I was based up in Soyo where we operated 11 vessels for our client, Angola LNG. After nearly 4 years with Svitzer in Angola I left there in July 2016 and relocated back to my home town of Port Elizabeth.

R.W. GOODALL 1976. Sailed with Safmarine until March 1981.
"For the first four years after leaving Safmarine I skippered patrol boats on the Namibian coast operating out of Walvis Bay. The basic task was to enforce the international laws of pelagic fishing under which all the major fishing nations operated. There were over a hundred Russian factory ships fishing 24/7 and all around the year - even dry-docking at sea on the move while decimating the hake stocks. Not to mention the E. Germans, Poles, and of course the Spanish bottom trawlers and Japanese crab and tuna boats. We also doubled as research vessels for marine biologists - catching, tagging and replacing deep water crab, rescue vessels for local fisherman and yachts and also hosting TV crews documenting the fishing industry. I ran a little school on the bridge every evening where I taught basic navigation and radio procedure etc. in an endeavour to train a number of the fisherman crew to the point where they could get a fishing skipper’s ticket and so improve their lot. Apart from the chief engineer and myself there were no trained or qualified people on board. This led to very interesting situations.
During a stint at university (UCT), I had my first real encounter with mentally handicapped people which led to me working at a Camphill farming community near Atlantis as a volunteer. The work involved building, Bio-dynamic agriculture, and caring for some very fragile people. This in turn led to me to Switzerland where I spent four years working with extremely challenged and fragile little children. This work was immensely intense - like an initiation of fire and a crash course in self-knowledge and the complexities of human life and human destiny. Faced with these children you either run away or you are forced to pursue very difficult questions about reality. I chose to question and I’m still at it.
In the mid-nineties, I returned to SA and to Camphill Village at their request and for the next four years became immersed in bio-dynamic agriculture. All of this work was based on the ground-breaking insights and initiatives of the Austrian philosopher and scientist Rudolf Steiner. It led me to totally new and fathomable perspectives on almost every aspect of life and human endeavour. I have been studying ever since. After getting married in 1989 to Christina with whom I had worked in Switzerland, we returned to Europe to study further. I studied in Stuttgart (S. Germany) before becoming ordained as a priest in the Christian Community - a movement for religious renewal. I worked for one year in Germany before being asked to return to Cape Town where I have been for the last 23 years."

A.H. MACLENNAN 1974. Andy recently retired but remains active in the training industry. A few glasses of wine over lunch had him joining our bursary fund committee.
1973 to 1993 sailed with Safmarine. Then joined Safmarine Marine Division which culminated in Marine Personnel Manager responsible for crewing the Safmarine fleet of +/- 40 vessels.
1994 joined Smit Marine as Business Development Manager and later General Manager of Sealink, Cape Town, a division of Smit Marine.
1998 - Transferred to Pentow Marine Head Office, Crewing Executive.
2003 joined S.A. Maritime Training Academy (SAMTRA) Simon's Town as General Manager. 2010 promoted to CEO. December 2016 retired.
D.P. WILLIAMS-FREEMAN 1943/44 #1334. I met recently with David. Still going very strong and stood me to a couple of beers. I reciprocated with our Bothie cap. He now hails from Nottingham Road, Kwa-Zulu Natal. Has a caravan park there, so if you are passing, must stop over. He has had an interesting career.
1942 he enlisted in the British Merchant Navy at age 14 from the UK before joining the Bothie the following year. After Bothie completed two years of school and a further two years at university. Then went farming in Citrusdal and Rhodesia and after some years returned to Durban where he worked in a convent.
1964 set up a trout farm in Kwa-Zulu Natal and also farmed vegetables, flowers, sheep and also established a sawmill on the property. 1995 farming and milling timber in Natal. Subsequently established a caravan park.
R.M. MUNRO 1984 #2841. Richard has just left Tidewater having been based in Angola for a while. He has now joined Eagle Bulk based in Singapore. We now have seven Old Boys in Singapore, time for a Bothie reunion over there chaps.

WORLD FIRST FOR LAWHILL MARITIME CENTRE

LMC recently opened their new extensions which includes additional boarding cabins, Marine Sciences classroom, a Ship's Library and Resource Centre and a world first electronic navigation (ECDIS) classroom for secondary school students. The ECDIS software valued at over R1m was donated by Kieron Cox GB term 1969.
The additional extensions were funded by the TK Foundation, Sean Day GB Term 1967 is chairman of Teekay, Sean writes;
"You regularly cover GBOBA support for Lawhill Maritime Centre and the extraordinary school that Brian Ingpen has developed there. I think that the GBOBA should also take indirect credit for the support from corporate sponsors directed by GB OBs. As you know, I assume, my company Teekay has been a big supporter. Although we now have 221 vessels in our fleet, we rarely call at SA ports and don't have any trades to and from SA. But given my SA background and my great experience at the GB, as well as my friendship with Brian Ingpen which dates back to our school days at SACS, I have arranged for support from our charitable foundation and we have now underwritten the building and the recent extension to the building. My family and I have also set up a scholarship program at Lawhill – you have probably read about it
http://www.lawhill.org/incredible-support-for-the-new-lawhill-educational-trust/
I think that the GBOBA should be proud of the many ways in which OB's have supported Lawhill!"
Thank you for the words of encouragement Sean. There are many Bothie Old Boys who are actively involved in mentoring and training the next generation of mariners and through them all; The Legend Lives On!

HOMERO - L26 YACHT FOR SAIL TRAINING

Members shall recall previous frequent reference made of Marine Inspirations in this publication. Founder member of our Bursary Fund also founded Marine Inspirations, namely Phil Wade GB cadet 2196 Term 1960/61 in conjunction with another friend who coincidently also trained at Naval College, Gordon's Bay (yes, your old Bothie) in the eighties.

Marine Inspirations (aka Phil Wade) are actively involved in facilitating Lawhill Maritime Centre learners' regular trips to Spain and crew on ocean going yachts competing in prestigious races there.
Marine Inspirations has reached a new height by raising sponsorship and providing a keel boat to Lawhill Maritime Centre for the students there to learn and experience sailing and boat handling.
The boat was launched in Simon's Town recently and a plaque presented in recognition of the contribution that our ship, and those that trained in her, has made, and continues to make, to the maritime industry.
Another world first we believe. The Legend of our ship and those that trained in her Lives On!

THE LEGEND BELOW THE WAVES - 70 YEARS ON

Detail of the end our training ship is contained in the book "A name among seafaring men" and recounted by The Rev. L.N. Green who was on board the navy tug which was in attendance near the *General Botha*:
"Soon after 1400 (Tuesday 13th May 1947), (tug) *St. Dogmael* took up her position and signalled ashore, "All clear for firing to commence."
The first shot went far above and fell to sea about half a mile beyond her. The next was nearer in, but further south. The three following must have gone very close to her masts. The fifth shot was a lucky one. It must have exploded on the main deck just aft of amidships. Probably it was this hit which ended her, for as the smoke of the explosion cleared, her main deck was seen to be on fire. The next direct hit was, I think, the 11th shell which hit near the water-line. Several other hits were recorded - five in all. After the 24th and last shot had been fired, she showed a slight list to port. Some smoke was coming through the starboard sponsons, but at no time was she hidden from view. The first hit had been as nearly a bull's eye as any gunnery officer could wish.
As we stood by awaiting orders from ashore, the list to port increased. In 20 minutes, she was on her beam ends with masts almost parallel to the water. For about 10 minutes there seemed no change. Then gradually the water closed over her stern. Soon her bow lifted out of the sea and the huge ram gradually disappeared. It was a sad and ugly sight."

SOS

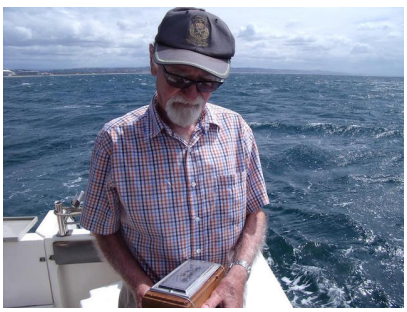
Newsletters returned from:

David Ian Loubser, class 1981, last known in Porirua, New Zealand.

Arthur George, term 1942/43, last known in Surrey, England.

Durban Branch News (Derek McManus)

This Year sees us celebrating the 85th Anniversary of the Durban Branch. Founded in 1932, one year after Cape Town. One could write a book on the joy that this has brought to members and the many memories that resulted from the vision and the step taken to perpetuate the spirit of the Bothie. To celebrate this event it is planned to make our Christmas lunch a memorable occasion (a date in November to be announced).
To this end an appeal to all to contact members of their respective years and hope to see lost souls come to the fore. This would be a fitting occasion to raise our glasses to Herby Horsley for his vision in kick starting the Old Boys Association in Durban.
The AGM was held at Roy Martins home and once again many thanks to Roy and Gwen for hosting the event. Needless to say that the status quo remains the same with Don Foulis being co-opted onto the committee.



We recently put to sea to drop a casket overboard to finally say farewell to Capt George Foulis who passed away last year. This was followed by an enjoyable lunch at the R.N.Y.C downing a few and much banter to boot. Thanks to Georges' wife Wendy for doing the honours and the commodore of the Club for providing the lunch.
The service was conducted at sea by Father Barnabus of the Seafarers Missions to whom we made a donation. (Don Foulis in picture)

D McManus, Chairman, Durban Branch

Gauteng Branch – Boiler Plate (Alan Ford)

The 2017 Commissioning Day Luncheon was held on a very pleasant Sunday afternoon 26th March at Rene and Karen Poerner's house in Linksfield Johannesburg. Thirteen cadets and spices were present and correct for standby tables, which is a reasonable turnout statistically, considering there were no invited guests this year. There were a significant number of apologies read out with quite a few cadets gadding around the country side and overseas, quite a few were not able to make it due to ill health, but one apology in particular put many an Old Salt to shame. Dave MacCullum who was from the 57/58 internment said he would have just run a road race on the Sunday morning, and didn't think that he would be back in time from the venue to attend, and was possibly going to be feeling a little knackered.

Talking of oldies hanging in there, it must be noted that Rene who was by far the oldest cadet present, carbon dating putting him at about AD 1947/48 vintage, still runs his own company and is not yet retired.

This year's function was a departure from the hired venue which we had enjoyed over the last few years and some concerns had been raised that perhaps the spirit would not be the same due to smaller numbers. Indeed it was different, but in a good way. There was no pressure to accommodate caterers and be finished by a certain time, so the event turned out to be extremely laid back and lunch took the whole afternoon, interspersed with much wine and good food supplied by Karen, Rene and their two galley staff. Desserts were finally cleared away by 16:30 and the remaining stalwarts were ready to ring Full Away On Passage, subtly aided and abetted by Rene and his private shebeen stocks. I decided that as my duties were concluded and that I had a family Skype appointment for 18:00, I could intrepidly leave the bridge of SS GBOBA-GT at 17:00 and let the senior cadets take the con.

There is the famous saying that what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. Let me just say that in this instance, what happened in Linksfield stays in Linksfield and leave it at that.

A huge vote of thanks must go to Rene and Karen for the wonderful food and hospitality which was enjoyed in their home.

Not too much of interest has come through from the Sparky's office, except that sanity has prevailed in the US and cadets are again allowed to do their post college Sea Year before qualifying as what we knew as 3rd Mates. Modern speak pertaining to the maritime industry, talks of "industry disrupters", which really means the huge influence modern technology is having on the way business on the high seas is conducted. Maritime law must be one of the most dynamics professions to be in today, as they scramble to wrap regulation around new technology and keep those who wish to exploit the new playing field to their own advantage from running amok. Viva Lawhill Viva !!

Hull antifouling and paint research is advancing at quick pace to squeeze every last bit of fuel efficiency out of marine coatings. Even in what would seem to be that benign field of research, the lawyers have to keep tabs on the scientists who purportedly use tin as a catalyst, but in reality bend the rules and let it leach out as an antifouling poison. Mollusc ecosystems are being devastated by sex changes caused by this environmental pollutant.

The latest pirate masterminds don't even need to go to sea anymore; they can sit at coffee shops and do their dirty work with their laptops. I believe they are using a new Microsoft platform called Portholes 17. ☺ ☹.

Death threats on a postcard please…

Regards, Alan

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher

Amazing how time flies in retirement – so much to do and organise! Barbara and I were delighted our GBOBA Vice Chairman / Newsletter Scribe Dennis Henwood accompanied by Belinda "stopped by" in March, an extended coffee stop before continuing to a family re-union in the area. I certainly appreciated the opportunity of a "catch up" on local news from the Cape.

Prior to Easter we met with Harold and Lorraine Lincoln. Both had been over in the UK visiting family before heading back to the USA. An enjoyable lunch in a local pub near Chichester. Harold of course an Engineer Cadet of 1959/60.

A Teaser……how were the colours red and green chosen for port and starboard lights on ships and arranged that way? When were they and related navigation lights first used rather than required by law? This question was posed amongst a group of 1953/54's a while ago, so, it would be interesting to see the overall response!!

The Sinking of the SS"Mendi" - During WW1 a ship carrying SA soldiers sank south of the Isle of Wight killing more than 600 African passengers. The Mendi was accidently rammed by a British Steamship.

Cachalot (Society of Master Mariners), Richard Hellyer GB 1956/57 and a Southampton resident are involved with the HSL 102 project at Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust. Richard sought and received permission to accompany, on the anniversary, 21st February SAS"Amatola" and HMS "Dragon" to the wreck site some 10 miles south of St Catherine's Point for a wreath laying ceremony. Aboard 102 were Richard, Terry Clark, the Skipper, one crewman and Councillor Lynne Hook, the Mayor of Gosport (picture right). Weather was a problem blowing Force 4 from the West, however bio-degradable wreaths on behalf of the Society of Master Mariners, South Africa and Southampton, the other representing the Mayor of Southampton and of course one by Councillor Hook were cast. Councillor Hook led some quiet moments of contemplation and quoted the words of Isaac Wauchope, ''Be quiet and calm, my countrymen…..let us die as brothers'' I guess we all know the history of SS "Mendi" and the dying African native soldiers and looking at the episode from a distance of 100 years it must have been a horrible situation for all on board. HRH The Princess Royal attended a Memorial Service at Hollybrook Cemetery in Southampton, where there is a Memorial recording the names of those lost in the tragedy. Wreaths were later recovered then laid alongside the flowers of the previous day. A detailed report together with pictures / photos was published on our GBOBA Facebook earlier in the year by our Chairman Tony Nicholas.

In June this year Richard Hellyer together with others will take MGB 81 and HSL 102 across to France (Pegasus Bridge) for the 6 July, D-Day Commemorations.

Ted Fisher…. tedefisher@aol.com

Australia Branch News May 2017 (Grenville Stevens)

The Commissioning Day Lunch was held on 18th March 2017 at the Ipoh Restaurant Chatswood RSL. The menu was Malaysia. Toasts were proposed to the Ship, The Queen and Absent friends. Attendees were: Gordon Maxwell 40/41, Stan Damp 47/48, Rudi Auer 59/60, Peter & Jenny O'Hare 64, Grenville & Suzette Stevens 60/61. Pete North 79 travelled from Perth, Peter Oakes 79, Hugh Murray (Hon Member) Gerry & Helen Hallock (Hon Member)

It was with great pleasure that we welcomed Pete North who made the long haul (flying time 4hrs 35mins on the Red Eye flight) from Perth to attend the Luncheon. (Picture - **Grenville Stevens 60/61 Rudi Auer 59/60 Stan Damp 47/48 Peter Oakes 79 Peter North 79 Jenny O'Hare Suzette Stevens Helen Hallock Gerry Hallock HON, Hugh Murray HON, Gordon Maxwell 40/41. Peter O'Hare 64**).

A General Meeting was held before the Lunch. The following was ratified by a show of hands

However, our constitution does not include the period of our financial year which has caused a delay at our SARS (tax man).

Therefore I propose an addition to our constitution as follows: 5.4.8 The association's financial year shall run from 1st January to 31st December each year.

A vote of thanks was extended to our Hon Secretary Peter O'Hare for his efforts keeping the GBOBA flag flying high. There were no further matters to report, the meeting closed at 12.30.

Bursary Fund Report, May 2017.

The Fund's 2017 programme continues to unfold month by month. Our bursars' studies during their first term yielded a broad range of examination results, from excellent to worrying. The first term is always challenging for the students, particularly for the incoming grade 10s adjusting to the demands of the Lawhill regime and curriculum. The ongoing weaknesses in maths and science remain apparent through all the grades, justifying our continued investment in the provision of extra-tutorial support. These first results form the basis for the second term individual review interviews by the mentoring team and for the focus of the subject-tutors; sustaining the successful and encouraging and helping those who are in need. The maths and science tutorial week initiated last year for the grade 12 bursars during the mid-year school holiday will be repeated this year during the first week of holiday camp; both those who attended last year are now busy with maritime studies at tertiary level.

Tony Nicholas and Peter Coetzee have had their exciting proposal to run the extra-mural mentoring activities for all bursars this year, during a one-week programme in the midyear holiday, shared with the Sea Cadet Corps at their T.S. *Woltemade* base in Lakeside, approved by the Board and funded by SAIMI. The programme will include educational field trips, shipboard protocols, seamanship and practical boat-handling training. In addition, it is planned to enable some bursars to sail with Marine Inspirations in Spain, and to possibly participate in the NSRI's rigid inflatable boat crew and coxswain training programmes.

Much excitement was generated at Lawhill Maritime Centre during this quarter: Firstly, by the opening of the Lawhill Maritime Centre's extended boarding and education facilities, including a state-of-the-art electronic navigation classroom, this reconfirms the Fund's confidence in Lawhill Maritime Centre as a centre of excellence, in secondary-school maritime education. Secondly, by the handing-over of the fine sail-training yacht *Homero,* on behalf of its generous donor, to the Lawhill Educational Trust. This fine craft will enable the development of practical seamanship skills, and certainly contribute to the development of sea-fever amongst the students.

The Fund's *Nurturing Sea Fever* programme was presented to two influential maritime industry audiences during this quarter, in both Cape Town and Durban, generating very positive and useful responses- as did the related paper presented by Keith Burchell at the SAMI conference in Port Elizabeth during April. These seminars and presentations were aimed at garnering further support and participation from the marine industry to secure the sustainability of the Fund. Yvette De Klerk, a fund Board member, having recently been appointed as the cadet programme manager, presented a paper on the current programme situation and an analysis of the options on the way forward.

The fund is busy reviewing its long-term strategy, particularly the extension of its Mentoring and Outreach programmes. In line with one of main conclusions of our interaction with the major players in the industry's educational and training sector, which concluded that there is need for the fund to align its programmes with the industry's maritime strategies.

The Fund administration has been creaking under the burden of managing the ever-increasing interaction with interested individuals and the industry, plus this year's record number of past and present bursars. We are in the process of engaging and organising this administration support.

Book Review

Ivor Little's book, **"Above Board and Under Cover"**, which you will recall was reviewed in this Newsletter in 2009, is now available as on-line e-book. It is available at the excellent price of R100-00 and includes colour pictures. It is an excellent read. For further information and purchase go to http://www.rapidttp.co.za/books/aboveboard.html.

"When young Ivor's prep school Afrikaans teacher, 'Japie' Horn, asked him "What do you want to do when you grow up?" He replied confidently "I want to be a navigating officer in the Merchant Navy, Sir." Ivor was devastated when Japie replied "You! If you ever become a navigating officer I will buy you a farm in Adderley Street!" Well, who would have imagined the career path of a naïve youngster sitting in boredom in a classroom staring out the window during on Afrikaans lesson? Ivor writes of this incident: "That one statement by a tactless teacher stuck in my subconscious, waiting for the right moment and impetus to set a train of events in motion that would prove him wrong. If Japie ever reads this, which I doubt, I would like him to know that he owes me a farm in Adderley Street!

That moment and impetus was not far off as Ivor brushed up the wrong side of the Headmaster of the high school and had to move on. He was a poor academic and had little interest in sport which was contrary to the aspirations of the school, the Headmaster and the Prefects. Fortunately his Father recognised Ivor's predicament and salvaged the situation honourably by booking him into the General Botha and to complete his schooling 1953/54.

The rest is history, and has been passionately recorded in this fascinating book. Ivor takes us through that career with many facets including some extraordinary navigation feats, just to prove a point to Old Japie!

His story leads him from the Bothie to his first ship, the President Brand, a tanker of the Southern Steamships fleet. He and Ernie Hinterleitner spent a full year on board as apprentices. Thereafter there are many intrepid and sometimes hazardous tales, as he describes his passage to achieving his Master's ticket at the age of 24. The chapters go on covering time on the Dalia, Safmarine and Harbour Service. He tells of the many people he met along the way, including his girlfriends and how he met his wife, Anne. Bothie Boys will recognise many of those mentioned, and you are likely to come across your own name mentioned in dispatches. He even ventured into the business world ashore when he was employed by Hank Wilson, the MD of United American Enterprises (UNINAM) in the illustrious position of "Executive Assistant to the MD", which translated simply into running an ice-cream parlour in Port Elizabeth.

Ivor served on the staff of the Bothie in the early days at Granger Bay when the first cadets moved across from Gordon's Bay. From there he was headhunted by the Navy who employed him as Navigation Lecturer at the Military Academy, Saldanha Bay, where he wangled an inter-departmental transfer with promotion from "Cadet Training Officer" (GB) to Commander. In the interview when asked why he wanted to join the Navy, his reply was "I didn't, the Navy wanted me to join it."

Well, that transfer and promotion in 1970 took Ivor on a different path which included lecturing specialised navigation courses to Officers studying Bachelor's Degrees (BMIL) – Oh! Where was Japie and his farm? He went on to work at the S A Naval Staff College, and then to Pretoria where he was involved in counter-insurgency operations and naval communications operations. Between all these he had made good friends with naval personnel in Chile and was invited to represent the SAN in that country and a trip to the Antarctic. Ivor was well thought of, and as his book explains, he made many friends – he is a natural diplomat. As Military Attaché he was sent on missions to Argentina and Italy, he was involved in Public Relations and the Defence Secretariat. Ivor eventually went back to sea, and we have read recently in this newsletter about his experiences on the Africana.

Ivor's experiences and dealings with people range from Anneline Kriel, Adraan Vlok, Naas Botha, Chris Barnard, FW de Klerk to Defence Secretaries of Africa and Russian delegations, and all these anecdotes make fascinating reading. The transition from the SADF to the SANDF is also reflected in

his experiences. Ivor is a Bothie Boy who has taken full advantage of a sound training on the 'Ship" and made a difference to all who crossed his path. We can be proud of him and all the Obies mentioned in this book."

"Brad's Steamship Story" (Brad Wallace-Bradley)

Suspecting that "Boilerplate", in his choice of *nom du plume,* hankers after earlier times, he and later generations may like to hear of a steamship evolution I had fifty years ago.

Sailing as Mate of the "up and down" albeit oil fired, **SS "Reef"** I had, on that occasion, nearly become "embayed" and had to tack her.

Bound Eastwards we had sailed from Cape Town with a defective Main Engine governor which meant that the on-watch Engineer had to keep handy to the controls if we pitched, causing the prop. to race and so "pull her back". In addition, the steam driven generator couldn't be induced to produce enough volts continuously to keep the radar "flashed up" – yes, we did have a radar – African Coasters were quite progressive. Its revs. could be temporarily increased to give us a picture by getting the e-o-w to jam a screw driver into its works and rev. it up.

There we were off the South coast virtually hove-to into a howling Easterly gale and attendant swells.

Master and two mates - the old man kept the traditional captain's watch: 8.00-12.00. On taking over at 0400 the 2nd Mate explained to me that if I wanted a radar fix all I had to do was blow down the voice-pipe to the engineer and request a five minute increase in revs. on the generator and he would know why.

On our Easterly heading an hourly fix was good enough – Mk.1 eyeball was good enough for collision avoidance and, if push came to shove, two vertical reds would probably suffice.

I took over with a 04:00 fix on the chart with the wind and sea fine on the stbd. bow. 0500 fix showed a Nor-Northwestwards set, still pounding and the e-o-w sitting on a beer crate alongside the controls reducing revs. as the stern lifted and the prop. raced. Come the 06:00 fix, the ship setting n'wards into St. Sebastian Bay and refusing to come to stbd. - in order to reverse the sideways set and leeway.

She was, to use a square-rigger term, going to become embayed behind Cape Infanta.

I had already two of my four trans-Atlantic under-sail crossings under my belt by that time – knowing that, to ensure a successful tack, pay-off, build up speed and then come about.

Voice-pipe to 2nd Eng. 'Cappy' van Tonder - he had been so long on the coast that he had gained the 'honorific' title of 'Cappy' – "I'm going to pay off – she won't pitch so hard – give me max. revs". All went to plan: paid off, increased speed, helm over, came through the wind and successive hourly plots put us setting Southwards. (In my mind, otherwise, I'll have to call the "Old Man" and we might have to try anchoring to snub her around to get the wind onto the port bow AND, I didn't fancy a spell on the spray-driven fo'c'sle-head.)

Eventually, the gale abated and we progressed our voyage.

Thank you, Brad!

The Rio Story, Yacht "FEO" - Graham Reinders (Eng. Cadet No.18 1958/59)

In the early 1970's I was a co-pilot with SAA. One day while flying along, the Captain a great Victoria Lake sailor (Germiston) was telling me how he had just built this fabulous little Fireball yacht and what fun it was. By the end of that flight I knew I just had to build a yacht. When I got home I was speaking to friend and he said he had some plans for a yacht. Yes!! we were each going to build one using his plans. I offered him my back yard to build his next to mine. After looking at his plans I said, "Isn't it a bit small, shouldn't we look for a bigger one?--- It was a 45 footer. That is how ignorant I was about yachting.

Anyhow, we set up a big (and I mean big) shed in my back yard and the game was on. This was the era of Ferro-Cement Boats. I built a Hartley (NZ) design, sloop rigged, 62 foot mast. --- Just a few bags of cement, and the rest is easy. What a fool I was. They never say that the "hull" is only 10% of the cost of a boat. Luckily, in addition to my airline salary, I owned The Sheepskin Shop in Johannesburg. Over the next three years every spare minute I had and every single Rand I earned went into the yacht.

By late 1975 we loaded the yacht onto a Low-bed trailer and I said I would meet them in Durban. The driver later told me that there was a bridge they had miscalculated and the damn yacht would not fit under the bridge. He said they let all the trailer tires down but it still would not fit. They had to do a hundred mile detour to the other side of the bridge and then carry on.
When it reached Durban and for a long time yet, this yacht had many more land-miles than sea-miles. And to add insult to injury for the "real" yachtsmen out there, I had never sailed a yacht in my life, not even the dinghy at Bothie. (I was an Engineering cadet with no dreams of Captaining a ship)
There was a sailing school in Durban and I enrolled and did a one week course on their 36 foot yacht. What more could there possibly be to this "sailing thing". Boy, was I naive or what. I did have the good sense to get a good friend who was a "real" sailor to Captain us for the Rio Race.
On the 1st January 1976 we had him, myself and 4 of my friends as crew. We did all this "starting" thing of sailing up to the line to start, (I think it was a cannon, I can't remember anymore), and we were off. Two days later we had a bit of a blow.
Due to a construction error where I had miscalculated the stresses in a yacht rudder, our rudder cables failed. We had to proceed with a short auxiliary tiller-bar and realized that we could not complete the race. We managed to get back to Saldahna Bay and docked at the Naval Academy. To my absolute surprise the Captain in charge there turned out to be one of our 1959 Bothie Officers. He was a two-and-a-half-striper then (an ex-school teacher). Way back then he had thrown me off the Rugby field during one of our games against one of the other schools. (I had tried to explain that I was not the bad-guy, but to no avail) That being 57 years ago I can't remember his name any more, I think it was De Klerk (we called him the Horgoid, from some science fiction movie I think).
Anyhow, he was very helpful. He got one of his Lieutenants to calibrate my sextant. I re-rigged the rudder and in a few days, we were off. Our yacht Captain had had to return to Port Elizabeth for business, (the polite way of telling me what an Idiot I had been) and I was now the new Captain. We were so far behind the race that there was no chance of actually being in the race anymore. I set sail for the Island of St Helena. (I lost the log and the paperwork a long time ago so I do not remember times and dates anymore). about a week-out we had a strong storm and a big blow. At the crack of dawn we heard this screaming from the cockpit for help. My future wife had had the helm through the night. I shot into the cockpit and I too was instantly terrified. Through the night the waves bad built up to what were probably genuine 40ft waves. There was no way the helms-lady or myself thought we could survive those monsters without sinking. I remembered reading in one of Chichester's books: - never get even close to Head-on, but take a 45* angle up and then surf down the other side. I was finally becoming a yachtsman.
A week or so later we sailed into St Helena. There was no real harbour and we had to anchor out. It was positively dangerous, and we risked our lives trying to land the dinghy in the swell. Immediately after we landed we were ushered up the mountain to the Queen Bee, she entertained us. What a surprise their language was. It was the quaintest Olde-English of two hundred years ago. We stayed a few days, visited Napoleon's Interment House and finally set off for Rio.
The name of my yacht was FEO (which is Spanish/Portuguese for ugly), my joke on myself, however the Rio authorities took it as a personal insult and gave me a hard time because of the name.
While I was in Rio, Isabel Peron in Argentina was having a political hard time and a revolution was imminent. The Rands I had left SA with were diminishing fast so I thought that I would go down to Argentina and make a killing as their exchange rate was astronomical. As I sailed up the River Plate Isabel was loaded into her helicopter and removed from office. I docked as the revolution was taking place.
My future wife and I decided we should learn Spanish and from an add. in the paper, we ended up with a lady as a teacher. Her children were in my age group and we became good friends and one of her sons and I became business partners based upon my business in Johannesburg.
My partner's father was a full Captain in the Argentinian Navy and his brother was the Admiral of the Fleet. They advised me and kept me safe under the new martial Law. One episode did take place where I really was in extreme danger. One night, being a young horny man, I was trolling the docks area looking for a shebeen and some ladies of the night.

Suddenly there were two goons, one on each side of me and they frog-marched me into the police van and I ended up in a dark basement cell sitting hand-cuffed to a chair. Their English and my Spanish were not compatible. They basically said, "You sit, we call Officer". I was terrified. The Junta at that time was renowned for loading dissidents and enemies into helicopters and dropping them into the ocean. At best, it could be a leg and arm breaking. They clearly thought I was an enemy agent.
About an hour later, an officer in a dark Great Coat walked into the dark cell, he looked at me and said, "Hello Graham, what the hell are you doing here?" He and I were in the same Karate Class. He took me aside and explained that I was damn lucky that he happened to be the Officer in Charge that night. That these Martial Law times were not to be taken lightly. That everybody was paranoid. I never went out alone at night again, only with the Admirals family.
A year later, when I realized that Argentina was never going to become a credible country, I loaded up my yacht and sailed out of Buenos Aires and headed for the US. On the way, I again had a rudder problem and managed to limp into Montevideo in Uruguay. I needed an underwater inspection to locate the problem. I had no idea how to achieve this. In a moment of deep thought, having been friends with a Captain of the Argentinian Fleet, I approached the Port Captain and told him my problem. He hummed and ha'd. There was no mention of money or bribery as was always endemic in these Latin Countries. Uruguay was a poor country at that time and the thing which really struck me was that this Port Captain was still wearing a pair of shoes well shined, but which had been repaired many times and even the tops were giving in. He said to me, -- "Promise me that you will tell everybody that the Great Uruguayan Navy, and Colonel Ramirez helped you". I salute an honest man.
An hour later the Navy frogmen arrived and helped me. Even now 45 years later I am still telling everybody that the Great Uruguayan Navy and Colonel Ramirez helped me. I sailed out of Montevideo and had to call in Rio again. The moment I docked in Rio, a bunch of Port Authority arrived and impounded my yacht. It turned out that a bunch of Swiss Anuses in a yacht also called Feo had wreaked havoc while they were in Rio and then sailed away in the middle of the night without clearing out. I had a hell of a job trying to explain that I was not the bad-guy. Finally, they got the message and I was allowed to proceed on my way to Miami.
After many more adventures, I ended up in Vancouver, Canada married and my helm-lady and became a Canadian citizen.
POST SCRIPT: Fools, Morons, and Idiots never learn. In 1995 I started building another 42 foot yacht and sailed out of Vancouver in late 1999 to an even more bizarre set of adventures.
We look forward to hearing the next episode across the Pacific, Graham.

SLOP CHEST

With so many interesting stories and news, space does not permit the normal detailed Slop Chest in this edition. Details of the items for sale and our banking deails. Please refer to previous Newsletters.

The Cornish Farmer

Dennis Penberthy, an elderly Cornish farmer, received a letter from the Department for Work & Pensions, stating that they suspected he was not paying his employees enough and they would send an inspector to interview them.
On the appointed day, the inspector turned up.
"Tell me about your staff," he said to Penberthy.
"Well," said Penberthy, "there's the farm hand. I pay him £240 a week, and he has a free cottage. Then there's the housekeeper. She gets £190 a week, along with free board and lodging. There's also the half-wit. He works a 16 hour day, does 90% of the work, earns about £25 a week, along with a bottle of gin every week, and occasionally gets to sleep with my wife."
"That's who I want to talk to," said the inspector, “the half-wit."
"That'll be me then," said Penberthy.

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