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

AUGUST 2020

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AUGUST 2020

JOINT NEWSLETTER

CENTENARY CELEBRATION

SAVE THE DATES!

4-6 MARCH 2022 CAPE TOWN

MISSION STATEMENT

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

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

Enjoy the Collegial Fellowship of Old Friends and Shipmates.

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

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

S.A.T.S. *General Botha* Centenary Celebration
Hosted by S.A.T.S. *General Botha* Old Boys' Association

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S.A. Training Ship *General Botha* Centenary Celebration – Cape Town

The year 2022 marks the Centenary of our training ship's commissioning.
Although the ship is no more, we plan to have a meaningful celebration in which to; *Remember the Past, Celebrate the Present* and *Secure the Future*.
Diarise the dates and plan to come and join the celebration in Cape Town. We are looking forward to seeing you!

Programme 2022

Friday 4th March 2022:	11:00 Annual General Meeting
Saturday 5th March:	Morning: Excursion to Simon's Town to the S.A.T.S. *General Botha* display at the SA Navy Museum and the Lawhill Maritime Centre. Evening: Our major event! Commissioning Day Dinner preceded by the launch of our Centenary Book.
Sunday 6th March	Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony at the S.A.T.S. *General Botha* War Memorial.

Opportunities for Sponsorship

The planning committee's goal is to make the Centenary Celebration as self-funding as possible as well as being a fund raiser for your Bursary Fund.
There will be sponsorship opportunities for businesses or individuals such as: venue hire, transport, book launch, gift books for invited guests, media and media development, dinner event manager's stipend, sound and first aid at the Service of Remembrance and tea after the service.
Should you or your organisation be interested in helping to sponsor the celebration, please contact Tony Nicholas or Hugh James: Contact details are on the newsletter masthead.

Secure the Future - Sale of tables for the Bursary Fund

Our major fund raiser will be the sale of tables - seating 8 guests each - at the Commissioning Day Dinner with the profit going to the Bursary Fund. Further details will be given in future newsletters.

From the Bridge of Cape Town

In the era of the universal marine diesel, do we still "steam on" at "full steam ahead" or "sail on" with "all sails set" {yachtsmen and square-rigger enthusiasts still do} or simply "chug along"? What is the answer to this question? Makes one think; a welcome change from discussing COVID-19 and lockdown.
Unfortunately at time of writing our education system in South Africa is still in chaos which is not for discussion in this publication. Suffice to say that your bursary fund continues to assist your bursars and, where necessary, their household as well. Besides the remote learning Simon's Town School and Lawhill Maritime Centre are providing, LMC has also provided sophisticated tablets to the LMC scholars to facilitate their remote learning. In addition our partner in Durban, Sail Africa, is providing a classroom for the bursars who are tutored by senior students of Sail Africa. So as the saying goes; *'n boermaak a plan,* let's pray that we can salvage something of their 2020 academic year. It is very sad that the grade 12s are missing so much of the traditional last year of school fun and ceremonies.
The preparations for the S.A.T.S. *General Botha* Centenary Celebrations are well under way and if the advertisement banner on the first page is anything to go by, we are in for a top class presentation and a grand time. Further on in the UK Branch news Ted Fisher is encouraging those who will not be able to

travel to Cape Town in March 2022 for the occasion, that the Association of Old Worcester will be holding a gathering in June of the same year at Falmouth. We do encourage our members in the UK to take advantage of this gathering and support Ted and our strong relationship with the Worcester, Conway and Pangbourne Associations, and particularly if you are not able to take part in the Cape Town events. It will also be another way of celebrating our centenary.

SCRANBAG

C.F. RYCROFT 1973 #2455. Charles has certainly had an interesting career so far.

After leaving Bothie I did six months as cadet on the SA *Krugerland* with Ferdie Santana (early 1974). I resigned to join my folks and siblings in Auckland and joined Maritime Carriers, a New Zealand company as uncertified 3/O after 3 months working at a winery! I had to do another year sea time before attaining 2MFG in 1978. I was promoted to 2/O and remained with Maritime Carriers for another year, then took an 18 months OE in UK. I had one year working as 3/O for UASC general cargo and container while in UK. We returned to New Zealand in December 1980. Maritime Carriers was sold to Union Steam Ship Co in March 1983. I was made redundant but started working for New Zealand Shipping Co as DPO from May 1983 on DSV Stena Constructor - my introduction to the offshore oil and gas industry.

New Zealand Shipping Corporation kept me employed in the offshore (DSV and supply) and a Pacific Islands / Australia / New Zealand container run until the company was sold in 1989. Swire Pacific Offshore employed me as DPO for one year on their DSV's working in SE Asian/Borneo waters. Later moved back to New Zealand for local short term offshore work in New Zealand on seismic / platform supply / container vessels as Chief Officer until October 1995. It was time to start work ashore, so resigned from South Pacific Shipping to work at Napier Port Ltd as tug master / trainee pilot. Pilotage was not for me so I took on the role as Napier Harbour Master until 2010. My employers decided to restructure my role which did not suit me thus took redundancy / semi-retirement - and promptly found short term work locally in the offshore as Master on ROV and supply vessels. I also had to retrain and obtain my full DP certificate which has kept me employed with various Australian and New Zealand companies on a casual basis to date.

During the last 10 years we have luckily had the time and opportunity to travel overseas to see family and explore prior to COVID 19. Highlights for me were canal boating in France and the Netherlands, plus a 10 day visit to the Cape.

When we aren't slaving away on our lifestyle block gardens etc we enjoy exploring New Zealand mainly staying with family or friends. I also enjoy bareboat yacht chartering (Bay of Islands), lake and marine fishing (sometimes successful!) and 4 wheel driving."

G.A. ATHERTON 1980 #2681. Last we heard of Greg in 2014 he was working as Business Development Manager for a construction company in the UK. However recent Facebook posts from him tells us that he recently completed a solo sail from Antigua to Porthcawl, Wales. A total of 38 days at sea with stops in the Azores and Ireland to re-provision and avoid adverse weather. Tell us more Greg, send us your biography of your voyage of discovery.

C.I. CRANE 1986 #2876. I briefly lost Ian in the sea clutter but with the assistance of his class S&R team soon had him back on our sights. Note the below is in reverse order, as done for a CV.

Carnival U.K. Southampton Apr 04 - Jun 20 Manager Cunard and P&O Cruises. Mitsui O.S.K. Bulk Shipping Europe Ltd. London May 02 - Apr 04, Assistant Manager Car Carrier section. Inchcape shipping services Southampton Oct 00 - May 02 Port Agent. Diamond Shipping Durban Apr 98 - Mar 99 Operations manager.Tucuxi Maritime Richards Bay Jun 97 - Apr 98 Manager.Tall ships (PTY) Ltd Richards Bay Sep 95 - Jun 97 Port Agent. Centromar Shipping Durban Apr 95 - Aug 95 Port Agent. Marcanship Agency Durban Jul 94 - Apr 95 Port Agent. Rennies Ships Agency Durban Dec 92 - Jul 94 Port Agent. Centromar Shipping Durban Nov89 - Jul 92 Port Agent.Unicorn Lines Johannesburg Jul 88- Nov 89 Freight assistant. Unicorn Lines Durban Jul 84 - Jul 88 Deck Cadet.

A.R. WYATT 1986 #2895. My Mayday for Ian also brought forth the information that not only had Andy changed employers but he also changed continents some SIX years ago. This has landed him on Captain's defaulters' parade.

"1997 Moved to England and was working on the Dover Ferry Services.2002 Chief Officer with Hoverspeed - high speed ferry service Dover-Calais.2006 London Harbour pilot.

Relocated to Australia in May 2012. *The rest of his story you can read in the Australia Branch news*.

A.B.D. JOUBERT 1956/57 #2007. Our appeal for yarns for possible inclusion in the Centenary Book brought a very interesting story from Bruce. But you shall have to wait for the book to printed and launched March 2022 to read his fascinating event. In the meantime; Apprenticed with T&J Harrison Line and after obtaining second mates certificate after completion of apprenticeship joined Ellerman & Bucknall Line. 1963 obtained first mates certificate and immediately joined the RRS *John Biscoe*, a research ship operating in the Antarctic supplying the research bases. 1967 obtained Masters Certificate and returned to S.A. joining the CSIR research vessel *Meiring Naude*. 1969 went to University of Natal to study for a BSc in Agricultural Engineering. After graduating in 1974 joined the Department of Agricultural Technical Service in Pretoria. In 1979 registered as a Professional Engineer and moved to the University of Fort Hare as a senior lecturer in Agricultural Engineering. In 1993 with funding from the Anglo American foundation started the "Animal Traction Centre" at the University of Fort Hare and was instrumental in forming the "South African Network of Animal Traction SANAT". In 2005 retired as lecturer from the University of Fort Hare and was re-employed on contract by the University to manage the "Animal Traction Centre" and to act as Secretary/Treasurer of SANAT. In 2017 went on full time retirement.

I.C. LITTLE 1953/54 #1836. Ivor has been extremely busy in retirement and thus decided it was time to update us. Ivor's full and impressive career can be read on our website.

On retiring from the sea in 2001 Ivor entered into an active retirement and at various times served as National Chairman of the SA Military History Society; Acting Chairman of the South African Chapter of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission; President of the Professional and Businessman's Club of Pretoria, Chairman of the Gauteng branch of the GBOBA and Warden of the Garrison Church of Christ the King in Voortrekkerhoogte. He was also awarded the City of Johannesburg Medal of Appreciation with Bar for services to veterans whilst serving as a member of the SA Legion. At the time of writing (2020) he is the doyen ("Godfather") of the Pretoria Branch of the Naval Officers Association. He is living in Centurion with Anne, his wife of 60 years. Their three children and two grandchildren live close by and he keeps himself occupied by writing articles for various local and international publications. He is also the author of a published and well received autobiography titled "Above Board and Under Cover".

I.C.N. HARE 1967 #2300. Ian managed to cruise below my horizon for many years but I recently acquired his target on my radar.

1967-1970 Vereenigde Neederlandsche Scheepvaart maatchappij, *Randfontein, Servaaskerk, Zonnekerk, Willemskerk, Randfontein.* 1970 - Unicorn Uncertified 3rd Officer *Nahoon* and others. 1970 - November achieved 2 NO Foreign Going. 1971 - 1975 University of Cape Town Bachelor of Building Science. 1974 - 1990 Brice Bros (Pty) Ltd Contractors Surveyor, Estimator, Director. 1990 - 1992 Will G Hare CC Managing Forest Hill in Mowbray. 1991 - 2014 Hare & Liddell Construction (Pty) Ltd Estimator, Contracts Surveyor, Contracts Director. 2014 - Present (June 2020) Swartz and Umvundla Construction (Pty) Ltd Director.

K.A. TATE 1976 #2542. Kevin is part of the salvage team on site of the car carrier *Golden Ray.* She capsized September 2019 in a sensitive sound of USA.

E.W. KIRKBRIDE 1984 #2836. Unicorn Lines 1983 to 1988 Cadet & 3/O. 1988-1989 Blue Star and Lion Shipping as 3/O. 1989-1991 Nedlloyd Agencies Durban as Port Operations Agent / Johannesburg Sales Executive. 1991 Unicorn Containers Johannesburg as Transport Controller. 1991-1993 BP Shipping as 3/O and 2/O. 1996 Obtained Chief Mates at Fleetwood, UK. 1997 Swire Pacific as 3/O. 1997-1999 Souter Ship Management as 3/O and 2/O. 1999 Obtained Masters at Warsash, UK. 1999 UECC Grimsby as 2/0. 1999-2006 Bristol Port Company as Marine Officer. 2006-2010 Fleetwood Nautical Campus as Lecturer (Obtained Prof. Cert. Education). 2010-2020 Liverpool John Moores University as Senior Lecturer (Obtained MSC Maritime Operations). 2020 Formed Relative Track Limited (Self employed).

Ewan has also very kindly offered to assist our bursary fund students for which we are extremely appreciative. Please view Ewan's interactive website: Relative Track – Live face to face SQA tuition in Navigation and Stability

B-J. E. WALTHER 1983 #2821. Last I had heard from Bernd was 2002 he was working in the port of Shuwaikh, Kuwait. I sent him an email mid-May this year but no reply. Does anyone have his contact?

C.R. HELLYER 1958/59 #E9. Charles says he shall try to give us a short synopsis of his career. Well short or not, an interesting career and I am sure fulfilling.

"I was the product of many primary and two high schools before arriving at the Bothie. I had finished normal schooling in Paarl Boys High with Junior Certificate. My family lived in Saldanha Bay and were friendly with most of the military Officers up there, Cdr Chips Biermann included.
I was in the first Bothie intake of engineering cadets (E9) under Lt Guy. Bothie was a magnet for me as I wanted to follow in my brother's footsteps. When my father (BoB RAF pilot) asked me what I wanted to 'do', I had no idea. He thought I was suited to engineering. I had seen the Bothie discipline and the less attractive side of my brother's experience at Bothie. But I was still determined to follow him. I was assigned to Foc'sle and was 'selected' as batman (chum) to the now 'Old Salt' Hannes Smit (Smitty) who had been my brother's batman, and who certainly assisted me to have a better time of it at Bothie. We were in the perhaps unfortunate change-over years from Captain Legassick to Cdr. Biermann and the arrival of the first SANDF intake on the Gordon's Bay campus.
We had many great times pulling cutters and whalers and I seem to recall pulling against the S. A. Navy at Simon's Town. I hated the cutters because I was always 'bows' with the shortest space to the gunwale and hence the heaviest oars! Climbing up the GB anchor to clean and paint it on the mountain side. And one of our number catching a fairly large shark while fishing from a whaler. Many good times at Bothie. Morning PT with PTI 'Slimy Eye' Smith, lots of press-ups and Bothie hops.
As an Engineering cadet my ship visits consisted of one visit to a coal fired coaster and it's boiler room, as well as one visit to the Salt River Railway Works, both of which put me off the whole thought of going to sea. Despite our Bothie training, we would have had to do a 5 year apprenticeship with a remission of 6 months at some workshop concern like Salt River Railway Works. No chance. It would have been better to offer us a Midshipman apprenticeship at sea or further training at some sea-going establishment, even the S.A. Navy. But it wasn't to be, probably because of being the first intake to a new discipline.
My folks departed for the UK at about my time of leaving Bothie so I tagged along. My Dad having been a Battle of Britain fighter pilot, I determined to join the RAF. Unfortunately, due to only obtaining Senior Certificate from Bothie, I did not qualify for a Commission in the RAF. So I joined in the Ranks as an 'Erk'. However, having some aptitude I got a full choice of trades so went for the top trades of Airborne Radar and Radio. After the usual square-bashing camp, where I was told I marched like camel, (and I thought I was so smart at Bothie!!) I eventually was sent off to Technical training. Having signed up for 20 years, I spent almost five years in that trade in the RAF, always trying to get that illusive Commission, finishing up as a Junior Tech (one inverted chevron/lance corporal). Despite have written two GCE's in that time in English and Maths there was still no chance of a Commission. I bought myself out.
Marrying in the UK I gravitated back to South Africa as a learner official mining for Gold Fields in Ventersdorp. That was the time of the sink-holes, so decided against that idea and instead returned to my 'trade' of airborne radio and any other engineering job on aircraft at Youngsfield in Wynberg Cape Town.
After a couple of years it soon became too repetitive with no higher prospects, so tried household radio repairs in Stellenbosch. However, I was soon kicked out by the Post Office who said I was not qualified for their type of radios! RAF/military certificates did not count in the SAPO Civvy street.
I then found a job with Burroughs Machines (a US Corporate) in Cape Town fixing mechanical adding machines, but always with an eye to getting into electronic computers. My RAF electronics helped in this regard. Most of the balance of my career (over 25 years) was with that Company or as it was known by its other names, Unisys which changed to Unidata after disinvestment. I stayed with Unidata and went back to Unisys again, after they eventually reinvested when they found out that there was not going to be a 'bloodbath' here in SA. In the process our company had absorbed Memorex and Sperry-Univac Corporations as we tried to rise above the other small IT Companies, with only IBM bigger than ourselves.
I rose through the technical ranks to Technical Manager for SA on the computer side rather than mechanical accounting machines. At a point I was Engineering Branch Manager in Pretoria and bumped into my Old Salt and now friend, Hannes Smit (Smitty) who was one of my many customers. He was the then Chief Director and manager of the large government computer facility, Numerus. Small World. Thereafter, I did a few overseas postings, one Managing Yugoslavia out of Vienna Austria managing a huge computer installation (64 systems) in that Country, fortunately long before both country and computer installations disintegrated. From there I took charge of the Unisys whole of

Eastern Europe (behind the Iron Curtain) including Russia. My other 'overseas' posting was to Switzerland as that 888 Country Engineering Director, after which I returned to SA as GM Engineering and eventually Director of Customer Services for Unisys (old Burroughs) South Africa. In the process I had travelled the world and visited most continents and many countries all of which had been by air. So, I had managed to travel the world as much as I would have had I gone to sea.
At that point I had been successful enough in 'Engineering' and wished to move on. I tried Sales in Pretoria, but eventually left (after reinvestment by Unisys) and took a retrenchment package. Thereafter I had short spells in other IT Companies such as Olivetti, Infotech and National Data Systems (NDS/NCR).
I did some management consulting and had a hand in the merger between Commercial Union Insurance and Protea Insurance reverse takeover in Cape Town. I finished my career in a start-up company installing IT networks in office blocks and parks called Building Intelligence as GM and Admin Manager in Westlake, Cape Town.
For sport, I enjoyed golf and was a member of Royal Cape GC for many years before moving to Westlake GC. To this day that was one of my favourite pass-times and Westlake the nicest bunch of Gentlemen of many persuasions one could wish to meet.
I had the privilege of attending two Bothie reunions one at Gordon's Bay and one in Mossel Bay of the '58/'59 intake and if I recall also the '57's our old-salts also attending and organising.
I am currently living in Saint Helena Bay but will be returning to the UK once the Corona Virus restrictions are lifted."
J.L.D. HUSSEY 1956/57 #2032. John is another of those Bothie Boys who had the ship's motto indelibly ingrained in him. Read on.
1966 - presented with a 'Royal Human Society Silver Medal' by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, and the 'Silver Laurel Wreath and Certificate of the Queen's Commendation for brave conduct' from the British S.A. Ambassador. John Hussey saved the life of a teenage Cadet washed overboard from the s.s. Mobil Enterprise (31 456 tons) off Cape Finisterre.
1958 Joined Shell Oil Tankers trading from the Persian Gulf initially then for 3 years all over the world, carrying white oil, refined products, bitumen and crude oil.2nd Mates Certificate in Durban.
1961 Joined Shell's Eastern fleet based in Singapore, trading In Indonesia, Hong Kong, India and Singapore. Often met up with Robin Gratjios (1956/57) and Brian Gunn (1956/57). Sadly Brian lost his life in a plane crash while flying home on leave. Robin & I played water polo in Indonesia.1962 1st Mates Foreign Going Certificate in Durban. 1963 Joined Mobil - *Mobil Mariner* in Durban. 1964-65 Sasebo in Japan as part of the deck crew overseeing the building of the *Mobil Astral*, 100,000 ton crude oil carrier. 1965-66 *Mobil Enterprise*.
1st January1966 - rescued Cadet Porter in the Bay of Biscay. June 1966 Foreign Going Masters in CapeTown/Durban. July 1966 *Mobil Transporter*. Discharged 25th January 1967.1967 Studying Commerce at Pietermarizburg University but a badly broken leg prevented him continuing. 1967 July - Joined the South African Harbour Service in Cape Town. He was working in the Harbour Master's Office when the Safmarine ship, SA *Seafarer*, went aground outside Cape Town harbour.1968 Moved to Durban working in the Harbour Service and worked up to being Master on tug boats.
1971 Emigrated to Australia to take up position as pilot for the Mobil Oil Refinery at Port Stanvac near Adelaide. The crude oil vessels, up to 150,000 tons dead weight berthed at a multi-buoy mooring. This was changed to a SBM taking up to 250,000 ton DW. The product berth could take ships up to 600 feet and distributed the refined products all around Australia.1997 Retired from piloting and moved to Port Lincoln, South Australia.
John's interest in seafaring also encompassed assisting in building a timber yacht, *Sebenza*, which he sailed in Durban.He once took Michael Carrington 1976 and his brother Chris Carrington 1977, sailing in *Sebenza* around Durban Harbour. His father, Norman, was piloting in Durban at the time. In Australia he fitted out a 42 foot ferro-cement yacht which he raced but mainly cruised in the Gulf St Vincent and Spencer Gulf. He subsequently built a house on Thistle Island at the southern end of the Spencer Gulf where he was a keen fisherman and scuba dived for crayfish.
2004 John spent 3 -4 months in Cuxhaven, Germany overseeing getting *Sarsen*, a 70 meter ex Norwegian Fisheries research vessel, back in survey with all the latest navigation equipment. He was on board for initial sea trials through to the Mediterranean. *Sarsen* subsequently underwent a refit/conversion into a cruising /adventure vessel in Bangkok. John and his wife, Jinny, were fortunate

enough in joining the owner on many cruises including dive trips to the Barrier Reef and Coral Sea, trips to New Caledonia, Lord Howe Island , Vanuatu and Noumea. John dived the wreck of the President Coolidge off Espirito Santo, Vanuatu to a depth of 150 foot where he kissed 'The Lady', a marble statue on the grand staircase! The final cruise was crossing the Pacific on *Sarsen* from Cairns via American Samoa, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Pitcairn Island, and Easter Island.

S.J. PEARSON 1967 #2312. Simon, who took over your Bursary Fund Chair from Keith Burchell, writes; Cadet, Third, Second & Chief Officer with Safmarine Cape Town. Training Officer at sea with Safmarine. Navigating Officer at sea with Union Castle Passenger Service. Joined the S.A.M.N.A. *General Botha* (later the Cape Technikon) lecturing staff in April 1978. Obtained a post graduate diploma in adult education from the University of Cape Town, 1980. Studied further to obtain part A of the Master Special Grade Qualification. Has sat on various government committees and advisory boards, also served as the outside Vice President of the Society of Master Mariners of South Africa.

June 2004 retired from the Cape Peninsular University of Technology. In 1989 headed up the research and development team leading up to the establishment of the very first (in Africa) Survival Centre at Granger Bay. Continued to manage the centre and the short courses from 1990 through to retirement from CPUT in 2004. The Survival Centre was accredited with ISO 9000 status by Lloyds.

Established own company, Seatrain, facilitating the training of foreign seafarers in South Africa.

Sold Seatrain in 2016 to SAMTRA. Continued with provided short courses for the industry on demand.

Joined the teaching staff at TRU4 (previously known as SSTG) in 2015 and to date still lecturing in Marine Law and Cargo Operations.

Also provide oral exam prep for all ranks from Fishing Grades to Master's Unlimited.

Am a current member of the Society of Master Mariners (SA) and the local regional branch of the Nautical Institute. A Trustee of Lawhill Maritime Centre. Chairman of the GBOBA Bursary Fund.

E.J.P. FENECH 1975 #2494. Eric has retired to the surfing mecca Jeffries Bay.

Sailed with Safmarine until 1980 he joined the S.A. Harbour Service as First Deck Officer. 1982 to 1986 sailed with Unicorn Lines before returning to the Harbour Service. 1990 joined P&I Associates as a Marine Surveyor and in 1994 was seconded to Maputo (Mozambique) as Principal Surveyor and Manager of P&I Associates, Maputo. 1996 returned to Durban and appointed to Maritech as Marine Surveyor. 1998 went into partnership in Independent Surveyors doing Marine Surveying. 2003 with Smit Salvage. 2018 retired from AMSOL but does contracts for AMSOL.

H.S. JAMES 1967 #2306. It was a while before I realised that I had a real live Bothie Gold Medalist on my GBOBA Committee. I am honoured

Junior Cadet Captain, Gold Medalist as well as the Navigation Prize and the Medal "Neatness and Quickness off the Mark". Sailed with Safmarine for 3 years, obtaining Second Officer's Certificate. Then studied at the University of Cape Town qualifying as a teacher of science and mathematics. During his studies he sailed with Unicorn during vacations. First teaching post was at Settlers High School in Bellville and in 1984 transferred to Oude Molen Technical High School in Cape Town. Promoted to Principal of the school in 1988. Co-authored a series of science textbooks. Took early retirement at the end of 2005 and continued to work as a part-time teacher and textbook writer for several years.

From 2006: GBOBA Cape Town Branch committee secretary. From 2007: Cape Town Sailors Home committee - chairman from 2012. 2011 to 2018: Assisted one day a week at Lawhill Maritime Centre with extra science for the Grade 12s as well as for the bursars of the GBOBA Bursary Fund from 2015 to 2018. 2017 to 2020: Facilitated the Applied Marine Science component of the Officer of the Watch course at TRU4 (previously Sea Safety Training Group). Hugh writes;

"Of the prizes the one that I valued the most was for Navigation - having enjoyed the subject and worked very hard. There was also a medal for 'Neatness and Quickness off the Mark'. This came as a great surprise to my father.

Although I did not pursue a maritime career past the second mate's certificate and a few months as second mate on a coaster, I have no doubt that the year at *General Botha* and experience at sea prepared and gave me the motivation for the career that followed in education as a Science teacher and technical school principal." And so Hugh toils on; Honour and Duty.

D.H. GLUCK 1956/57 #1996. It is always good to hear from our Old Salts.

1958-1965 joined S.A.Marine. Sailed on S.A *Vergelegen*, S.A. *Constantia*, S.A. *Trader*, and S.A. *Scientist*. Failed eye test for Mates.1965-1988 joined S.A. Stevedores where Jack Clark was manager,

not only mentor but friend. Due to containerisation staff were reduced, I resigned.1988-1998 joined Cape Dairy Co-op (Bonita Dairies) Bellville as Area Manager in charge of 120 vehicles. Later reduced to 40 due to the rise of Supermarkets selling our products at reduced price. Resigned.1998-2010 joined Elzet clothing (Wynberg) as Warehouse and Dispatch manager.2010 Retired. Feb. 2013 moved to the U.K.

K.T. DOWNIE 1987 #2900. Another defaulter Ken moved continents without informing us but our Australian Chairman activated his S&R team and found Ken in Canada. He writes;

"Yes all good here - currently sitting out COVID-19, housesitting a 10 acre rural property on Vancouver Island. My wife (Canadian) and I relocated in February to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada just before COVID-19 struck. The move was prompted by me being laid off from Maersk/Hamburg Sud in January, the AU bushfires and my wife's work situation. Unfortunately not a good time to be looking for work here or anywhere in the world, as I am sure you appreciate. With Hamburg Sud I was National Marine Operations Manager for Australia, then within a few months of Maersk acquiring Hamburg Sud I switched to reporting to Maersk as Port Captain for the five AU container ports, whilst still on contract to and working at the Hamburg Sud office (not ideal)." We hope your work situation has improved by now Ken.

I.B. HARVEY 1950/51 1651. Old Salt Ian writes; "After having been retired for some 23 years I have finally decided that I would finalise my details of my time at Portnet head office in JHB." So, starting at the beginning.

1952 - 1957 - Bank Line, rising to 2nd Mate. 1958 - 1959 - Durban Lines, Chief Officer.

1959 - 1992 - Harbour Service (Portnet), Tug Mate & Master, Pilot, Assistant Port Captain & Port Captain. Transferred to Johannesburg in 1988 as Manager, Marine Operations. Promoted to Senior Manager, Marine Services, in 1991. This is the top job in Portnet's Marine hierarchy.

"Details of my time at Portnet head office in JHB.I took over from Ted Page as Director and Marine Services in 1991, about a year later Transnet was split into separate business units, we became Portnet, and I then became Executive Manager Marine Services. About a year later I took over the management of the lighthouse department which had been managed by our head office engineering office. When I retired in November 1996, I retired as Executive Manager Marine Services/Lighthouse Services."

R. MORGAN 1968 #2338. Richard has recently moved from S.A. to the U.K., I await Richard to advise his postal address and phone numbers.

After leaving Bothie joined Ellerman Lines. 1970 came ashore and joined Dulux Paint Company and in 1989 joined Plascon Paint Company. Since retired.

WILLIAM HILDYARD'S TEA SERVICE

Captain Gordon Hildyard was a Pilot in Durban and finished up as Port Captain of Port Elizabeth. His son Rodney G.B 1948/50 failed his eyesight so went into Marine Engineering, achieving one of the top positions in the Harbour Service. Rodney's son Gordon G.B. 1980 is a Harbour Pilot in Durban.

Our Bothie Boys, Rodney and Gordon, are related to a William Hildyard, being the father of Gordon Hildyard, the Port Captain.

William Hildyard was Harbour Master of Cape Town during the 2nd World War and did a bit of heroics in Cape Town and was presented with a Silver Tea Service.

Bothie Old Boy Gordon wishes to know more about who William Hildyard was, what he did, and more importantly what were the heroic deeds that he achieved in order to be presented with the Tea Service. Hopefully our membership has some buried information or a book on Table Bay Harbour history. We look forward to hearing from you.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

O.J. PEETOOM 1964. Otto passed away 11th July. He certainly is remembered as the life of the party during our 75th anniversary celebrations in 1997.

Otto left the sea at the end of 1978 as a Deep Sea Captain/Mooring Master, finishing his years at sea in the Offshore Oil Industry. He worked in S.E. Asia, Persian Gulf, West Indies and West Africa. In 1979 he started his own business, turning his hobby into a living as a professional philatelist.

J.E.C. HEWITT 1960/61. Jack sadly passed away 30th June whilst out walking at one of his favourite spots, Blackmans Bay south of Hobart.

1965 joined Safmarine as Third Officer on the *South African Victory*.

Later joined a South African subsidiary, of Royal Interocean Line, the cargo ship *Jupiter Sun*, ex *Straat Cook*, on the S. Africa to S. America cargo run.
On return to South Africa he joined the S.A.R & H., i.e. the harbour service, driving a 1936 built coal fired, twin screw triple expansion steam tug called the *TS Ericksen*.
1975-76 joined Rennies Stevedoring in Durban. Thereafter joined S.A. Container Depots as Operations Manager at their Johannesburg depot.
At the end of the contract with SACD Jack was offered a job running a couple of liquor stores in the city of East London, in the Eastern Cape before being approached by the South African Breweries, who enabled him to establish his own liquor business. Finally owning a hotel, 4 liquor stores in various locations, and a restaurant, a take away and a plant nursery. 2001 emigrated to Australia, opened businesses there and eventually became a compass adjuster after selling the businesses.
W.K. COPE 1953/54. Bill ('Ben') Cope was another student from that famous Boys' High School in Potchefstroom, the school that has produced so many leading Bothie Boys. At the *General Botha* he not only did well scholastically, winning the prize for practical seamanship, but also excelled as a sportsman, pulling in the 'A' whaler crew and forming part of the boxing team. In his senior year, he was promoted Junior Cadet Captain.
On leaving the Botha, Bill served his apprenticeship with Ellerman Hall Line, sailing in the City of Dundee and City of Philadelphia, along with Louis Nel.
After passing his second mates in Cape Town, Bill decided to give up the sea and took a job with the Metal Box Company in the field of quality assurance. He then moved through De Beers Diamond Research, the concrete division of Hume Pipe Company and then to the clay division of Stone Quarry and Crushing. A career change from cement and concrete took him to the South African Bureau of Standards where he served in their civil engineering department's minerals testing lab in Cape Town before becoming a SABS accreditation and quality systems auditor.
1995 Bill established his own company, Petro Malan Associates, Industrial Engineering Consultants, finally retiring in 2005. He was married to Jeanne and they have two daughters. Bill and Jeanne lived happily in a pleasant retirement complex in Noordhoek. Deceased 29th June 2020.
S.W. LEE-ROBERTS 1969. Stuart passed away 6th January. Previously with Safmarine.Worked 13 years for Truworths as a buyer. He was then with Miladies as joint MD and a director. He retired in Franschhoek and lived there for 25 years. When he moved to Franschhoek he bought a small farm which had lemon and nut trees. Later sold and bought in the village. Had a company called Cape Computer Labels that was in Bellville which makes all sort of stuff like wine bottle labels, medical tags, price tags for clothes etc. Later built own factory in Wellington.
M.C. CULLEN 1954/55. Mike joined S.S. *Dalia* at Cape Town in March 1956, sailed to Lourenco Marques (now Maputo) and back. Then went to Vereeniging where he had grown up and got a job with John Brown Land Boilers as an apprentice Fitter.
Met up with his wife, Beryl, who was in matric that year and they have been together ever since, married in 1960 and have 4 lovely children.
In 1959 Mike secured a position at the Union Steel Corporation as a sales clerk on condition that he played soccer for the company team in the local league. In 1963 he joined Caltex Oil Company as a sales representative.In 1966 Mike and 3 of his peers, all Sales Reps from Caltex, started a business building the canopies over petrol pumps for the oil companies. They built the canopy at a new B P Garage in Germiston and B P asked if they would like to be the operators. Mike jumped in and took up the challenge. Beryl gave up her teaching position and they ran the business together.
Some years later they decided to move to the Natal South Coast where they bought a trading store which they ran for some years.The trading store was converted to a supermarket and they opened an Estate Agency Business from the same premises.
Moved to Durban in 1980 and opened another branch of their Estate Agency in Durban.
Retired at the age of 50 and spent most of their time following the Natal and South African Hockey Teams around the country and around the world. Deceased 22nd May 2020.
K.L. van der WALT 1952/53. Ken passed away 18th May. Ken was Chief Cadet Captain in 1953 and for some strange reason was nick-named "Joe". He won the Thesen's Sextant Navigational Prize, the Safmarine binoculars for a good all-round record and the Queen's Gold Medal.
After a brief spell at sea with Safmarine he came ashore and took a job with Nestle. In 1974 he was promoted to Managing Director of Nestle Rhodesia, returning to South Africa as Marketing Manager of

Nestle South Africa. He took early retirement in 1981 and started Bookstat, Randburg Stationers, Sandton Printers and Randburg Printers before retiring permanently because of his illness. He was a keen golfer and was for a few years Chairman of the GBOBA Johannesburg Branch. He is survived by his wife Yvonne and a daughter in the Western Cape.

R.H. LOVELL 1975. Initially with Safmarine and Safocean. In 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 writes; He will go down in history as one of our Bothie Boys that achieved many different positions during his career and followed our Motto of Honesty and Duty to the letter.

M.G. NELSON 1964. Mike slipped his cable 28th February. Little is known of his career other than that he was, or owned, Knysa Hydraulics and Outeniqua Timbers. Details of his career shall be welcomed.

PAT DOWNING - Widow of Michael Foulis sadly passed away 19th May last. Pat has been one of our stalwarts over the years assisting in many respects. Pat was also the Ship Society scribe and her weekly newsletters were always informative but above all, entertaining. Her son Alastair leads the dives on our Ship in False Bay. She shall be missed.

C.D. GIBSON 1964. Clive passed away 1st August following an illness. After Bothie Clive joined Clan Line and studied at Kings College. Later with Pentow Marine, Master of the Causeway Salvor and was involved with the Single Buoy Mooring in Durban and Mossel Bay.

Our condolences to family and shipmates.

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher

The impact of the dreaded Covid-19 pandemic continues to be felt and the subject of much discussion; indeed, it seems as if this is all people talk about now! National News concentrates on matters of retail, leisure and social distancing but there is little mention of how the pandemic has affected the maritime world. The Cruise industry in particular with no ships sailing, vessels of all shapes and sizes anchored or laid up throughout the world. Who would ever have considered this would occur – one must be thankful of retirement from whatever industry in which we were eventually operating.

Having managed to secure the last flight out from Cape Town in late March we have settled into a reasonable lockdown routine, jobs being completed both on the domestic front and in recent weeks, since the easing of lockdown restrictions, we have been able to meet with local long term friends on a minor distancing situation, importantly golf has resumed.

I am able to confirm the Warsash, Rising Sun Pub, first Wednesday of the month gathering is still suspended. In conversation with the pub management they intend to re-open on 26 July, however, will only be able to host small tables with social distancing rules currently in force, and unlikely to change into September. This lunch is arranged by the local Old Conway Association.

Our Chairman Tony Nicholas has made mention of year 2022 marking the Centenary of our S.A.T.S *General Botha* Training Ship's Commissioning, the dates being Friday 4 March to Sunday 6 March 2022. I would assume many of our aging Obies may not consider a long haul to South Africa – certainly Barbara and I are unable to attend. HOWEVER, all is not lost as we have an invitation from Mr Bob Lineker, Chairman of the Association of Old Worcester's (AOW), to join a gathering in Falmouth on the 14, 15 and 16 June 2022. Like our GBOBA they too are finding, in the demographic of their membership, the opportunity of members to attend meetings/functions from within the UK and abroad appears to be declining. I, with Barbara, had the pleasure of representing GBOBA at the AOW 150th Anniversary in Portsmouth Guildhall in 2012. Attendees also came from the Nautical College Pangbourne and Old Conway Association. Indeed, a really enjoyable social gathering. Given the historical relationship between our respective organisations, Falmouth should be an event where Old Boys from the Pre-Sea Training Colleges could gather and reflect our joint heritage. Thus chaps, give it thought – travel to SA may not be possible for all, however, Falmouth would be an ideal alternative opportunity to partake in a well organised programme to no doubt include visits to local attractions. **I**

would appreciate a response from UK Old Boys, positive or negative, then I shall communicate further with Bob Lineker. Our Chairman Tony Nicholas is aware of this proposal and will be kept 'in the loop' as it all develops. Best to all, stay safe, take care, Ted Fisher GBOBA-UK Hon. Sec., tedefisher@aol.com Tele: +44 1903 744400.

Gauteng Branch – Alan Ford

No reports to the sickbay which is good news. The branch has gone into cold layup for the winter, and compounded by decrees from on high that voyaging by the elderly is frowned upon; we have mostly complied and stayed alongside.

Earth shattering news on the maritime front has been quite scarce except for regular mention of the crew repatriation problems caused by landlubber government officials all around the world. There has been a tiny sliver of a silver lining for some of the crew members, particularly the deck and engine staff on a few of the passenger busses who have had the opportunity to do some wonderful long deep sea voyages, delivering crew back to the Far East. It must have made a pleasant change from the daily hop 'n stop boring grind of Caribbean cruising. They could enjoy that wonderful blissful experience of a settled routine. No berthing stations once or twice a day, the bleeding picks could stay tucked in their holes instead of rattling up and down every day or two. Seeing a bit of proper ocean wave and weather, and having some relatively clear Sargasso weed free seas to sail through.

I just wonder how many Old Men encouraged there officers to take advantage of the extremely rare opportunity to rummage through the bridge lockers, find a sextant, if there were rumours that one was aboard, take the wax wrapping paper off, look through some Interweb articles on basic checks to refresh their minds, and actually take some sun sights and work them out on bits of paper. I suspect that that would not happen because they themselves wouldn't have a clue either and wouldn't want to embarrass themselves in front of their junior officers. With the H.E. corrections they would be using the horizons would have been as good as perfect. But I doubt it.

Probably no one got the chance to learn to manually steer a straight course at sea speed either. How are they ever going to safely enjoy the weird feeling of chasing the card without 2000 passengers complaining to the cocktail waiters why the wake is following a large curve instead of being dead straight? Having said that the sunseekers would have to notice the anomaly first, and that's not a given for a large percentage of them.

The other thought that comes to mind is the complaint that these crews have been stuck on board for Heaven forbid 5 or 6 months at a time. They have been unable to sign off, hop on a plane, and be home with the family on the other side of the world in a few hours time. Now I suspect that the real old timers reading this will have an opinion on that scenario. Did Ivor Little not spend something like 2 years on his first ship tramping all over the show? Things were different in the fifties and sixties... you had to ***get*** home first before you could ***go*** home. As I remember things in the Saf Tanka environment 6 month stints were normal, so what's the problem today? Sorry, I can't help my aged flatulent medical condition and therefore being a bit cynical in this respect. I'm sure there must be valid reasons why its' a problem. I suspect it's mostly due to expectation.

It's also a bit sad to see more and more of the prettier and older passenger ships being beached in Turkey, ready for the steel vultures with flaming arms to consume them. They will shortly be joined by the more modern bigger and uglier ones..... not so sad. Anyone want to buy an Airbus A380? Can't give them away. That too is sad. The modern dinosaurs are going extinct.

I'm glad that the daily North declination of the Sun is decreasing right now and we can soon be back in shorts and T shirts and partaking of bootlegged cold beer or dripping glasses of chilled Chardonnay.

Alan.

GBOBA Australia Branch August Newsletter

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

Firstly news from **South Australia**; Leon Strydom has now been joined by his wife Nicole in Adelaide. Between him, Gordon Hayward and Mike Carrington, there are frequent gatherings.

Here in **Western Australia** we are having another "dry" winter, although there seems to be more rain this year, than last year. I have been down to Busselton but not met David Leigh (1983) there yet. He lives in Dunsborough only a 10 minute drive from Busselton, and is happily retired. At his age he is still surfing! He managed to injure himself and I hope you make a good recovery David. At our age it

seems to take longer. This is also prime wine growing country and the only difference to the Cape is that the sea is warmer.
I was recently up in the Pilbara at both Karratha and Port Hedland. I spoke to Mike Minogue, (1989) who is based there. Unfortunately, he was in Onslow when I was there, so only got to speak to him on a number of occasions. We will hopefully meet when he comes down for some simulator training. I happened to be on the same plane home, with Richard van der Spoel (1982).
I have also spoken to Mike Rowe from Esperance who will be doing simulator training and medicals to keep his competencies current.
We seem to be weathering the Covid-19 crisis well, although our Premier is being roundly criticized for keeping Western Australian borders firmly shut. Most of us agree that he has done the right thing as we have more social freedoms than the other states in the east.
Until our next update stay well, from Andy Fotheringham, Deputy Chairman, Australia Branch.

From GBOBA, Victoria, John Sampson (#1674) 1950/51

First Trip Second Mate - It was 1955 in Cape Town when the Examiner of Master's and Mates, Captain Kenny, informed me that I had passed the Second Mate's examination. I was quietly delighted and subsequently, on the orders of Shell Tankers Eastern fleet, took passage to Singapore on the *Boissevan*, a Dutch passenger liner. Shell appointed me Third Mate of the 9,000 deadweight tons product tanker *Lotorium*, the same ship that myself and Bill "Flossie" Codrington, fresh from the Bothie, had joined In February 1952 in Cape Town.
The following months on *Lotorium* were confined to the Eastern Archipelago. This was a lot of fun since we were continually in coastal waters sailing through straits between numerous islands. The master had no option but to rely on his officers, since obviously he could not be on the bridge at all times. Consequently, I became an excellent coastal navigator but alas, never had the need to take an astronomical sight in anger.
Thirteen months passed and then to my surprise I was ordered to pay off in Singapore and join the *Dromus*, Captain McCulloch in command, as Second Mate. This was unusual. Shell usually required officers to hold a superior certificate.
Dromus had a problem with its Browns gyro compass, which two technicians endeavoured to fix during loading at Shell's Pulo Bukum refinery. Loading concluded with the recalcitrant gyro still a problem. The vessel was moved off the berth and anchored in the Eastern Roads to allow repairs to the gyro to continue. Captain McCulloch stipulated that the vessel would sail for Kawasaki at 1800 with or without a functioning gyro compass.
During that morning, myself and a Third mate, also a first tripper, arrived at the vessel on the company launch *Makota*. She had a Malay crew of two, dressed in spotless whites with the deckhand wielding a boathook RN style. I could not help thinking to myself that Bert Costick, Ernie Goff and Tackies McGee would have thoroughly approved.
Unfortunately, the gyro malfunction defeated the combined efforts of the technicians, and as promised, we sailed at 18:00 hours steering by standard compass. At noon, the following day we had the Groot Nantuna Islands abeam to starboard so, to my relief, I was able to fix the noon position by cross bearings. Just before my watch ended Captain McCulloch appeared on the bridge after his post prandial nap for some social interaction. At the end of our chat he said "By the way Two O I'll be taking noon sights with you and the Third Mate tomorrow. It's not that I don't trust you, but I'm a Member of the Institute of Navigation and navigation is my hobby. I also take evening stars with the Chief Officer". I'm not sure how I felt about this, but thought "This is going to be interesting".
Next day the three of us are on the bridge with our sextants. The altitude of the sun is increasing as the sun approaches the meridian. McCulloch says, "I think she's gone Two O". "Aye sir she's gone." I replied with great aplomb. "What do you make it." says the Master. So I tell him what I make the altitude. To this he responds, "Not the altitude - the ship's position. I make it 8 degrees 23 minutes North 110 degrees 15 East." He turned and entered the wheelhouse muttering something like "Tut Tut I don't know what the younger generation is coming to."
I think to myself "You bastard! You bastard. First trip Second Mate and you do this to me." I follow him into the chartroom, do my calculations and agree his position.
We are now in the South China Sea and I spend the rest of the watch pacing the wheelhouse endeavouring to work out how he obtained the ships position by looking at the altitude set on his sextant. As eight bells strike, I think I have an inkling of how it might be done. I can't wait to get at my

Nav books.
My Nav teacher on the Botha was Harry Pinn. He was a gifted teacher and Nav had always been my favourite subject. By the time I turned in around eight, thanks to Harry I had worked it out.
The key is the fact that the C correction from the ABC tables used during the morning Longitude by Chronometer calculation is the ratio between d. lat and d. long. So that if d. lat was 5' and the c correction 4 then d. long is 2'. So you run the morning position, through which the position line passes, up to noon and use that assumed noon latitude to calculate the noon altitude. The difference between actual and calculated altitudes is your d. lat which you apply to the run up noon latitude and then multiply the d. lat by the c correction to get d. long. This d. long you apply + or – depending on the direction that the position line runs and there you have your noon position. It is a lot to remember but after a while it becomes second nature.
Next day at noon McCulloch made no comment when I read off the ship's noon position from my sextant. He did give me quite a look - but never again mentioned it. I thought at the very least he could have suggested I put my name down for the Institute!
That same afternoon I pulled one back.The master appeared on the bridge wing as usual at 1530 and we had a chat at the conclusion of which I said, 'By the way sir, we're back steering on auto pilot." "What?" He says. "What do you mean we are on auto pilot? The gyro is stuffed and the technicians couldn't fix it." I explained that since joining and settling into my new position I had not had an opportunity to look at the gyro. I told him that I started the gyro and when it had reached its operating speed, I noticed that the compass card was slowly and continuously moving in a clockwise direction. Clearly the directional control mechanism was not operating. (In the particular model the gyro case had a small hole in it through which the spinning wheel ejected a jet of air. This jet impacted one of the faces of a small double bladed aluminium paddle. The blade moved outwards completing an electrical circuit which drove the compass card in the reverse direction until the second blade was impacted by the jet and again reversed the card's direction. So the card continuously made small oscillations).
An examination of the removed paddle with a magnifying glass showed that the copper helix which carried the electrical impulse from the paddle was broken. Repair was simple. The paddle was replaced by a new one from the spares box and the gyro re-started.
I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall as Captain McCulloch was composing his voyage report to head office. He was an excellent master and I enjoyed sailing with him.

From GBOBA, QueenslandAndrew Wyatt (#2895) 1986

In May 2012 I relocated from Folkestone Kent UK to Cairns QLD and started with Australian Reef Pilots just over 8 years ago initially doing Inner Route of GBR, Great North East Channel and Hydrographers Channel. Inner route is longest single handed pilotage in the world and typically takes about 36 hours on a 12 knot ship.

In 2015 I obtained a licence for Gove and in 2016 Whitsundays Passage and anchorages licences for cruise ships. My work was an even split between port piloting, cruise ship piloting and coastal piloting. Nice mix for me as I enjoyed the 36 hours on a bulk carrier as much as I enjoyed the port piloting and draught surveying in Gove.
In 2018 we won the contract to provide pilotage for the new port of Amrun and commenced training at the Smartship simulator in Brisbane. Obtained licence in October without having seen the wharf, all training undertaken on the sim alone. Have been working mostly at Amrun for the last two years with just the odd cruise ship when they were still operating and a two week swing to renew my reef licences 18 months ago.
However I have very happily just been let out from Amrun and write now from Yorke Island pilot house having disembarked earlier from Rolldock Star. She's nearing the end of a 2 month eco speed voyage from Barcelona to Brisbane via the Cape at 10 knots. The motor yachts in the picture have owners onboard I was amazed to learn. The boats are hooked up to electrical and sewage and apparently using more fresh water on daily wash downs than the entire ships complement of 17 are using! Getting their money's worth. They didn't know the voyage was to be at eco speed and assumed it was going to be the shorter route via

Suez. So it's taken twice as long as expected! (Pays to read the small print in a contract).
I left SA in 1997 where I had been working on harbour tugs in Cape Town and Durban. The 15 years in UK have some interesting interludes, I'll write separately about those for next edition.

THE POWER BEHIND THE SPITFIRE

Author GRAHAM HOYLAND states that the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine 'turned the tide of the war during the Battle of Britain, and then Merlin-engine bombers destroyed the Nazi war machine.' In his book Merlin: The Power Behind the Spitfire, Mosquito and Lancaster (published by William Collins) he tells the extraordinary story of the development of the remarkable Rolls-Royce aero engine that powered these iconic World War II fighter aircraft. Hoyland said: "The Second World War above all others was decided through air power: all the decisive campaigns were won or lost by piston-engine fighters and bombers. The winner would be the side that could build the most powerful and reliable aero engines. "Eighty years ago, the distinctive roar of Derby-built Merlin's was heard over the fields of southern England during the summer of 1940 as 'The Few' fought hordes of German aircraft during the Battle of Britain. Without such a powerful and reliable power unit at such a crucial time Britain would have lost the battle for the skies and the war could well have been won by the Axis powers." He revealed: "It nearly didn't happen. At the last minute a wealthy benefactress, Lady Lucy Houston, had to provide the funds for the Rolls-Royce 'R' racing engine that sired the Merlin." In response to the economic depression of 1929, the British government refused to support the 1931 Schneider Trophy air race, so it was only thanks to a generous gift from Lady Houston that the Supermarine S6B could afford to enter – and it won the race. The S6B was to be developed into the Spitfire and, said Hoyland, its engine helped the birth of the Rolls-Royce Merlin. Lady Houston also financed an expedition in 1933 to attempt high-altitude flights over Mount Everest, which were successful. Hoyland said: "Through her sponsorship of the Schneider Trophy and the Mount Everest flights she encouraged the development of enormously powerful aero engines, high-speed airframes and high-altitude aviation, all soon to be crucial in the approaching war on Germany." He added: "Lady Lucy Houston was a visionary, as was Charles Rolls. Both of them in their different ways saw the future." He said: "Once the revolution of the motor car was channelled into the evolutionary progress of his Silver Ghost he [Rolls] switched his attention to aeroplanes, and he planned to build an aero engine. His prophecies for the future of the aeroplane were accurate, including the techniques of aerial bombing, which was the eventual reason for the Merlin engine… Rolls was the golden boy of both motoring and aviation. "Without Rolls the Rolls-Royce Merlin probably would never have been built, and, maybe, the Battle of Britain never won.

TAILPIECE - The Importance of Accuracy in your Tax Return

SARS has returned the Tax Return of a man in Vereeniging due to his answer to one of the questions: "Do you have anyone dependent on you?" The man wrote: "4.2 million illegal immigrants. 1.1 million druggies, 28.6 million unemployed, 245 000 criminals in overcrowded prisons plus 550 idiots in Parliament, thousands of "retired politicians" and "military veterans" and the former President's 5 wives and 24 children."
SARS replied stating that the response he gave was "unacceptable."
The taxpayer response to SARS was "Why? Who did I leave out?"

TAILPIECE - MARQUARD

Anyone wishing to visit Old Boy Jannie Gous GB 1958/59 should know a little of the town's history to impress our Old Boy. In days gone by, Marquard was fenced in and there was a night-watchman who would guard the four gates at night. There was only one tap to serve the whole town, and legend has it that a local clergyman's horse learned how to open this tap at night to drink from it, but, of course, couldn't close it, causing the town's reservoir to run dry.The town has a colourful history, with tales being told of a stock auction at which a lion was put up for sale, with a fox terrier being added to the lot to increase its value. Oom Schalk Greyling bought the pair for 10 pounds, and then got into the habit of spreading a story that the lion had escaped, much to the consternation of the villagers!