SATS *General Botha* Old Boys' Association

www.generalbotha.co.za

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August 2023

JOINT NEWSLETTER

CAPE TOWN CALENDAR

Fairship Marine Bursary Golf Day
26 October 2023
Rondebosch Golf Club

FAIRSHIP

This popular Cape Town maritime industry annual event is hosted by the ***General Botha* Old Boys' Association Bursary Fund** (incorporating the Society of Master Mariners Bursary Fund), in support of bursaries for disadvantaged students studying towards tertiary maritime qualifications.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES -
Wet hole sponsorships | **R5 500** (2nd, 6th, 12th & 16th par 3 holes)
Advertising or sponsorships: 1st tee, 5th green, 10th green, 11th tee, 18th green and the Practice Putting Green **R8 000;** Half-Way House eats and drinks **R10 000;** Prize giving snack platters **R12 000;** Special prizes for nearest the pin on the 6th and 12th; Special prizes for the longest drive on the 11th & 18th holes; Prizes for winners – 1st to 10th places.
Contact **Thalia Hock** Email: gm@generalbotha.co.za; Tel: 073 174 0536
BOOKINGS -
4-Balls | **R2 750** per 4-ball (*excludes golf carts*); Limited number of electric carts, but push carts and golf clubs available for hire. To book a 4 ball/s, carts, or equipment, contact **Dennis Henwood** Email:dhenwood@iafrica.com; Tel 083 503 3623.
Note - *Section 18A tax certificates / receipts cannot be issued for golf day fees or sponsorships.*

MONTHLY	Pub lunch, Royal Cape Yacht Club, second Tuesday of every month without fail. Rig of the day, casual.
2024	16 March 2024: AGM and Commissioning Day luncheon.
	17 March 2024: Annual Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony.
2025	15 March 2025: AGM and Commissioning Day luncheon.
	16 March 2025: Annual Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony.

For those of you travelling in from beyond our Cape Town border, please let us know of your travel plans.

Australia Branch lunch 29 August *see page 11 below*.

From the Bridge of Cape Town – Chairman, Tony Nicholas

A relatively quiet quarter here in Cape Town but there is always a Bothie Boy in the news. World wide news was the capsize of the 112-year-old steel hulled bark; sv *Europa*. This happened in May this year in Cape Town. Fortunately, not whilst she was afloat, but whilst she was being maneuvered on the port's syncrolift. A most unfortunate incident for such a historic vessel. But in sailed Bothie Boy Nic Sloane, internationally renowned salvage master. Snap, Crackle and Pop, Nic had her upright in no time. Bravo Zulu Nic, in the tradition of honourable service. Now the blame game starts in earnest.

"Europa" capsized on the Cape Town syncrolift

As we all know our training ship was bought from the British Royal Navy and donated to South Africa by philanthropist T.B.F. Davis in memory of his son, Howard Davis, who was killed in World War 1. Although a different battle, but the same war, your Association laid a wreath at the Delville Wood Memorial Service in Cape Town recently. We were ably represented and Chris Kortum laid our wreath. A most poignant service.

Snap, Crackle and Pop, Nic had her upright in no time. Bravo Zulu Nic

Elsewhere you shall see our flyer for your bursary fund forthcoming Marine Golf Day in Cape Town, proudly sponsored by Fairship, Bothie Old Boy Allan Vermaak and his business partner. Without such fund raisers your bursary fund would not be able to grow and meet its objectives, the training of youth for a meaningful maritime career. We look forward to your support, albeit 4 ball teams, prizes, hole sponsors or simply sponsorship in any form. It is your Duty which should be performed with Honour.

Cheers until next time.

Planning the Future 2023 Onwards – Dennis Henwood

Background - Our Old Boys' Association (OBA) is now 92 years old having first met in August 1931, and in those years our name, history and achievements are wide and highly spoken of. It all started with dedication and determination by a few Old Boys, as you can read in this extract from the brief history of the OBA on our website:

In 1925 the Secretary of the Board of Control for S.A.T.S. General Botha, at the request of the Old Boys made it known that it was proposed to form the Old Boys Association, ……. In 1928 further interest was displayed in the formation of an Old Boys Association and by this time quite a few subscriptions had been paid, but the enthusiasm of the Old Boys was still lacking.

Early in August 1931 ex cadets Paul Dymond and Herbert Horsley [class 1928/29] whilst travelling back to work by train decided that they would like to see the foundation of an active Association. They arranged to see the Secretary of the Board of Control that same evening for the purpose of soliciting his assistance. Their request for particulars of those who had passed the Training Ship was met with great kindness by the late B.P. Davies, who was at the time Secretary of the Board of Control. He placed at their disposal the full records and offered to put a notice in the press calling for a meeting to be held on the 28th August 1931. ……..

Messers Dymond and Horsley made it their duty to contact by telephone or personally every ex-Botha cadet resident in the Cape area and appealed to them to be present at the meeting which was organised to take place in the offices of the Board of Control, Cape House, Exchange Place, Cape Town. A few days before the meeting all concerned were again contacted with the result that at the inaugural meeting of the association 27 ex cadets were present.

Inevitably and sadly, our membership is on the decline, our membership profile is that much older and certainly not going to get younger, and this must of course be accepted and understood. However, of greater concern more recently has been the poor attendance at our annual events and meetings which were in the past highlights of the OBA calendar. This has been the experience not only at our Cape Town and Durban branches, but elsewhere in Gauteng, the UK and Australia.

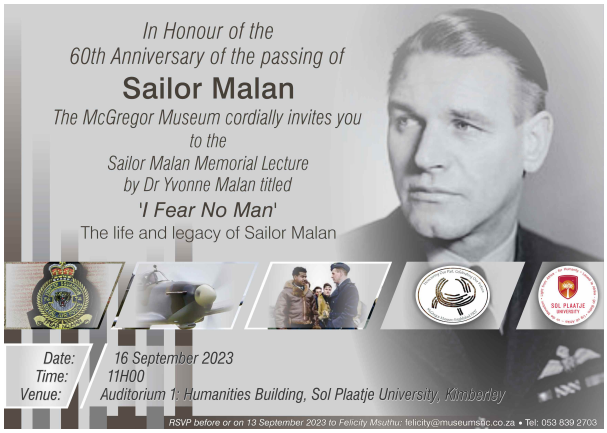
There are, understandably, some practical reasons for this decline. However, there is also a perception of reluctance in some quarters to be a part of formal ceremonies and occasions which are not only

traditional but also in part constitutionally required. Your Chairman and Committee wish to have a better understanding of this and come to terms with what the consensus is of the wider (not just Cape Town, but universal) GBOBA membership on this matter and the future of the OBA.
Dennis Henwood (vice-Chairman) has been tasked with getting together a "Think Tank" panel of a relatively small group (19) of Obies representing different categories of years and membership to work on this. The Panel has had one meeting at the end of June when it was decided that we should distribute a Questionnaire from which we hope to gauge the perceptions of as many of our membership as possible as to how we see the future planning of the OBA in the short and long term. **It must be stressed, however, that this is not about any suggestion of closure or negative approach.** To the contrary we are seeking how you, the Obie member would perceive your Association, how our constitutional responsibilities will be managed, and most importantly how *The Legend Lives On!*
Having taken serious and positive consideration of the above and what the GBOBA really means to you, **We appeal to ALL of our Association's members** to please take 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire at your earliest convenience.

GBOBA - How can we Improve? Questionnaire (*final version*)
LINK - https://forms.gle/rEXCisriMtaXgKPu7. Thank You!

For your guidance this is a Google Forms. Should you have difficulties, please email dhenwood@iafrica.com for further assistance.
The "Think Tank" Panel will meet next in September to review the responses to the questionnaire and look at the suggestions in the hope of assisting our committee in the future planning and management of the Association.

Cadet 168 A.G. 'Sailor' Malan 1924/26 Term, Memorial Lecture.



Saturday 16th September 2023 @ 11h00 Memorial Lecture in honour of the 60th anniversary of the passing of 'Sailor Malan', followed by a panel discussion.
Venue: Auditorium 1, Humanities Building, Sol Plaatje University, Kimberley.
Sunday 17th September 2023 @ 11h00 a wreath laying ceremony at 'Sailor' Malan's grave shall be held, West End Cemetery, Kimberley.
Anyone, or organisation, wishing to lay a wreath please let me know in advance.
If you plan to attend both or one of these events, please let me know.
email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za or phone/WhatsApp +27 82 555 2877
To attend the Memorial Lecture also RSVP before 13th September to Felicity Msuthu: felicity@museumsnc.co.za Phone: 053 839 2703
All are invited to attend; I look forward to an array of Bothie regalia there.

1927 – 'Sailor' Malan joined Union Castle Line for eight years. He was then accepted for a short service commission with the Royal Air Force. After training he was posted to Number 74 Squadron, the famed "Tiger Squadron", on 20th November 1936. In less than fifteen months, during World War II, 'Sailor' Malan rose from a little known flight commander in a Spitfire Squadron to Britain's Premier Fighter Pilot and Wing Leader. After the war he returned to South Africa, joined Anglo American becoming private and political secretary to Mr. Harry Oppenheimer. In 1950 he was asked to become the National President of the war veterans Torch Commando. For his leadership role and for the things that he publicly said in defence of democracy, constitutionalism, justice, anti-racism and standing up for the poor and people of colour in particular, 'Sailor' Malan was isolated and purged from historical memory. He was a Battle of Britain spitfire fighter pilot and war hero. As he was strongly anti-Nazi, he was dismayed at seeing it on the rise in his homeland. This is how he should be remembered – as a war hero and an opponent of the rise of the South African answer to the Third Reich in Germany. Died 17th September 1963 aged 53 of Parkinson's Disease.

His portrait, painted by William During, was one of a collection of war pictures presented by the British Government to South Africa.

OLD SALT FEATURE – #2169 KEITH BURCHELL 1960/61 TERM

L-R: Loyiso Jantijes, Keith Burchell, Avela May, Lukhona Tetyana

At your bursary fund recent Annual General Meeting, Keith was honoured by being awarded Life Governorship of your Bursary Fund. Your bursary fund was conceived and founded by Term 1960/61 during their Sailing Dinner 50th Anniversary in 2011 and Keith accepted the challenging role of founding chairman. Incumbent chairman Simon Pearson delivered the citation:

"We in the GBOBA Bursary Fund are so proud of our first chairman and founder of this our Bursary Fund, this with his colleagues of the 1960/61 GB Term.

Many of you will agree it needs passion, foresight, determination, good contacts and friends, and courage to start what Keith has done.

He was a recipient of the Cape Town City Council Bursary to attend the Bothie in 1960 so Keith – you are giving back to your Alma Mater with additional value.

Keith can't remember a time that he didn't want to be involved with the sea – when all the other little kids were drawing pictures of animals and flowers, he was drawing picture of boats and ships.

(In fact, at one point Keith went AWOL from school and ran, or is that sailed, away on a fishing boat. The record does not show what his father's response was by the time he returned home.)

He grew up between Clifton and Camps Bay.

Always a keen sportsman, he played cricket and soccer at school – even in his late 20s he was playing cricket and soccer for South Western Districts and for a long time golf was a passion – he also played bowls for a time.

A plethora of achievements in the maritime industry (too numerous to mention) but he was the youngest person at the time to be nominated Port Captain (age about 43 years).

He spent many years on the board of IALA in Paris (International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (*no wonder they use an acronym*) and he is very proud of the fact that he was involved in AIS (Automated Identification System) since its inception.

Apart from travelling for work, which while living in Johannesburg could be anywhere between 160 and 200 days a year, he has managed to make 23 separate trips to visit the grand-kids in Australia and of course numerous trips to Ireland – he has been there so often they finally gave him an Irish passport and now there is even talk of making him an Honourary Catholic. But no matter where he has worked or lived, helping others has always been part of his psyche – that sense of giving back. Honour and Duty Sir.

He lived in Johannesburg for 20 years, but went on numerous occasions to a remote mission station at Nzhelele (near the Zimbabwe border) just helping out doing odd jobs etc.

So, whether it was Mosselbaai, East London, Cape Town, Saldanha, Walvis Bay – he has always found the time to give of himself, whether it be the NSRI (National Sea Rescue Institute), Mission to Seafarers, Rotary. He loves seeing young people grow in the passion for the sea especially in sail and power craft and being qualified as skippers.

Keith's position as Chairman was not an easy act to follow, in those big shoes, but he formed a great team in the Bursary Fund Executive Committee and the Board and it's only right that he be awarded the status of Life Governor, not as a purely honourable status, but rather in sincere gratitude for all you have done, and continue to do, for this Bursary Fund.

Before I end this tribute may I also say how much we appreciate that having a supportive lady at your side is what makes a good man well celebrated.

Mary, to you, we salute your gifts in helping and supporting Keith, and therefore the Bursary Fund, to be the successful organisation it is today. We have a small token of that appreciation from us all.

Now to Keith, we award you Honourary Life Governorship, Sir, in respect of who and what you mean to this Bursary Fund through its many years and challenges.
It's a great Honour and easy Duty to bestow this on you Keith." (*Simon Pearson*)

SCRANBAG

K.G.D. OBERMEYER 1979 #2675. Kevin's wife recently bought our centenary book for him believing he shall now have ample time to read, let's hope so.
"1976 - 1979 South African Navy. Frigates and Fast Missile Patrol Boats (FMP). Spent six months in Haifa Israel as part of the first crew of P1562 (the second Israeli build FMP) this gave me the yearn to travel so applied to become deck cadet with Safmarine in 1979.
1979 - 1987 Safmarine, various positions. 1987 - 1991 Portnet in Richards Bay, first on tugs and then as Quality Performance Manager for the port. 1991 Emigrated to Canada.
1992 - 1995 Port of Prince Rupert, Canada, as Assistant Harbour Master.
1995 - 1999 Port of Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, Canada as Director Marine Operations and Harbour Master.
1999 - 2006 Pacific Pilotage Authority, Vancouver as Director Marine Operations.
2006 - 2022 Pacific Pilotage Authority, President and CEO overseeing the pilotage for the entire British Columbia (Canada) Coast. Mentored new CEO and retired February 2023.
Thereafter Board Member/Director for GSTS (Halifax) and Board Member/Director for the International Sailors Society Canada."
And to round off a remarkable career a scholarship has been named in his honour:
"The Pacific Pilotage Authority (PPA) is thrilled to announce the creation of the Captain Kevin Obermeyer scholarship in recognition of his dedication to the marine industry during his exemplary 23-year career with Pacific Pilotage Authority. This scholarship was presented by Dhaval Shah, Associate Dean of the BCIT marine campus, at the Change of Leadership Ceremony held on June 15 to honour Kevin and recognize the leadership transition to PPA's new CEO, Julie Gascon. The scholarships will recognize deserving students in the BCIT Nautical Sciences Program and the Bridge Watch Rating Programs with a total of $15,000 for scholarships and awards annually. The Bridge Watch Rating entrance awards will foster inclusivity and diversity within the marine industry by giving preference to students of traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. Kevin has always been a strong supporter of diversity initiatives and developing the next generation of mariners. We cannot think of a more fitting way to recognize his leadership while at the helm at Pacific Pilotage Authority."
Bravo Zulu Kevin.

J.A. MULLER 1966 #2286. John has finally put finger to the keyboard. "1966 *General Botha* Merchant Navy Academy - part year at Gordon's Bay & the first intake at Granger Bay. 1967 Joined Safmarine's *SA Tzaneen*, Captain Young & C/O George Findlay. About a year on the *SA Tzaneen* - thence, to *SA Statesman* followed by the st *Koberg* for 14 months & signed off back to the *SA Statesman* whilst in Japan where we headed back to Durban & I signed off to write my 2nd Mates ticket late 1969. Safmarine wanted me to re-join the *Koberg* early 1970. I wasn't keen to go back to the tanker I'd spent 14 months on with five hours shore-leave in that year. Nice ship but I wanted a general cargo vessel. As we know, you can't dictate your preferences. Started hunting for a shore-job & long-story-short, joined Freight Services Ships Agency as a junior ships' agent doing bunker ships. Fell in love with being in Operations as a Ships' Agent. It really was a fantastic job for a guy like me. Freight services Durban 1970-1973. Transferred to Port Elizabeth as assistant manager. Got married to Kathryn Scallan. Transferred to Richards Bay Steamship in 1976 and handled the first coal ship to load at the RBCT. Real pioneering days. End 1977 transferred to East London as branch manager. Thence back to Port Elizabeth in 1979, a joint operation with Aeromarine & Freight Services ships agency called Freightmarine, as their assistant branch manager. In 1982 transferred to Johannesburg in a marketing position. Resigned in 1984 to join SA Ships Agency. That didn't work out & in 1985 US Lines took me on as the representative for Port Elizabeth & East London. 1986 US Lines filed chapter 13. 1986 joined Bridge Shipping in Durban & was part of the team that created their Bridge Marine Ships' Agency over the next seven to eight years. Loved it. Circumstance changed, I was being transferred to Johannesburg. This wasn't good for the family at that period and around 1992/93 I joined Tall Ships in Durban / Caravel in Maputo. Circumstances evolved. The director of Tallships took an interest in API = African Portland Industrial Holdings. From 2003 to 2010 I was responsible for the overall operations of two

bulk terminals, being Matola Coal Terminal (TCM) in Maputo and the Walvis Bay Bulk Terminal in Namibia. API was bought by Grindrod in 2008 (I think) & I retired in 2010. Thereafter I joined my brother's business Northbound Freight Services in 2010, a trucking business operating a consolidation service, Johannesburg into Gaborone & Maun & return. I was offered a position in LBH Xpress, (2015-16) a then fledgling courier trucking service operating out of Durban and Johannesburg into Mozambique, Maputo to northern Mozambique. Now fully retired, in Johannesburg, at end of 2016 & still enjoying life to the full."

T.J. RICHARDS 1974 #2484. Trevor recently purchased five of our books setting an excellent example for the rest of you out there. **"**2006 President, Spring Cove Marina, Solomons, MD, USA. After Bothie in '74, my last trip with Safmarine was in 1982, as I recall. Headed off around the world in *Wandering Star*, my Knysna built Endurance 37, from '82 - '86 and in Australia I met my future wife, Liz, who is from the States. That, of course, put an end to my single handing days. Sailed back to the States in '87 and in '88 got the manager's job at Spring Cove Marina in Solomons MD. It is a full service "resort" style marina with 250 slips and boatyard which has kept us busy and out of trouble. After 10 years, became the managing partner, and after another 16 years, here we are! Our son and daughter are both working at the marina, (as well as Liz and my brother Alan - a real family affair), *Wandering Star* had a facelift - (adding all the mod-cons like chart plotter and radar!) and we planned on some East Coast/Bermuda cruising in the next few years as our kids (or more accurately, "we") became more comfortable (with them) running the marina. We enjoy skiing in the winter and I still race my Laser in the warmer months, although now I am called a "Grand Master" and seem to be getting slower and slower! Subsequently retired from the Marina business, living in the mountains of western Maryland where we have lovely summers and real winters. We still own our Knysna boat Endurance 37 after 43 years and we keep her on the Chesapeake where we try to get a little sea time in a couple of times a year."

P.J. PEISER 1961/62 #2211. A recent communication brought the response from Peter; "Stuck on the Caribbean Island of Tobago." My immediate reply requesting an update has brought no response so far. We wait impatiently unless someone else is in contact with him and able to solicit a response.

B.D. WEBSTER 1977 #2593. My recent enquiry to Bryan brought the response that he is still in Seychelles, idyllic.

1977 - 1987 Safmarine at sea. 1987 - 1995 Surveyor, Caleb Brett and Saybolt. 1995 - 2001 Pentow, discharge advisor on Durban SBM and bunkers' manager. 2001 - 2005 S.A. Stevedores as their National Operations Manager. 2005 -2008 MD of SCL and CTS Group based in Ghana. 2008 - 2011 Grindrod in African business development and Intermodal division. 2013 - 2020 with APMT at KBSP port in Bahrain first as GC manager, then head of operations and COO. (Where I worked with Simon Brebner). Retired in December 2020 and contracting in ports' development and management, amongst other port related activities. 2021 on a short-term contract in Port of Salalah. 2023 on a mid-term contract in the Seychelles as port development manager.

M.O. SANGSTER 1978 #2632. For decades we posted hard copy newsletters to Mark's last known address in Bloemfontein. Following some search and rescue recently we find Mark teaching at a school on the island Koh Samui, Thailand, where he has been for the past seven years. I still await your further update in response to my emails Mark.

P.J. UREN 1982 #2787. My recent inquiry found Peter in Langebaan but on his way to an interview in Oman. We wait, somewhat impatiently for news.

R. EBELTHITE 1977 #2563. Another failed email address and S&R found Roger now living in Estonia having recently retired as harbour pilot in Sohar, Oman. We wait, somewhat impatiently for further news Roger.

S.C. BRADFORD 1973 #2431. Stewart was known to be in Cape Town recently but unfortunately, we missed him. Last known to be dairy farming somewhere in the Eastern Cape. I await, somewhat impatiently, for your update in response to my email Stewart.

M.P. MELLY 1978 #2606. Mike recently retired, again, from sea going and has taken on more responsibilities. Where does he find the time?

"I joined Unicorn as a cadet in 1976, gained my Master's in '87, and then came ashore in 1988 after serving mostly on tankers. I joined Caleb Brett (now Intertek) and then P&I Associates in 1990. I was appointed Managing Director of Calcon, a subsidiary of P&I Associates and Pentow Marine, and

bought out the company in 1992 due to the sensitivities of the tanker business at that time. The Inspection and Testing activities were merged with Gazelle Testing Services about 10 years later, and I sold my shareholding in that firm to Inspectorate in 2006. I had by then become very involved in an international NPO called Retrouvaille, and with Caryl, served a term on the International Board from 2009-2013, ending up as International Coordinator/President. I continued working for the organisation in the interesting role of Organisational Change until about 2019. I continued with P&I surveys throughout, as well as my long-distance trucking and broking business (Calcon and Buffalo Tankers) until 2016 when dark clouds gathered over that market, and I decided to revalidate my CoC in order to upskill myself with all the new technology which had been introduced since I left the sea. This led me to join Grindrod Shipping as Marine Superintendent, aka Fleet Mentor aka Career Development / Cadet Training for Unicorn (the wet fleet of Grindrod Shipping,) then the dry fleet (IVS) also. Through this, I became aware of and very interested in the activities and sterling achievements of the GBOBA Bursary Fund, and joined the board in 2020. I "retired" again that year and once again answered the Call of the Sea, returning as Master on IVS bulk carriers. I remain very interested and actively engaged in mentoring and training. I serve our OBA on the branch committee in Durban, as well as on the BF committee in Durban. (2022)".

B.A. CARVER 1960/61 #2170. Brain is still rather busy, he writes; "Retirement? Not yet. Will only consider it when I get old. I have 3 jobs.

1. I have a fabrication workshop where I manufacture heat barriers and air filters for the Railways.
2 My company, Morning Star Projects, is the agent in SA for KONI locomotive shock absorbers.
3 I do Engineering Consulting with a small group for private railways in Southern Africa. At present busy with one in Botswana." Phew.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

SEAN DAY 1967. Sean passed away 27th July following a long battle with illness. A remarkable man and a sad loss to the maritime community.

Sean Day – who passed away last week. In every aspect of his life, he was and remains an exemplary role model for young South Africans.

BRIAN INGPEN

Sean trained in SAMNA *General Botha* before joining Safmarine in 1968 He soon decided that a sea going career was not for him and from 1969 to 1972 he attended the University of Cape Town for a B Bus Sc.

During this period, he found the time for an adventure and crewed on the Academy's training yacht *Howard Davis* for the inaugural Cape to Rio yacht race in 1971. Thereafter in 1973 Sean did his national service as a Sub Lieutenant, S.A. Navy, serving as assistant navigating officer on the Destroyer SAS *Jan van Riebeeck.*

1974 to 1976 saw Sean attend Oxford University (Rhodes Scholar), M.A. (Law).

1976 - 1979 - Hong Kong & Taiwan, working for the Jardine Matheson & Co subsidiary Indo-China Navigation Ltd.

1979 - 1981 - Montreal, Canada. Operations Manager followed by Marine Manager of Fednav Ltd, the dominant bulk shipping company operating in and out of the Great Lakes, and in the Canadian Arctic.

1981 - 1986 - New York, U.S.A. Executive Vice-President of Navios Corporation that owned and operated 36 bulk carriers trading worldwide as well as terminals in the U.S. and South America.

1986 - 1989 - Vice President Citicorp Venture Capital, New York. Acquiring companies for Citicorp in leveraged buyouts (a great learning experience in the financial markets!).

Among Sean's many achievements saw him skiing to the North Pole at age 60 years. Remarkable!

1989 - 1999 - President and CEO of Navios Corporation after leading a leveraged buyout of the company with Citibank's backing. Sean was able to buy 30% of the company and so was a part owner. The company was sold in 1999 after a very good 10 years building up the company again during the very demanding 1990's!

1999 - Chairman of Teekay, A Vancouver based tanker company. During this period he was also Chairman at various times of Teekay Offshore Partners, Teekay LNG Partners, Teekay Tankers Ltd, Oceanic

Bank in the Bahamas, the Compass Group (venture capital and high tech investing), Anholt Ltd (agricultural investments in South America, Eastern Europe and Africa, as well as oil and mining) and Transmarine Navigation in Long Beach.

2017 - Retired as Chairman of the Teekay Group after 18 years, but remained on its Board as Chairman Emeritus. In 2018 Teekay named an LNG Carrier *Sean Spirit* thus acknowledging his many years of heading the company and his remarkable achievements.

Bothie Term Mate Simon Pearson writes; *"We remember Sean as our '67 SCC and an excellent student and faithful friend. His achievements, in all the areas he gave his time to, resulted in huge successes. He gave generously so that the less fortunate, especially in SA, would benefit and we have his legacy in Lawhill M.C. May he RIP and his family gain comfort from his years of sacrificial generosity."* A fitting tribute.

Extracts from *"Port Pourri," The Cape Times, 1 August 2023* - **A Shipping Giant, Philanthropist has Crossed the Bar**

"Someone in the hostel," a school friend told me 61 years ago, "also collects ships' postcards." I sought him out – he was Sean Day who, like me, wrote to umpteen shipping companies, begging for postcards of their ships. Presently, thick envelopes of postcards would arrive – in his case at the school hostel, and in my case, in our letterbox, the fruit of an evening's letter-writing. We shared that interest, trawling Cape Town's shipping offices for postcards, periodically swopping duplicates amid shipping-related chatter.

World affairs and shipping were his interests even in those school days. Each morning, with his schoolmates still asleep, he would hasten to the common room to read George Young's Cape Times shipping column, and to scan the newspaper to keep himself informed of global and national events.

Those are my early memories of Sean, a great friend who, after a long illness, passed away last week.

After leaving school, our courses crossed again when, after training at General Botha, he joined Safmarine where I appointed him to SA Nederburg, the company's newest ship which he joined shortly before Christmas in 1967. That posting bugged him, he told me years later – with a chuckle, as he had planned to be home for Christmas. Instead, his ship ironically was off Knysna – his hometown - on Christmas Day! ……

However, Lawhill Maritime Centre at Simon's Town – where I enjoyed 23 fascinating years - won an award in London in 1999, an achievement highlighted by an international maritime journal. An email arrived the next day. "Same person? Regards. Sean." Our regular correspondence resumed and continued, even into those dark days of his protracted illness. In about 2006, he visited Lawhill, then housed in shipping containers. A second visit followed in 2007, this time with Susie Karlshoej, CEO of TK Foundation, an associate of the tanker company that had been established by Susie's father. Prior to that later visit, Sean had wanted an architect on standby. "Why the architect?" I probed. "Your new maritime centre," he responded – and, via the foundation, he and Susie kindly arranged the funding for the wonderful, new, custom-built Lawhill Maritime Centre. Subsequently, the foundation has helped Lawhill students in many other ways, including providing vital support during the devastating covid pandemic.

Sean valued his South African roots and education. Thus, the memory of this amazing man will continue and will be honoured in the lives of many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those at Lawhill whom he assisted via the Sean Day Scholarships. His help smoothed their venture into worthwhile careers and opened new horizons, thereby also improving the circumstances and lives of their wider families.

He travelled extensively in the course of his work – once, he told me that in two days, he had chaired eight board meetings! His business skills and negotiating prowess often turned situations and investment opportunities to the advantage of the company, mainly because people implicitly trusted this great man of absolute integrity.

He was a hands-on Teekay chairman who understood the complex lives of seafarers and the conditions under which they work. When he visited the shuttle tanker Nordic Laurita, anchored in Table Bay for weeks awaiting her next cargo, he took me with him. Out in the launch we

went, we climbed the long pilot ladder, and, while chatting to the master, he learned that the ship had not been alongside for a long time. He scribbled in his little notebook and the following day, at his insistence, the tanker berthed in Cape Town to enable the crew to enjoy a run ashore. “We must look after these people,” he told me, referring to the ship’s sudden berthing in Cape Town.

In 2018, Teekay honoured his contribution to its phenomenal success by naming its new gas carrier Sean Spirit, a gesture that meant so much to him. On a smaller scale, but equally sincerely, his interest in and support for Lawhill’s small boat training programme was marked by naming a RIB Sean Day.

The RIB Sean Day is used for training students at Lawhill Maritime Centre in small-boat handling. Several students have their skipper’s ticket after following the successful training programme, organised by the General Botha Old Boys’ Association Bursary Fund. ***GBOBABF***

Although his illness must have been extremely frustrating and exhausting for him, his emails to me always reflected his positive attitude and growing prayerful faith. He deflected inquiries about his health, writing instead of his enormous appreciation for the devoted help and care from his wife, Ginny, and their four daughters, and how proud he was of their own exceptional achievements. Naturally, his emails beamed his absolute delight to welcome his grandchildren into the world and to the wider Day family.

What a great privilege to have known this honourable man, a true shipping leader, and to reflect on his admirable and exemplary life of family values, of service, and of generosity to those needing a hand-up! **A giant cedar has fallen** …. *brian@capeports.co.za*

R.H. WIGLEY 1946/47. Ron sadly passed away recently, shortly after I had been in contact. Reported in "Old Salts" 1947/48: “Has joined the 'President Steyn' as an Apprentice Officer.” After coming ashore Ron worked for forwarding & clearing agents, Renfreight and Grindrods, for 25 years. Deceased 2nd July 2023.

B.T. GLASS 1955/56. Brian went to sea in 1957 with Ellerman & Bucknall but in 1958 failed the eyesight test. Thereafter he worked for Ford Motor Company from 1959 to 1978, primarily in the Parts and Accessories business of the company followed as Business Manager, Vehicle Sales and Marketing Division. 1979 to 1983 worked for the Ich Group as General Manager of the Ford Tractor dealerships. 1983 joined Barlow Motor Investments and moved around the country in various senior positions, finally as Group Properties Manager responsible for the planning, construction and administration of motor dealership properties. Retired June 2004. Thereafter involved in social and church work and embarked on a three-year Theology course.

Deceased 30th May 2017.

J. CARSE 1961/62. I believe that Johan was fulfilling his bucket list when he unfortunately and unexpectedly, passed away during his travels in China.

1963 Johan joined Safmarine as cadet South African Seafarer. 1966 Obtained 2nd Mate certificate in Liverpool and joined as 3rd Officer in the *South African Shipper*. 1966 Left Safmarine and joined mv *Glyntaf,* (Glenafon Shipping Co, Cardiff) tramping. 1967 Left mv *Glyntaf* and obtained his Chief Mates certificate in Cape Town. 1968 Joined Zapata Oil Co as Mate/Navigator tug *Plato* and signed off in Texas, USA. 1969 Immigrated to Canada joined Canadian Coastguard as 3rd Officer in the ice breaker *John A Macdonald* and escorted the ss *Manhattan* through the North West Passage to Prudoe Bay, Alaska. 1969 Obtained Masters certificate in Halifax, Nova Scotia. 1969 to 1975 Worked Imperial Oil Ltd, Northland Navigation and BC Ferries. 1975 Obtained my Masters certificate in Cape Town. 1975 to 1999 with Portnet, last three years as Marketing and Port Manager, port of Cape Town. 1999 returned to sea with S.A. Marine Corporation/Maersk as Chief Officer. 2000 Immigrated to New Zealand. 2000-2006 General Manager, Lamnalco Nigeria and Oman. 2006- 2010 seconded to Abu Dhabi JV ADNOC-Lamnalco. 2010- 2013 APMSCO-Jordan. 2013-Lamnalco consultancy work including Kuwait. 2014 Resigned from Lamnalco and retired to New Zealand. Deceased 17th June 2023.

I.W. TODDUN 1954/55. Following many years of emailing our news to Ian in New Zealand, Ian went off radar. Search and Rescue finally revealed that Ian has passed away 11th November 2019. We know that Ian joined Shell tankers after Bothie but have no further details. Any additional information of his career shall be appreciated.

P. MORRIS 1949/50. Peter sailed with Union Castle as a cadet and later joined Standard Bank in Cape Town. Transferred to Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe] in 1954 and worked in the various sectors of the finance industry before being transferred back to Cape Town by the Colonial Mutual Assurance Company. Next joined S.A. Breweries and following time in the Eastern Cape as their manager bought the Grand Hotel in East London. Thereafter spent another five years in Zimbabwe returned to Cape Town where he started a motivational business and then invented and patented worldwide a system to improve service on the forecourts of service stations. Shell S.A. bought the rights and he worked for Shell as a consultant on the project for 10 years. Then spent 9 years as GM of Peers Retirement Village in Fish Hoek, Cape Town. Retired. Deceased 16th May 2023.

F.W. THOMPSON 1960/61. Francis passed away peacefully 26th July. Unfortunately, we have no details of his career and would be grateful for information.

I.S. PAYNE 1946/47. After two years with Clan Line Ivan came ashore and worked in an industrial laboratory. He became Works Chemist with Consol Glass and then joined S&CI, a Unileaver chemical company, eventually becoming Marketing Director. Transferred to IOP, a subsidiary of Chemical Services, as Marketing Director. Retired end of 1990. Deceased circa 2019.

Our condolences to family and ship mates.

AWOL

Gerard Meyer and Nigel Treacher both 1961/62 Term and both last know somewhere in Gauteng, have gone off radar.

Stephen Doncaster 1986, all we know is that Stephen was a robot programmer somewhere in Thailand.

Peter Cowell 1965, last known in Langebaan, South Africa.

Dennis Forster 1979, last know flying as First Officer with Safair.

Greg Rouse 1981, last known in U.K.

Chris Liendtke, last known in Thailand.

Everyone, please activate your Search and Rescue. I wait to hear from you.

Bothie Boys make maritime history – submitted by Ian Harvey 1950/51.

As South Africa developed various ports were developed around the coast to further trade and the development of the interior regions of the country. Each port was a separate entity and the maritime operations were managed by a Port Captain or Harbour Master.

From left to right commencing with the back row are: E.S. Page 1944/45, Port Captain, Port Elizabeth. I.B. Harvey 1950/51 Port Captain Saldanha Bay. M. Cooper in the dark suit, assistant to the Nautical Advisor, not a Bothie Boy. A.M. MacKay 1944/45, Port Captain, East London. P.M.J. Carrington 1945/46, Port Captain Richards Bay. J.C. Davies 1955/56, Assistant Port Captain Port Elizabeth.

Front Row from left to right: K.L. Carter 1942/43, Assistant Port Captain Durban. I.W. Edwards 1940/41, Port Captain Durban. Front Row dark suit D.P. Powell 1943/44 N.A. Head Office, Johannesburg. W.J. Damerell 1941/42, Port Captain Cape Town. R.S. Schooling 1944/45 Port Captain Walvis Bay.

With the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 all the ports now fell under the jurisdiction of the then South African Railways and Harbours and the practice of operating the maritime operations within the ports under the control of a Port Captain continued.

Initially all the certificated marine personnel operating within the ports were from overseas.

Gradually over the years more and more ex cadets of the SATS *General Botha* joined the Harbour Service, until finally in 1984 or

1985 all the Port Captains and assistant Port Captains were Bothie Boys and history was made after seventy four years of port operations.
This photograph was taken at S.A. Harbours Head Office in Johannesburg.
Seated in the bottom row in the dark suit is Captain David Powell 1943/44, Nautical Advisor to the South African government, and the Head of Marine Services within the ports.
The requirement for deck officers for service in the ports, for tugs, dredging, pilotage, and for promotion to the more senior posts was a Masters C.O.C, this requirement remained until the end of 1996, when the new regime in head office decided that in future no marine qualifications would be required, Fast Tracking was the new way to go. Thus it could be said that after 86 years the era of the professional mariner in the ports came to an end. The end of an era in our history. As a matter of interest from those in the photograph, there are two survivors, John Davies and myself Ian Harvey.

Durban News - Mike Melly

Greetings from the Zulu kingdom. Our branch continues to thrive, with anything from 7 to 12 members from across the years attending our monthly luncheons (1st Wednesday of the month at Stella Sports Club), and even a murmur heard here and there about introducing a second lunch date. (This may still come to pass if there is sufficient interest – please just let a committee member know that you're keen. A lunch "up the hill" at Stokers or elsewhere thereabouts is not an impossibility). Committee members are: Rob Farren-Hanford (Secretary/Treasurer) Roy Martin, Rod Hall, Derek McManus, Chris Smith and yours' truly, Mike Melly.
We've been delighted to welcome Hugh Scheffer back to Durban. Hugh recently retired after spending many years in the UK, and then Singapore. Hugh was latterly the Commercial Manager of Unicorn Shipping, which as most are aware, was the tanker division of Grindrod Shipping, bought last year by Taylor Maritime. Grindrod Shipping sold its' last tankers prior to the sale unfortunately, but for some like Hugh who had done his time driving desks, it was time to take a well-earned rest rather than move to new beginnings.
We were also delighted to welcome back Tas O'Brien, who was AWOL for some time. This is thanks in part to his nephew James. James is also attending our lunches, as Tas' chauffeur, but is himself fast becoming a de- facto member of the branch, with a keen interest in the Bursary Fund. Tas himself is theoretically retired, but as a true Old Salt, still spends his mornings in the office. Great to see you again Tas!
Roger Ryan also re-appeared recently after a break in far-away ports. Great to see you, Roger! There are other well-known (and less well-known) Obies around. Let's just say that "we know where you live." It would be great to catch up with you. We are equally aware of some older members who may live out of town, and who are unable to get to the lunches. Drop me a ring on 083 253 9586 or send us an email durban@generalbotha.co.za if you would like to host a lunch on your farm, or at your local, and we'll scratch a team together to pay you a visit.
We have also recently learnt of certain "Snowbirds" who spend the Southern winters in warmer climates (far warmer if the news is anything to go by!) then return to the nest for our summer. Please do visit us when in town, we'd love to hear your stories of distant lands. Similarly, any Salts making for an anchorage in the Bay, please let us know that you'll be passing through, and we'll send out a welcoming party.
We enjoy a cordial relationship with others in the marine fraternity, notably our engineer friends. It has been great to welcome a couple of them to our lunches recently. They're most welcome, and contribute in a very meaningful way to the comradery and chatter.
The Bothie name is better known in KZN than most realise, thanks mainly to the work of our Bursary Fund. Of course, one has to network in maritime circles to hear it. The EThekwini Maritime Cluster in particular does a lot of good work advancing and promoting the industry, and you'll at least hear our name mentioned at all important gatherings. You'll even see our banner flown at some. Together with the landmark "dome" on the hill overlooking the bay, (Howard College,) our traditions and our history of paying the benevolence of a certain Capt TBF Davis forward are becoming well-known and well-respected. We do have plenty more work to do, so we call on all our local members to put their hands to the oars and to pull together. We'll make better speed and distance if we do so.
See you at the next lunch, hopefully! *Mike Melly*

Australia Branch – Grenville Stevens

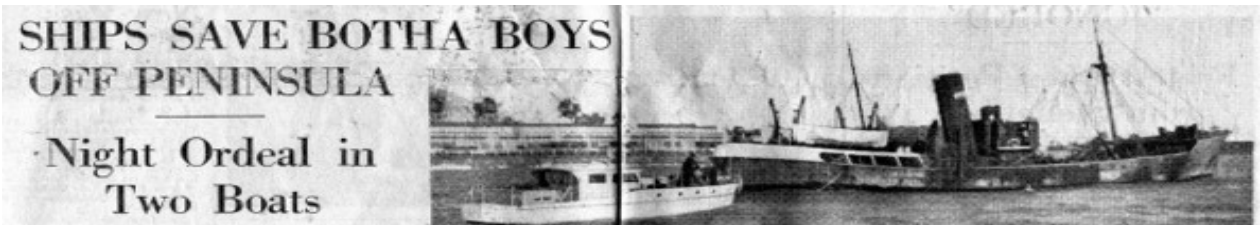
From GBOBA Yass NSW; Tony MacQuillian 1950/51 Lunchtime snack 9 July 2023

One day in 2023 I raided our freezer at home in Yass NSW for a lunchtime snack, and out came an I & J carton of frozen calamari. I remembered I & J as owning deep sea trawlers out of Cape Town when I was in training nearby for the sea! [1]"Hmmm" I thought, as I remembered a rescue by a Cape Town deep sea trawler back in September 1951, "was it possibly an Irvin & Johnson trawler?" My Grandfather had sent my parents cuttings from the newspaper, and I still had a copy.

A local broadsheet, 'Cape Times' of 10 September 1951 had described the drama:

[1] According to Simplot's web portal (https://simplot.com.au/) "In 1910, fisherman George Irvin and Carl Johnson formed I&J to tackle the world's deepest seas in search of the freshest seafood. Today the brand is one of many owned by Simplot (The J. R. Simplot Company of Boise, Idaho, USA which today has a revenue of US $8 billion plus)."

The sub-editor's headings that followed encapsulated their reporter's view of events:


SHIPS SAVE BOTHA BOYS
OFF PENINSULA

Night Ordeal in Two Boats

"The cadets left their base at Gordon's Bay at daylight on Saturday in two motorboats on a coastal trip to Cape Town, where the smaller boat was to undergo repairs. The larger boat similar in size to the Robben Island packet boat sailed as escort."

"Gale Warning," "Damaged," "Distress Signal," "Tribute".

I was crew in the larger college boat named *'General Botha.'* We had spent much of a late winter afternoon struggling off Kommetjie, a small beachside Cape settlement where my mother's cousin, Mavis Orpen, lived and whom I had recently visited. As our drama unfolded, I found it frustrating in the middle of the afternoon as the tow line to the smaller vessel broke again, as we attempted a tow, as her engine had stalled and refused to restart. I could see the familiar house and inwardly pleaded "Please, Mavis, notice the plight we are in and ring the police." Initially we were not so obviously in distress, as to a casual observer we may well have been fishing boats tending our nets.

The smaller boat's engine had failed indeed and for what seemed an eternity in rising seas, off this unprotected west coast of the Cape Peninsula, we attempted to tow it towards Hout Bay, a small fishing haven a mere 10 to 15 kms to our north. The inadequate tow ropes kept breaking and our plight was serious. College Second Officer Pinn, the officer in charge, decided to send a 'Mayday' on our two-way radio, but the radio communication was poor when either, or both engines, were running and we could neither hear a response, nor determine whether our 'Mayday' had been received.

Fortunately, it had. In the deepening dusk, a large tug from Cape Town, the *'John X Merriman'* appeared from the north and immediately took the smaller boat in tow on a long hawser. Then with its bright towing lights slowly dimming, it gradually disappeared to the north on its return to Cape Town with its tow, but our adventure, those of us left behind, was not over.

Seasickness had already overcome some of us, and disturbingly the launch began to accumulate seawater in the engine-room bilges, as we motored slowly into the steep seas coming from the northwest. Distressingly, we could not get the electric bilge pumps to operate either, which meant manual bailing with buckets, pots and pans. It was a long, bad, frightening night, and the poor officer-in-charge, who had been torpedoed twice in tankers during WWII, must have wondered whether this was "third-time-unlucky".

Just to make life more challenging for us, one engine stopped in mid-evening and refused to restart. *'General Botha'* did not steer well on one engine, thereby adding to our stress. Moreover, the rising

water in the bilge was getting perilously close to our bank of batteries, placed intelligently at about the centre of gravity of the boat, but not high enough, nor were they in waterproof battery boxes. Unbeknownst to us, battery electrolyte, sulphuric acid, when mixed with seawater makes for a dangerous combination, deadly chlorine gas. However, in blissful ignorance at the time, I just did not want to think of the consequences of the water gaining on us and bailed harder.

At dawn, visibility was poor with mist and frequent rainsqualls, but the wind and sea had abated. Then, miraculously through the rain appeared one of five fishing trawlers alerted to look out for us. It was the trawler 'Grootvlei' with its calmly confident master, Captain B L Collet, who later said to the press: *"I must pay tribute to the cadets, they could hardly stand on their pitching deck, but they soon had the rope inboard and secure."* He had picked us up, he said, *"four miles north/west of Llandudno."* So we had not travelled far from the dangerous lee shore we were trying to avoid, but fortunately did not know that at the time. Ignorance is bliss sometimes.

English Leather Gloves
Stuttafords
CAPE TIMES
Established 1876
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1951
SHIPS SAVE BOTHA BOYS OFF PENINSULA
Night Ordeal in Two Boats
10 YACHTS CAPSIZE IN GALE
Search for Afrika Korps Loot

'Cape Times' front page cutting 10 September 1951. Captain B L Collett image clipped unfortunately. Author in rear of group photograph.

The 'Cape Times' concluded *"The rescued cadets were unkempt after a day and a night in the storm-tossed launch. One had an injured hand. Many were in bare feet with their trousers soaked with water."*

Postscript: This was my biggest adventure at the "Botha"[2] but I was safe. I swore I would never go to sea again in a small motorboat without either sails or an auxiliary motor, let alone without good radio communications. Obviously, I had learned a valuable lesson about small boat seamanship.

Anthony (Tony) J MacQuillan
1950/51 GB Cadet 1662

[1] On 15 December 1950, three days after we had all gone home on leave, the college's new sea-going tender, the motor yacht 'California' arrived under her own power from Durban, a considerable and risky feat given the reputation of the South African coast for terrible storms and the relatively wide spacing of its havens. The yacht was promptly renamed 'General Botha'. Her scantlings were 53 x 12 x 5 feet, or 16 x 3.65 x 1.5 metres. She had twin GM diesels and had been built in timber by Thornycroft of Southampton in 1938, presumably as a private motor cruiser. She was a 'three-quarter-decker', the foredeck stretched over the main cabin all the way to the front of the varnished timber wheelhouse-cum-day-cabin. On the small afterdeck was the deckhouse portion and skylight of a small 'owner's', or aft cabin. This certainly was a fine acquisition for 1950. 'General Botha' could achieve almost 12 knots in smooth water and was tolerably sea-kindly, although she was not of the scantlings any Cape professional fisherman might have chosen for those waters. Fishermen choose instead vessels with considerable sheer and a relatively high bow because of the long South Atlantic swells, and the need for safe and dry working conditions on deck, no doubt born of bitter experience.

INVITATION - The General Botha Old Boys Association invites Old Boys, Hon and Associate Members, (Worchester, Conway and Pangbourne) together with their partners and family

Function	2023 Lunch Gathering
Date	**Tuesday 29th August**
Time	11.45
Venue	Hornsby RSL Club 4 High Street Hornsby. 5 Min walk from Hornsby Station/Bus Stops
Cost.	Order and pay for Food /Drinks. Selection from Three Food outlets. **https://hornsbyrsl.com.au/bars-dining/the-courtyard/.**

RSVP to Grenville Stevens, S.A.T.S. *General Botha* Old Boys' Association, Australia Branch, Email grenville.stevens@gmail.com.

UK & NWC Region – Jonathan Warren

Greetings from the UK, currently enjoying our summer.

Our plans for a midsummer meeting have taken a bit of a setback, given OBs other commitments. Still, it's likely that Donald (1971)and Kathleen Neaves are going to be in an around the Liverpool area in August, so a group of us have opted for a meal together with them rather than a full-blown Bothie do.

There are moves afoot to do something in Europe next year, suggested by Graeme Stephan (1978) at our last Zoom monthly gathering, so here is plenty of advance warning! We are thinking of Summer, in a Belgian city yet to be finalised. Belgium, as anyone who was laid up in Zeebrugge in the *SA Helderberg* would attest, is beer country! I will keep everyone posted as to progress and perhaps we can have a UK/EU gathering of OBs in '24.

Sad news in that Claire Pink, daughter of Gerry Greenen (1963) wrote to me to report that "…I am afraid that my father moved in to a care home here in Scotland back in March 2020, thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic leading to the UK government shutting all care homes to visitors for over a year, when I finally was able to visit him, he did not recognise me at all. During this 12month period he had developed Dementia and was diagnosed finally in June 2021. As a result of this illness his health has deteriorated exponentially in the last 2 years, which is heart breaking to witness. He is unable to leave his care home due to his fragile physical state now, and he does not have any recollection of much of his life anymore.". Consequently, she asked that Gerry be taken off the mailing list, which I have done. I added this to the newsletter so he is in your thoughts and prayers, especially his shipmates who may have fond memories of him.

Morris Hulley (1973) also made contact this quarter and sent me a copy of a book he is writing which deals with his take on life and his experiences trying to live the motto "Honour and Duty" through his eventful life, which I'm happy to forward to any OB who would like to read it. He reports most frankly that: "In the context of the debate concerning the life span of the "General Botha Old Boys Association" it is my studied opinion that the ethical norms aspired to in the that immortal phrase "Honour and duty" are eternal. "Honour and duty" - which I am sure you will all agree, is to be applied to ALL walks of life, is a very heavy burden to bear - I personally have failed miserably - how about you?".

Our Monthly Zoom gatherings continue to attract a good level of support from OBs able to join us on the second Tuesday of every month, and the burning issue we are grappling with is the future of the GBOBA, currently being debated by the Think Tank set up and run by Dennis Henwood.

And that brings me up to date! Goodness (not my usual expletive), but the demand for copy for these newsletters arrive so soon! Not much else has happened, really, apart from the country slowly descending into anarchy, things not working and living in a society that Anderson (*Hans Christian*) could have set his "The Emperor's New Clothes" in, where the old certainties become less so in the face of fashionable myths. It seems to me that we are desperately in need of a little boy to puncture balloons.

Until next time. *Jonathan*

***Alang* Beach**

In this edition I would like us to contemplate the proverbial tips of the icebergs, Titanic in time, Noah's Ark and how much do we really know about the past. Last time I spoke of the future and what sort of double edged sword Artificial Intelligence would potentially be for us as humans and sailors. This time lets us old nautors turn our attention to a lost history and what it could have meant for sailors and shipping, to a time for which we have at this stage of scientific research, probably no idea of what was, and have some fun contemplating what might have been.

To give some context to some of the aspects as to why we are bereft of evidence pertaining to the origins of shipping dating back to times which classical archaeology tended to dismiss, some perspective needs to be established with respect to how long wrecks and buried objects have lasted. Take for instance Titanic, which sadly has been in the news again these last two months. Look at its state after such a short time. She being a ferrous metal vessel is decaying fast and in a relative blink of an eye archeologically speaking will have disappeared completely, eaten up and reprocessed by nature.

It is an important point to remember, and interesting to note that the ceramic cups and saucers, glass bottles and other items littering the seabed around her, which may take hundreds of thousands of years to disintegrate, will tell future generations nothing about the scantlings of the ship or its propulsion method. As you will see later, this is exactly the situation humanity finds itself today when trying to work out what was what a very very long time ago.

Buried wooden ships have lasted much longer than anything steel. Many examples of Viking longboats have survived and been discovered and studied which were encased in anaerobic silts for perhaps a few thousand years. In many of these cases these ship burials were we think ceremonial, and therefore basically left undisturbed until forgotten. At that time there was no relative shortage of materials and therefore no life or death requirement to recycle anything of value which mankind could lay their hands on. Not the case as is proposed by recent studies going back many thousands of years prior to what most people erroneously understand today as binge the beginnings of humankinds voyaging skills.

From a Galactic point of view the Earth has had its ups and downs in the past and there is now convincing evidence in the geological record from all over the world that one or more cataclysmic events took place, which almost, but not completely, obliterated the day to day status quo pertaining at the time. These events are well recorded in our current human history records from all over the world, and very many of us will recall being taught about Noah's Ark in primary school. I'm sure most of us who were educated in a Christian culture would at some stage taken out crayons and exercise books and drawn what we imagined to be a very great ship. We took it for granted that the ark was made of wood, most probably it was, as there didn't seem to be any other type of suitable material available at the time. The question lateral thinkers and scientists are starting to ask today is why is this the case, as there is now irrefutable evidence that some sort of very strong highly engineered metallic materials were being used prior to the "flood" as religions calls the time, or the global cataclysm as it is called in the modern scientific idioms. I would suggest that readers tickle the keyboard a little and read up on the interweb about the Younger Dryass period about 12,000 years ago. There is much visible evidence, particularly in North America of melt water flooding on a scale which we today find hard to contemplate.

There is evidence being discovered in South America of civilizations having substantial harbour facilities which are now hundreds of metres above existing lake levels. These lakes covered vast areas back in the day and seemed to have disappeared in a very short space of time. Their stone work which indicates a very high level of technical skills, which are similar to others all over the world, is now the only remaining evidence scientists have to work with.... the tip of the proverbial icebergs as I referred to earlier.

Egypt is for various practical reasons one of the current hotspots for archaeological research. The area around the Nile and the veritable time capsules called the pyramids (of which there are very many), are a treasure trove of examples of technologies for which we have absolutely no explanation today. Classical archaeological theories about how things were made are fast biting the desert dust. Modern laser based 3 dimensional scanning of items large and small is now revealing truly astonishing information, and raising questions we have no answers for. Sadly the vast majority of the thousands of tourists who traipse round the historical sites with cameras and water bottles don't really grasp what they are looking at. Too much for them to think about, too much to take in and try to analyse. Answering the few questions enlightened tour guides may today ask them is someone else's problem.

I have for some time been wasting a lot of productive time following a YouTube Channel called Uncharted X. It is devised by a more down to Earth young Australian fella you could not ask to come across. No hype, no controversial personal opinions and soap boxes, just plain evidence and valid questions asked and some potential theories offered. He recently combined his many videos into a presentation which highlighted the "tips of the icebergs" we are dealing with pertaining to the research being done today.

The presentation is about 2 hours and 40 minutes long. It is well worth watching even if you have to break it up into manageable sections. But how does this relate to us as sailors you ask. Just one tiny aspect which you can lie awake and think about as ex and current heavy lift cargo specialists (Chief Off Mr Parkinson and Capt Sloane, two luminaries who come to mind) is how would you lift a 1000+ ton granite obelisk out of a quarry pit on dry ground without breaking it, transport it to somewhere and then stand it up straight, given the limitations in technology which those guys were supposedly subjected to.

I have an unorthodox theory but it would take some kitchen experimentation and a bit of trial and error with some off the shelf products which I'm sure were available 12000 years ago to perfect and recreate the methodology. It would be a fun and interesting school physics experiment. Hit me up on the old GBOBA Facebook page for details!!! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixTTvRGk0HQ.