SATS *General Botha* Old Boys' Association

AUGUST 2021

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JOINT NEWSLETTER

CENTENARY CELEBRATION

SAVE THE DATES!

4-6 MARCH 2022 CAPE TOWN

MISSIONSTATEMENT

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

Celebrate the Arrival and Commissioning of the South African Training Ship *General Botha* and to honour her benefactors, together with all those who trained in her as Ship, College and Academy and who fulfilled their legacy ofhonourable 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 youngSouth 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. TRAINING SHIP *GENERAL BOTHA* CENTENARY CELEBRATION CAPE TOWN 2022

MISSION

Remember the Past

Celebrate the Present

Secure the Future

www.generalbotha.co.za

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Booking forms for the Celebration will be emailed early in September.
At the beginning of July, we emailed members about the arrangements we are making to celebrate the Celebration. The following is a summary of that notice:
Likelihood of Restricted Travel - While we hope that there will be exceptions, we strongly doubt that international travel to South Africa will be operating in time for most Old Boys outside of South Africa to make travel arrangements for the Celebration in March 2022.
Hybrid Events (in person as well as online) - To overcome the possibility of restricted travel, we shall hold hybrid events that can either be viewed online wherever you are, or you can attend in person.
Live Streaming: Events will be streamed live as well as be available to view afterwards. Full details explaining how to log in will be advertised nearer the time.
Limited in-person Attendance: If you can do so, there will be opportunity for you to attend each event in person, but Covid restrictions and venue size may limit attendance. The capacities of venues given below are for Covid Level 1 restrictions – the lowest level − in South Africa.

PROGRAMME

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be a live webinar on Zoom, and with limited physical attendance.

Date: Friday 04 March 2022
Time: 11:00 (GMT+2). Logging in will commence at 10:30
Venue: The Grill Room at Kelvin Grove Club, Claremont. **Capacity under Level 1: 60**

Light refreshments will be provided after the meeting for those attending in person.

GB CENTENARY CELEBRATION

We shall celebrate the SATS *General Botha* and Remember the Past, Celebrate the Present and Secure the Future. Masters of ceremonies will host a fast-moving event of pre-recorded videos, photographs, and interviews. The event will be streamed live for those who cannot attend in person.
Cost: Whether you attend online or in person, you will be asked to contribute to defray expenses.

Date: Saturday 05 March 2022.
Time: 11:00 (GMT+2). Logging in will commence at 10:30.
Venue: The Ballroom at Kelvin Grove Club, Claremont. **Capacity under Level 1: 100**.
Lunch: The cost for those attending in person will include lunch after the event.

WAR MEMORIAL SERVICE – will be streamed live.

The annual Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony will be held at the SATS *General Botha* War Memorial.

Date: 10:00 (GMT+2) Sunday 06 March 2022, Log in from 09:45.
Venue: Corner of The Heerengracht and Hertzog Boulevard.
Maximum capacity under Level 1 regulations: 500.
Refreshments will be available after the service at another venue still to be arranged.

The GB Centenary Planning Committee looks forward to your participation in the Centenary weekend!

FROM THE BRIDGE OF SS *CAPE TOWN* – Tony Nicholas (Chairman)

It is indeed unfortunate that at the time of writing certain areas of South Africa has been subject to serious social unrest over the past week. However we are happy to report that all our members, our bursary students and their families are all safe as far as we can ascertain. Although they, and indeed the rest of the country, shall feel the after effects for some time their resilience has come to the fore. Our thoughts and prayers are with those affected and we shall assist wherever we are able and required, in the meantime we have purchased phone data for all the bursary scholars to enable them to communicate with us and Lawhill Maritime Centre.

The initial rush of orders for our Centenary Book was encouraging but this has unfortunately slowed, almost to a stop. Only 22% of our planned print run has been ordered at the time of writing. I expected far higher interest and look forward to the next rush of orders. Honour and Duty must prevail. In the invoices I sent I clearly indicated that when making your payment your individual reference is: Book Name Name - i.e. Book, your surname, your first name. Hell bells, one of the first payments simply states; THE LEGEND - now how am I expected to match that payment to someone?

On a closing note all please take note that I shall be on leave during the month of September. Kathy and I shall be travelling mostly in the desert region of the Northern Cape and therefore mostly self isolated. As added protection and peace of mind is that we have both been vaccinated against the rampant COVID-19. Therefore my email address shall be unattended for a few weeks. As an alternative please contact Hugh James whose detail appears in the header of this newsletter. Stay safe all.

The SATS *General Botha* and a Century of Honourable Duty.

As everyone knows by now we are publishing a book as part of the Centenary Celebrations and this shall be available soon. The book, titled ***"The Legend Lives On"*** is being published in two editions: the "Library" edition and the "Standard" edition, both with identical content in full colour, abundantly illustrated and enriched throughout by yarns from dozens of Bothie Old Salts. ONLY 100 copies of the "Library" edition shall be printed. We are pleased to offer you a pre-publication special price of R700 for a Library Edition or R500 for a Standard Edition. Please note that this price EXCLUDES packaging and postage.

This book explains why the legend of the Ship and her Old Salts lives on. It is a book that celebrates a century of honourable duty performed with distinction, it salutes the past and anticipates the future, revealing the essence of a truly South African maritime story - a great legendary saga to be told and retold, never to be forgotten while South Africans go down to the sea in ships.

Pre-publication order deadline 30th August 2021.

For orders and enquiries email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

For Old Salts without email, phone: +27 82 555 2877 - alternatively write to the Cape Town postal address listed in the header of this newsletter.

SCRANBAG

A.C. RATHBONE 1972 #2423. I still have Alan in Kwa-Zulu Natal but the galley wireless suggests he is in Australia. Does anyone know his whereabouts?

W.J. LANHAM PARKER 1968 #2336. Most know him simply as Joe Parker. I remember seeing Joe perform on stage in the Lonsdale Hotel, Durban, whilst on honeymoon. Joe is now in London and says he is studying again.

R.B.O. HELLYER 1956/57 #2002. I first met Richard when we were both seconded from Safmarine to the RoRo Service. 1958-1963, Union Castle Line to cadet to 3NO. 1966passed Private Pilot's License,Youngsfield Cape Town.1964 to 1967, SA Navy to Lieutenant, also CNO certificate and Master FG in South Africa and sailed with Rennies Coasters to Master. Then Swazi Ship as Marine Superintendent, Chrysler SA. Pretoriaparts manager, Brian Porter Cape Town,parts manager, Atlantic Trawling fishing HoutBay, Marine Superintendent, Rennies Stevedores Durban. Cargo superintendent, SAECS/Transatlantic Joint RoRo service on the SA coast, cargo superintendent, with Safmarine and finally Marine Manager, Safmarine London Office, until close down. Then established himself as Safmarine's Big White passenger services manager, UK as well as Pentow UK agent. When Safmarine discontinued passenger services, retired. Since then has spent many hours volunteering with restoration of WW2 Royal Navy vessels.

M.C. HARTWELL 1980 #2715. Malcolm very kindly assisted the Association recently for which we are grateful. As a result I finally obtained detail of his fascinating career which would be a fascinating book one day.

"I went to sea with Safmarine starting out on the *SA Virgin Legion* in 1979 with Guy Davies, Lionel Archer, Bruce Anderson, Andre Kruize, Neil Hannaford, Greg Atherton, Mike Kelderman, Herschelle Bennet, Greg Filies and Peter Yon. Our TO was the ultimately laid back Alan Hansford for the first trip who was replaced by Roy Martin for the second trip which was marked by Roy's enthusiasm for a naval approach to discipline and a rigid approach to academics.

Unfortunately, my first trip was marred by youthful indiscretion in our first foreign port being Singapore. A bunch of us dressed in our number ones managed to get on board the QE2 which was berthed nearby and had a grand tour of that amazing ship. On the way back to the ship, we collectively (I blame Archer actually) thought it would be a good idea to add a QE2 sign to our ship's bar paraphernalia. It was my turn to carry the sign when the Singapore Port Authority Police found us walking back to the ship. I was interviewed the next day by the station commander who, rather strangely at the time, asked me a lot of questions about my family before releasing me with a warning. My shore leave was stopped for the entire coastal period which was rather distressing as we had several days in Hong Kong, Kowloon and several Japanese ports before spending two weeks is Yokohama loading heavy lifts.

Some years later when I told my father about the Singapore misfortune, he advised me that he knew all about it. After WW2 he was stationed with the Warwickshires in Malaysia and commanded a platoon that spent months on patrol in the jungles during that country's war of independence. He had received a letter from the station commander in Singapore to advise that he had let me off with a warning rather than a caning only because he had served with my father in the British Army.

I was fortunate during the rest of my cadet time to spend a lot of time on the fruit ships and general cargo ships on the Far East and States run.

I remained at sea until 1988 when I resigned after obtaining my Masters. Amongst the highlights were serving as TO on the *Vergelegen* along with lengthy repeat trips to the States' east coast on the *Sea Transporter* and *Venture*.

I was introduced by a family friend to Manley Kapelus who was then senior partner at Deneys Reitz, one of the big four law firms in South Africa with a large shipping department. I went to ask for his advice on what shoreside prospects there were other than becoming a stevedore foreman or surveyor. As Manley recounted years later, he thought I was an interesting young man and he told me that I needed to get a law degree and then come and see him. He never expected to hear from me again. I read for a BA with majors in English and law and then for an LLB at the University of Witwatersrand from 1989 to 1993. I contacted Manley again and asked him what I needed to do next and his reply was; "Well, I suppose you better join us in Durban". I served my articles in the Durban shipping team and have been with the firm ever since. On admission, I was made partner, due to my advanced age and experience.

Most of my practice revolves around casualty work. I have been involved in most of the casualties off this coast and the Indian Ocean over the last 25 odd years. We generally act for the insurers of the cargo or the Hull & Machinery insurers of the ship and the P&I Clubs that carry the ship's liability.

I have had the privilege with working with many of the contacts I made at sea including Jon Lamberg, Nic Sloane, Mike Riddell and Rob Swier. As the members are all aware every casualty is different which makes life very interesting.

Highlights include an idyllic month in Mauritius following the grounding and subsequent CTL of a bulk carrier full of rice which had sought refuge in a small bay in the North of Mauritius. Unfortunately, the Master didn't check the provenance of the soundings which reflected there was sufficient water for him to safely anchor while they carried out main engine repairs. The soundings were based on a survey carried out in 1890 since when the coral reefs had grown at their usual several centimetres a year and conspired to tear the bottom out of his ship when he entered the bay.

I also attended on a number of groundings in the River Plate which is notorious for its shifting sandbanks and for the salvors that lie and wait for unfortunate vessels that find those sandbanks.

My practice has taken me to arbitrations in New York, London and Singapore and to litigation in many other jurisdictions.

In one case I acted for the Egyptian government following the arrest of one of their ships in South Africa in order to secure claims for damage to cargo discharged in the DRC. Amongst other things, this gave me two weeks in Cairo consulting with my client's witnesses in advance of a successful London arbitration hearing. The Chairman of the company, hearing I was at a loose end one Sunday, arranged a private tour of the library at Alexandria for me which really was quite remarkable.

Something which struck me the other day is how the causes of full speed groundings have changed in the last few decades. My first one was on a little refrigerator vessel, the *Astor,* which ran from Cape Town to the Indian Ocean Islands. I acted for the second officer in a then Department of Transport hearing. He was the first trip officer of the watch having only recently acquired his Second Mates ticket. He was concerned about the duty he might have to pay on a case of beer that he bought in Mauritius to share with his shipmates the night before landfall so finished off the case before proceeding up to the dreaded midnight to 04h00 watch. He promptly fell asleep and accordingly failed to alter to port when the ship made landfall near Port St Johns. The first responders found a line of locals carrying beds, furniture and radars to their hillside huts.

In a similar jolly jack vein, another vessel who shall remain nameless was a brand new multi-purpose vessel filled with a power station bound for Kenya which ran aground in clear weather at full speed near Mazeppa Point. There was no mechanical failure and the grounding was subsequently attributed to the Master and second officer being involved in an intimate clinch on the bridge when the former should have been altering course to starboard.

Recently, I acted for the owners of the bulk carrier that ran aground at full speed in Mauritius. It transpired that neither alcohol nor any other of the traditional seafaring weaknesses were responsible for the grounding. It seems that the officer of the watch wanted to approach close to the coast so that he could pick up wi-fi signal to get hold of his family. Symptomatic perhaps of the modern generation of seafarers.

Deneys Reitz morphed into Norton Rose Fulbright which is a global firm consisting of about 4,000 lawyers in 51 different countries. I currently head up the transport team and shipping team of Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa Inc. Although casualties have been a bit quiet of late, I still thoroughly enjoy my work and the privilege of dealing with South Africa's and the world's leading shipping lawyers. One of those was Malcolm Wallis who was a senior advocate at the Durban Bar before going to the bench where he currently sits as a Judge in the Supreme Court of Appeal, our highest commercial court. Rather unkindly, I think my partners refer to him as clever Malcolm in order to distinguish him from me.

One of my first legal mentors, Rob Greenhalgh was the head of the shipping team at the time and his laconic response to any successes of mine was to remark that; "you see Malcolm, this is proof that even a blind pig can find the odd truffle.".

Shipping law is fascinating, not only because of the characters involved, but because every case is different and during any one month, I will be called upon to provide advice and solutions relating to

disputes under South African, English, Chinese, American, French or other law. It is also intellectually challenging which helps keep my interest.
During my time at what is now Norton Rose Fulbright, I was admitted as an attorney of the High Court of South Africa and as a solicitor of the Courts of England and Wales. I served as President of the Maritime Law Association and am currently on a number of its technical sub-committees. I am proud that our shipping team is consistently ranked in Legal500 and Chambers as a leading team and was pleasantly surprised last year to be listed by Legal500 as one of the leading shipping lawyers in South Africa." *Bravo Zulu Malcolm*.
W.J. LEES 1954/55 #1891. Recent communiqué from Wally brought us his interesting account.
"In 1956 I joined the *Perthshire* in Durban only to find out that when I went for my medical I had Hepatitis and was unable to join them.The Shire Line was owned by Clan Line.Two months later I joined the *Lanarkshire* a refrigerated ship, and spent most of my apprenticeship on this ship, sailing between South Africa, Europe and the UK. After that I joined the *Clan Alpine.* I did a trip to India and East Pakistan as 4th Officer. I sat for my 2nd Mates Certificate in Liverpool. I then joined the Springbok Line *Rooibok* which was part of the Clan Line, as 3rd Officer. I resigned in Durban but was asked to remain on board as 2nd Officer. I sailed up to Beira. I then sailed to Cape Town where I finally resigned. Then I joined a Stevedoring Company, African Associated. After that I joined Royal Interocean Lines in 1961 and ended up as Marine Superintendent.I worked at Royal Interocean Lines for 9 years and was approached by the Old Mutual to join them. I was with them for 9 years and after that started my own business, Induscor. I retired 3 years later at the age of 52.My hobbies are photography, golf, bowls and fishing."
P.D. MURRAY 1981 #2726. At long last I prevailed on David to update his bio with us, he writes;"Was raised in various port cities in South and South West Africa (now Namibia) including Durban, Walvis Bay and Port Elizabeth following my father around as he was transferred between various port cities having joined the SAR&H. Matriculated from Alexander Road High School in Port Elizabeth in 1979 and went straight to sea on the Safmarine cadet ship SA *Vergelegen*, determined to follow in my father's footsteps. Over the next ten years served on general cargo vessels, container vessels and bulkers with Safmarine, until ending my seagoing career as Chief Mate on the salvage tugs *John Ross* and *WolraadWoltemade*.
Studied for Masters at SAMNA *General Botha* in Granger Bay in 1991 and subsequently came ashore with Safmarine in the cargo planning department. Was poached by Pentow in 1992 in view having tug experience and filled various roles from Marketing to Towage and Salvage Coordinator. When Smit of Holland bought out Pentow in 1999, was promoted to Business Unit Manager; Transport and Heavy Lift reporting to the Divisional Director in Holland. Involved in all the major salvage operations on the South African coast in the early 2000's including the *Treasure, Ikan Tanda, Jolly Rubino, Sealand Express*, etc. Served with Pentow in its various guises of Pentow Marine, Smit Pentow Marine, Smit Marine South Africa, Smit Amandla and am now Business Unit Manager Offshore Marine Services with AMSOL having been part of the leveraged management buyout in 2018, and now also a shareholder in AMSOL. In 2020 celebrated 40 years' service in the various Safmarine / Pentow Marine guises. Presently accountable for offshore marine services offered by AMSOL managing contracts in South Africa, Mozambique and Namibia, which includes the management of the Government contracted coastal protection tug *SA Amandla* ex *John Ross*. Sits as a Trustee on The Lawhill Maritime Education Trust and on the GBOBA Committee.
David also included a more detailed bio of his late father for us.
P.D. MURRAY 1952/53 #1784. Peter **s**ailed five years with Blue Funnel Line which included attending the Outward Bound School in Aberdovy. In 1958 he joined Safmarine as Third Officer and 5 years later joined the S.A. Habour Service. Served in various ports around the country on dredgers and tugs as well as harbour pilot. 1988 became Assistant Port Captain of Richard's Bay until retirement in 1993. Since 1967 has been involved with the Mission to Seamen Institute in each port that he served. On retirement he was appointed manager of the Mission to Seafarers in Port Elizabeth and served with pride giving back to seafarers until it was forced to close in 2010. Passed away suddenly and unexpectedly on 27 October 2020.
G.A. CELLIER 1977 #2582. A Facebook response to a class mate initiated our Search and Rescue to finally locate this AWOL Bothie Boy living on the paradise island of Hawaii.

"After a successful 2 years with Safmarine and being awarded the prize for Best All-Round Cadet at Bothie, I went into forestry and studied at Stellenbosch University, University of Washington and University of Kwa-Zulu Natal where I earned my Ph.D. I have lived in Hawaii for 25 years.Previously CEO of Forest Solutions International LLC." It is amazing where we find our alumni.

K.J. SHIRLEY 1967 #2315. Ken recently sailed from our Cape shores for the temperate climate of Kwa-Zulu Natal. 1968 to 1979 Safmarine - Cadet to Chief Officer.1979 - Trident Marine - Operations Manager. 1980 - 1981 SAR&H First Deck Officer.1983 - Master Tugs & Dredgers. 1988 - Nautical Assistant Portnet Head Office. 1991 - Harbour Master/Pilot Mossel Bay. 1993 - Port Manager Mossel Bay. 1995 - Deputy Port Captain Durban. 1998 - Marine Manager Durban. 2000 - Operations Director Maputo Port. 2010 - Port Authority Director Maputo Port. Previously based in Mossel Bay for 4 years as Harbour Master, Pilot and Port Manager.2008 appointed Port Authority Director, Port of Maputo.2013 retired to Cape Town, working for BMC Africa on port projects.2016 Port Captain in Port d'Ehoala Fort Dauphin Madagascar.2016 - 2019 Port Operations Advisor Port d'Ehoala. Then retired.

B.I. DAWKINS 1982 #2757. Brian alias "Doc" resides somewhere in the Cape, at least when he is ashore. "I'm still at sea and since we were last in contact I've been serving as Captain/OIM (Offshore Installation Manager) on Seadrill's rigs and floaters.I somehow survived the cull in the oil industry since 2015 and am currently (May 2021) on board a laid-up rig alongside Tenerife awaiting reactivation once C19 and the oil slump ends.

Loving life - spent 11 years in Knysna but have moved back to Cape Town now that the kids are in Varsity and am once again enjoying all it has to offer."

C.P. SUTTON 1983 #2816. Chris was planning to relocate to the Isle of Mud from where he shall continue to work out of Grindrod London office. I had to Google that, appears there really is an Isle of Mud. Presently I know not his course and speed.

G. BALL 1981 #2735. "After my 3 years in Safmarine ending in 1983, I completed the following: SA Navy 3 years Permanent Force Finance Branch. PicknPay 8 years Retail Branch Manager. OK Bazaars. 4 years Retail Branch Manager. Shoprite Checkers 24 years Retail Branch Manager and Claims Assessor. I have retired officially in March this year." Greg was planning to move from Cape Town to Mossel Bay; we look forward to your update Greg. Where are you now?

T.A.L. WHITTLE 1984 #2854. Tim suddenly went AWOL but our search and rescue team managed to haul him back on board again.

1987 - 1989 Lever Brothers, Maydon Wharf, Durban. 1989 - 1991 Rhesco Engineering Supply Co, Durban. 1991 - 1992 Self Employed - Tinseltown Graphic Design. 1992 Moved to Northern Ireland.1992 - 1997 Sales Engineer, Pegler & Louden Ltd. 1997 - 2002 Business Development Manager - Ireland, St Gobain Pipelines plc. 2003 - 2003 General Manager, Ulster Tubes Ltd. 2003 - 2016 General Manager / Managing Director, BM Heat Services Ltd. 2016 - 2021 Sales Manager - Ireland, Börger UK Ltd. 2021 Country Manager, Ireland, AVK UK Ltd.

B.A. WADE 1984 #2851. Bruce left Unicorn Lines in 1986 to get into the computer world. After graduating from the Van Zyl and Pritchard Computer Academy he got a job at AECI as a programmer. Just 4 years later Bruce was married and living back in Cape Town working at various fashion retailers in IT Finance & Logistics. He then moved to the international stage with IBM and later JDA as an Implementations Manager. In 1989 he started his own business and has since developed a vast skill in entrepreneurial and business skills. Bruce is currently the director of two companies and a member of the Professional Speakers Association of Southern Africa. Bruce is an Innovation Adventurer and Story Engineer and gets to talk on stages around the globe on strategy and innovation promoting his books and business models.

M. LIPOWSKI 1980 #2694. Marek tells us that he has recently retired to the relaxed country life. Joined Safmarine in 1979. Resigned 1986 as Second Officer. Joined Department of Environmental Affairs and sailed on m.v. *Agulhas* and r.v.*Africana* as Chief Officer. Resigned in 1988 and joined De Beers Marine. Obtained Class 1 certificate in 1991 and promoted to Relief Master in 1992. Promoted to Master in 1994. 1996 sailing as master on m.v. *Douglas Bay* engaged in diamond prospecting off Sierra Leone, West Africa.

1994 till 2020 sailed as master on De Beers Marine South Africa and Debmarine Namibia vessels *Douglas Bay, Grand Banks, Coral Sea* and *DebmarPacific*.

D.A.P. PISTOR 1964 #2249. We now find Dieter in England after a stint in Hamburg.
Previously a cargo surveyor in Durban. In June 2008 joined Beluga, situated in Bremen, as senior ships planner. When Beluga went into liquidation joined the newly formed company Hansa Heavy Lift as Senior Ships Planner, also based in Bremen. The company subsequently moved to Hamburg. Contract with Hansa Heavy Lift ended in May 2015. Then relocated to London, continued working as a freelance cargo Superintendent. 2021 undertaking the Administration & book keeping for a merchandising supply company, situated in London.
B.J. SMITH 1974 #2489. Barry's brother, Chris, managed to establish comms with Barry recently. Barry is fighting forest fires somewhere in Alberta or somewhere bizarre like that. Amazing where Bothie Boys get to.

AWOL

Johan Juselius 1974 last known in Kwa-Zulu Natal. A class mate managed to contact his daughter but at the time of writing no news of Johan.
Tim Whittle 1984 last know somewhere in the UK. Despite some leads from class mates Tim has not responded to me.
Find them and report back to Head Office.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

V.F. HOLDERNESS 1955/56. Vic, as he was widely known, passed away 3rd June 2021 at the age of 81. Vic served with Shell Tankers until 1960 when he had reached the rank of Third Officer. He then joined the S.A. Navy from where he finally retired with the rank of Rear Admiral (JG) in 1989. During his career Vic qualified as a Submariner with the badge #9. A proud achievement.
R.J.C. POERNER 1948/49. Rene passed away peacefully 8th July 2021. After Bothie Rene sailed with Safmarine and later in life was a director of Torque Tool in Johannesburg. Rene shall always be remembered for his unwavering support of the OBA hosting many functions in his home in Johannesburg. Tom Fraser writes; "I will always remember the vibrancy, energy and warm friendliness of Rene' and Karen Poerner, who together were an amazing couple and a powerful team.I will also always remember Rene' as one of the JHB resident GBOBA members who over the 40 years that I knew him, never missed an annual commemoration lunch. In more recent years as the active JHB resident GBOBA community steadily shrivelled to a point, at which it was no longer feasible to hold our annual Commemoration luncheons in a restaurant, Rene and Karen made their home available to us.We had wonderful Commemoration lunches there that were filled literally with sunshine and laughter and good times, as old comrades getting together should do.Rene' our dear friend, may your soul rest in peace.I look forward to joining you and seeing you again one day in the future, in that great place up there in the sky.Pat and I send our love and deepest condolences to Karen and Rene's family."
P.C. LANGSTON 1986. Sadly Philip passed away 26th July of COVID-19 complications which he reportedly contracted in Walvis Bay. 2014 Technical manager with Svitzer working out of Milford Haven and 2019 technical superintendent at Svitzer Angola.
Our condolences to family and shipmates.

DAVID MACCALLUM'S 1957/58 LEGACY.

Stephen Clarke 1957/58 writes; your regular Newsletter brings its usual mix of joy and sorrow. For all of which I beg your continued perseverance and exemplary standards.
This time, the sorrow arises at the passing of David MacCallum.
Dave and I were in the ‘A’ crew of ’58 and, looking at the rogues’ gallery of old photo’s where the ‘A’ Crew have pride of place, I see that there are only three of us left. Alas, Sidney Stigant, ‘JJ’ Judd and now David MacCallum have all gone and we are bereft.
Dave pulled Stroke for us in the fateful ‘dog’s leg’ race against the South African Navy at Saldanha Bay, back in ’58. I don’t think PTI Smith ever forgave us!! Sidney, pulled second stroke, Donald Forbes was a’midships and JJ and I were in the bows. Dave de Wet screamed abuse at us all the way, from the stern. Sweet memories are made of this!
Probably unbeknown to him, David MacCallum left one unlikely legacy, however. Early on in our senior year, when we were both Senior Cadet Captains, I complained at the loss of sleep that I was

experiencing, as the SCCs had to bunk down on the Chums' deck to keep order. David volunteered the following advice for a good night's sleep;
Lie on your back, and then take in ten full, slow intakes of breath and exhale very, very slowly each time. After about nine breaths, he prophesied, you should be asleep.
It worked for me that night, and has continued to do so for every night thereafter! 62 years of perfect slumber (so far) are David's legacy for me. Good on ya', Dave! I won't be forgetting you in a hurry! Greetings to all!"

***ALAN*G BEACH**(Gauteng)

Since last we spoke I was able to make a deal with the Yard Manager Dada Toni Nikleesh and his admin wallah Dada Dinesh Henwiddie for some of the kit which came off the old SS Gauteng before she succumbed to the torches of Hades. These kind old gentlemen allocated me an empty 20ft container on top of a 3 high stack way up at the back of the beach. In there I have the old bridge pilot chair, half a pair of binoculars, the kettle and black pan, and the bed out of the sickbay. Access to this stunning penthouse suite is by rotten pilot ladder. From this vantage point I can leave the doors open and survey the entire maritime industry as far as the eye can see. Visiting scribes are welcome for a cup of chai or cold toddy. Should I come under attack from disgruntled readers, a swift chop of the fire axe will send the manky ladder crashing to the ground and I shall remain unassailable, until one of the kind old Dada's take pity on me and comes to my rescue.
So let the pontification begin!.... but before that....sad news.
A stalwart of the old inland branch Rene Poerner 1564 '48/'49 passed away after a long illness in July. He and Karen always supported our functions and graciously hosted the last couple of them at their home. There are so many adjectives one could use to describe Rene, but for me, as I had come to know him, he was a quite kindly gentleman, without airs and graces who could relate equally well to young and old Bothie boys. We had many pleasant discussions in their garden about chillies, strawberries, and how to repair broken underground sewers. He was proof that Old Salts of his day eventually mellow with time and become lovable old characters. My condolences go to Karen and family on behalf of the old Gauteng Branch members in particular, as well as the rest of the GBOBA members and spouses all over the world. We log RFAOP for him in the Bothie Logbook and Bon voyage.
We have just recovered from the jolly green monster issue in the furrow, when another noteworthy maritime mishap occurred with another boxie, albeit a much smaller one, but more spectacular In Guy Fawkes Day terms as we knew the annual event as kids. The X-Press Pearl caught alight for some reason and within a few days ended up as a heap of rusting scrap lying in 21 metres of water off the Colombian coast.
As with any armchair analysis of situations like this, one comes to a conclusion that there are some questions to be asked as to why things panned out the way they did. Maybe those questions arise because we are not playing with a full deck of cards, and don't understand all the facts that were potentially taken into consideration which resulted in the way the scenario played out. We can of course surmise what factors were in play, and offer a potentially better outcome had we been calling the shots. That is what armchair critics do best, so let's go for it.... and hopefully the wise and knowledgeable amongst our readers can throw some light on a few points.
One of the first questions I ask is how are the bilge stripping lines in a ship of that size specified when it comes to pumping rate. Are they designed to cope with the very significant tonnage of water which could be drizzling down amongst the hot boxes from the fire monitor spray of the various types of OSVs and workboats which miraculously arrive on scene like tow trucks at car crash? Or are they just designed to cope with rain water and wave splash and maybe a very small fire (whatever that may be). Has any thought gone into the design of the strum boxes to make them less "clogable" with debris from fires?
Then there is the factor of time frames. If the engine room can't strip the water out of the bilges as fast as it's coming in from the tugs, OSV's, fireboats or whatever, how long does the Master have before flooding and free surface effect becomes a serious issue. A fast burning deep seated fire can also convert a very significant mass of material to smoke in a short space of time thus also negatively affecting the ships stability. So how could the potential pump out time available to the fire crews be increased. This is where my main thoughts on the quality of seamanship take front of stage.

It was evident in this case that the seat of the fire was maybe one third of the way down from the bow of the ship. The ship was at anchor in 20 something metres of water. She was either lying wind rode or tide rode or both I don't know, but the old man and his head office puppeteers and the fire fighters would surely know. This meant that the entire accommodation block was in the path of dense toxic smoke which would have resulted in the requirement to timeously disembark the ships compliment, which includes the engineers who would have been looking after pumping and power generation. We as South Africans who grew up regularly standing around braai fires, automatically know that the trick is to try (usually unsuccessfully) for us tong wielders to get up to windward of the partially combusted vapours from the wors, chicken marinade and damp wood. Why then does this concept of at least ***trying*** to attempt keeping the working part of the ship up to weather and functioning as long as possible, seem foreign to these various other nationalities who are found commonly at sea today. Probably because they don't braai. But Google translate tells me that there is a word in Russian, барбекю , or barbekyu so maybe there is no excuse.

So what could we have done? Pure conjecture I agree, but with the few and I dare say incomplete set of facts or observations at hand, there were a couple of options to get the stern up into the wind as soon as possible. Firstly get rid of the deployed pick and chain PDQ if access to the foredeck and chain locker is still an option. Sub questions... are tools generally available onboard to free up the bitter end, where are those tools stored, and is the bitter easily accessible in a full chain locker?

If the foredeck access was not a proposition, then the ship could still have steamed up wind and manoeuvred the stern out of the direct smoke drift vector as best as possible. I can't think of a reason why a marine diesel can't continue to run full astern for a long time to assist in this strategy.... steam turbines if they are still around, not so much, and rather ineffective.

While such jiggery pokery could have been going on one of the big POSH tow trucks which was called out, could have attached a tow line to the stern and assisted the ship to stay stern into wind. That would at least have given the engineers a few more hours to try to reduce the rate of water level increase in the holds.

If getting the accommodation block out of the smoke under the ships own power was for some reason not accomplished in time then the options for success would be seriously curtailed. Perhaps the navy could have got out there with a Checkers packet full of C4 and blown the anchor cable, hopefully allowing the bow to drift off and the ship to lay a bit more beam on to the wind, which would facilitate getting a towline connected to the stern. Anything...anything... try whatever plan the actual situation would allow to keep the ship fighting as long as possible.

But no.... the thinking seamanship frame of mind and fighting instinct which was to be found in the great sea battle commanders and their men of yore, Drake and his adversary Don Hugo Moncada, Villeneuve, and of course the heroic Horatio Nelson, men of the sea for whom fire and burning ships was part of the job description, is now unthinkable.

In all probability General Average was going to be the final outcome of this show, for reasons we may not know, but why didn't they at least ***try.*** One of the pictures showed a fire fighting vessel, if you could call it that, standing a little way off from the down by the head self cremating ship, spraying its monitor uselessly on the water. Game over.... all for show, like cop cars with their sirens blaring and flashing blue and red lights at the scene of an accident.

Next time, in the Spring edition of the magazine we will have a story about Opduwers with some research by Fred Kop and I.

UNITED KINGDON BRANCH – Ted Fisher

Welcome to the August ramble from GBOBA – UK. It would appear at long last we are starting to resume a life style we once always took for granted. Certain restrictions remain in place, new Covid variants will keep raising their heads but vaccines will continue to cope.

After well over 20 years in the role of UK-Hon.Sec I have decided that, now being an octogenarian, an 84th birthday ahead, it is time for me to hand over the helm to a new incumbent.

In agreement with our Chairman, Tony Nicholas, Captain Jonathan Warren (GB1980) has kindly agreed to take over the role of UK-Hon.Sec. The hand over will take place during September. Jonathan was at sea with Safmarine 1979-86 from Cadet to 2nd Officer. Sailed with various Coastal companies, Sea Fisheries and Unicorn Tankers. Since 2003 he has been a Lecturer at Fleetwood Maritime School,

Nautical Lecturer at John Moore's, Liverpool, University School of Maritime Studies. He has now set up his own company teaching and preparing students for SQA exams. He also works with UK Harbour Masters managing their HM certificate courses. A very experienced gentleman indeed.
Importantly, he is well known to Committee Members of both the Bursary Fund and Cape Town Branch. Modern technology is his forte and I'm sure he will challenge older Old Salts into embracing Zoom and Skype thus providing an opportunity of regular contact across our organisation.
I have appreciated and very much enjoyed my period as GB Link/Hon.Sec. It has provided me with an opportunity of maintaining contact within many sections and people of the maritime industry of which I have always, since leaving the sea maintained an interest. My later 38 year career within the Building Materials and Construction Industry (Tarmac Group) provided many opportunities not least when we participated over a few years sailing during Cowes Week where we entered our company Bavaria 42. In succession I have been a member of Worthing Round Table, Founder Member of Worthing Steyne Rotary Club and remain a Member of Chanctonbury Probus Club. In all the former I have served on the Committee and the role of Club Chairman.
Hopefully, from time to time I shall contribute to our Newsletter and will continue as GBOBA representative assisting arrangements for next year's **14-16 June 2022 Falmouth 4for Orders** with Old Conway, Worcester and Pangbourne Colleges.
GBOBA-UK: Proposal to hold **Zoom Meeting on the second Tuesday 10 August 2021 16.00 GMT** – a Zoom link will be emailed to those who had replied to my earlier email advising of this intention. Captain Jonathan Warren intends to participate and Chair the session.
Kind regards all, Stay well, stay safe.
Ted Fisher. tedefisher@aol.com Tel: +44 (0)1903 744400, Mob: +44 (0) 7702 635017

DURBAN BRANCH News – Derek McManus (Chairman)

Now that things have returned to normality, our lunches will resume on the first Wednesday of the month at DYC at the Point.
It was heartening to see a number of members who attended Granger Bay at our last get together, and most enjoyable to listen to their stories which somehow were not dissimilar to ours.
It is with regret that Howard Jackson-Moss tendered his resignation as Secretary. As previously reported, he has faced a number of challenges recently and a special meeting was called to find a new incumbent. It is always appreciated when someone volunteers and Chris Smith agreed to take over the position. Howard made a great contribution to the running of the Association, his attention to detail as well as his involvement in nautical matters. Howard will however remain on the committee. I am glad to say that he is not lost to the association and thank him for the sterling work and the way he handled his portfolio.

We are living in uncertain times with the covert factor and sit on the side line while those in Cape Town ponder the 100th anniversary - something I was really looking forward to. International travel is risky from a financial point of view but I'm sure that something could well take place. Our branch has agreed to sponsor a bus for a day and contribute 50% of any costs associated with the celebrations.
The Durban branch celebrates our 90th next year (one year behind Cape Town).
Appliance sales are sure to take a dip now that some consumers are fully stocked. Hope that they have electricity to enjoy the fruits of their labour - KZN was certainly on fire.
Kind regards, Derek McManus, Chairman.

GBOBA AUSTRALIA BRANCH

From GBOBA Sydney; Grenville Stevens 2189 60/61
GBOBA were invited to the joint Conway Worcester Pangbournian, luncheon which regrettably fell victim to the Sydney Covid lockdown and had to be cancelled.
Note: Errol Hunter E30 1959/60 has moved from his Care facility in Victoria to a new address at PresCare Groundwater Lodge, 165 Arnaud Street, Granville, QLD 4650 Tel 07 4122 6800

From Bannister NSW David Leigh 2807 1983– The Barefoot Bloke

I left the sea in 1989. Worked for Omni Stevedores for just short of a year. Then went to Island View Shipping as a port captain. Following that I worked for 20 years with MUR Shipping both in Johannesburg and in Sydney. Left the shipping industry in 2014. Still married to Susan, for some 35 years now, she has endured my nonsense. Two daughters, eldest is Sarah-Jane, she has a PhD in Neuroscience and Psychology and is currently doing research in Ireland. Second daughter is a DVM (Dr of Veterinary Medicine).I Settled in Bannister, I found the area by putting an anchor on my shoulder and walking until someone asked what was that I was carrying. Shipping was no longer the industry that I got involved in when leaving school. In those days there was honour amongst thieves... today it is a ruthless cut-throat occupation.
Today:Qualified Equine Podiotherapist; Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, B.App.Sc. (Equine).
[Following is an Extract from the 'Barefoot Bloke' Facebook (Ed)] - "David's (Dave's) passion is for horses – everything and anything horse related. He is constantly striving to learn more about horses, his second passion is sharing what he has learnt with others. Learning about horses is not definitive; there is no destination, only the journey."
David's journey started when he was 5 years old and he became a student of the horse. *"The more I learn the more I realise I don't know… I have barely scratched the surface."* David has completed various natural horsemanship courses, attended courses offered by Farriers and Barefoot Hoof Care Practitioners.

David Leigh – The Barefoot Bloke

He has also completed the two-year diploma offered by the Australian College of Equine Podiotherapy and is a qualified EPT. This course was a defining factor in his life as it moved away from the anecdotal type of training previously encountered into something tangible and based on science.This course covers everything from anatomy, musculoskeletal biomechanics, horse handling, OH & S, practical trimming training, hoof pathologies, nutrition and even business principles. *"The most important lesson I learnt was that one cannot look at the hoof in isolation, the horse needs to be looked at in its entirety, taking cognisance of the horse's environment and other outside influences that may directly or indirectly impact on the horse's well-being."*https://equinepodiotherapy.com.au/lecturers/david-leigh/.

From GBOBA, Queensland, Michael Pomfret 1728 1951/52
We are fine here, although we are currently having more regulations thrown at us than we did from the original onset of this Covid problem. We have the *"Don't leave your house without a mask".* Wear the Mask if inside a premise used for business, club, or whatever.
We have been very lucky here on the Sunshine Coast, as our lifestyle was not really affected, until today. To be honest we really do not have any real problems. For instance, both Margaret and I play golf four times a week, regulations only require us to wear a mask when in the Pro Shop. Just how hard is that!
We have folk drop in for refreshments, the 40% types. These I think are limited to ten people, how many people are in your Wardroom? My main regret is that I have stopped sailing with SCYC, they have had a bad time with COVID and the entrance to the Mooloola River (where dredging operations are almost constant currently).
We have both had the first Vac shot, went to our local medicos for the Flu shot and got the COVID shot first instead, and the Flu a week later.
Apart from that, we have been denied our time sea cruising, which we both enjoy, with all the usual services being provided, good! I think our latest rescheduled cruise is now late 2022. I think I need to win an enormous amount on Lotto so I can then buy my own yacht and cruise when I/we feel like it!

From GBOBA Central Coast NSW; Rudolf Auer 2137 1959/60 in Conversation with Ted (Edward) Thorpe. 1791 1952/53
Rudolf interviewed Captain Ted Thorpe (who is not linked to the outside world by email):

Rudolf reports "we are in both weather and Covid lockdown and hanging on by the skin on our teeth. Therefore, as it was impossible to visit Ted, we spoke on the phone".
"Ted Thorpe went to Bothie in 1952- 53. When he completed his cadet schooling, he was only 16, and too young to go to sea. He had to wait until he reached the correct age and then joined Union-Castle lines as a deck apprentice in July 1954. He seemed to be so young for Bothie, I asked if he had a torrid time being so "small". He wouldn't be drawn on that. Nigel Hobbs in my year group had the same experience. Very young compared to us.
After his sea time Ted presented to Southampton to prepare and sit for his Second Mates' Ticket, He then re-joined Union-Castle as Fourth Mate, after having to present to London. He tells me that he had to borrow money to get to London. He re-joined *'Winchester Castle'* where they required two qualified bridge watch keepers for each watch. "Safety First" as they say. As I understood it, his sea time towards his Mates' Ticket was halved, because he didn't have the watch himself. This meant that he had to do double the sea time to be eligible for his Mates' Ticket. If I'm correct, he took his Mates' Exam in London, and was annoyed to find some of his classmates presenting for Masters at the same time. In his time with Union-Castle, he also served on the "Black Hulls". They were Union Castle cargo carriers. Lots of ship stability calculations and fun!
Ted's first ship as Master was an interesting tale. The Master passed away at sea and he took over as the Master....his first command!
As with most seagoing stories, Ted met a lovely young lady in UK. She was Australian and guess what happened? She was returning home, so Ted swallowed the anchor and joined her. In Australia he first worked stevedoring, an uninviting area, and then in ships' cargo planning with the first new computerised systems. This lot eventually drove him nuts, with phone calls from different time zones day and night. He retired saying "no more computers in my life".
Ted and his wife live happily in a *cul de sac* area of Umina Beach, up against the mountain with no passing traffic. What a jackpot!"

From GBOBA Adelaide, Mike Carrington 2548 1976.

I am now on thirteen weeks of leave, during which time Cheryl and I are planning to head up north to the Northern Territory and the northwest coast of Australia.
In April we travelled out west to Esperance where we caught up with Stephen and Maureen Dickason, who were kind enough to allow us to set up camp in their driveway, as all the local campsites were filled to capacity.
Steve is an Esperance Marine Pilot and who is currently rather busy with large bulk carriers, container ships and tankers, which frequent this relatively small, beautiful, port on the south coast of Western Australia, approximately 700 kms east southeast of Perth.
Steve's other past-times include cultivating and cloning mushrooms, diving and exploring the region's incredibly beautiful coastlines and archipelagos aboard their magnificent power boat, *'Recherch'e Investigator*'.
The other GBOB's Marine Pilot working at Esperance is Mike Rowe, with whom we caught up over an awesome lamb roast, kindly prepared by the *maestro culinarian*.
Mike too enjoys the remoteness of Esperance, with abundant areas to explore and camping in the region when he is not working.
I was amazed sighting a SATS General Botha muster photo, mounted on Steve's home office wall, where some of the past and current employees of Port Esperance or Southern Ports Authority appeared in the same photo, - namely the late Robert Lovell (#2497), David Teague (#2510), Stephen Dickason (#2515) and Michael Rowe (#2572).
Similarly in Adelaide, we are proud to enjoy the fact that there are three GBOB's working in the Port with Gordon Hayward (#2834) a Marine Pilot with Flinders Ports, Leon Strydom (#2915?) the Marine Operations Manager for Flinders Ports and Michael Carrington (#2548) a Tug Master with Svitzer.
We certainly enjoy the odd social catch-up together while we always feel indebted to South Africa and the likes of the General Botha, Safmarine, Unicorn and Portnet for the knowledge and expertise we gained whilst studying and working there, all of which now stands us in good stead here in our adopted Country, Australia.
We hope and pray that the trouble in South Africa will cease soon, allowing for the beautiful Motherland to regain its composure and self-respect for all.

From GBOBA Yass NSW Tony MacQuillan 1662 1950/51 – Cadet Journal

MY FIRST SHIP, m v "ROWALLAN CASTLE", UNION CASTLE LINE 1952

I joined the "Rowallan Castle" on January 16th January 1952 in Port Elizabeth. There were, at the time, five other cadets on board and I had little difficulty finding my way about the ship with their help and becoming familiar with the routine.

She had just arrived from the United States with cargo for all South African ports, as well as Lourenco Marques, in Portuguese East Africa. On the way there, we went into dry-dock in Durban for four or five days for repairs to the tail shaft and to scrape and repaint the bottom with anti-fouling paint.

ARE tRE (i)
DECLARATION.
I DECLARE (i) that the person to whom this Discharge Book relates has satisfied me that he (she) is a seaman and (ii) that the photograph affixed bearing my official stamp is a true likeness of that person, that the signature within is his (her) true signature, that he (she) possesses the physical characteristics entered within and has stated to me the date and place of his (her) birth as entered within.
PHOTOGRAPH OF HOLDER
SIGNATURE OF SUPT. AT MERCANTILE MARINE OFFICE
M.M.O. EMBOSSING STAMP
DATE 9. M. 52.

All our cargo was finally discharged in Lourenco Marques, incidentally the final resting place of the famous barque 'Lawhill' and we set courses then for Beira. Unfortunately, little did we guess we would be outside at anchor for a fortnight before going in, but we couldn't grumble as one ship had been there seventy-four days, when we arrived and had still not left when we did.

The loading of Rhodesian copper took just under a week, working day and night. The cargo was worked from barges alongside by plumbing a derrick over the side and using the union-purchase method. A chain 'snotter' was passed around the copper bars and slabs, which had been levered up onto quartering by crowbars. The dunnage was flat, but should have been quartering, but this was unavailable, and it was laid athwartships. The copper ingots were then tommed-down.

From Beira we sailed for Cape Town, where we loaded grapes, pears, apples, melons, canned goods and fish oil. The grapes, pears and apples were stowed on top of the copper and kept at a temperature of 31 degrees Fahrenheit.The melons were stored on the forward well deck and secured with rope netting.After leaving Cape Town, this deck cargo moved, but it wasn't until after St Helena that it broke adrift and was damaged.

Next port of call was the island of St Helena where over a couple of days we loaded New Zealand flax, their only exportable product. Were it not for the fish which the islanders caught, they would be in a poor state as regards food, which is rationed worse than in England, and more expensive. The islanders are extremely poor, though fairly well educated and well spoken.They are mainly people of mixed race. The average earnings are 24 shillings per week, whether a labourer, or technician, and the head of the family finds it difficult to keep his (usually) large family properly clothed and fed.

The island has a rugged beauty, its precipitous cliffs rising out of wonderfully clear water of a luminous blue.The boats have to wait for lulls in the waves before going alongside the small wharf. The main attractions of the island, from the visitor's point of view, are Napoleon's House and Tomb, the Boer prisoner of war camps, of which little is left, and the 699 steps of Jacob's Ladder [stone staircase leading from Jamestown, at sea level, up the side of Ladder Hill to the Ladder Hill Fort].

From St Helena we sailed for Las Palmas in the Canary Islands.We were delayed considerably by heavy weather and patches of fog, and the melons on the foredeck, now broke loose and were damaged. We docked there for a day and then sailed from Las Palmas in the dark, just spending sufficient time to refuel and load a deck cargo of potatoes and tomatoes. Leaving Las Palmas, the weather became colder, with a lot of fog around, but we arrived in Southampton on time. The amounts of moorings we put out in Southampton was quite a surprise to me, compared with South Africa where the ropes we put out were quite half the amount we had to put out in Southampton [due to the odd pattern of tides with double peak high and low tides?]

All the fruit cargo was discharged in Southampton, leaving the copper and flax for Swansea and Liverpool.I had time, to see the Old Bar Gate and parts of the old city wall in the snow. (Between interviewing the Naval Liaison Officer and attempting, unsuccessfully to obtain a Seaman's Discharge Book and a British Seaman's Identity Card).

The day before sailing for Swansea, three of us were sitting in the cabin next to mine, when we heard a great commotion from next door and "Mac, there's a fire in our cabin"! None of us remember the rush

to next door, but when I saw the flames and dense smoke, my heart sank. While my three mates, 'Harry', (Guy Coulson), 'Sandy' (Alexander Buchanan) and Lyn Jackson fought the fire, I rushed off to fetch the Second Mate. By the time I returned, 'Sandy' in his excitement was spraying the entire cabin with an extinguisher, and the fire was out. Evidently a cigarette end in the wastepaper basket had set disposed paper on fire, and then the clothes above it caught alight! Luckily only a couple of shirts and an oilskin were lost, but the mess took ages to clean up, even if the extinguisher foam cleansed our carpet for us gratuitously.

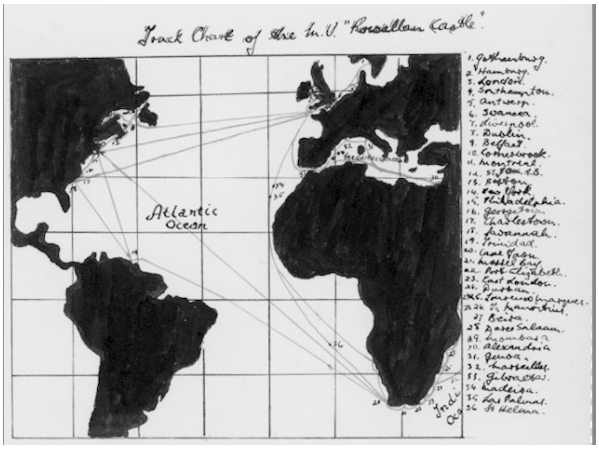
In Swansea one gang of labourers, in one of the holds, cleared it of the amazing amount of 300 tons of copper ingots in one day. At that rate we were soon on our way out of those bleak docks and the coldest weather we had experienced that trip.

We arrived in Liverpool at two in the morning and had to wait for the tide to allow us to pass through the locks. Subsequently it was seven o'clock by the time we were tied up.

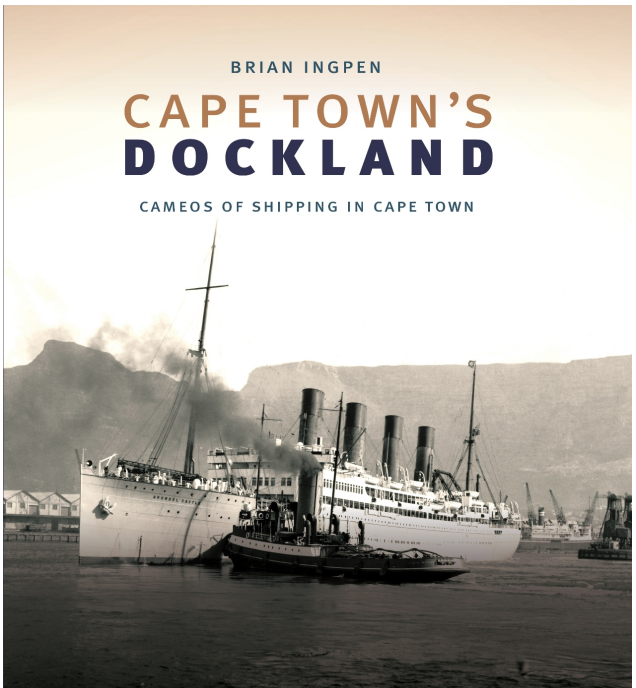
We were to pay off that afternoon, so one can imagine the discontent of the six cadets, when we were ordered to clear the lifeboats for surveying. Later in the afternoon, being a South African national, I had to wait for the immigration authorities to clear me, and thus missed the express train to London.'Sandy' and 'Pinger' Jackson had also missed the train. They were on their way home to Bournemouth. The three of us parked our luggage from our taxi, bought our tickets and went off to find a decent place to eat.We were catching the midnight train, so even had time to go to a picture show on the station.

Off to London at midnight and arrived there in the early dawn. Hired a taxi to take me to Canons Park, in north London, the home of my relations at seven a.m. So was greeted by Uncle and Aunt in dressing gowns, about to have breakfast. Little did I realise how short my leave would be, or how little of that time I would be with them.

During my stay in London I saw nothing much, but from tube train windows, as I was too busy rushing about being interviewed by people, including the Union-Castle Line's Captain Superintendent, and my great uncle Commander Harry Strong, RD, RNR (ret'd), a former Commodore of the Union-Castle (1927). While Uncle Harry Strong had waited for me to arrive in London, he had organised various appointments for me, being ambitious for my seafaring career. Soon I found myself enrolled as a Probationary Midshipman RNR and a Cadet of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, the latter which gives rise to this first chapter of a diary I was instructed to keep!



I had four days leave in London, before being recalled, and I caught the midnight train back to Liverpool for another interview, this time with the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office, to be provided with a 'Seaman's Record Book of Certificates of Discharge' and a 'British Seaman's Identity Card' and rejoined "Rowallan Castle" for her next five voyages for most of the rest of 1952.



This attractive high-quality book takes readers from Cape Town harbour's wooden jetties of yesteryear to today's towering container gantries and the Waterfront's allure. Through its evocative text and over 820 carefully-selected photographs, you can smell the sea, you can taste the salt, you can see the cargoes, while its 304 pages convey images, stories and descriptions of ships – from Union-Castle's legendary mailships, coasters and containerships to trampships,

tankers, tugs and trawlers – that will rekindle warm maritime memories for many.
For further information or orders ***brian@capeports.co.za***.

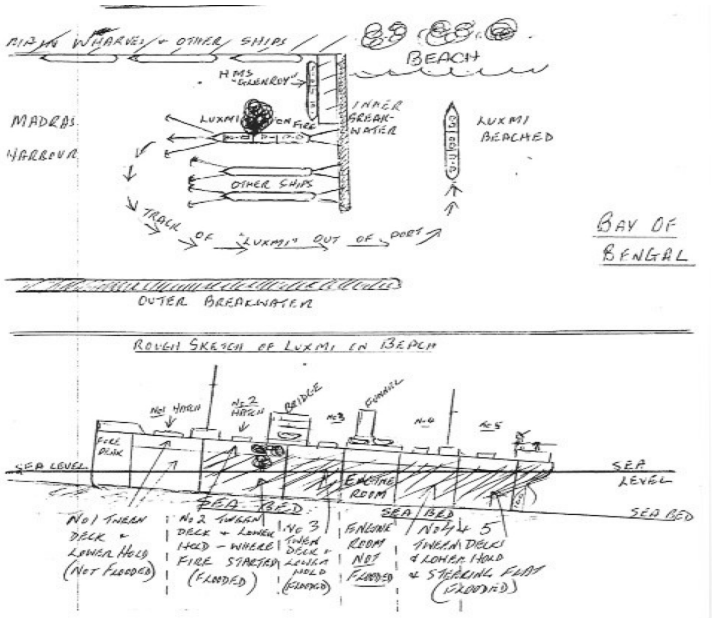
THE SEAGOING MEMOIRS of BRIAN DOUGLAS HOATSON

Scribe – Following on from ***Alang*** **Beach** (Gauteng) *(Page9), critique on modern day firefighting, the following extract from Brian Hoatson (GB No.1179; 1941-42) on the decisive action to extinguish a ship-board fire back in 1944.*

Fire – On a passage from Colombo to Madras a spontaneous combustion fire of baled Sisal was smouldering in the cargo hold of "*Luxmi*". "*… When the smouldering reached the upper part of the stow in the tween deck and into the fresh air and oxygen – the whole mass of burning sisal burst into flames. This outbreak occurred while "Luxmi was in Madras harbour. … it was fortunate it did not break out at sea as she would probably have to be abandoned and sunk.*"

The "*Luxmi*" was lying to a Mediterranean moor in Madras. "*This outbreak of fire also occurred at a significant period in world history, as it happened that Madras was one of the staging ports for the invasion of Malaysia and Singapore. …. So the harbour and surrounding ocean was crammed with ships, mainly merchant ships, but also many naval vessels, landing ships, and assault ships. ….*"

The fire broke out with fury of an afternoon when the forward part of No.2 Hatch top was opened to discharge Madras cargo. "*We got fire hoses, fire extinguishers and anything we could lay our hands on to fight the fire. I manned a fire hose standing on Sisal bales in the aft end of No.2 Hatchway … and directed the hose jet under the coaming, and into the narrow space between the underside of the Upper Deck and the top of the sisal cargo stow. …. A Royal Navy Assult Ship, the H.M.S. "Glenroy" – which was moored to a wharf close to the "Luxmi" – lowered a landing craft and sent a squad of Royal Marines to help us fight the fire. Tugs with fire hoses came alongside but could not do much to help.*"



The vessel took on a list to Port. After inspecting the situation the Harbour Master ordered the Captain to take the vessel to sea and scuttle her. The Captain refused to obey this order and instead agreed to take the ship out and beech her just outside the harbour where he intended to flood the vessel to extinguish the fire. So they cleared out of the harbour with a heavy list to Port, and once clear of the entrance turned to Port and with engines full ahead steered straight towards the beech. "*The ship touched bottom very gently – on a slight sloping sandy sea bed – and came upright from the Port list, as she stopped – aground – about 200 yards from the shore. Fortunately, the seabed was smooth and gently sloping, and the ocean was very calm with no ocean swell. The range of tide was very small – only about 2 feet – so the situation was very favourable to flood the ship, sink it to the bottom, and extinguish the still raging fire in N0.2 Hold.*"

"*… the "Luxmi" was, ….an 'open shelter-deck ship' … with the tween decks common from bow to stern … the flooding of No.2 hold spread up along those tween decks and into Nos. 3, 4 and 5 holds … No.1 hold and Engine Room were not flooded. When the ship finally settled on the seabed, … the Steering Flat …. was also flooded, as well as the DEMS Gunners quarters, and the armaments magazine.*" The fire was eventually extinguished the following morning after the entire crew attending throughout the night. There was a lot of damage caused by the fire and the subsequent flooding, including the parts of the accommodation and the domestic store rooms and fridges adjacent to and above No.2 tween deck. The ship was then pumped out using ship's pumps and power, and cargo discharge resumed into barges which all helped to lighten the ship for re-floating. The Chief Officer

prepared a Kedge Anchor placing it about 200 yards from the stern and hooked up to the aft mooring winches.

"*After about five days of pumping out the ship, it was estimated that "Luxmi" had been "lightened up" sufficiently to be re-floated. At … the highest tide that daythe largest tugboat in Madras port came out and attached a towline to our stern. The tug then started heeving on our stern while we started heaving on our Kedge Anchor line. With the ship's main engines going "Full Astern" we managed to ease "Luxmi" off the beach and afloat once more.*"

"The sun shines not on us but in us. " (John Muir)

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

"Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, snow is exhilarating;
there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather". -John Ruskin