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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

http://www.generalbotha.co.za

May 2020

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 *CAPE TOWN*

As I write this we are in the middle of the COVID-19 lockdown (yes, you all knew I would start with this subject), not only in South Africa but internationally. We have been faced with many challenges over our lifetimes but this is the most worrying that I have experienced. Prior to the lockdown in South Africa **Ted and Barbara Fisher 1954/55** were visiting from England. No doubt Ted shall report his experience, suffice for me to say they made it out of Africa with seconds to spare.

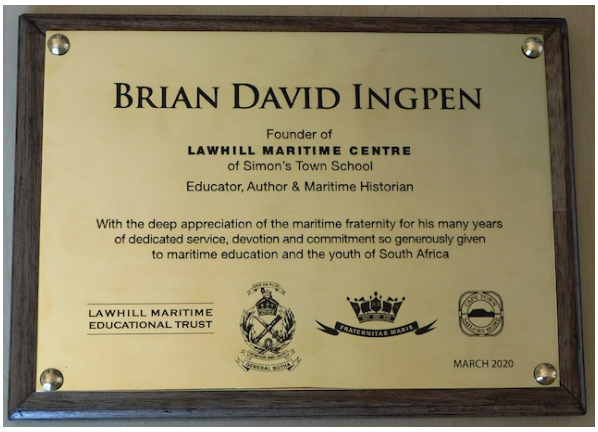
This newsletter shall of course be circulated on schedule by email but unfortunately the 85 members who still receive theirs by post, your delivery shall be delayed. If you do indeed have an email address to receive our newsletters please inform me, my detail in this header.

The response to our membership internationally for COVID-19 support for your bursars was extremely positive and supportive, in the tradition of Honour and Duty - *Eer en Plig*. We are humbled by your response which at the same time encourages your bursars to aim high and achieve. Bless you all, our appreciation. Again, at the time of writing your bursary fund EXCO are evaluating means of providing academic support to your bursars as we expect this lockdown shall be prolonged. (*See Bursary Fund news on Page 14*)

As all know we celebrate our ship's Commissioning Day on or about 15th March followed by our War Memorial Service, this year no exception. During the Commissioning Day Dinner **Tom Fraser 1979** ordered a Corona from the steward whose response was; "sorry no Corona here". We all thought that was rather amusing. Get it?

However, prior to these two events we also hosted our monthly pub lunch at the Royal Cape Yacht Club. On arrival who should greet me at the door? None other than **Chris Davies 1983** visiting from New Zealand. Also at the lunch visiting from the UK were **Ted and Barbara Fisher 1954/55, Peter & Norma Heydenryck 1952/53, Ian and Isabel Lindsay 1963 and Steve and Oona Bayman 1959/60**. Unfortunately yours truly forgot to take photographs to record their visit.

The doyen of maritime education at secondary school level, **Brian Ingpen**, has hung up his chalk and duster retiring last December. Brian is a founding member of Lawhill Maritime Centre of Simon's Town School some 25 years ago and has been a major positive influence on innumerable youngsters and their careers. We took the occasion of our Commissioning Day Dinner to honour Brian. Brian's family and school colleagues were invited as guests and we were joined by four other maritime institutions in honouring Brian at the event, namely; Lawhill Maritime Educational Trust, Society of Master Mariners of S.A., Cape Town Sailors Home and your GBOBA Bursary Fund. Simon Pearson gave a stirring eulogy, Brian responded with excellent anecdotes and ended by proposing the traditional toast; Gentlemen - The Ship! Enjoy your time writing many more books Brian.



Brian followed up with a letter of appreciation:
"I want to thank you and the GBOBA committee for the honour you accorded me on Saturday – It was a most pleasant occasion and also very meaningful for me, indeed very humbling when one thinks of the many GBOBA members whose achievements are so meritorious. As I said on Saturday, the successes of Lawhill have been the result of a team effort and therefore I was SO pleased that you had invited the Lawhill team to be there as well so that their hard work could be acknowledged. I sincerely appreciate that – as well as the invitation to my family to attend. They enjoyed the occasion very much and were most grateful to be able to share the moment with me.
So a huge thank you to you all for the honour and for the spirit with which the award was conferred. I value it greatly and am indebted to you folks for the encouragement that this award gives to so many.
With gratitude and best wishes to you all.
Brian Ingpen."
An interesting note from **Dave Murrary 1981** - "my wife Kim follows the singer Ard Matthews (of Just Jinjer fame) on Instagram. She mentioned to me the other day that he has bought the *Howard Davis* and is busy restoring her. She is following the story on Instagram – "followtimsv", or something like that. I don't do Instagram, so hopefully you can pick it up from that? Jeez, I spent many hours sanding and scraping on that lady – and they didn't call her the Olympic Flame for nothing – I think I only went to sea on her once, but she is a beautiful boat". Well I don't do Instagram either so hopefully Kim shall keep us updated.
On a holiday visit to Gibraltar **James Smith 1973** was fossicking in a junk shop (sic) and spotted a First Day Cover of interest. It records the opening of Howard Davis Hall, Victoria, Jersey, Channel Islands in 1935. T.B. Davis is illustrated with The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) and the four postage stamps all feature T.B. Davis. For our younger members T.B. Davis was our benefactor who originally bought the S.A.T.S. *General Botha.* James duly entrusted Ted Fisher to deliver the historical item to us at our recent Commissioning Day Luncheon. The First Day Cover is a valuable addition to our collection of memorabilia and our appreciation to James for his foresight and generosity. (*Scribe – Unfortunately the pdf file of the Cover and background story is too large to include in this edition. However you may read the background to this FDC on page 15 below*)

On the subject of **2021 reunions** I am expecting a rousing turn out of the 1971 and 1960/61 classes next March but no word from class 1981 yet. Where are these Chums? Term 1950/51 are also very quiet but I hope to hear from them in due course.
An interesting snippet for the beer drinkers following **Mike Foulis GB 1952/53** and Pat Downing visit to Australia for the 2003 Rugby World Cup, our appreciation to Pat Downing for sharing.
"The Aussies smile easily and are a laugh a minute and if we had been Irish we would have been referred to as "bog-trotting losers", but being South Africans, they sportingly called us "Jaapies". Mike Foulis managed to get in a few comments about them being "convicts" which kept the banter going. Comments made in an Australian publication re the S.A. Rugby Team were: "Hope they leave the 'biters' behind. They're not the force they once were! They are going through a rebuilding phase."
Many more snide comments were published but in the spirit of sport we ignored them and laughed them off.
Once in Aussie with the fine weather, the beautiful land and the friendly Aussies, it is not hard to fall in love with Australia. Staying with a 'dinkum', beer drinking, rugby fanatic Aussie friend, Mike Newman (his best friend is John Payne the father of Charles Payne who used to play for Australia and now plays for New Zealand), I had to survive the excitement of the build up to the Rugby World Cup and not being a beer drinker nor much of a rugby fan, I soon learnt that to order a beer, it varied from state to state and that you had to know whether to order a Beer, a Pot, a Schooner, a Jug, a Butcher, a Pint, a Middy, a Glass, a Six or a Seven or an Eight or Ten. Why no Nine? No one could tell me. These names determined the volume of beer to order, anything from 170ml to 1140ml or a Pony, which was 120ml and jeered at. With all this confusion, you then still had to know what make to order – Victoria Bitter, Toohey's New, Carlton, XXXX, Cascade, Boags, Coopers or Swan, to mention a few. There is one thing the Aussies love more than sport and that is their beer! There is a pub around each corner, with a large screen for watching rugby. The Watershed Pub in Sydney was nicknamed "Bokke Town" for the duration of the world cup. This was where the SA Springbok players, supporters and SA visitors drank - we steered clear of it".
Well, that story has certainly lifted the spirits, pun intended. Fair winds and following seas.

A MUST READ!

Charles Kingon and I recently posted on our GBOBA Facebook page an appeal to populate our database as well as submit material for our centenary publications.
Many of you are not on Facebook and therefore I repeated those posts on email recently. However 85 Old Salts and some Chums still receive the newsletter by mail, no Facebook nor email. Therefore we repeat the message here. A must read to the bottom of the page, even if you have read this message on Facebook and/or email, read it again and contribute.
We look forward to hearing from all of you.

From Tony Nicholas:
By now hopefully everyone knows that I regularly request your career details for capture into our database. I started this project back in the 1980s and is far from complete. This has proved to be valuable resource to family members of those that have long slipped their cables.
This resource shall also form a valuable research engine in the future when we are long forgotten. I could go on.
Oh how I now wish that I had listened more closely to the Old Salts I have met over the years and recorded their ramblings.
Thus Charles Kingon's request for your reminisces and/or anecdotes is a timely reminder. We are in the midst of an international lockdown, so now is the time.
This quote below is by the famous author David Baldacci. Makes you think and wonder -- when should I start?
"Once we reach adulthood, most of us assume that we know all there is to know about our parents and other family members. However, if you take the time to ask questions and actually listen to the answers, you may find that there is still so much to learn about people so close to you. Oral Histories are a

dying art, which is sad indeed, for they show appropriate respect for the lives and experiences of those who have come before. And, just as important, they document those remembrances, for once those lives are over, that personal knowledge is lost forever. Unfortunately, we live in a time now where everyone seems to be solely looking ahead, as though we deem nothing in the past worthy of our attention. The future is always fresh and exciting, and it has a pull on us that times past simply can never muster. Yet it may well be that our greatest wealth as human beings can be 'discovered' by simply looking behind us."

From Charles Kingon:
2022 is the Centenary of the first commissioning of The Ship in Simon's Town. Your committee is working on suitable events to celebrate this milestone. Watch this space (Facebook), and the newsletters.

For the 75th Anniversary in 1997, Old Boys submitted anecdotes of their time on the Ship, or Red Hill, or Gordon's Bay, or about their adventures at sea after their training. These stories were compiled into a book: "Old Salts Yarns" and suitably bound.

A 2nd volume was planned for the 80th Anniversary, but did not get off the ground, as only 2 submissions were received. (Thank you, Alan Ford, and Parky) We are hoping that with the passage of years, many of the Granger Bay Obies are now retired and have time on their hands to submit something to make Volume 2 a reality?

Perhaps you can turn this lockdown period to good use and send in your stories? They don't have to be long, a page or two, even a paragraph can be entertaining, whether at the Bothie, or at sea, or ashore.

CENTENARY MARCH 2022

By now you have all hopefully noted the dates and booked your flights to Cape Town; dates Wednesday 16th March to Sunday 20th March, perhaps longer depending on your stamina. We are planning an interesting program and to stimulate your interest there is a strong possibility of a day outing by steam train.
In addition there shall be centenary publication book launch which shall be a treasured book among your collection as well as an exhibition of our memorabilia.
We have previously appealed for your suggestions and input for this celebration to mark the milestone in our history. This opportunity is not to be missed; I look forward to hearing from you.

SCRANBAG

N.J.A. SLOANE 1981 #2750. It should come as no surprise that Nic has been appointed Vice President International Salvage Union. Bravo Zulu Nic.
L.S. ARCHER 1980 #2707. Lionel has been off our radar for a number of years, I followed up on a radar target which acquired Lionel. "After obtaining 2nd Officers Certificate, joined Freight Marine in Durban spent 8 years working my way from Boarding Clerk up to Ro Ro Port Co-ordinator. Then moved back to Zimbabwe and started a property development business and invested in commercial farming, lost everything in Mugabe's land grab. Got on bus to Beira and straight back into the Shipping business. Starting building a small tourist resort, stopped working in shipping 2019 to get resort going. Name is Illa da Marocanhe, as we have an island within a lagoon."
Next GB 1980 reunion venue? If so I hope to crack the nod for a guest appearance,
A.B. KRUIZE 1980 #2693. The tallow in my sounding lead has brought up an Australian email address for Andre, to which he has not responded. Anyone have further detail of Andre?
G.G. SHARP 1966 #2291. Gordon is Senior Facilitator for S.A. Maritime School & Transport College. He recently dropped anchor in Cape Town to open a campus here.
R.S. VAN DER SPOEL 1982 #2769. A change of address has brought Richard back into range. 1997 - sailing as Master with S.A. Marine Corporation. 2000 - relocated to Australia.
"After departing with South African Marine Corp (Enterprise) in 2000, I worked for Seaspan Container lines until 2004. In 2004 I came ashore and worked in the Marine Surveying with C.R. Cox and

Associates until 2011. I moved across to a Marine Warrantee Surveying in 2011 at Braemar Technical Services (Offshore)." July 2019 Braemar Technical Services sold to Aqualis Offshore and became Aqualis Braemar.

R.J.T. GREENSMITH 1973 #2439. I guess social distancing is nothing new to Richard.

"After various careers lived on a small holding in Wilderness Heights and was the only full time producer of fully carved Victorian rocking horses in S.A.

2000 sailed for England on his own built yacht, Spray, first leg of his round the world cruise.

Since leaving Knysna in 1999 I have sailed over 50 000 miles in my boat including several single-handed Atlantic crossings. I also delivered a fair number of other yachts usually on the East West Atlantic crossing. The planned circumnavigation did not come about due to lack of funds.

I have passed my boat on to a younger man and have moved ashore now living in a fairly remote village near the North Cornwall coast. Keeping in touch by volunteering at a nearby coast watch station and finally finishing the novel I've been writing."

M.P. FLEMING 1979 #2670. Mike and Janice have left Somerset West for the pleasures of Fourways, somewhere in Johannesburg I believe. Mike is now working in Douala, Cameroon, for Smit Lamnalco.

A. MAY 2019. Avela attended Lawhill Maritime Centre of Simon's Town School 2016 to 2018 and then achieved his OOW at SSTG 2019. Avela recently embarked on his career joining MUR Shipping vessel MV *African Baza* as cadet. We wish him well and look forward to hearing of his adventures.

H.W. SCHEFFER 1971 #2403. Hugh and family sacrificed the delights (or should that be debauchery?) of Singapore for the delights of Kwa-Zulu Natal. At short notice Hugh made a surprise appearance at class mate's Terry Purdon's 70th birthday surprise party in Cape Town. Fortunately we managed to send Hugh back home before the national lockdown.

Sailed with Safmarine until 1973 and then joined the Unicorn Lines being promoted to Master in 1979. Came ashore with Unicorn in 1984 as Trade Manager, Bulk Trades and had responsibility for the Container department, Coastal Operations until his appointment as Commercial Manager, Unicorn Shipping. 2001 Transferred to Unicorn Shipping International, London. 2011 Transferred to Singapore with Grindrod Shipping. 2020 Retired and returned to South Africa.

R.L. GRATJIOS 1956/57 #1998. Robin and Margaret have sadly left their beautiful home in Tasman and settled near their daughter in Melbourne. Am sure they are missing the Tasmanian Devil.

G.R. GRENFELL 1956/57 #1999. I gleaned from an old news document that was typed up on the Bothie in 1964 that in 1964 Graham was Second Mate in African Coaster's *Barrier.* I think we sailed together on the S.A. *Transporter* in 1970, Graham Second Mate and **Mike Mathews GB 1966** Third Mate. **Derrick Kemp GB 1957/58** just promoted to Chief Officer. Me, a lowly first trip cadet.

Unfortunately my email to Graham remains unanswered.

I also recall us three first trip cadets hiding from the C/O by sitting on the cross tree of the aft mast watching Derrick striding up and down the deck looking for us. He never spotted us up there. Methinks my ten years in boarding school prepared me well for a life as a malingering cadet.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

Mrs. Noelle Botha-Reid - Mrs. Botha-Reid, passed away peacefully 24th April, was the widow of General Louis Botha's grandson who passed away a few years ago. Before they became too frail they never missed our annual War Memorial Service and laid the wreath in memory of General Louis Botha. From her daughter; "Mom died on Friday night 24 April at the great age of 95. She was such an inspiration to us all, still living each day to the fullest, never complaining despite her increasing frailty, and remaining so interested in everyone she had contact with. She will be greatly missed.

Amazing to think she attended the last Botha ceremony and negotiated all those stairs six weeks ago.

She was the last remaining Botha-Reid as that surname was created when my grandmother Frances, Louis Botha's daughter, married Hubert Reid. They had three daughters and just one son Louis, my father. He and Mom went on to have three daughters, no sons! But my sister Clare in Christchurch NZ still uses her maiden name as a general practitioner. So there s still a Dr Botha-Reid in NZ."

R.H. LOVELL 1975. 1984 Robert attended the Australian Maritime College and obtained his Master's FG there. 1986 Chief Officer and later, Master, on the AMC's training ship Wyuna. 1988/91 worked in

Madang, PNG, and then went to Nauru as Harbour Master, Pilot, surveyor and Stevedore Foreman. 1991 went to Brisbane as Assistant Harbour Master but, bored with the desk jockey job, went to Hobart as pilot in Townsville, North Queensland and in 1999 returned to work in Brisbane Marine Pilots, a privatised pilotage company. Also studied for a degree in education and a graduate diploma in business. 2009 Marine Manager/Harbour Master in the port of Esperance on the South East Coast of Western Australia. Deceased 26th April 2020.

Bob Wells 1967 writes; "I am very sadly reporting that Rob weighed his anchor yesterday in Australia, after a long illness. Rob is sorely missed by all his family as well as all his close friends in Esperance and the Australian Marine World because he was one of the greats on the Aussie coast. Our sad condolences to all his family. Salaams, Bob."

R.J. SPENCER 1954/55. Richard was a keen whaler and dinghy sailor and won the Nettleton Trophy for Management of Boats in 1955 (which has sadly gone AWOL from the museum). Failed eyesight test after leaving the training ship. Did an engineering apprenticeship with Globe Engineering. Subsequently went to sea with Ellerman & Bucknall as an engineer. Sailed with Safmarine in 1964. 1965-69 with Reckitt & Coleman in Research & Development. 1970-95 with Caltex Oil at their Milnerton refinery in field and supervisory positions in Reliability Services before retirement in 1995. Deceased 2nd March 2020.

D.R. CHAPLIN 1966. Dave passed away 16th February. Unfortunately we have no detail of Dave's career and would appreciate any information.

"Just a little thank you for the messages of condolence re Dave Chaplin some sent from overseas others from S A and also to the people who attended from General Botha. It meant so much. One big thank you to Geoff Walker who missed the ceremony as he was misdirected to the incorrect area. I will miss him more than words can say. He was a thoroughly good man and a wonderful husband of almost 49 years and a loving father. God Bless. Cheryl Chaplin."

P.E. NORTH 1979. Peter was previously owner of Pace Transport & Logistics, Australia. Peter attended his GB class 40th anniversary last March in Cape Town and by all accounts thoroughly enjoyed his visit. Unfortunately we have no detail of Peter's career and would appreciate any information. Deceased 12th February 2020.

C. WHITE 1956/57. Colin, a founder member of Port Owen Yacht Club, passed away 7th February. Unfortunately we have no detail of Colin's career and would appreciate any information.

J.L. PEARSON 1955/56. Logan passed away 4th February. "On going to General Botha I planned to join Shell Tankers. That unfortunately never happened due to my father passing away while I was at the Botha, and I really enjoyed sport. This resulted in me being employed by Shell on shore in Cape Town in 1957. I did many different jobs over the next 37 years at Shell. I married a Camps Bay lady called Norah Paarman in 1964. We lived in Camps Bay for most of our married life apart from a 5 years working for Shell in Mossel Bay. In Mossel Bay we became good friends with Captain Keith Burchell & his family who also grew up in Camps Bay & attended the Botha. We have 4 children & 8 grandchildren all living in Cape Town which give us great pleasure. I played soccer for the Cape Town City Team, the first professional team in Cape Town. At the age of 40 I started playing lawn bowls & represented Western Province seniors for 5 years. After retiring from Shell in 1994 we moved from Camps Bay to Hout Bay & then to Kommetjie. All our houses have had sea views, the sea must have been in my blood."

M.H. COMPION 1944/45. Martin sadly passed away a while ago. 1946 - 1952 - In business in Windhoek raising funds for medical studies. Commissioned in ACF, artillery training on Robben Island.

1953 - 1959 - Studied and graduated at Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin. Returned to S.A. and entered general practice after internship in Uitenhage and East London. During years of practice in Namibia transferred to medical corps and did annual duty on the border as a Major. 1989 - Semi retired, Swakopmund, and did a daily clinic at Henties Bay as well as Town Councilor of Swakopmund.

"Only one claim to fame - I bet you haven't one Bothie boy who has pulled a live, but doped, lions tooth."

P.M. KIBBLE-SARTORELLI 1942/43. After serving in the R.N.R. and SANF (V) during the war joined S.A. Airways and served a senior apprenticeship as a Ground Engineer. Moved to Canada in 1953. Worked in the aircraft field until April 1988 and retired as Quality Control Manager for Canadair Ltd. in Montreal. Deceased 2nd March 2020.

S.W. GILLHAM 1941/42. 1943 - Joined S.A.N.F. as an Able Seaman. Was serving on the m.v. Doryssa when she was torpedoed and sank 25/03/1943. 1946 demobilised from S.A.N.F. as Leading Seaman and joined the printing industry as Apprentice Compositor. Retired from the printing industry in 1992.

Stan passed away on 30 July 2019, aged 93 yrs. He was one of the survivors from the Tanker MV Doryssa which was torpedoed south south west of PE on 25 April 1943 by the Leonardo da Vinci. Only 11 survivors were found after 6 days at sea by the HMSAS Roodepoort and HMSAS Southern Barrier. He celebrated his 17th birthday in the lifeboat. On coming ashore he joined the printing industry and remained in the industry until retirement. Stan also loved bowls, which he started playing after retirement and went on to play until he was about 90.

R.N. WREDE 1952/53. Robin was born in King Williams Town 29 November 1935, went to school Dale College and then the Bothie where he was Chief Bugler. There was a group of musicians and poets called the "Bothie Blue" of which Peter Dobeyn, Robin Wrede, Vic Alberts and Daniel Le Roux among others were members.

"I did an engineering apprenticeship with the intention of going to sea in the engine room. This plan was scuppered when soon after qualifying I met the girl I was to marry and the sea career seemed less attractive. We lived in the Transvaal (now Gauteng) where I worked in a power station for several years before travelling to England in 1963 for a working holiday. Upon returning to South Africa we settled in East London where we lived until 1977 when we moved to England with our three children. I worked in a winery in Kingston-Upon-Thames, while my wife ran the corner shop we owned. Later I worked for British Rail and retired in 1998 when we moved to Dorset." Deceased 4th January 2020.

Our condolences to family and ship mates.

AWOL

Jock Cameron 1947/48 gone walkabout from Sydney.
Robert Flack 1954/55, last known in London "gone away".
Please find them and report in.

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher

Here we are well into April, a period of lockdown the past three weeks with an extension into early May and who knows possibly longer. We need to distance ourselves from others especially when out and about for walks or shopping. Home chores are not really chores but a necessity to complete jobs that had been on the 'back burner' due to golf, walks, cinema, theatre and general socialising with friends. Still the garden is kept tidy, garage has seen more daylight and a large stack of debris awaiting collection some time!

We managed a three week stay in South Africa, arriving in Cape Town to join the Tuesday Lunch at the RCYC on 10th. Our first time at this event, an opportunity to meet with a few familiar faces, especially Okke Grapow (53/54) who was a JCC in my 'chum year', he in charge of the Motor Cruiser with yours truly the working hand! From the UK it was good to see Peter Heydenryck (52/53) and wife Norma…they of course live in Tangmere but a few miles from us in Storrington. Also, present Ian Lindsay (1963) from Aberdeen together with his wife Isobel.

Fortunate to attend the **AGM & Commissioning Day Lunch** in Kelvin Grove on Saturday 14th. Again, a splendid occasion the Guest of Honour Brian Ingpen, together with his wife, two sons and their wives. Brian, known to all who have been involved in shipping over past decades. Simon Pearson (1967) proposed a toast to Brian who, in turn, following a most illuminating and humorous talk about his career in Education, Shipping and Travel proposed a Toast to 'The Ship'.

I gave greetings on behalf of UK -GBOBA Members to our hardworking Chairman Tony Nicholas and Committee Members, thanking them for their continued hard work and commitment to our Association
Our first week went well enabling Barbara and myself to meet with family. We drove up to Wilderness to join my sister and husband (they having driven down from Gamtoos) for a week in a local hotel. The day after our arrival we had a call from our UK Travel Agent suggesting we return to Cape Town with a view to securing an earlier flight home due to SA starting lockdown and airlines reducing inbound flights. A further 350 +/- mile drive back to Cape Town. No chance of flights so, we decided to return to Wilderness. A couple of days later we were advised an Emirates Flight (at extra cost) via Dubai to London Gatwick was available on the evening of 23 March. Back to Cape Town, handed in my Avis Hire car, checked in having been advised of a three hour delay. In the boarding process, we were taken aside to be informed we could not transit via Dubai. Being in CT International Airport in the late evening, no car, no accommodation was not a happy situation! Help was available as Dirk Lutterbeck our Abbey Manor Host in Cape Town kindly collected us for a further four day stay, the only guests, others having cancelled their reservations……indeed Abbey Manor had three months of cancellations due to Convid-19! To end our little adventure our departure date was brought forward at short notice by a day as SA was closing to all inbound/outbound flights at midnight on the 26th March. We boarded a delayed British Airways flight only to be informed 13 passengers had gone 'walk about' having checked their baggage aboard. Fortunate they were located with the flight departing at 0015 0n 27th March-----THE LAST FLIGHT OUT OF AFRICA!
In the February Newsletter I did ask members to consider contributing an article (blog) for inclusion in the May Newsletter. Indeed, delighted to receive from Keith Lindsay (60/61) an account of his February/March 2020 voyage aboard 'Oosterschelde' a three-masted topsail schooner from Cape Verde to Rotterdam via the Azores, winter North Atlantic. Fair to say an enjoyable read and by kind permission of our Editor Dennis Henwood, Keith's account can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter.
In the light of the current lockdown situation the monthly Training Ships Old Boys Association informal lunch at the Rising Sun Pub, Warsash, on the first Wednesday in May and onward is I understand cancelled until further notice. In the meantime, all go well and stay well.
Best regards - Ted Fisher (tedefisher@aol.com) Tel: +44(0)1903 744400

AUSTRALIA BRANCH NEWS – *Compiled by Grenville Stevens*

From GBOBA, Adelaide, South Australia - *Mike Carrington (#2548) 1976 20th April 2020*

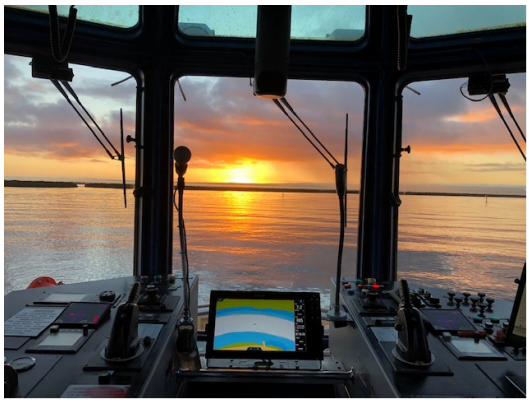
Our news from Adelaide has been rather interesting amidst the global Covid-19 "lockdown" with a visit from Andrew Fotheringham, ('76 #2525) in January / February before he returned to Fremantle prior to the closure of the State borders.
Andy previously lived in Mackay, Queensland or to the extreme east of the Country from Fremantle, 4600 kms with Adelaide being midway!
February also saw the arrival of Leon Strydom, ('89 #9059) to take up the position of Marine Operations Manager with Flinders Ports and will be based here in Port Adelaide. Leon spent five days towing his caravan 3000 kms across the Nullarbor from Geraldton, WA. where he had been Harbour Master. Leon and his Family emigrated to Port Hedland from Cape Town in 2011, where he was employed as Marine Operations Manager before moving to Geraldton. An accomplished and self-taught musician, Leon has kept us and our neighbourhood entertained on the odd occasion by playing his guitar in our driveway while we experience the isolation and "lock down" in our area.

Andrew Fotheringham & Mike Carrington

Gordon Hayward, Leon Strydom and Mike Carrington

Leon's wife, Nicole, along with his Daughters, Jenna and Kyla remain 'stuck' in Western Australia where they unfortunately will be until the border controls are relaxed to allow them free access.
Another interesting local "Old Boy" is Gordon Hayward, ('84 #2834) see above, who has been a Port

Adelaide Pilot since August 2019 having been a South Australian Regional Pilot, based at Port Pirie since April 2007.
Initially, Gordon and his Family emigrated to Auckland, New Zealand in August 2000 where Gordon sailed aboard the Spirit of Adventure Trust's 45.2 m, three masted barquentine, "Spirit of New Zealand" eventually as Master.
Gordon and Megan's son, Dale was born in NZ with their elder son, Brynn, starting out in Cape Town, - a multi-national Family!.
In 2003, Gordon and his Family moved to Nelson, South Island where he was a Port Nelson Harbour Pilot for four years before 'crossing-the-ditch' to South Australia.



Autumn sunrise Port River, Adelaide, from Mike Carrington's conning position tug "Barunga"

It's great to hear Gordon's crisp and clear commands given to the tugs when he is on duty and nice to have the Hayward Family living just 'down the road' whose company we enjoy when we are off duty.
I, (i.e. Mike Carrington, '76 #2548) emigrated to Adelaide in March 2002 from Mossel Bay/Cape Town, initially worked as a casual labourer while studying towards my Australian Certificate of Recognition for my South African Class 1 CoC. In December 2002, I was fortunate to secure a position as Tug Master with Adsteam Harbours, based in Port Adelaide, although initially spending a fair amount of time working in the regional ports of South Australia. The tug Company is now known as Svitzer Australia Pty Ltd which is regarded as being the largest tug Company around the Australian coast with the head office based in Copenhagen. https://svitzer.com.au/
The oldest GBOB in South Australia is John Hussey, ('56/57 # 2032) who with his lovely wife, Jinny have been retired for many years in Port Lincoln and come across to Adelaide on the odd occasions for medical treatment or to see their Family who reside in Adelaide.
The Husseys have lead an incredibly interesting life while John was a Marine Pilot at Port Stanvac which included dairy farming, building an ocean going yacht, building a house and living on Thistle Island, driving the off road lap around Australia, to name but a few exploits of this amazing couple. It would be a great read if they were to write and publish a book of their most interesting life.
Another GBOBA link is Joyce Jones widow of Gordon Jones (#1181) 41/42 who lives in Adelaide as does their son Graham and his family. Joyce now 93, is on the Australian GBOBA email list. The late Gordon Jones was Chairman of the GBOBA Durban Branch for 30 years
It too is great in having the GBOB "Japies" around where we are able to compare various *biltong, drooi wors, babotie* and *vet koek* recipes while quaffing local beers, or good SA (South Australian) reds.
(Ed. Note: Port Adelaide has 2 x Damen 24/11 – 80 t. BP tugs, plus 1 x 30/12 – 75 t. BP tug. All are AZD (Z-Peller) drive tugs.)

From GBOBA, Queensland - *Michael Pomfret (#1728) 1951/52 16th April 2020*

How about this memory, December 1951, We were on long Christmas leave, but for those Cadets of I suppose 1949-1951, it was encouraged for Cadets to go to sea over their Christmas break, learn, experience, put your training into practise. Well as 1951 “chums” Alan Evenden and I put our names down, Make “Gus” happy and proud of us. We may have drawn the short straw. I forget the actual date now but Evie (Allan Evenden) and I reported to the Thesens Office in the old Dock. We were then directed to the 'Basuto Coast', docked not far away, but screened by trawlers. We found her alright, boarded and, somewhat timorously announced our presence aboard. Nothing. We cautiously went down the companionway to the accommodation, still nothing. It was then that a voice boomed out, enquiring very rudely as to who we might be. It was the Mate, a very unhappy person, who it seemed to Evie and I that this personage disliked all other humans. We were very lucky with the accommodation, there was no 2nd Mate, I got his Cabin. Evie was also lucky as the Chief had sacked the 2nd Engineer, so there was another vacant cabin on the starboard side. The Captain was a relieving skipper, a

Norwegian by birth, who boasted a 'Masters in Sail', which at our age, 15 years, was seriously considered as very, very, old. I believe to this day he was though. We actually sailed a day, or was it two days late (?) as the Chief Engineer, a native of Liverpool originally, was seriously engaged with a lady he had met at or in "The Navigators Den"**.** However, we did sail, and it was straight to Walvis Bay, I was to be with the Norwegian, Evie drew the low card and was to assist the Mate. When we were just outside Table Bay, I was in the wheelhouse with 'my Captain'. He instructed me to go below with some presents meant for the agents in Port Nolloth and Luderitz. Oops! I had never been seasick before and now I was. It was not an experience I needed. It took a whole day to pass, the Xhosa steward under instructions of the Norwegian, kept me well fed with food, but nothing that you would eat willingly. However, I have never been Seasick again.

From New South Wales, Yass - *Tony MacQuillan (#1662) 1950/5* General Botha, Gordons Bay 1950 - Two junior cadets trying photographic tricks.

The following morning, I was on the bridge/wheelhouse with 'my Captain'. He and I were rostered to be on watch from 0800 - 1300, then after that we were on watch from 1700 - 0100. During my first morning with the Old Man he casually pointed out to the wrecks that adorn the coast. So many. Impressive! That evening was to set the pattern for the whole voyage, at 1900 he radioed Thesens' base in Cape Town*; "Position, Course, Speed"*, always ending *with "Good night darling"*. His wife was in Cape Town. With that he looked at me and said, *"I go below now, take care"*. I thought the old man was going to the Heads to relieve himself. Time went by, no Captain. The helmsman saw me getting agitated and volunteered, *"Captain gone to bed, Sir*". I was somewhat put out. On the coast, no lights in those days, checked the chart, too close for comfort, first executive order coming up: *"Helmsman, Port 10"*. This ended up as a sort of game played between me and the Captain, In the mornings when we came on watch, he would check our position, with a lifetime of experience. He always gave me a funny look. He knew what I had done previously, just a few miles away from that surf

We got into Walvis May on Christmas Eve, and anchored as there were no free berths. An American the "Sally Lykes" sailed on Christmas Day and we then went in to discharge our cargo. Docked astern of 'Basuto Coast' was an American tanker, the 'Sea Beaver', she was a coal burning tanker, how old was that?! Alan and I watched, with some interest when the 1st Mate and the Bosun of 'Sea Beaver' went up to the Marine Bar in the town and carried their Captain back to his ship, up to his bridge, opened the window and hung him outside, so he could take his ship out to sea!

That is a long time ago.

From GBOBA, Western Australia - *Andy Fotheringham (#2525) 1976*

There was no Commissioning Day gathering this year. The date coincided with the State and Commonwealth of Australia restricting movement of people. In comparison to other countries Australia has had a fairly easy passage through the Covid 19 pandemic. Here in Western Australia, we have been dealing with outbreaks on cruise ships with up to 3 ships at a time alongside in Fremantle. One vessel was alongside for about 3 weeks.

As a marine surveyor, we are considered an essential service. Travel restrictions were implemented between regions in WA as well as between WA and other states. With travel restrictions across regions, we are required to have documentation to justify our travel across these regional boundaries. Interaction between shore and onboard personnel has to be kept to a minimum. Use of face masks, gloves, having your temperature checked are everyday occurrences in our world. We are also very lucky not to have been affected by a decline in work.

We also need to spare a thought for the vessels crews who cannot go home on leave, due to the travel restrictions. I have spoken to two Old Boys who are on vessels. Both have been told that crew changes will be reviewed in the middle of May. By that stage they will have been onboard for 6 and 4 months respectively.

From GBOBA, Sydney New South Wales - *Grenville Stevens (#2189) 60-61*
Regrettably, the Commissioning Day Luncheon had to be postponed. A new date will be nominated once the current Corona Virus lock down restrictions are lifted.
Ken Downie (#2900) 87 and wife Nanaimo have relocated from Sydney to Vancouver Canada he wishes to remain on the Australian GBOBA list.
Robert Hillary Lovell (#2497) 75 Sad to report Anchors Aweigh **on 26 April in Melbourne.** Our condolences to his children Erica, Andrew, Cameron and his family
HMS / HMAS Psyche (The forgotten cruiser) **-** A memorial near my home on the foreshore of Corlette Port Stephens NSW in honour of one of the first ships commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy. The memorial to the ship was unveiled at 27 June 2015 celebrating the 100th anniversary of her commissioning. This fine vessel came to an ignominious end in the area. Commissioned in 1899 as a light cruiser, HMS Psyche served with the Royal Navy on the Australian Station prior to the First World War. Following the outbreak of the war in August 1914, she took part in the operations to capture Germany`s Pacific colonies and undertook escort duties. Returning to Australian waters HMS Psyche was laid up in Sydney in late 1914.
In July 1915, Psyche was commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy and was ordered to the Bay of Bengal. Based at Rangoon in Burma (now Myanmar), she carried out routine patrols along the Burma coast and Malay Archipelago. In June 1916 she was redeployed to Hong Kong to patrol off the south coast of China and Indochina (South-East Asia). HMAS Psyche retuned to the Bay of Bengal in October 1916 and continue patrol work until she was recalled to Australia in September 1917.
She was engaged in patrol work off the eastern Australian coast in November 1917 and remained a commissioned vessel of the Royal Australian Navy until March 1918.
Psyche was sold to the Moreland Metal Company on 21 July 1922 who used her as a timber lighter. Psyche sank on Monday December 8 1924 during a storm in Salamander Bay at a position of 32º 43.194` south and 152º 05.445 east (degrees, decimal minutes).
Although HMAS Psyche did not participate in any major action during her time in the RAN, she should always be remembered as being one of the first ships of the Royal Australian Navy.
For more information on HMAS Psyche go to http://www.navy.gov.au/history/feature-histories/hmas-psyche-forgotten-cruiser.

GAUTENG BRANCH – Alan Ford

The Sick Bay report for this quarter remains in relatively good shape. No reports to the bridge have emanated from the voice tube, but then I kept it well stoppered because some people were using it to get rid of sweet papers and cigarette ash. I did however enquire down to the Sick Bay and was told by our Branch's most Senior Cadet's pretty nurse that he was in much better spirits after the pipe work in his legs had some maintenance work done on them, and he would probably be fit for some brass work polishing duties now. But alas Mrs Poerner is not allowed to transport Mr Poerner to my home for recuperative domestic therapy, and the nonferrous ornaments, I mean equipment, up here on the bridge will have to continue gaining patina.
While talking of medical topics I refuse to mention of the dreaded lurgy. There is nothing I could say of any relevance and nothing you all haven't heard *ad nauseam* already.... so moving on..
Three topics of interest which have been trawled out of the news and ended up in the cod end of my media net are discussed below and specifically sorted from bad to interesting to amazing.
Micro managing the Master
This article discusses yet another bad influence that "The Office" is exerting in this day and age on the Head Puppet or as we lovingly knew him... the Old Man. I'm sure there are some readers of this newsletter who have occupied both roles at some stage in their nautical careers, and did so as was customary in those days, in strict sequence of first being an Old Man and then ascending to the dizzy heights of at least "Shore Super " and who can therefore digest the article from both ends of the sausage.
What does the article tell us? Its either that the modern masters are becoming so incompetent that they can no longer be trusted to breath, or put one foot in front of the other, or that if and when they

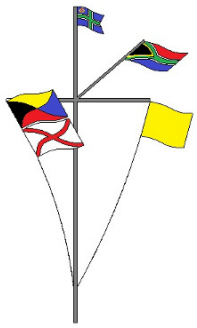
eventually walk on floors instead of decks for their salary, they become narcissistic demons, or they are overruled by the faithless suits on the top floor who still don't trust their judgement.
I leave you to decide, click Here .

Now for something new

Since when did time spent on the beach and playing in the waves have any potential benefit to the skills exhibited on a ships bridge. Well those strong and tanned young men and women who participate in the exhilarating sport of Kite Surfing may well be developing a skill which will stand them in good stead when they are fortunate enough to actually *sail* on a ship which has the following bit of kit installed up at the sharp end. This video shows how kite surfing has grown up from a sport practised by adrenalin junkies to a way for the bean counters to extract every last saving in the debit columns of their ship management financial statements. In the concepts current form as shown in the video, it reminds me more of the many hours spent as a child gazing up into the sky watching a contraption fashioned out of bamboo, string, coloured tissue paper, and glue by my master kite maker mother. I suppose this new technological manifestation will be one way of keeping the OOW's eyes off the ECDIS and looking out of the bridge windows in front of him/her, but whether or not the OOW's attention will be focussed on vessels to starboard which may be on a constant bearing is another question.
The video doesn't say whether the kite can be flown at night or whether if needs some flashing red lights if it does. How about an addition to the ColRegs Rule 22 and Annex 1? One doesn't want the pilot chopper flying into rag and string thing up in the air, when hauling it in near the fairway buoy. And lastly In the event of the main engine being stopped, how do you determine which tack you are on.....just asking... Enjoy the film. Click Here

And now the amazing

Demonstrations of seamanship and skill (attributes which are not always mutually inclusive but often are), should be an emotional sight to behold. And such is the case with this video obtained of a passenger ferry NORDNORGE coming alongside during a storm somewhere in Scandanavia. Although equipped with conventional twin shaft propulsion, she is equipped with double thrusters in the bow and stern skeg. After viewing this video a couple of times over, I asked myself a few questions about ship handling techniques. Maybe someone could comment. One would think that both stern thrusters are fully powered to Starboard, but there doesn't appear to be any use made of the bow thrusters to also counter the excessive leeway, and reliance made only on dragging the pick. And would trying to screw the stern to weather with the main propellers help or impede the thrusters? You can find a sort of GA picture on the interweb and decide for yourselves.
When one thinks of the variable parameters involved in a very complex exercise like this, such as sea bottom conditions and possible obstructions for the anchor, how much cable to veer, and how much it will affect the drag rate in that particular wind strength, it is remarkable. I'm sure the Old Man knew exactly what the playing field conditions under water were like, but the Bosun on the Gypsy brake would need to be on his toes in case of a snag as well.



The only thing to spoil the whole show is the fellow on the foc'sle trying to throw a heaving line right at the end... Eish.. and lastly to be really pedantic the cadet didn't have the Y flag up! Click here.
I promised in the beginning to say nothing of the dreaded lurgi, but I can't resist relaying these anonymous words found in the footing to an article a few days ago.
Mariners are among the unsung heroes of this entire sorry affair. There is a legitimate argument to be made that professionals manning the world's shipping fleets are bearing the brunt of keeping world trade functioning, thus the world…lest we forget.

Voyage on the STS "Oosterschelde" – by Keith Lindsay

You invited any UK member to contribute to our newsletter and I was inspired by my contemporary Phil Wade who reported on his participation in the Cape to Rio race, summer South Atlantic. I have

recently completed a voyage on a three-masted topsail schooner from Cape Verde to Rotterdam via the Azores, winter North Atlantic.

The Oosterschelde was built in 1917 and converted to a sail training ship in the 1980's. She belongs to the Dutch nation and is operated by a not-for-profit company. In winter she does holiday cruises in Cape Verde, exploring the islands. There is accommodation for 24 guest crew who sail the ship and adventure ashore with hikes, climbing, swimming and meals on the beach. As this was an ocean passage to reposition the ship for summer cruising, there were fewer guest crew for the 30 day voyage. Nine of us flew to Palmeira on Sal Island, 3 women and 6 men. The AB's are 2 women and 3 men, Captain, Mate and Cook.

The ship is 50 metres overall length, beam 7.5 metres, draft 3 metres and about 630 tons displacement. The mast heights are 36 metres and sail area 890 square metres. During her trading life she operated on the coasts of Norway, Sweden, Baltic and North Sea, Western Mediterranean and Morocco and Canary Islands.

We sailed from Palmeira on 29th February into a boisterous sea and steady trade wind. Because of the square sails and absence of a deep keel the ship will only point 7 points to the wind and with leeway that means she effectively sails across or with the wind but not into it. Tacking will just put you on a reciprocal course. The passage to Azores was a long northerly arc as the wind veered from NE to E.

I have sailed a square-rigged ship before (a barque, from Bermuda to Southampton) and understand square sail rigging but I found no reason to object to being taught again by a curly-haired, 20 year old Danish woman with a lovely smile. She has sailed square-riggers for 4 years and is a superbly competent AB. Although quite diminutive her haul-down on ropes was at least the equal of mine. All the ABs were very nimble and nurtured us out on the yardarms.

When the wind came abaft the beam, we set the fore-course, an absolute monster of a loose head canvas square, 9 by 12metres (the forestay sail and schooner sail are lowered). Three squares and the main gaff gave 7.5 knots. Main topsail was only set in light wind, and then mainly to teach us how to hoist it.

My old eyes and salt-caked glasses meant that I could not read the degree scale on the steering compass, so I steered N by W ½ W and remembered Mr Sandroff asking us to box the compass in our oral exam. I also learnt how to steer close-hauled by the topsail windward leech. Anita then taught me to trim all the fore-and-aft sails to the topsail. There is absolutely no end to fiddling with ropes when 10 sails are set. At night we took down the uppermost sails and reefed the main and mizzen gaffs. I was pleasantly surprised at the speed we attained, close-hauled in 20 knots wind she ran at 8 knots and on a broad reach she did even better, getting to 10.5 knots at one point.

We reached Ponta Delgada in 11 days (1455 miles) and docked without a pilot. That is when we learnt that most of Europe was closed to shipping because of coronavirus. The next passage that we had anticipated was Azores to Mataro near Barcelona, to position the ship for sail-festivals in the Mediterranean. This had become impossible and the owners directed us back to Rotterdam. A whole year's cruising is now in doubt, as is so much else in Europe while Covid-19 makes its malicious presence known.

The change in destination presented a difficulty after leaving the Azores high pressure area. Winter North Atlantic can be very bumpy, with winds of 45 knots forecast in latitude 45N. That is not the place to take an old ship with an inexperienced crew. In a north wind we sailed east towards Spain but soon realised that we would never get far north enough to clear Cape Finisterre under sail. We had to use the engine to get north enough to approach that lee shore and enter Biscay, where we skirted a

vigorous frontal low pressure. All this was a very good lesson in sail configurations for different wind conditions. Sail hauling was done at the change of watch when more hands were on deck. It was hard physical labour requiring teamwork and awareness of inherent danger. Everyone enjoyed it.
We closed in on the French coast in the vicinity of Nantes to get a SE wind off the land and to position ourselves for a known gale in the English Channel. The forecast was for persistent easterly winds generated by a strong high pressure north of Scotland. As the news of coronavirus in Europe was worsening we wished to get a phone signal close to the land. All onboard were healthy.
We anchored off Lorente without making any contact with the shore, waiting for favourable winds in the channel. Everyone was relieved to contact home and exchange news. Next day we sailed leisurely close to the coast and anchored at sunset. People were very tired after weeks of watches and small ship motion. In daylight we motor-sailed through Ras de Sein as there was little wind but lots of tide, proceeding to the inside passage at La Conquet. However, the French Coast Guard refused us permission to pass that way. We went west and took the Passage de Fromveur inside of Ile D'ouessant. The tide was flooding fast and the sea disturbed in a complex of islands and rocks.
Easterly winds persisted in the Channel and we motored on the English side for two days, being unable to sail anything to windward. These unsailable winds presented the problem of fuel consumption and we anchored off Dungenness in order to sit out the ebb, rather than battle against tide at 3 knots when the engine gives only 6 knots.
We anchored again outside Rotterdam, now becoming aware of just how drastically life ashore had changed because of coronavirus. Two weeks at sea gave us pratique and we entered the Maas without a pilot to berth at the Rotterdam Maritime Museum which this ship calls home. We held a sailing dinner onboard, which with 18 people may have been the largest social gathering in lock-down Europe that day.
The voyage was an adventure, a technical education and a social enrichment. 3518 miles in 29 days – about the speed of a cantering horse! I returned home on the ferry to Harwich and car to Liverpool.

Nurturing Sea Fever – The May Bursary Fund News

Swimming training is provided to Grade 10 Bursary Students as well as two Sea Cadets and selected students from Lawhill (LMC). This is step one in their preparation for the NSRI introductory camp which normally takes place in the September holidays. This year we were overwhelmed with the response from LMC students interested in joining the program. Testament to the positivity of the NSRI program.
The program starts with a medical conducted gratis by Dr. Cleeve Robertson CEO of NSRI. Sarah Sandmann is the professional swimming coach who assessed them in the first session. At this stage four of them were nervous to even put their faces in the water. The incredible determination and enthusiasm shown by all the swimmers, but especially these four, is proven by the fact that after only five lessons, all of them except one could swim a width of the pool unaided!!! This is a life changing experience for some. One of the Bursary Students shared towards the end of the training that her twin sister had drowned in Durban when they were five. She was so excited to be able to show her Mom that she could now swim!
Thank you to all our sponsors and partners who assist the Bursary Fund to uplift and change the lives of young South Africans.
All our Bursars were in attendance at the Memorial Service on Sunday 15 March. Grade 12 Bursars Nikita Adams and Buren van Wyk laid a wreath on behalf of LMC with decorum and dignity under the watchful eye of our Old Salts, Bravo Zulu to them. No doubt all the youngsters, Cadets and Bursars alike enjoyed the "sticky buns" after the service.
Apelele Ntshinka and Sabelo Mthimkhulu are both now settled into the Officer of the Watch course at Sea Safety Training Group and their accommodation in Blouberg. The course is continuing online despite the COVID-19 lockdown. So they are happily able to carry on studying in the comfort of suitable accommodation that is provided to them as part of their bursary.
Lockdown meant that all LMC boarders were sent home before school holidays were due to start. Many of them live in less than ideal circumstances , so the Bursary Fund was concerned about how

their families would cope having an extra mouth to feed for an unplanned extended period. The student Mentors have maintained contact with the students through WhatsApp groups to provide support and encouragement through this challenging time. An appeal for financial assistance was sent out. BF Chairman, Simon Pearson writes "*wearing the hat of the Chair of the Bursary Fund, can I take this opportunity to thank everyone who generously gave of their finances, time, and support to the care of the Bursary Students studying at home with very little school input. The emergency fund (we called Emergency Aid Response – EAR) received a very healthy amount from a cross section of Old Boys and Master Mariner members to enable this Fund to pay the food costs of our bursars, necessary medical needs and data to stay in contact with mentors and their school. We also paid for a tutor to assess where are Grade 12 students are with their maths and science subjects and to support them in their 'at home' studies. None of this would have been possible without this kind and valuable support from the Society* (SOMMSA) *and the Old Boys of the General Botha. Thanks again guys.*"
The BF continues to operate remotely under lockdown under the management of GM Thalia Hock and Chairman Simon Pearson.

Maritime Review Africa

We are proud to have the GBOBA featured in the Profile section of this well read and large distribution magazine. Read it here.

T. B. DAVIS – Memorial Issue First Day Cover

The following is an extract of the story behind, and the description of the special stamp issue 25th October 1985 marking the 50th Anniversary opening of the Howard Davis Hall, Victoria College, Jersey. They are Jersey stamps of value 10p, 13p, 31p and 34p. With apologies that we are unable to include a copy of the document and FDC. – Scribe.

On 23 July 1935 the Prince of Wales came to Jersey to open the Howard Davis Hall, Victoria College (Jersey) and unveil the portrait of King George V by John St. Helier Lander. This painting had been acquired at the Paris Salon Exhibition the previous year by Jerseyman Thomas Benjamin Davis. It was characteristic of Davis' generosity that he then also decided to provide a lecture hall in which to hang the picture.

The Howard Hall (*depicted in stamp 10p value*) built of granite from Ouaisné, matched the Gothic style of the older college buildings. Inside there was seating for 238, almost the exact number of boys at the school when the building was opened. The paneling and woodwork were of teak, and the clock an exact replica of that at the Greenwich Observatory.

T. B. Davis, one of Jersey's great philanthropists, was born at Havre des Pas, Jersey, on 25th April, 1867, son of a ship's carpenter. As a boy he was in the choir of St Luke's Church. At fourteen he went to sea as apprentice in a sailing ship. The snapping of a rope in rough weather cast him adrift in an open boat at night in the North Sea. The following day, he was picked up by a Norwegian vessel 'Urda' which later put him ashore at Cowes. He reached Jersey on a Sunday morning, so went straight to his old church- where he found his Memorial Service in progress! Clearly T. B. Davis was destined for a long and eventful life.

In his early thirties he went to South Africa, living initially in Port Elizabeth. He worked and saved hard and within a short time purchased a stake in a stevedoring firm. Over the next decade he gained control over the wharfinger business from Port Elizabeth to Dar-es-Salaam.

His great wealth was most generously used. He found and endowed the fine University College of Science in Durban. He presented the training ship, 'General Botha' to the Union Government. At the outset of the Second World War he established a fund of £100,000 to help dependents of South Africans serving in the Forces.

In November 1927, the States of Jersey unanimously agreed to accept as a gift from Davis, the house, farm buildings, and some 40 vergées (*a unit of land area*) of land (then known as 'Parkfield'), situated near Trinity Church. A deed of Covenant stated that the bequest was made on the understanding that the Howard Davis Farm should be used as an experimental centre for the development and study of agriculture and for the instruction in this science of young Jersey people and other interested parties.

Today the farm also houses the Jersey Agricultural Department's Headquarters (*depicted in stamp 34p value*).
In 1939 the Howard Davis Park in St Helier was opened, this also being a gift to Jersey by Davis who had purchased the property known as 'Plaisance' and employed Mr. J. A. Colledge, a famous landscape gardener, to lay out the grounds in the form of a park. A statue of King George V was erected within the main entrance, (the nearby flagstaff is the spinnaker boom from the racing yacht 'Westward'), and a Hall of Remembrance established in the grounds. The Park (*depicted in stamp 31p value*) is much admired by visitors and locals alike, providing as it does a quiet haven amidst the bustle of the busy town traffic and a feast for the eye with over 60,000 plants in full colour during summertime.
One of Davis' great loves was sailing and in 1924 he purchased the 323 ton schooner yacht 'Westward'. She had been built and designed by the famous American yachting firm Herreshoff, Rhode Island in 1910, having both American and German owners before Davis acquired her. She was constructed with an all steel hull of LWL 97 feet, designed and built for speed. During the inter-war years, 'Westward', (*depicted in stamp 13p value*) with Davis at the helm, won many great races in competition with King George V's 'Britannia'. T. B. Davis died in South Africa in 1942 and despite efforts made by his family to find a new owner for 'Westward', she was eventually scuttled in the Hurd Deep off Alderney in 1947. A special set of stamps on this famous schooner will be issued in two years time.
Technical details: Stamps, FDC and Presentation Pack designed by Alan Copp. Stamps printed in four colour offset lithography by Carter SA, France, in compact sheets of 20. Die size 48 mm x 30 mm. Date of issue 25th October, 1985.
The FDC design illustrates the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) with T. B. Davis, opening the Howard Davis Hall, Victoria College, 1935. The Presentation Pack shows T. B. Davis at the helm of 'Westward'.

A DAM BUSTER HERO – *Extract from War History on Line*

The UK has sadly lost another esteemed hero of the Dam Busters' Squadron, Kenneth (Ken) Law Sumner, who died at the beginning of April in Newcastle.
In July 1941, at age 18, he joined the Royal Air Force, where he joined 44 'Rhodesia' Squadron, where he was a bomb aimer. He flew a total of 27 operations in the Lancaster Bombers and in April 1944 he was the bomb aimer on a sortie to attack Schweinfurt. A long way before the bombers arrived on the target, the flight was hit by anti-aircraft fire, and Flight Sergeant Sumner's hand and arm were seriously injured by shrapnel. He told the Captain that his injuries were not severe and that they should continue with their mission. On reaching the target, Sumner directed the bombing run, and their assigned target was destroyed. Sumner only allowed his injuries to be treated when the bomber safely crossed the border on their homeward run. For this act of selflessness and bravery, Ken Sumner was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Soon after he turned 21, Ken Sumner was transferred to 617′ Dam Buster' Squadron, where he took part in the famous bouncing bomb attacks on the strategic German dams. To read the full story click here.
From a Bothie perspective, one wonders whether or not Ken would have flown under the command of our Wing Commander John Dering Nettleton VC (GB 573 1931/33) on any one of those bombing raids. However, Nettleton was lost in action on 13 July 1943 after a raid over Germany.

Tail Piece

This has been a bumper edition, and we hope that it has been of interest and enjoyable. Thank you to all who have contributed. It is great to hear more about our Obies in Australia, thanks.
It seems we are all in the same boat wherever we are in the world. The Corona Virus is the common enemy, and as Friday 8th is the 75th VE Day, so we look forward to our Victory Corona Day.
Meanwhile stay safe, stay healthy and remember the health and essential service folk including our seafarers who are all doing sterling work. *The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails* (William Arthur Ward). Which one are you when it comes to dealing with the Virus?