# S.A.T.S.


**PO Box 22015,**
**Glenashley, 4022**

**Chairman:** Derek McManus
Tel. (H): +27 (0)31 7673719

**Secretary:** Howard Jackson-Moss
jacksonmoss@telkomsa.net
Cell: +27 (0)83 300 9891
Tel (O): +27 (0)31 572 3901

**PO BOX 4515**
**CAPE TOWN**
**8000**
**Chairman:** Tony Nicholas

cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za
Tel.: +27 (0)21 788 5957
Fax: +27 (0)86 233 6410
Cell: +27 (0)82 555 2877


# GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

http://www.generalbotha.co.za

## AUGUST 2016

## 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.

SOMMSA/GBOBA JOINT MONTHLY LUNCH

- Tuesday 13th September, 1130 for 1200 – Pub lunch, Royal Cape Yacht Club.
- Speaker: Kieron Cox, Sole Proprietor of Maretek - http://www.maretek.co.za/
- Subject: 'Ships that go bump in the night (and sometimes during the day too)'.
- NOTE the earlier start time. Cost R60 per person excluding gratuity.
- Booking for the lunch is important, please RSVP by Sunday 11th September 2016 to:

  Kathy Nicholas: phone 021-788 5957
  Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za
  Facsimile: 086 233 6410

## AN URGENT APPEAL – *DONATIONS*

*An extra note from your Chairman, Tony Nicholas*

Further to our previous reports; the association is no longer on a sound financial footing. We have had to draw down from our capital investment to fund this newsletter edition. This is of major concern to your committee as much labour goes into running this association and meeting the goals of the members, committee and constitution. Our primary overheads are:

- Printing and postage of your quarterly newsletter to those who do not have email.
- Hosting the Annual War Memorial Service.
- Hosting our widows to the December lunch.
- Hosting our Old Salts to the Commissioning Day Dinner.

In addition to the above regular overheads we have over the years erected various memorial plaques commemorating the Bothie, one of which is in urgent need of repair after being vandalized in Gordon's Bay, plus many other initiatives which have all been reported on in the newsletters.

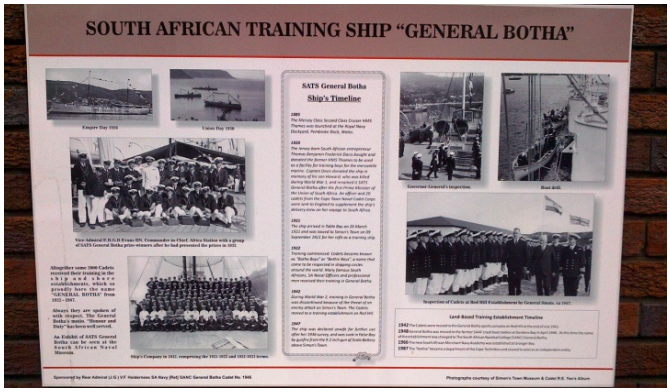
The high volume of newsletters requiring posting remains of concern, particularly to members based overseas. I am confident that many of you do in fact have email addresses and thus urge you to advise your email address to: cptchairman@generlbotha.co.za.
A number of years ago your committee decided, in order to reduce administrative tasks, not to run the association on an annual subscription basis, rather to rely on regular donations from members. This system worked well for a number of years and thus we appeal once more to the generosity of members in order to keep the association afloat, on even keel, with a positive GM. Cheques can be made out to "General Botha Old Boys' Association" and EFT:

- Bank: Standard Bank
- Branch: Thibault Square, Cape Town
- Branch code: 020909
- Account name: General Botha Old Boys' Association
- Account number: 070835128
- SWIFT: SBZA ZA JJ

We look forward to a positive response from members.
We are grateful to those who did respond to our appeal in the last May newsletter, which did bring in some welcome donations, but unfortunately insufficient to meet the operating costs of the association. Of course this appeal is not aimed at those who have *already contributed, thank you.*
On the subject of donations I failed to thank the CLASS 1986 for their welcome donations made to the association as well as to the Mission to Seafarers during their reunion in Cape Town last March. Amazing how generous members can be when the atmosphere has been *Charles Glass* infused.

## FROM THE BRIDGE OF s.s. CAPE TOWN

It has been a relatively quiet quarter with visits to Cape Town by Alex Sharp 1961/62 and Mike Neill 1958/59. Unfortunately both failed to visit us at the monthly lunch due other commitments. Great pity as class mates had turned out to meet them.
My visit to Bill Damerell yielded two interesting items for our archive. One is the original logbook of the s.v. Howard Davis of her Cape to Rio race. (For the Old Salts the s.v. Howard Davis was our sail training ketch on the Granger Bay Bothie.) This was the inaugural race in 1971. The other was his scrapbook of the race including the build up, actual race including a casualty and the return home afterwards. In it are mentioned Jennifer & Gordon Webb 1942/43, Mike Brown 1960/61, Pat Cullen 1955/56, and Brad Wallace-Bradley 1951/52. Jennifer & Gordon Webb had the unfortunate experience of their yacht hitting a whale and the boat sank within 15 minutes, they spent 16 hours in the life raft before being spotted by a passing freighter. The crew of the s.v. Howard Davis included Phil Nankin 1941/42, Bill Damerall 1941/42, Brian Georgeson 1957/58, Andy Cross 1966, Sean Day 1967, John Abercrombie 1969 and Hans Baumgartner 1969. I am reliably told that as Phil Nankin, skipper of the Howard Davis, did not drink beer he banned beer on the boat as being too heavy. However since he enjoyed whiskey there was sufficient of that refreshment in the boat's victuals. Can you imagine 28 days without a beer? Something Bill and Brian corrected immediately after crossing the line at Rio.
An appeal received from Simon's Town Museum, can anyone assist?
"Audrey Reed of the Simon's Town Museum is looking for information regarding the local training of Naval gunners for service in Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships [DEMS] during the Second World War. Is there anyone on your *General Botha* databases who is recorded as having undergone such training or do you know anything about the local training and the people who were trained?
Did *Lawhill* not have a gun aft at some stage?
Apparently, the gunners were trained at Lower North Battery and most lived at Froggy Pond Camp. If anyone can assist let us know.
"The Legend Lives On". On a Main Road, Simon's Town, wall outside the dockyard a number of signboards have been placed detailing the history of Simon's Town. Vic Holderness 1955/56 placed one detailing our training ship. Have a look if you are passing by. Our thanks to Vic.




**On the Simon's Town Dockyard Wall**

Another chapter in "The Legend Lives On". Charles Edward Jolley GB Term 1927/28 was awarded the sextant prize for Rule of the Road at Sea, presented by Mrs W.D. Barber. After Bothie Charles was apprenticed to T&J Harrison Line. Later joined the S.A.R.& H. and in 1972 was APC of Port Elizabeth. In 1977 Charles presented his sextant to N.S.R.I. Station 6 (Port Elizabeth) as a prize to a crew member for Proficiency in Navigation and Seamanship. Since then it has been awarded to a different NSRI Station 6 crew person each year, their names are recorded on the sextant box.

Also among the memorabilia from Bill Damerall are copies of "The Log of the Lawhill". These are newsletters published on board the s.v. Lawhill in the late 1940s. I shall include some of the anecdotes in this publication. Here the first:
Sunday November 23rd 1947 – "Last week in L.M. the 2nd Officer said to the Mess Man: What's for supper? - Tongue, Sir. - I don't eat anything that comes out of an animal's mouth, the 2nd said. - Very well, Sir, replied the steward, I get you a boiled egg."

## SCRANBAG

**F. MARAIS 1961/62 #2208.** Fred joined Safmarine (SA Pioneer) in 1963 after leaving Bothie. Followed a regular sea-going career path in Safmarine (doing mainly Far East and USA runs with the occasional trip to UK and Continent) to Masters in 1970. Last Safmarine appointment was Second Mate in SA Vergelegen. Got married and joined the SA Navy in 1971.
Followed a naval sea-going career culminating with a three year command of the SAS Drakensberg. After serving a further five years in Defence staff appointments, demilitarised in 1997 to take a civilian appointment as a director in the Defence Secretariat. Retired from the Department of Defence in 2007 but served on a contract basis with the Defence Secretariat for a further four years.
Currently settled in Scarborough on the Cape Peninsula and enjoying retirement.

**R.A. BAILES 1976 #2520.** After obtaining his Chief Officer's Certificate FG with Safmarine Robin did a BSc in computers in Grahamstown. Then moved to Swakopmund in Namibia where he worked on a uranium mine for about 9 years. Thereafter worked in Sacramento, USA, for 4 years before settling in Alaska in 1997, remaining in the computer industry. Besides computing Robin's next interest is his Harley Davidson. A larger version of our blazer *wire* badge made here in Cape Town, and we have a PRESENCE in Alaska.
*More photographs on our Face Book page.*

**C.H. JOHNSEN 1971 #2392.** Colin was recently awarded a citation from the Society of Master Mariners South Africa for his contribution to maritime education in SA and the effort he has put into reviving the Durban branch of the Society. Bravo Zulu Colin.

**Colin receiving his citation from SOMMSA Branch Master, Capt. Grant Bairstow**

**A. WALKER.** Andrew recently gave the monthly lunch meeting an interesting talk on various special cargo his company underwrites. 1987-1997 sailing with Unicorn Lines and in 2002 chief officer with Bank Line. Sailed as Master with German company Alphaship 2003-2006 and then sailed as Master Safmarine/Maersk Lines 2006-2011. 2012 Employed by AIG South Africa as Marine Loss control manager for Africa and Middle East.

**A.R. BRINK.** Allen was in Scotland recently to receive the Nautical Institute Platinum Award (Membership Recruitment Recognition). Well done Allen, you have certainly placed the NI on the African map.

**R.I. HALL 1968 #2334.** Irvine is another soon to be retiree. **"**I see the last info you have says I am working for Cunard. Well, in 1998, Cunard was bought by Carnival, who placed the company (i.e. Cunard) under the management of P&O Princess, which resulted in my sailing on a couple of Princess and P&O ships. (Princess was managed from LA, and P&O from Southampton - what a shambles that was! Nowadays, Princess is Princess, and completely separate from P&O, which is under the Carnival UK, umbrella; as is Cunard) Tony, I'll tell you something -- Cunard, because of the Queens, is probably the most famous name in shipping, and Carnival is one of the biggest. But, the quality of management in both companies, was nowhere near as good as Safmarine's, especially in the days of Marmie Marsh and Capt Bluett -- Saf used to be an exceptionally well managed company. And I sure that not many people realised just how good it was. Of course, I don't know what it is like these days. The best captains I ever sailed with were on Saf ships - Cameron McKenzie, Mike Fowkes, Simon Young, Ivan Currie, etc. Unfortunately, I never did sail with Harry Gillespie. Obviously, there were good officers in Cunard, but not many - I promise you, I could tell you stories that would make your hair stand on end. There was one excellent captain, and he is now the head of Trinity House - well, after Princess Anne, who is the ceremonial Captain.

I left the 'sea' as such in 2009 and went back to harbour tugs in the form of Svitzer, in Milford Haven. This is quite unlike the SAR&H way (large crews and 4 officers). In Milford, it was a total crew of 4 and we worked 2 weeks on 24/7, then 2 weeks off. During the 2 weeks on, we lived aboard, and did our own cooking and cleaning, plus the usual maintenance; then we slept. This is a *shite* way to live, and after 3 years, enough was enough, and now I am working for the UKHO. So-o, that's where I am at the moment, basically doing a retirement job, both interesting and boring at the same time.

**M.R. MCDONALD 1965 # 2268.** After G.B. Marshall spent 5 years with Safmarine becoming third mate, before studying at the University of Natal (1970 - 73) obtaining a BSc. Then spent 1 year with Tanker Services as a Freight Sales Representative. Emigrated to New Zealand and spent 5 years as a Sales and Marketing Consultant. Returned to S.A. and worked in various capacities including:

* Personnel Consultant for 8 years
* Personnel Manager for 2 years
* Senior Warden of the University of Natal Residence for 9 years.
* Occupational Health and Safety Manager at the University of Natal (UKZN) for 10 years.
* Then retired and formed own consultancy working in the Occupational Health and Safety field for 5 years.
* 2016 fully retired near Margate on KZN South Coast. Fishing and cray fishing.

**D.M. HOLZ 1961/62 #2204.** Kito recently moved to London. " I left the ship in 1962 and went to sea for 14 months with the Ellerman & Bucknell group.

From 1964 to 1970 I was at the University of Cape Town where I completed by B. Sc, B. Sc (Hons) and M. Sc. in physics. From 1971 onwards I have mainly been working in the computer field as a programmer and systems analyst. I worked for Leo Computer Bureau for many years and subsequently for Hosken Insurance Brokers for many years (They are now called Indwe Risk services). For the past five years I have been on my own doing computer work for various companies."

**C.H.J. SMITH 1968 #2347.** Chris has recently signed off the Maersk Labrea into retirement. Sensible fellow. Enjoy.

## ANCHORS AWEIGH

**N.E. BULMER 1942/43.** Passed away this year, 2016. Neville came from Kimberley and was the sick bay attendant on the Bothie. Joined the Royal Navy Reserve and later worked for Shell in Port Elizabeth. Bothie nickname was "Teddy".

**M.A. HAY 1958/59.** Passed away 4 July 2016. Mike lived in Johannesburg with his lovely wife Galyin and a great family. Mike was a retiree and was the Green Keeper of the Brackenhurst Bowling Club, where he will be greatly missed. Any further detail of his career would be appreciated.

**Captain Ernest Albert (Dai) Davies** passed away on Friday 3rd June 2016. Although not a Bothie Boy many of our members worked with Dai Davies. He was a legend within the international and South African maritime industries and leaves a legacy of massive achievement in marine salvage particularly. A significant part of that legacy is the depth and experience of an extensive network of salvage masters, tug masters and salvage management that he developed and inspired over the years. He came into the local salvage industry in its infancy and, through his considerable charm, confidence and ability, leaves it as a fully developed, internationally respected industry.

**S.C. VILJOEN 1967.** Chris passed away on 6th August. 1968 - 80 sailed for Safmarine in various ranks. 1980 - 84 Assistant Marine Superintendent for Safmarine in New York, U.S.A. 1984 - 85 Cargo Superintendent for SAECS/Transatlantic RoRo Service on the Southern African Coast. 1985 - 88 Port Co-ordinator for SAECS/Transatlantic Ro Ro Service, Durban. 1988 - 89 Marine Superintendent for Bridge Marine on the Southern African and Australian coasts. 1989 transferred to Brazil as Marine superintendent for Bridge Ocean Lines, later renamed Barbican Line then purchased by Von Rantzau Group in Hamburg. 1993 promoted to Owners Representative for Barbican Line, Brazil. 1999 owners' representative for Global Lines in Houston, U.S.A. and running a company called Armadillo Marine Consultants. 2009 semi-retired, doing the occasional jobs for Oldendorff Carriers and Saga Forest Carriers. Subsequently returned to live in South Africa.

Class mate Les Hellman writes: "When we all met fifty years ago (well, most of us) we probably thought we would never die. So sad to think that that bouncy, far too clever for his size, teenager has gone. I remember him getting the answer to a stability question that had some information missing thanks to a typo. “Gallie, how did you manage to get the right answer without all the info?” “Well, the question was illogical, so I used an illogical method to work it out.” Coming from Gallie, that made sense."

*Our condolences to family and shipmates.*

## THE ANCHOR ON THE MOUNTAIN

The history of our Gordon's Bay mountain anchor has sparked much interest, among others Colin Greenacre 1949/50 and Alan Bole 1949/50 who writes:

"I was most disappointed that the essential role played by Junior Cadets in this project had not received the attention it deserved. I was one of a number of Chums, who, on the very first day, went up the hill. As was to be expected, our duties were to fetch, carry and run errands etc., and mine was to carry one of the two tape measures plus a number of Semaphore flags. (You couldn’t expect Old Salts to carry anything if Chums were present.)

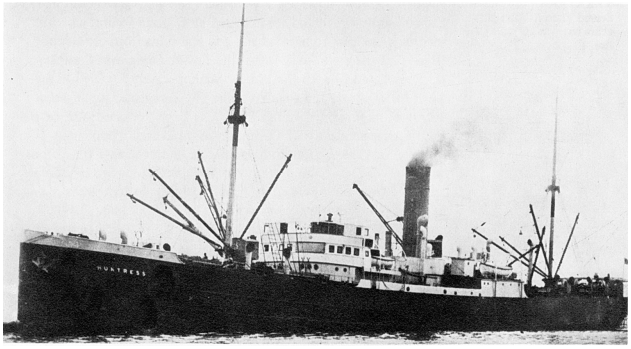
On arrival at the (approximate) site predetermined from observations at the college, there was an initial inspection as to its suitability (no humps, bumps, out crops of rock etc.) not obvious from below. After some discussion and communication by Semaphore with the observing party stationed at the college, the centre of the ring of the anchor was established. A small cairn of stones was built to mark the spot from which all measurements would be taken. The Shank of the anchor was then measured using the two tapes and the ‘lower’ party departed 200 feet down the hill and proceeded to measure out the flukes etc. The ‘Upper’ party marked out the perimeter of the Ring – diameter – 20 feet. As the ’Tape Bearer’, my role was pivotal in the operation in that I held the ‘other’ end of the tape at the centre while Hovelmeir indicated where the flags were to be placed along the circumference of the ring. Unfortunately, the ground was so hard that (stony and no shovels) small stone cairns had to be built to support the flags. The circle was completed with smallish stones but no attempt was made to mark out the ‘thickness’ of the ring at this stage. This activity continued for some time, (mainly by the chums), until we were all recalled

The flags were all collected and on the way down the hill, a number of small cairns were built along the centre of the Shank. That was the only time I was up the hill and only took a casual interest in the progress after that. Having got the project successfully under weigh we felt that the Old Salts could probably cope without our assistance and so left them to muddle their way through it. Not a bad job considering. The bulk of the work was completed by the Seniors after completing their final exams.

As it is now almost 70 years since we worked on this project I cannot recall the role played by other Chums but have no doubt that it was extremely significant, but few more important than 'Official Tape Bearer (upper Party)'
Some 50 years later, while I was on a coach trip from Stellenbosch for Whale- Watching in Hermanus, the tour guide announced that the Anchor and GB stood for Gordon's Bay and was rather surprised when I put him right in the presence of the whole coach, in no uncertain manner."

**THE LEGEND IS BORN**

1924 It is noted in *SATS Magazine* that the entire deck crew of the Union Government's merchant ship *Huntress*, with the exception of the Boatswain, was made up of former *General Botha* cadets.



In the anticipation of rapid industrialization after World War I, railway development began in earnest. From 1918 to 1920, many miles of new track were laid but local supplies of timber for sleepers were inadequate. Experience showed that Jarrah from Western Australia was best suited to South African conditions but scheduled lines calling at South African ports *en route* from Western Australia had little surplus cargo space to carry sleepers to South African ports and, at first, ships were chartered in an attempt to ease the shortage of sleepers. In response to an appeal to Britain by the South African Government, three prize ships - the twin-funneled *Apolda* (4 997 gross tons), ***Huntress*** **(4 939 gross tons)** and *Seattle* (5 133 gross tons) were transferred to South African registry in July and August 1919. For convenience, the vessels were owned, operated and managed by the South African Railways and Harbours Administration, the fleet becoming known as SAR ships. During their wartime services, the vessels had been put to maximum use so that expenditure on general maintenance, their great coal consumption, low speed and small cargo holds led to high operating costs. Nevertheless, once the urgency of sleeper importation had eased, the normal voyage in ballast from South Africa to Australia was extended to allow the carriage of coal to Far Eastern ports *en route* to Australia and gradually a triangular service developed. On one such voyage, the *Huntress* was badly damaged in a collision in the Straits of Singapore where, even in those days, a formidable flow of shipping made safe navigation a difficult proposition.

**DURBAN BRANCH REPORT** - D McManus. Chairman, Durban Branch

It is with regret that I missed the deadline for the last newsletter. With the reunion in Cape Town, public holidays and other logistical issues we settled down to the AGM at Ray and Gwen Martin's home. Some 23 of us sat under his lapa on a perfect evening to a splendid spread and many thanks to Gwen for doing the honours. The Pavlova washed down with Port certainly a treat to remember. No guesses as to the status quo regarding the Committee and Chairman remaining the same.
I recently made contact with Basil Algar (39/40/41), Norman Caseley (41/42) and Fred Petters (42/43). The story goes that Norman Casely's rendition of the last post on his silver bugle prompted a visiting Admiral to comment that it was the finest he had ever heard – a message being passed to the Ship to that effect.
Another incident that warrants mention took place when our A Whaler crew (1956) crossed the finishing line ahead of the pack. Two Royal Navy Officers standing next to me at the finish (plenty of gold braid nogal) commented that they were the finest crew they had ever seen. They beat both the Royal Navy and the SA Navy on that occasion. A fitting tribute to the coxen and coach if ever there was one.
I regret to inform you that Dennis Banks (42/43) passed away yesterday (11 August 2016) after a short illness. Dennis has been a loyal supporter of the Association for many many years and will be sorely missed by all.

It was certainly a memorable trip to the 60th anniversary in Cape Town and a visit to the College which is certainly in great shape and well maintained.
Our Christmas lunch is scheduled for November and details will follow at a later stage.

**Gauteng Branch News** – Alan Ford

Alan writes: "Some waffle and boilerplate to fill a page or two of the next newsletter." *Thank you Alan. I wonder if you had any interesting response to your challenging question in the last newsletter?*
One of the great benefits of attending the US Merchant Marine Academy is the experience of going out to sea on US-Flag merchant ships. This is called 'Sea Year'. While the state schools primarily rely on school ships, USMMA Midshipmen are sent, generally two at a time, to commercial vessels trading around the world. That is until now — if the following information released by the USMMA ALUMNI Association is to be believed:-
While the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Maritime Administration (MARAD), and the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) have made consistent efforts to address sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus over the last few years, we've grappled with appropriate means of extending these efforts during "Sea Year" when the Midshipmen are off campus training on working U.S. merchant marine vessels. The safety of these young women and men are our highest priority, and the USMMA is standing down having Midshipmen serve on these vessels until it is assured that their training will be carried out in a safe environment.
On June 24th, MARAD is convening a Call-to-Action with the maritime industry to address these issues, as well as their overall safety, as we begin to develop a comprehensive plan that protects the Midshipmen.
We are making every effort to ensure an on-time graduation for any affected students. More information to follow as details become available.
USMMA spokesman, Benjamin Benson, Director of External Affairs, provided the following statement to gCaptain, assuring there was no specific incident that prompted the decision:
"The annual reports to Congress on sexual assault and sexual harassment submitted by the USMMA have shown the aggressive steps taken to address the matter on campus. Sea Year is a unique situation for these young men and women, and we believe there continues to be a need to address the culture onboard vessels to better ensure Midshipmen are in an environment that is both safe and respectful. This is not just about Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment, but an effort to ensure the Sea Year is an appropriate training and work environment for the Midshipmen," Benson wrote in an email.

**GBOBA – UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher**

Keeping in touch as an organisation is difficult with our UK membership well scattered (as I've mentioned before). I'm continuing in my role as GBOBA UK Hon Sec, however, social events in future, as you will appreciate, are not to be on a regular basis due to lack of support. That said I am always ready for suggestions on how we can move forward.
**The Rededication Service of the Five Training Ships Memorial** is to be held on Merchant Navy Day Saturday 3 September 2016 at The National Memorial Arboretum situated in Alrewas, Staffs. A short service will commence at 12noon so anyone who wishes to attend need to be at the Reception Office anytime from 11.30am. There will be buggy type transport from reception to the Merchant Navy Memorial site.
Following the event there is to be a buffet lunch available at The Crown Inn, Alrewas, at a cost of £9 per person payable on the day. There is also a cash bar.
An **Order of Service** is now with the printer. The service is to be led by Reverend Simon Douglas-Lane, Honorary Chaplain, The Conway Club. Please confirm your intention to me by email tedefisher@aol.com or telephone 01903 744400 by Friday 19 August latest as I need to inform the organiser who is an Old Conway Club member.
The Arboretum is between Lichfield and Burton-upon-Trent on the Croxall Road off the A38, DE13 7AR for your Satnav. There are local hotels although attendees may well feel able to make the trip from home on the day.

**Expanded Panama Canal** Those of us who can recall transiting the Panama Canal in our seafaring days may well appreciate the article featured in The Times Newspaper of 24 June 2016. The old canal too small for the so called post-Panamax generation of megaships. How life has changed!
Best regards to all and please get in contact at anytime.
Ted Fisher email: tedefisher@aol.com Tel: 44 903 744400 or Mob: 44 7702 635017

## Australia Branch News

Peter O'Hare writes, No news at the moment, Lunch on 6th August. *Too late for this NL, but we trust you all enjoyed the lunch 'Down Under', and look forward to hearing the war stories in the next NL. Scribe.*

## Bursary Fund Input to the GBOBA Newsletter, August, 2016.

**Bursars and Mentoring Program**

The Fund's bursars are now under way through the third term of their academic year, working hard to lay a good foundation for their year-end examinations.
The mid-year exam results and individual mentoring interviews indicated that all our bursars are on course for success, but the challenges of mathematics and science remain significant for some of them. The extra-tutorial coaching in science provided by Hugh James is helping immensely, and there is confidence that a newly appointed extra-maths teacher Elna De Jager will be very effective. A focused individual maths and science tutorial week was arranged during the last week of the school holidays for our two grade 12 students, in order to give them a critical boost prior to their final preparations for their matriculation examinations. Thanks to Hugh and Charles Reid for their expert contributions of both content and motivation.
The Committee decided that a specific mentor will work with each grade of bursars in future, and remain with that group throughout their three-year progression through the Lawhill Programme. This is intended to improve the mentoring process by developing a progressively maturing sense of trust and mutual insight between individual student and mentor. Tony Nicholas works with the grade 10 students, while Ian Fishley and Danny Meyer mentor the grades 11 and 12 respectively. Nomkhitha Mbele liaises with the Fund's past bursars.
Tony continues to co-ordinate the mentoring programme overall. He is also a very popular and effective field guide. The term 2 field trip focused on boat design and building. Tony reported as follows:
*"All ten of our bursars, spanning grades 10 – 12, accompanied me on a visit to the boat builder Nautic Africa during May. This was by the kind invitation of the Company's Chief Operations Officer, Mr. Gianni Johannes.*
*The tour started in their new facility situated in Amphion Street, Paarden Island, which the Company had just occupied. There the group was first taken on a tour of the still empty administration offices explaining the planned use of the office space, particularly for the design team.*
*On the factory floor were two general-purpose stainless steel boats in different stages of construction, destined for the Nigerian market. This gave the students the opportunity to walk around and under the vessels demonstrating hawse pipe, bow thrusters and propeller-shaft tunnels, frame, longitudinal, sacrificial anodes, amongst other points of interest. The group was also able to board one of the craft, giving a further view of the internal construction.*
*We then proceeded to the Company's Marine Drive factory where the fibreglass vessels are built. Besides seeing fibreglass work in progress, the group was particularly interested in two of the S.A.Navy's new high-speed boarding boats – reputedly able to achieve 40 knots!*
*Throughout the visit various students asked numerous questions of our hosts, displaying a keen interest in boat building, welding, etc. As ever, the conduct of our bursars was courteous.*
*Archie Leeu, grade 12, made a "thank you" speech – unsolicited."*

**Marine Inspirations**

Phil Wade and Anthony Just and all their fantastic helpers and supporters, did a marvellous job again this year, arranging sponsorships for three Lawhill students to crew in The Superyacht Cup regatta in

Palma, Spain, this June, including Loyiso Jantjies, one of our grade 11 bursars. Not only are these international trips valuable motivational and developmental life-experiences, but the regatta is an intensive training exercise in practical seamanship with world-class sailors. In addition, the students benefit from a number of vessel tours and technical briefings on all aspects of shipyard work, equipment design and naval architecture – simply invaluable complements to their maritime schooling.

*The additional fact that Loyiso crewed on the winning yacht "Win Win" in the regatta is added "kudo's" for the fund. We look forward to hearing Loyiso's feedback on the trip and how he managed to lose himself at Oliver Tambo Airport*???

That these young people are also fine ambassadors for what we are all endeavouring to achieve is illustrated by this typical response to one of the field visits by the trio:

*"It was a pleasure to meet your young guys. I am happy that they got something to take away.*
*I have always liked teaching, especially if the 'pupils' actually want to learn what I have to give. I am more than willing to repeat the visit when you bring the next group, so just let me know.*
*Thank you also. It is so nice to see that some people still care about helping others."* Erik Hansen, Echo Marine Services. **We are proud of them.**

**Finances, Sustainability and Commitment**

Although our finances are very healthy **thanks to our generous individual and Corporate sponsors**, our financial commitment is substantial, bearing in mind that most of our bursars represent a 3-year commitment**.** It is thus that we will need, in the coming months, to find ways of ensuring sustainability through long term commitment. Our achievement of BBBEE Certification and our planned Audit to satisfy the Code 700 Social Development requirements will help reward our donors and sponsors and encourage such long term commitment.

**Planning The Way Forward**

The fund has identified a number of Projects as mentioned in earlier newsletters and our Annual Report. These projects and the results from them, will quite likely, substantially alter our Strategy going forward, which in turn will determine our future Budget. A complementary program of presentations, meetings and an educational and training workshop, having been put in place to facilitate this.

These project results and strategy changes, will in turn have to be aligned with the substantial changes being made at Lawhill - physically, in their educational and mentoring program and through their greatly improved support base.

It is suggested that those interested should download and read the latest Lawhill Newsletter which gives you an idea of how much is happening -**http://www.lawhill.org/lawhill-term-2-newsletter-2016/**

**BEFORE GPS**

*The passenger steamer SS Warrimoo was quietly knifing its way through the waters of the mid-Pacific on its way from Vancouver to Australia.*

*The navigator had just finished working out a star fix and brought the master, Captain John Phillips, the result. The Warrimoo's position was latitude 0 degrees x 31 minutes north and longitude 179 degrees x 30 minutes west. The date was 30 December 1899. "Know what this means?" First Mate Payton broke in, "we're only a few miles from the intersection of the Equator and the International Date Line". Captain Phillips was prankish enough to take full advantage of the opportunity for achieving the navigational freak of a lifetime. He called his navigators to the bridge to check and*

*double check the ships position. He changed course slightly so as to bear directly on his mark. Then he adjusted the engine speed. The calm weather and clear night worked in his favour. At midnight the "Warrimoo" lay on the Equator at exactly the point where it crossed the International Date Line! The consequences of this bizarre position were many. The forward part of the ship was in the Southern Hemisphere and the middle of summer. The stern was in the Northern Hemisphere and in the middle of winter. The date in the aft part of the ship was 30 December 1899. Forward it was 1 January 1900. This ship was therefore not only in two different days, two different months, two different seasons and two different years but in two different centuries-all at the same time.*
Guess the engineers down aft were always a little behind.

# Expanded Panama Canal ready for its first megaship

Panama
**James Hider**

At dawn on Sunday a vast Chinese ship will sail into history when it becomes the first vessel to navigate the newly expanded Panama Canal, the result of a $5.5 billion engineering project that aims to revitalise global trade, just as the original opening of the canal did more than 100 years ago.

The old canal cost at least 25,000 lives, mostly to diseases such as yellow fever and malaria, and bankrupted the French company that first tried to dig it. The new extension took 110 million man-hours, 292,000 tonnes of steel, 1.6 million tonnes of cement and had to be approved by a national referendum in 2006, so vast were the costs to the tiny Central America nation.

Some experts warn that the huge economic gamble may not pay off, given the prolonged slump in world trade, low oil prices that have made it cheaper for some ships to go around South America instead, and the delays in key US ports updating their own infrastructure to welcome the new generation of megaships.

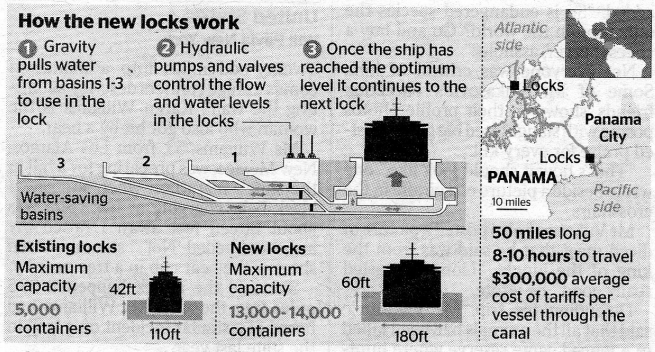
The original canal, opened in August 1914, had simply grown too small for the so-called post-Panamax generation of megaships. Its locks allowed only ships with about 5,000 containers to squeeze through. Now, with deeper and wider locks paralleling the old ones for huge vessels carrying as many as 14,000 containers — and paying up to $300,000 for a one-way trip — the canal has doubled its capacity.

With this enhanced scope, the canal authority hopes to lure back shipping that had been diverted to the recently expanded Suez Canal in Egypt, as well as Chinese companies that had preferred to used megaships to transport their goods to the US west coast and then load them on to lorries or trains. That method has proved to be faster, but shipping by sea to the big east coast ports is a much cheaper way to reach the key US markets.

The canal is Panama's cash cow, and the administrators expect it to bring in $1.5 billion a year.

The project has not been without its controversies and at the back of Panaman's mind is the spectre of a Hong Kong consortium that has broken ground on a proposed $40-billion rival canal in Nicaragua.

There may be one final headache: mega-ships that are too big even for the revamped canal have already appeared on the world's oceans, raising the prospect of yet another expensive overhaul before another century passes.




THE TIMES NEWSPAPER 24 JUNE 2016

**SHIP to SHORE, by HAMISH ROSS, EDITOR SEA BREEZES**

I recently travelled back to the Isle of Man by ferry on Good Friday of Easter weekend, and reflected on one of the blessings of my retirement nine years ago from the ferry industry: the ability to relax and enjoy bank holiday periods free from the worry of some operational mishap occurring at the most inopportune moment. In the 31 years during which I occupied various shoreside roles in the ferry industry, fortune often decreed that if something was to go wrong it would go wrong at the busiest time of the sailing calendar.

It got me thinking that it was 40 years since I had made the 'leap' from ship to shore, bringing to an end a seagoing career that had started deep sea and continued on the ferries which crossed the Irish Sea from Scotland (Stranraer) to Northern Ireland (Larne). It was fascinating to contrast the way of life at sea with life ashore, as I am sure many others have done when making such a career change.

For example, being ashore avoided the extreme pressures which those onboard would endure during the worst instances of weather or mechanical problems, but by and large a ship's crew could 'switch off' when their turn of duty was over and their responsibilities handed over to the oncoming crew, until their next turn of duty. Those in senior shore-based roles have an almost constant pressure (at least in the back of their minds) of overseeing the shipping 24/7, trying to ensure it operates safely, efficiently and to time.

In 'days of old', and particularly when deep sea, communication was very limited – which on a very positive note meant relatively little interference from Head Office in the matters of running the ship, but on the downside meant virtually no opportunity to stay in touch with loved ones 'back home'. Modern technology has flipped that situation around. But, back then, 'disappearing off the face of the

earth‘ for months at a time was often the driving force in deep sea seafarers seeking shore-based positions or at least onboard positions closer to home.
Over the long period when I worked ashore, I noticed at times the expansion in shore-based operations to meet the greater regulatory, safety and commercial pressures; and at other times the contraction due to some of these functions being ‘outsourced‘ to ship management companies or centralised at ‘head office’. In the ferry industry, I always saw merit in the value of locally based senior marine management. When I moved ashore in 1976 as Shipping & Port Manager for Sealink’s Stranraer - Larne route, I also took up the responsibilities of Marine Superintendent and firmly believed that local knowledge – of vessels, operating conditions and personnel – enabled appropriate decisions to be made. On my desk, I always kept a copy of the inquiry into the loss of the **Princess Victoria** on the route in January 1953. This was a constant reminder as to the safety aspects of the Marine Superintendent’s job and it was never far from my mind; in fact my predecessor in the role had been Captain LJ (Joe) Unsworth, MBE who had served on the **Victoria** and by a fortunate quirk of fate had been transferred to another route to cover staff shortage a day before **Victoria**’s final tragic voyage.
I guess the relative attractions of ship and shore positions are a matter of individual circumstances and views, but my trip down memory lane to 40 years ago did lead me to conclude that I was very glad to have made the career change, before containerisation and other factors changed forever the way of life deep sea that I had known and so much enjoyed. Equally, however, I valued the substantial time I had spent at sea before coming ashore. And who knows – maybe all the grey hairs I gained ashore during all the operational mishaps, weather and engineering disruptions and occasional near disasters – particularly during bank holiday weekends and peak holiday periods – would still have turned grey (or fallen out completely had I remained afloat).

## SA WORLD-FAMOUS DOLOS DESIGNER DIES IN HOME CITY

By **Barbara Hollands** – DESPATCH LIVE July 26, 2016

Aubrey Kruger, the former East London harbour draughtsman who designed the ingenious dolos sea buffer system 50 years ago, died in the city last week.
Kruger, who had been a keen fisherman, diver and general “man of the sea”, died two days before his 82nd birthday last Tuesday.
While harbour engineer Eric Merrifield was initially credited for their invention, a claim emerged in the 1990s that it was Kruger who came up with the ingenious interlocking concrete design, which is now used to dissipate waves at breakwaters the world over.
Kruger’s son, Lance Kruger, said the family had been delighted when Kruger’s hand in the dolos design had been commemorated by the South African Mint in the company’s South African Inventions theme, just a couple of weeks before he passed away.
Speaking from his Vincent home, where his father lived with his wife, Daphne, until just before he died, Lance showed the Daily Dispatch two sterling silver coins – a R2 Crown and a 2½ cent tickey – imprinted with geometric dolos shapes, as well as three miniature silver dolosse.
“The family was emotional when they arrived from the Mint recently.
“We were all in the room when we gave him the coins and he got to touch them. He held them tight. We knew he was deteriorating and it was exciting to give this to him before he left us.”
Lance said his father used to tell the story of how he came up with the very first mock-up of the dolos after Merrifield instructed him to design a concrete structure that would protect the East London harbour breakwater from battering waves.
“He drove home to Cambridge on his Vespa and asked my mother for the broom. He sawed it into three pieces and made the shape of [what was to be] the dolos.
“He based it on the dubbeltjie thorn. Then he went back to work and put it on Mr Merrifield’s desk.”
His father had then made a small prototype of the structure, which Lance said was named by his grandfather, Joseph Kruger, who worked at the harbour’s dry-dock.
“He came into Merrifield and dad’s office and said: ‘Ek sien julle speel met dolosse.’ [I see you are playing with dolosse]. Dolosse were joint bones children used to play with. And that’s how they were named.”

Lance said his father went on to work at the Durban harbour as a draughtsman, then returned to East London, where he started a tyre retreading business, before working as a truss designer for a timber company.
A keen diver and spearfisherman, he was an early member of the Border Undersea Club.
"In 1998, he retired to Mgwalana where he spent his time fishing and doing woodwork."
Following a stroke six years ago, Kruger and his wife moved into a flatlet on Lance's property.
"As a family we are very proud of the legacy he left behind."
Kruger is survived by his wife and children Gary, Sandra, Ross and Lance, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. There will be no memorial service as per his request. — barbarah@dispatch.co.za
*Thanks to Grenville Stevens for sending us this interesting article.*

**The Tail Piece to conclude!**

The Doctor gave a man six months to live. The man couldn't pay his bill, so the doctor gave him another six months.
Patient: 'I have a ringing in my ears.' Doctor: 'Don't answer.'
The remarkable thing about my mother is that for 30 years she served us nothing but leftovers. The original meal has never been found.
*Quotes from Calvin Marshall Trillin, an American journalist, humourist, food writer, poet, memoirist and novelist.*

**SLOP CHEST**

These slop chest items all proudly display our association insignia and are available from Cape Town branch. Place your orders without delay with Kathy:
Phone: 021-7885957 fax: 086 233 6410 Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

| | |
|---|---|
| **TIE [STRIPED]** | **R60** |
| **PLAQUE** | **On application** |
| **PEAK CAP [BASEBALL TYPE]** | **R125** |
| **'n NAAM WAT SEEVAARDERS EER**<br>Geskiedenis van die opleiding skip. | **DONASIE** |
| **A NAME AMONG SEAFARING MEN**<br>History of the training ship. | **DONATION** |
| **FIRST DAY COVER**<br>60th anniversary of our Old Boys' Association | **DONATION** |
| **BELT BUCKLE** | **R250** |
| **DVD "THE SHIP"**<br>Filmed on board during the thirties. | **R40** |
| **DVD "RED HILL 1946/47"**<br>Collection of Rex Chamber's photographs with titles and accompanying music. | **R40** |
| **DVD "SOUTH AFRICAN NAUTICAL COLLEGE GENERAL BOTHA 1954".**<br>Filmed by Barry Cullen and Chris Copeland. | **R40** |
| **DVD "THE BARQUE LAWHILL – ON WINGS OF THE WIND" A film by V.J. Penso** | **R40** |
| **MAGNETIC BADGE** | **R30** |
| **BLAZER *WIRE* BADGE** | **R100** |

**PLUS PACKAGING AND POSTAGE!**
**Note: some items in the slop chest are available from Durban branch as well.**
Cheque or postal order should be made out to "General Botha Old Boys' Association". Post to: P.O. Box 4515, Cape Town, 8000
Alternatively, the payment can be made by electronic fund transfer directly into our bank account.